

# Kafla Intercontinental

(An International Journal of Art, Literature & Culture)

January-April 2010, Price: Rs. 20, Life Membership : Rs. 1000

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Printed, Published & Edited by

Dev Bhardwaj, # 3437 Sector 46-C, Chandigarh-160047, Ph. 98728-23437

e-mail : editorkafla@yahoo.com Website: www.kaflaintercontinental.com

**Executive Editor:** Harish K. Thakur (Shimla) Ph. 94180-08900

**Artist :** Raman Bhardwaj (Chandigarh), Ph. 98156-05738

Printed at : Computata Services, Okhla New Delhi, Phone. 011-26385761

RNI No. CHA-ENG/1994/235

## Editor's Note

We are pleased to present you the latest issue of Kafla that proves to be yet another milestone in the long journey of our search towards peace and cooperation. In the times of contemporary disorder and chaos where the crime, intimidation, violence, and warfare has become routine of life the urge of man to grope for the light of peace, cooperation and happiness is on the rise.

Today man is engaged in multiple of acts oriented towards the objectives of universal brotherhood and peace for humanity and in this consistent search a large number of people, writers and activists prominently, are moving ahead as fellow crusaders. Our journey towards the same goal touched yet another feat with the successful organization of 5<sup>th</sup> International Writers' Festival in the world famous pink city of Jaipur (Rajasthan) on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2009.

The poets, writers and the scholars from different states of India and the world participated in the event with great enthusiasm. Prominent among them were Mr. Kasum Cana (a renowned Roma poet-painter from Croatia), Uktamoy (A poetess from Uzbekistan), Dr. Rafique Ullah Khan (poet & scholar from Bangladesh) and Dr. Suresh Ramburn (poet & writer from Mauritius) etc. The current issue represents the mosaic of poetry, elocutions, papers and recitations on the occasion. The papers contained in the issue primarily focus upon Literature, Peace and brotherhood. The poetry represents the distinctivity of different regions of India as well as the world.

Here it would be pertinent to acknowledge the assistance and cooperation we received from the Principal, Managing Committee and other staff members of the Maharishi Arvind Institute of Science & Management, Jaipur (Rajasthan). We also extend our thanks to Mr. Sumit Mayyar of Captab Biotec and his associates- Mr. Amrik Singh Mama Ji, Mr. Manoj Saxena, Sunil Chaudhary, Vanit Pant & others for their unflinching help in organising the festival. Also, our special thanks to Mr. Lakhwinder Singh Bajwa (Kartar Group of Institutions, Sarna, Pathankot, Punjab) for his support.

We hope the reader would enjoy the content and come back to us with positive feedback.

*Dev Bhardwaj*

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# Literature & World Peace

Prof. (Dr.) S. D. Sharma

The prognostication of whole world as one family is very tantalizing. Nevertheless, the fructification of this concept is a Herculean task. The role of literatures and cultures in this respect is worth-remembering. In every country there are different religions and languages. Consequently, different literatures do come into existence. In India, alone there are different languages and literatures. However, on the best literatures in the languages of Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malyalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Napali, Oriya, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and English, Sahitya Akademi Awards are conferred every year on the eminent litterateurs of these languages. The major theme of all these Indian Literatures remains the same e.g., the world peace, humanism, rural development emphasis on sterling values of life and ultimately to upgrade the modern decadence of human values and world peace. The underlying idea of all these literatures remains, in summation, the same namely:

अयं निजः करोवेति गणना लघु चेतसाम् ।

उदार चरितानाम् तो वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

(This is mine, that is thine. For kind-hearted men, the whole world is one family)

Rabindranath Tagore was the first Indian who was conferred Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 in recognition of his monumental work known as *Geetanjali*, which is a collection of poems. Mother Teresa was awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for her efforts for maintaining peace in the world. Prof. Amartya Sen, too, was given Nobel Prize for Economics, but his outstanding writings are on world peace, removal of poverty and social discrimination all over the world.

In foreign countries, writers have been extremely cautious to use their writings as an instrument of world peace. Their dogged efforts at maintaining world peace has been memorable. For example, in America, Ralf Waldo Emerson in league with Dickinson, Robinson and Frost, struggled for spiritual salvation and world peace. Being highly influenced by the *Bhagvadgita and the Vishnu Purana*, he became an ardent disciple of the doctrines of *love, karma and salvation*. These doctrines are, of course, the bases of maintaining world peace.

*Catharsis* is the purgation of the feelings of pity and fear. This purgation is caused by literature through its various genres like poetry, drama, tragedy, comedy, satire, fiction etc., It is one of the chief functions of literature. Now a very tricky question arises as to how literatures of the world can purgate the feelings of pity and fear from the mind of the entire humanity of the world and as to how it would lead to the establishment of world peace. It is the empirical or scientific side of literature. A closely related question is - how to measure catharsis and what dose of *catharsis* is needed to the wielders of power in the world. If delegates present over here can find an answer to this problem, then, of course, literature may prove to be a very effective means of the maintenance of world peace. Tulsidas's *Ramcharit Manas* offers ample *ramsayan* to the Indians; so does Milton's *Paradise Lost* to the Britishers. Nevertheless, the quantum and efficacy of *catharsis* has to be measured in scientific and medical terms so that the empirical side of literature is universally accepted.

Another important question that I wish to pose before this learned assembly of scholars, litterateurs, writers and thinkers of the whole world is - how to stop decadence of communication channels of thinking in different languages, which leaves its direct bearing on the production of humanized literature so essential to maintain world peace. Such language disorders or diseases as *purealexia*,

*demensia, dislogia, graphic aphasia, focused aphasia, schizophrenic aphasia, disartharia* etc., are to be removed through the empirical applications of semiotics technology so that literature of world quality is produced to maintain internal peace and harmony.

The whole world nowadays is passing through a very critical phase. *The Sword of Damocles of III World War* is hanging on the head of mankind. The problem of terrorism has assumed terrifying proportions. The destructions caused by bomb dropping on *Hiroshima* and *Nagasaki* are still fresh in mind. In such a critical situation, the role of litterateurs has become all the more important.

Let me dwell upon another extremely significant dimension of world literature in future, which may probably unite the whole world as a prime mover force. This undercurrent is the scientific temper. Most scholars of literature forget this aspect. I would like to dwell upon this aspect a little more in order to probe deeper as to how this undercurrent was always present in the world literatures and how this aspect remained rather ignored.

Since I have been a University Professor for more than 44 years and have taught English Literature / Language/ Linguistics/ Semiotics Technology/ Technical and Professional Communication, I feel convenient to elaborate this point taking help of English Literature and Language only. To begin with, in the works of Homer, Sophocles, Lucretius, Virgil, Plato and Democritus, the undercurrent of scientific thought is quite visible. During the pre-Elizabethan period, Hrothgar's *Beowulf*, Caedmon's *The Christ*, *The Judith* and *The Dream of the Rood* and Aldhelm's *Bede* bear sufficient testimony to have scientific thought running parallel to religious one. Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus* points towards a one form of governance through scientific bases. Newton propounded a synthesis of religion and science system to harmonise world conflicts and the Victorian skepticism. Charles Dickens and his entire

school –Charles Kingsley, Charles Reade, Walter Beasant, James Rice and Richard Whiteing – all wrote novels having the base of humanism and sterling values of life very essential to stop decadence of moral living and harmonious existence in the world. Thackeray, Disraeli, Trollope and Butler – were greatly influenced by scientific temper, yet they dreamt of having the scientific base for harmonious living in the world. Thomas Hardy and George Meredith were highly influenced by Darwinism, but both harnessed evolutionary principles for the good of humanity

The concept of the whole world as one family is nothing new to the Indian culture and religion. India has been the harbinger of this concept in the entire world. The Indian scriptures have been advocating for the world peace since the times immemorial. Our *Vedas* have already enunciated the concept of world peace. *The Bhagwadgita* and other litterateurs of India have significantly contributed to propound the doctrine of the world as one family. M.K. Gandhi's role in this regard cannot be forgotten because he influenced almost the entire generation of writers in Indian Languages by giving them the broader vision of world as one single family. He even went one step farther by conceptualizing one government for the whole world.

Vallathol Narayan Menon, the poet – laureate of Malayalam since independence until his death in 1957, wrote of M.K.Gandhi, in one of his famous poems entitled *My Master* appeared in his eighth -volume collection of poems *Sahitya Manjari as:*

*The power of sacrifice of Jesus Christ,  
The zeal of Lord Krishna in defending Dharma,  
The non-violence of the Buddha,  
The vigour of intellect of Sankara,  
The intense compassion of Ranthideva,  
The truthfulness of Harishchandra,  
The courage of the prophet Mohammed –  
If you want to see all these blend in one man,*

*Go to my Master and view him close,  
Or else, persue the story of his life.*

*Sine dubio*, M.K. Gandhi was an epitome of the quintessence of Indian cultures and religions, literatures and languages, which also propounded that the entire world is one family and that if the world peace has to be maintained, the world has got to be humanized. In India, the traditions and cultures have always been rooted in the concept of *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam* which mean the whole world is one family.

The kernel of the best literature is its element of sublimity. *Satyam, Shivam* and *Sundram* characterize the entire Indian literature written in Sanskrit language. In the *Agnipurana*, the god-like potential to create permanently beautiful and true world has been attributed to a poet of sublime vision:

*अपारे कव्ये ससारे कविरेव प्रजापतिः।*

*यथास्मै रोचते विश्वं तथैव परिवर्तते॥*

*(Apare kavyam sansare kavirav prajapati*

*Yathasmei rochate vishvam theiv parivartate.)*

Acharya Mammat, while lauding the truthful creation of a poet, also hints at the sublime element to be an essential outlet of an immortal work, where the entire world may live peacefully:

*नियतिकृतनियम रहितामाहादै कमयीमनन्य परतन्त्राम्।*

*नव रस रुचिराम् निर्मितिमादधती भारती कवेर्जयति॥*

*(Niyatikrutniyam rahitamahadei kamayimananya*

*parnantram*

*Nava ras ruchiram nimititmadadhti bharti aaveijaryati.)*

*(Kavaya Prakash 1.1)*

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## Poetry For Peace

Dr. K. V. Raghupathi

Poetry is the most primitive literary art. It is as old as human civilization. It was developed before prose. Every country and every human language has its rich literary tradition rooted in poetry. It arises from emotional utterance in connection with song and dance. Primitive man often expressed the emotional aspect of common experiences by means of a kind of art which includes music, dancing and simple verse, each element inseparable from the other. In Greek literature, the lyric odes of Pindar and the dramatic odes of Aeschylus and Sophocles were written for musical performance in connection with processional or dance movements of the singer. Eventually as the time went these were separated.

Poetry has never been conceptualized although several definitions have been offered by poet practitioners from time to time as to its nature and function. However in consensus it may be defined as emotional and imaginative discourse in metrical and non-metrical form in language characterised by imagery and rhythmic sound. On the side of rhythmic sound it is closely related to music, but it differs from the latter in its capacity to represent both in concrete and abstract ideas as well as images.

Although poetry is held in high esteem in the world of literatures only a few thinkers in the past made adverse comments. They include Plato, Sigmund Freud, Marx, Engels, Lenin, later Marxists and Stephen Gosson. Plato was the first phisosopher to comment negatively on poetry and poets. In Book X of his famous book *The Republic*, he banished poets from his ideal state on metaphysical and ethical grounds. Poetry, or for that matter all art is a product of wild imagination, and it being fiction, is untrue and necessarily twists and distorts the truth. It is removed

from the reality thrice as it is an imitation of the world which is an imitation of the idea of God. Thus for Plato art is an imitation of imitation of imitation. The second ground on which Plato dismisses poetry is ethical, that is, for him art should be guided by moral principles and imitative art has a corrupting influence on man who should be governed by reason and not passion. He condemned poetic imitation on the ground that "it fed and watered the passions instead of drying them up, and let them rule instead of ruling them as they ought to be ruled, with a view to the happiness and virtue of mankind."<sup>1</sup> However, Plato also glorified and extolled the artists and emphasised their role in human life. He advocates strict censorship and exhorts poets to inculcate in people moral virtues of forbearance, tolerance and rectitude.

After 2500 years Sigmund Freud raised similar doubts and apprehensions about art. First, he considers art as "one of the true charms of the good life." He admires artists and writers. He calls literary men "the precursors and adjudicators" of psychoanalysis as they understand the hidden motives of life. Yet eventually Freud speaks of art with contempt. Art, for him, is a "substitute gratification", "an illusion in contrast to reality." It shares the characteristics of the dream, whose element of distortion Freud calls "a sort of inner dishonesty." He places the artist virtually in the same category with the "neurotic". According to him the artists are day-dreamers. They are misfits in the world. Freud's views are similar to that of Plato's. His views are however unjustified. He does not perceive the relation between art and external reality, because he believes in the hedonistic nature and purpose of art. He, however, perceives the difference between the artist and the neurotic. He does not deny its function and usefulness: "it has a therapeutic effect in releasing mental tension; it serves the cultural purpose of acting as a 'substitute gratification' to reconcile men to the sacrifices they have made for culture's sake; it promotes

the social sharing of highly valued emotional experience; and it recalls men to their cultural ideals." Thus Freud has a high conception of value and significance of art.

Later came Marx and Engel whose views are not as harsh as that of Plato's and Sigmund Freud's. Though they were instrumental in changing the society through their revolutionary ideas they considered art to be an independent activity. Being poets in their youth they responded favourably to poets. Marx considered poets to be "originals, who must be allowed to go their own way, and one shouldn't apply to them the same standards as to ordinary people." They never judged literature in terms of purely political tendencies. They loved such great writers as Aeschyles, Goethe and Shakespeare. It is however interesting to note that Marx and Engels never wanted to specialize art as a 'weapon' of social change, and believed in the Renaissance ideal of the complete man.

Lenin, an organiser and fighter, enjoyed reading poetry, fiction and drama. He knew and admired Pushkin, though he considered him a bourgeois poet, but better poet than Mayakovsky. Yet, as he was steeply involved in revolution and ideological war, he developed aversion to art and he however believed that art should be a weapon of social change. Even Trotsky a powerful and hardcore ideologue, dismissed such terms as "proletarian literature" or "proletarian culture" as dangerous "because they erroneously compress the culture of the future into the narrow limits of the present day."

The later Marxists to some extent did not favour art in general and poetry in particular as these two are related to imagination; and imaginative people, as their contention is, are not fit to carry out revolution and bring change in the society. Nevertheless, they have strongly supported and promoted the art that is aimed at projecting the proletarian cause. Even poetry as they conceived should be written and tuned to suit this convenience. All other forms of poetry

they have regarded as imaginatively conceived and hence not fit to be placed within the domain of art. They considered all pre-revolutionary literature as bourgeois and it does not focus the interests of the communist revolution and the sufferings of the working class and peasants. Therefore, such literature is not viewed as real and true. It is clear that the Marxists have conceived the art in narrower sense, therefore it is biased and one sided.

Barring these major thinkers Plato, Freud and Marx, Engels, Lenin and later Marxists, no other poet or artist has condemned poetry as useless. In fact, poetry is the highest and supreme form of human expression. In its highest sense, it simply turns into mystical or celestial song. All great saints in our tradition have made poetry and used it as medium of praise of the Lord. In their ecstatic moods they have sung - it was an outpouring of their emotional longing for god. *Bhakti* (devotion) is an important element in their poetry. Intense bhakti at the highest level simply turns into songs of praise.

Leaving its nature and composition aside, the functions poetry discharges are not only aesthetic but also metaphysical. T.S.Eliot observed "poetry is supreme amusement".<sup>2</sup> Here "amusement" should not be viewed in its entertainment sense, but in aesthetic and spiritual sense - that which appeals not only to mind but to heart and ultimately should transport us to other world." Even Plato who differed with poetry, Aristotle, Longinus, Horace in the classical times identified "delight" as the fundamental and immediate function of poetry. Although poetry pleases, mere pleasure, Plato says, cannot be its object. He could not have conceived art as divorced from minds. He suggests therefore truth as the test of poetry. Pleasure, even of the highest kind, ranks low in Plato's scale of values. A poet is a good artist only in so far as he is a good teacher.

For Aristotle a poet or an artist is just grown-up child indulging in imitation for the pleasure it affords. The

instinct for harmony and rhythm helps make him a poet. Through poetry the poet reveals truths of a permanent and universal kind. To prove this Aristotle draws a comparison between poetry and history. The true difference is that history relates what has happened, poetry what may happen. Poetry, therefore, for Aristotle, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. As for its function, he says, the immediate function is to please. To instruct is not ruled out if it is incidental to the pleasure it gives. "From the Aristotelian and Greek point of view art is an element in the higher life of the community; the pleasure it affords is an enduring pleasure, an aesthetic enjoyment which is not divorced from civic ends"<sup>3</sup> Aristotle also sees, like Plato, that poetry makes an immediate appeal to the emotions. Plato considered them as baneful to the healthy growth of the mind. Aristotle had no such fear. These emotions, he says, are aroused with a view to their purgation or catharsis. In the medical language of the school of Hippocrates it strictly denotes the removal of a painful or disturbing element from the organism, and hence the purifying of what remains, by the elimination of alien matter.<sup>4</sup> So the emotional appeal of poetry is not harmful, as Plato believed, but health-giving and artistically satisfying.

In defining the functions of poetry of Horace is more explicit. For him poetry discharges two functions - the hedonistic as well as the utilitarian. For poetry to be great it has to be both pleasure-giving and morally improving. The test of poetry according to him lies not in delight or instruction or persuasion but in its transportation - its capacity to move the reader to ecstasy.

In British literature Sir Philip Sidney was the first and foremost critic who defended poetry in his long essay "Apology for Poetry" despite there had been no great poetry in his times with the solitary exception of Chaucer, rebuffing the adverse criticism levelled against it by Stephen

Gosson in his essay "School of Abuse" on four grounds: that a man could employ his time more usefully than in poetry, that it is the mother of lies, that it is the nurse of abuse, and that Plato had rightly banished poetry from his ideal commonwealth. It is a spirited defence of poetry against all the changes that had been laid at its door since Plato. He revered the poet as a "maker", comparable to the Heavenly Maker. In his definition of poetry he follows both Aristotle and Horace. "Poetry", he says, "is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word Mimesis... with this end, to teach and delight." Those who practice it are called makers and prophets "for these indeed do merely make to imitate and imitate both to delight and teach, and delight to move to take that goodness in hand, which without delight they would fly as from a stranger, and teach to make them know that goodness whereunto they are moved, which being the noblest scope to whichever any learning was directed, yet want these not idle tongues to bark at them."<sup>5</sup> The final end of philosophy, history, science and law is same as that of poetry but in promoting it they fall far short of poetry. Hence it is superior to all these subjects. Sidney also unconsciously differs with Aristotle in the meaning he gives to imitation. Poetry is not so much an act of imitation as of invention or creation. It creates a new world altogether for the edification and delight of the reader.

John Dryden, an important poet and critic of neoclassical period, has dismissed the thought that the poet should unburden his soul only to himself. He did not support Art for Art's sake. Plato had wanted poetry to instruct, Aristotle to delight, Horace to both, and Longinus to transport. All which led him to conclude that the final end of poetry was delight and transport rather than instruction and, to realize it, it did not merely imitate life but offered its own version of it - "a beautiful resemblance of the whole."<sup>6</sup> In his own words, "delight is the chief, if not the only end

of poesy; instruction can be admitted but in the second pace; for poesy only instructs as it delights."<sup>7</sup> The poet, according to him, is neither a teacher nor a bare imitator - a photographer but a creator, one who, with life or Nature as his raw material, produces a new thing altogether, resembling the original in its basis but different from it in the super structure - a work of art rather than a copy.

In his book *Life of Milton*, Dr. Johnson has one sentence to sum up on poetry: "the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling imagination to the help of reason." In the imitation of truth it is guided by reason and in affording pleasure by imagination. Truth, to be poetic, has to be pleasure-giving. He writes in the *Preface to Shakespeare*: "The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing."<sup>8</sup> In the case of Wordsworth, the overall object too is pleasure but it is pleasure in which the moral gain far outweighs the abilities. Next, he says, pursuit of truth is the main objective of poetry. It is truth of man's knowledge of himself and the world around him. Shelley too expresses similar views by defining a poem as "the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth." Science too is engaged in the same pursuit, but while the truths it discovers benefit us only materially the truths of poetry "cleave to us as necessary part of our existence," for they concern man's relation to man, on the one hand, and his relation to the external world of Nature, on the other, both illustrated in "incidents and situations from common life." The pursuit of science pleases the scientist; there is nothing in its truths that can equally please the common man. Being purely the product of the "meddling intellect", they are not 'felt in the blood, and felt along the heart," as the truth of poetry are. "Poetry (therefore) is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science."<sup>9</sup> Finally for Wordsworth, poetry's a great force for good. In his letter to Lady Beaumont (May,

1807) his own object in writing poetry was to “console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think and feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous.” From this he drew the general conclusion that “every great poet is a teacher; I wish either to be considered as a teacher or as nothing.”<sup>10</sup> This is what Plato wanted poetry to be but as Wordsworth insists on pleasure as being a necessary condition of poetic teaching, he may be said to follow Horace more than Plato.

In his inimitable style Mathew Arnold has summed up the functions of poetry. He could not conceive of poetry as something apart from life. He was never concerned with “art for art’s sake” – an experience delighting the poet only. It was a serious preoccupation with the art of living itself. In his lectures on Homer, in the General Introduction to Ward’s *English Poets* (later entitled “The Study of Poetry”), in the essay on Wordsworth and that on Byron he defines poetry “as a criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty.”<sup>11</sup> Arnold himself explains “criticism of life” as “the noble and profound application of ideas to life;” and “laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty” as “truth and seriousness of substance and matter and “felicity and perfection of diction and manner.”<sup>12</sup> Like Aristotle he thinks it is not the function of poetry to present life as it is. The poet has to add something of his own, too, to indicate *what he thinks of it*. It is this addition that makes all the difference between life and poetry. It is the poet’s criticism of life his contribution to its enrichment. Poetry exists to make life richer and fuller by applying itself, within these limits “to the question: How to live?”<sup>13</sup> It has the “power of forming, sustaining, and delighting us, as nothing else can”<sup>14</sup> He affirmed his immense faith that more and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry, “to interpret life for us, to console us to sustain us.”<sup>15</sup> The grand power

of poetry is its interpretative power. Without poetry Arnold says our science will appear incomplete. Life is moral and spiritual too. “Criticism of life” means an interpretation and healing representation. The great poetry has a transforming power. By “criticism of life” Arnold means this transforming power of life. Poetry interprets life in two ways: one, it expresses with magic felicity the physiognomy and movement of the outer world; two, the ideas and laws of the inner world of man’s moral and spiritual nature. It is therefore essentially moral, not in the narrow didactic sense, but in the larger sense of conforming to the highest ideals of truth, goodness and beauty.

In concluding observations, I would like to say that a poet is a greatest artist of all artists. He is nearer to God, as he’s the only artist who can achieve this proximity and no one else can. In him we see all artists uniting into one. As Victor Hugo has said “poets are the most vulnerable of people in creative. In fact, they walk on their hands.” They are “sacred vessels” because they carry the whole humanity and the whole universe on their heads. A great poet is a discoverer, rather than an inventor; he discovers the truth that underlies all human experiences and gives it back to humanity.

Poetry is “nothing but healthy speech” as H.D.Thoreau has said. It offers pure delight, happiness and joy. Frost has put it very succinctly as: “It begins in delight and ends in wisdom.” It is “the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds” (P.B.Shelley). The best part of it is summarised by Channing as: “It reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of youthful feeling, revives the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the spring time of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature, by vivid delineations of its tenderest and softest feelings, and through the brightness of its prophetic vision, helps faith to lay hold on the future life.”

Shelley wrote a beautiful essay “A Defence of Poetry”

in 1821 as an antidote to Thomas Love Peacock's semi-serious essay, "The Four Ages of Poetry" published in *Oliver's Literary Miscellany*, No.1 (1820) in which he strongly defended the cause of poetry. It is one of the best pieces of prose ever written and penned by a poet in literature in defence of poetry. I do not find a better piece in literature than this. Hence I would like to quote some lines without distorting them as I consider them to be the best and in the present context I feel there is no better option than this. Writing about the nature of poetry and its function, Shelley writes most audaciously:

"Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of Knowledge, it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred."<sup>16</sup> "It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which all spring, and that which adorns us all; and that which, if blighted denies the fruits and the seed, and withholds from the barren world of nourishment and the succession of the scions of the tree of life. It is the perfect and consummate surface and bloom of all things; it is as the odour and the colour of the rose to texture of the elements which compose it as the form and splendour of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption."<sup>17</sup> "The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception and still more of the creation of poetry, is often wholly unalloyed. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers."<sup>18</sup> "Poetry thus makes immortal all that best and most beautiful in the world."<sup>19</sup> "Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man."<sup>20</sup> "Poetry turns all things to loveliness, it exalts the beauty of that which is the most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed, it moulds exaltation and honour, grief and grief and pleasure, eternity and charges; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes

all that it touches; and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to portable goal the poisonous waters which flow from earth through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms."<sup>21</sup> "He is the wisest, the happiest, and the best in as much as he's a poet, is equally incontrovertible: the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence."<sup>22</sup> "A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not."<sup>23</sup> "A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth."<sup>24</sup> "A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds."<sup>25</sup> "Poetry acts in another diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar, it reproduces all that it represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light."<sup>26</sup>

Arnold has expressed his optimism in poetry by saying "the future of poetry is immense" and in future it would replace religion because in it we find all values – aesthetic, moral and religious coalesce. Religion in its form deals with essentially moral and historical facts, but poetry with ideas born out of the depth of experiences. Religion has failed us, Arnold says, because it has attached its emotions to historical facts whereas poetry represents ideas. In sense poetry itself is a religious act. Poetry alone can restore man from his fall and establish peace, order and harmony. Peace is not won by war but by poetry. It has peace as its god. Hence through poetry, irrespective of its language form, the world can be united, *vasudika kutumbam* can be established.

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## The Societal Web as Conceived by Rabindranath Tagore

Dr. Nalini Nambiar

Rabindranath Tagore emerged on the historical and literary scene at a time when science and technology was beginning to shrink geographical distances between nations. Secular ideologies lured Man to the worship of wealth, comfort and power to satisfy his physical wants, but deprived him of his humanity and concern for higher values. Tagore was disillusioned by "the cultivation of intense race egotism" and "the epidemic of moral perversity"<sup>1</sup> of his times. He saw "a universal churning up of jealousy, greed, hatred and mutual suspicion"<sup>2</sup> of both the weak and strong nations because political passion had taken the place of creative passion.

Looking through the prism of reality Tagore sees Man as an exploited entity, the desecrated victim of a hopeless man-made socio-economic structure. Man's commercial existence is the very negation of the divine rhythm of life. It transforms him into an ugly child of industrialization with no hope of true freedom. This existence encourages man to indulge in a senseless, intemperate accumulation of wealth through domination, colonization and exploitation. The Yaksha town in *Red Oleanders*, where people lament that the sky has dropped out of their lives, is visible everywhere. Such towns become of self - exhausting civilizations that create soul-less societies. The lack of spirituality perpetuated by the mad pursuit of material pelf in the name of progress, and the consequent de-humanization and de-individualization of Man, becomes Tagore's constant concern.

The poet finds a moral, physical and spiritual lethargy in the nation. The country is crippled by all kinds of social inhibitions, religious beliefs and superstitions. The

privileged use religion to instil fear in the less privileged, and thus exploited the masses in the name of God, theocracy and parochial laws.

Women live in “a world of limited space, dust-smear poverty and habitual life struggles”<sup>3</sup> A male-dominated socio-economic system degrades and deprives them of their basic rights as human beings. They are forced into loveless marriages based on money, caste and orthodox beliefs, and denied all rights of compatibility.

Tagore feels that a greater misfortune cannot befall a nation, and is determined to rouse his countrymen from their slumber and indifference to a rigid social orthodoxy and an alien political rule. As an optimistic philosopher, Tagore steers clear of despair and nihilism, and shows in his writing, the promise of a new and richer apprehension of reality. His works reverberate with the theme found in the world’s great literatures – that of the common destiny of mankind. Tagore perceives the universe as an organic web, pulsating with a cosmic energy that links all elements in existence, in a relationship, which is interpenetrative and indivisible. He emphasises that if the world is to endure, it must find a “psychological unity and spiritual coherence”<sup>4</sup>

World solidarity or ‘lokasamgraha’ is an urgent necessity. If the fragile life of Man has to be saved, a humanistic religion of spiritual fellowship must evolve. Thus Tagore propagates one of the earliest messages of our sages – that society is a web and the whole world is one family – ‘*Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam*’. In this noble mission, Tagore advises Man “to claim the right of manhood to be friends of men”<sup>5</sup>. He is basically optimistic in spite of his awareness of the evils and sufferings around him because the poet believes that Man’s life is a proactive expression of a dynamic forward thrust. Tagore sees life as an endless process of ‘becoming’, and emphasises that each individual has the latent ability to actualize his potentialities. A spirit of affirmation surges through his writings manifesting itself

in a glad acceptance of life in all its baffling variety, with the faith that Men may be cruel, but Man is kind. In his book, *Thoughts of Gandhi, Nehru and Tagore*, Goyal quotes Tagore’s fervent declaration.

*Let this be my last word, that I trust in love. Man’s history is waiting in patience for the triumph of the insulted man.*<sup>6</sup>

As a spiritual humanist, Tagore constantly underlines the need to recognize the dignity and divinity of Man. He expresses great faith in the essential goodness of Man and so is an active crusader against the unhappiness and servitude meted to his brethren in the form of social, political and religious exploitation. Tagore is impatient with any closed and rigid system of thought, creed and sham religion which destroys the fragile sensibilities of Man. He raises this voice against the subservient role of women, declaring that society will change only if woman, or ‘*Sakti*’ is restored to her right place in the home and society. Tagore also feels the need to reach out to the common man whose life is a perpetual struggle of mute suffering under unjustifiable practices. He reiterates that earthly laws may differentiate between one human being and another, but God’s laws see all men as equals. It is the selfishness of the greedy, the injustice of the powerful, the brutality of the rich and the iniquity of the strong that creates disparity among mankind. Tagore’s intrinsic creed seeks a universal religion of brotherhood which expresses love for all beings and things, as they are emanations of God. Tagore constantly reminds us of the integral nature of this Universe, and the concept of One in all and all in One. Therefore his poems are not just hymns of humanity but of sustainability as well. He recognizes the Earth who is our Mother, with reverence. The poet stresses on the need to live in harmony with Nature and not mutilate her with our unbridled materialism because Nature too is part of the Cosmic web. His intrinsic faith recognizes the Supreme Reality in Man and Nature and conceives a Religion of

Man, the basis of which is the humanization of God and the divinisation of Man. The poet declares,

*I felt I had found my religion of last, the religion of Man in which the infinite becomes defined in humanity and comes close to me so as to need my love and co-operation.*<sup>7</sup>

This religion of Man which is the basis of 'Sanatana Dharma', one of the ancient of all living religions existing today declares that "Truth is one it is perceived and spoken of in different names and forms".<sup>8</sup> Therefore Man needs to transcend the world of plurality which is the manifestation of the Creator. He has to journey from the Outward to the Inward, from a Multiplicity to Unity, and this supreme doctrine of Unity is called the Religion of Love. Once Man reaches "this union at the centre where all radii meet,"<sup>9</sup> he denounces caste, creed and narrow divisions. He begins to love humanity and all creation. He affirms his faith in the humanistic values of compassion, selflessness and the oneness of Man.

Tagore seeks to establish a classless society, using a brand of socialism, which follows from his conception of God. Tagore establishes the fact that there is only one race - the human race, because all are equal as manifestations of God. The truth of this Religion of Man does not run counter to any established religion. Tagore's outlook, which is thoroughly humanistic and also inherently spiritual, includes in its sweep the full account of the depth of Man's life, and relationship with the ontological reality, along with the vital concerns of his empirical life. The poet sings of common life in rapturous lyrics extolling domestic life, the value of life and work, condemning at the same time those who renounce a world pervaded by love, joy and beauty - which is the proper stage for Man's quest of that one Reality. That Man should find solace in work is also the accent of Tagore, and for this Man should be free from bondage. Work or 'Karma' is Man's birthright and so there is no harm if one's clothes become tattered and stained in service. True

service lies in working with "the tiller and the path maker" and standing by them "in toil and in sweat"<sup>11</sup>

For Tagore, the way to deliverance is not through renunciation, chanting or telling of beads, but in service to humanity. The only way to find God, "who walkest in the clothes of the humble among the poorest and lowliest and lost,"<sup>12</sup> is by participating in life selflessly, serving humanity. Those who fear to give up their lives in service, do not "plunge into the great waters of life"<sup>13</sup>. It is Tagore's conviction that Men's union with God, whose dynamism is all pervading, cannot be a passive one. The poet declares,

*In order to be united with Him we have to divest our work of selfishness and become 'Visvakarma' the world-worker. We must work for all*<sup>14</sup>

Thus unlike traditional humanism, which insists upon service to society in a materialistic sense, Tagore's spiritual humanism seeks God in the service of humanity. For the poet, the love of fellow human beings expressed through egoless service, is the way to realize the Infinite in Man.

Since Tagore visualizes the world as one family, he expresses great faith in the regenerative value of love. Love, which merges all contradictions and gives itself in endless gifts emanates from God, "the great lover who constantly gives Himself up to gain Himself in love"<sup>15</sup> says Tagore. Man who is God's unique modelization has to learn that only in giving, one finds oneself. Tagore, 'the Prophet of the law of Love' as Helen Keller once called him, places great trust in "the dynamic force of love which is hidden in humanity",<sup>16</sup> points out Mohit Chakrabarti, quoting Tagore. This Primal Love is Gift Love - a liberating passion that transcends all bonds and limitations. This force, if understood by Man, can transform his life of self-destruction into a life of creative work and peace, is Tagore's perpetual emphasis.

Tagore's "ovation to the spirit of humanism transcends a narrow national feeling"<sup>17</sup> says

Bhattacharjee. Quite often Tagore is pained to see the politics of nationalism drive out man's essential humanity through out the world. It is this 'world consciousness' that made Tagore's heart bleed for Africa whose virginity was ravaged by European conquest. Thus 'nationalism' is not the worship of the nation as an embodiment of power, but of truth, for Tagore. He visualizes an India whose essence is freedom and fearlessness where thoughts and actions flow from "the clear stream of reason", and not from "the desert sand of dead habit"<sup>18</sup> The poet despises all kinds of fanaticism that destroy the societal web. He drives home forcefully the lesson of religious tolerance, as he conceives all religions as spiritually valid roads to God. It is Tagore's fervent prayer that he "may never lose the bliss of the touch of the One in the play of the many".<sup>19</sup> When one realizes this great truth, "the stranger" becomes the brother" and "then alien there is none, then no door is shut"<sup>20</sup>

Thus the voice of Tagore the activist, who speaks the language of the conscience, reverberates with his concern for the whole of humanity, which is one family. The societal web he conceives is one that is built painstakingly with inviolable filaments of love, brotherhood, enlightenment, values, freedom and the recognition of human rights, so as to be proof against the unholy winds of exploitation, hypocrisy, narrow nationalism, fanaticism and inhumanity. While Man is his pivotal concern, Tagore shows that Man is not sufficient unto himself. The poet's broad humanism, intertwined with a profound spirituality, which recognizes the divine attribute of Man, form the weft and warp of his poetry. Through the contemporary anguish and despondency, Tagore's voice leads us to an enlightening awareness which is momentarily hidden from our vision -- that the whole world is one family; a lofty wisdom that can be attained if Man restores the God of humanity to His altar.

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# Writing and Reading as a process of relation building across the boundaries in the millenium

Dr. Prasanta Kumar Panda

How, then, do we write ourselves into our texts with intellectual and spiritual integrity? How do we nurture our own voices, our own individualities, and the same time lay claim to “knowing” something?

Laurel Richardson, *Fields of Play*

## The present scenario of reading and writing

It is a customary thinking to accept writing and reading is an elitist process. Keeping in mind the number of illiterate people in the planet it becomes hard to accept the fact that the world is connected and internet has done the miracle. Only seventeen percent of the world population is capable of using net and the basic amenity of a computer is available to them. So the question of connectivity and sharing knowledge for better relationship amongst individuals, communities, professionals and finally countries is yet to become a global reality. Only a short sighted and a self centered professional community (computer geeks, as is popularly known) is forcing others to believe it with dexterity. The global community or village is still a distant dream. Writing and getting published is also a similar distant dream for many who are capable of writing but incapable to manage the process of getting published or even read or heard. The organizations like the one which has given us opportunity to share our writing and facilitate reading and listening is a way out of the political domain of the big world of creative hegemony.

## Academic writing and the requirement of reading

If the inherent aim of all writing is to develop some sort of a relationship, it is befitting us to ask what forms of relationships are initiated by existing traditions of literary

writing. How do such forms of writing affect relations among writers, between participants readers in scholarly communities, and between teachers and students? The most important aspect in the present inquiry is, how these traditions of writing contribute to the development of interdisciplinary knowledge base. In other words, what do they do to break the boundaries now separating the disciplines? And broadly, how do existing forms of writing affect the society in general? To appreciate what is at stake, consider John Shotter’s commentary on contemporary academic exchange:

*Is there a kind of violence at work in intellectual debates and discussions; in the university colloquium, seminar, or classroom; in academic texts? Is there something implicit in our very ways of us relating ourselves to each other in academic life in present times that makes us fear each other? Is there something in our current circumstances that makes us (or at least some of us) anxious about owning certain of our own words, or taking a stand? Speaking from my own experience, I think there is (1997).*

If forms of writing do contribute to the kinds of social worlds we inhabit, how does this process occur? In the present case I will be particularly concerned with the ontological and value based presumptions – along with forms of social organization –implied by given genres of writing. As I shall propose our styles of writing not only carry with them conceptions of the person, but as well images of ideal character of institutions and in an extended manner of nations – that to which we may properly aspire. Where content or topic may change radically across time, forms of writing often remain stable. For example, in recent decades Psychology has undergone a major change in its emphasis on behavioral as opposed to cognitive models of human functioning, the forms of scientific writing have remained relatively less official or formal it is used to be. This mode of writing not only constructs a conception of

the ideal person, but also establishes a particular condition of relationship – between writers and readers, and by implication, for us all. Our major traditions of writing within the social sciences were born of a particular historical ethos, and their societal implications are today deeply troubling.

After giving such a seemingly disjointed presentation of facts related to writing, I will now explore several forms of writing that now begin to subvert the debilitating effects of our longstanding traditions. In the final part I shall illustrate on the developments in representational practices that suggest bold revisions – both to our conceptions of ideal human subjects writing, and the modes of relationship with the readers.

### **Beyond the biased boundaries**

Now let us consider how then do our traditional forms of writing affect the structuring of academic disciplines and the potentials for crossing boundaries? To the extent that our forms of writing construct a world of bounded and alienated being, the individual writer finds him/herself in a condition of potential solipsism. There is no means of verifying the accuracy or rationality of his or her cerebration, no means of measuring its value as a contribution to knowledge. Or more broadly, the solitary individual lacks the capacity for self-authentication. A responsive audience is required, but more specifically an audience that adheres to the role of the ignorant, and largely owing to this state of ignorance, will respond appreciatively. It is largely through the existence of the appreciative audience, either real or imaginary, that the scholar is authenticated as an acceptable human being. Of course, by virtue of curricular demands one may secure a certain degree of approbation from one's students. Further, because colleagues understand the cultural rules of reciprocity, they may offer a certain degree of support: it is largely by providing affirmation, that one can secure it

in return. Thus, by rationalizing a certain form of curriculum, and building a network of professional support, the isolated individual achieves a sense of value. Or more broadly, in order to sustain one's conception of self as a worthy being (within the Enlightenment mold), something approximating an academic discipline is required. Self-authentication, as we have seen, typically, though not inevitably, requires an audience willing to accede to a role of subservience. Yet, for a scholar to fill this role is simultaneously to define him/herself as an incomplete vessel, unable to "deliberate for him/herself." Thus, the scholarly landscape is populated with those set against the writer, unless deceased or apostatized.

For the mature writer, the critics are his relations for whom he puts a bridge through his or her writing to be criticized and hence prove his or her worth. The scholar is confronted by an essential condition of self-uncertainty: "who am I, what is my value, how good am I?" To relieve the uncertainty, the cycle is repeated - new inquiry, new writing - but now in a more advanced form. New concepts may be constructed, unknown works brought to light, more obscure vocabulary extricated, new populations explored - in effect, increasing the range of "what there is to know." Such increments enhance one's position in the hierarchy, and in turn, send others into a spin of refutation and refurbishment. Rapidly the conceptual, terminological, and methodological world expands, and to maintain the sense of individual value, there is little means of exiting the process. It is through continuous reading, critique, and recreation that the shaky grasp on worthy being is maintained. At the same time an otherwise impenetrable wall of words is erected by the community. Should the stranger struggle to enter this house of language, and employ the discourse with less facility, he or she risks derision. Within our mode of writing there an obliquely induced form of academic life that facilitates disciplinary separations, not to speak about bigger issues like nationalism.

## Opening far beyond the laminated relationships

During the last two decades I have become increasingly sensitive to these issues, and in my own writing have searched for means of breaking the confines of tradition. There is professional risk attached in such writing, and I have not always been able to “find my voice” in the experimentation. I have also been fascinated by the brave efforts of many others to open the door to new modes of expression in the social sciences – and thus to new forms of relationship. Especially relevant to my present concerns are writers who have tried to foster a more richly laminated relationship with the reader. Rather than positioning themselves as fully rational agents, bounded, and superior, the effect of these writings is to generate a more recognizably human persona, one to whom the reader may sense a shift from the division of me versus you to “the two of us.” In terms of the Enlightenment conception of the person, such writings reassert the significance of the otherwise marginalized domains of the psyche: desire, emotion, bodily sensation. Carolyn Bohner captures the spirit of such writing when she speaks of her writing on the mother-daughter relationship as “showing the connections among the seasons of a woman’s life and encouraging readers to sense what I am feeling as well as hear what I am thinking. And to express their own feelings and think about their own experiences.” (1990:16)

This is only one example from a steadily expanding genre. Sociologist Carol Ronai detailing aspects of what it is like to be parented by the mentally retarded submits: I resent the imperative to pretend that all is normal with my family, an imperative that is enforced by silence, secrecy, and “you don’t talk about this to anyone” rhetoric. Our pretense is designed to make events flow smoothly, but it doesn’t work. We have started to see this pretext as an option to communicate through our writing. The following passage can be taken as an example:

Everyone is plastic and fake around my mother, including me. Why? Because no one has told her to her face that she is retarded. We say we don’t want to upset her. I don’t think we are ready to deal with her reaction to the truth.... Because of (my mother) and because of how the family as a unit has chosen to deal with the problem, I have compartmentalized a whole segment of my life into a lie (1996:115).

In a variant on this auto-ethnographic account, sociologist Karen Fox fashions two, first-person narratives derived from interviews with a child sexual abuser (Ben) and his victimized step-daughter (Sherry) (1996:339).

The author simultaneously adds her own voice to the mix, as she can also speak knowingly as a victim of childhood sexual abuse. The individual voices are arrayed three columns of consecutive expressions:

### *Ben-Sex Offender*

I love her, you know. You see  
we really have a good relationship.  
She loves me, she told me that.

### *Karen-Researcher*

I want to believe Ben. I guess.  
I’ve always hoped that I meant  
something to my abuser.  
that he really did love me;  
that he really did feel I was  
special.

### *Sherry-Victim*

I never felt romantic love for  
him. That area disgusts me....I’ve had  
feelings of love for him, like for a  
father. (Fox,1996: 340)

Fox’s experiment with form of writing not only inserts a personal (and simultaneously “knowing”) voice into the account, but creates a certain diffusion of identity. She

makes it clear in her work that she has selected and refashioned the narratives of Ben and Sherry; in doing so she also colors these voices with her own. Thus the writer expands for us as readers; the unified and coherent personality coveted by the modernist tradition gives way to multi-faceted being. Further, these facets contain other voices, just as we may now ingest the voice of the writer. In this process new relationships between the reader and the writer are created.

In recent times some writers have been able to display their polyvocal character. One of such adventures is represented Michael Mulkey's 1985 volume, *The Word and the World*. (1985) The work demonstrates how abstract theory - virtually a private reserve of modernist formalism - can be expressed as a personal experience. For example, in the introductory chapter the voice of a querulous interlocutor is interspersed throughout. In the expository Mulkey speaks formally of "extending the range of analytical discourse to include forms not previously considered appropriate." (1985, 10) Mulkey as the impious Interlocutor replies "*That sounds very attractive in principle, but it ignores the important distinction between fact and fiction...*" (1985, 10) Mulkey goes on to explain to the interlocutor that even within science, "what is fact for one (scientist) is no more than fiction for the other." (1985, 11) The interlocutor rebuts, "*Aren't we in danger of confusing two different meanings of 'fiction?'...*". Other chapters include correspondence between Marks and Spencer, letters from these individuals to Mulkey, and a discussion among a group of inebriated participants at the Nobel ceremonies.

Now let us consider Stephen Tyler's *The Unspeakable* (1987). Tyler wishes to advance a range of theoretical ideas. But in generating these word pictures Tyler draws from a rich palette of genres. For example, in one attempt to dislodge the scientific view of language as carrying specific meaning, and therefore revealing truth, Tyler playfully

deconstructs a phrase from semiotics ("movement along the syntagmatic axis...") by showing that when the meanings of each word are fully traced, the phrase actually means, "the second world war pitted the anally obsessed Germans against the orally obsessed British." In an outburst of humor, Tyler than rapidly heaps one discursive tradition on another to further the argument:

The simultaneity of paradigmatic implication interrupts the urgent forward flow of signifiers in the singularity of time. Don't follow forking paths! Don't fork! Get thee behind me Borges! Time marches on(1986, 6)!

He continues and in the last part of the chapter manipulates the trend and rhetoric of 19th. Century romanticist poetry:

Beneath the glimmering boreal light, mirrored polar ice groans and heaves, the flame flickers feebly on the altar hearth, in the later heart, into the moldy breathing darkness of the anti'podal night (1986, 59).

The traditional criteria of excellence in scientific writing have been used to bring the contradictory effect to diminish in importance. For example, there is little demand in these writings for verbal economy; is it possible that austere writing generates the sense of diminished personhood? Polyvocal writing stands as a critique of the criterion itself. In these writings clarity and certainty of the traditional variety give way to ambiguity and ambivalence; in reaching for a full relationship through writing there is no "comprehensive account" for space must always remain for the added voice of the reader. Most important than what is missing in these experiments is what they create. As I experience them, they seem to strike up a different form of relationship than what I have commonly encountered. Rather than the cold, brittle, and intrusive rationality of the autonomous other, I often find warmth, spontaneity, and the admission of foibles - all of which draw me to the writer. It is not his/her position as against my seeming

ignorance or against the position that I must defend in my name, but rather we find here an invitation to something akin to a shared subjectivity. By writing in the fullness of the first person I as reader am invited to imagine myself as the writer, to feel and think with. Thus the boundary between author and reader is diminished. Further, with the substantial reliance on affectively charged language - discourse of values, desires, emotions and spirit - I come to experience the writing in a different way unlike my reaction to traditional writing. Further, the sense of hierarchy and competition induced by traditional writing also subsides. With reasoned argument, the dimension of superiority/inferiority is always at hand; however, when you speak from experience we are likely to participate as equals. With the admission of foibles (such as personal bias), I am no longer positioned as an inferior; with the expression of multiplicity I am no longer so protective of my own incoherencies.

We are not competitors in this world of writing and reading but linked in an ever extensive project of inquiry. I am also struck by the way these iconoclastic adventures affect my sense of disciplinary boundaries. By writing in a way that gives me the sense of the writer as a full person, concern with disciplines seems put aside. The writer first of all seems to be a human being engaged in inquiry; that he or she happened to have a PhD in a given area seems quite secondary. The writers in the millennium have realized that the difference between the pedestal that they share and the arena the readers throng should vanish to have a better world of mutual understanding and relationship.

### **Representing relations: Real or vicarious**

The relationship between the writer and the reader or any other possibility of other persons getting involved in a process of reading and writing, as I have discussed in the beginning of this paper, may not find it a physical

manifestation. For example, the popular movie dialogues repeated through decades by not only the actors but also by the common people in similar physical contexts can be taken as an extension of the reading writing process. The writer does not appear to be physical in such cases and even whether he or she exists at all. The people who are repeating the dialogue seem to be repeating the verbal action of the actor, who first utters the words. Nevertheless, the writer is the originator of the dialogue and that in chain creates a sequence of relationship because the common people can identify with the character in whose mouth the writer has put the words. It goes without saying that in such cases the relationship is vicarious, not real. But the impact of the writing is clearly visible and the process of writing establishes itself as creating opportunities, both real and unreal, to spread the relationship among people who have similar response to the words of the author, seem to be nowhere in the picture.

I make no sense without you, nor you without me. And if this is so, then what are we to make of these pronouns, "I" and "you?" Are they not misleading, creating artificial distance and disconnection? No, we are not one: "one" is itself a defection. But we may pay homage to that primordial process of relationship to which we owe all possibilities of you, me, and us, and without which there would indeed be no sense of the real or the good, no reason for writing at all. How can our modes of representation bring relatedness itself into common consciousness? In exploring alternative forms of writing, so do we open the door to new modes of relationship. Thus to carve out forms of relational representation may bring into being new forms of action. Distance, alienation, competition, hierarchy and many others. In their place we might hope for relational dances that celebrate communion, invite exploration without fear, and enable a conjoint construction of better worlds.

Let's sample a few possibilities, for example, dialogic

writing. Rather than writing as a singular agent, controlling the meaning, defending the semiotic construction of 'self', why not write with others, and to do so in a way that there is no singular message, but a weaving of disparate strands to generate a whole, complex text?

I will conclude this paper by alluding to Umberto Eco to substantiate my point of view regarding the relationship as the innermost urge that prompts a writer to indulge in the act of writing:

*I have often asked myself: would I write today if they told me that tomorrow a cosmic catastrophe would destroy the universe, so that no one could read tomorrow what I wrote today?*

My first instinct is to reply no. why write if no one will read me/ My second instinct is to say yes, but only because I cherish the desperate hope that amid the galactic catastrophe, some star might survive, and in the future someone might decipher my signs. In that case writing, even on the eve of the Apocalypse, would still make sense(2002,334).

Another prolific writer of our times Salman Rushdie in his book *Step Across this Line* has a opinion that boundaries of nations has nothing to do with writing as a relationship building process:

*In this internationalized moment can anyone remain closed? Nationalism is that revolt against history which seeks to close what cannot any longer be closed. To fence in what should be frontierless. Good writing assumes a frontierless nation. Writers who serve frontiers have become border guards (2002, 67).*

This 5th Writers' Festival organized by Kafla Intercontinental can be considered as an attempt of all of us to build relationship in different levels simply by the fact of being here. We are here because we believe we belong to a community and through our writing testify that we can individually personify each other to share the experience of writing and the difficulties we find in getting ourselves noticed. This psychological need of recognition is

fulfilled through our being here at the moment to prove the point that we as writers have no boundaries to pay heed to: whether it political, socio-economical or simply as an imposition by an totalitarian big boss who distorts every other aspect of human existence but cannot intervene in the writing process as an act of relation building by any individual writer. The evidence is clear our relationship with Joseph Brodsky, Youl Sounki, Alice Walker, Salman Rushdie and the like of them is not an act of just readers appreciating their work but an act of empathy because we are intricately related to not only their ideas expressed in the body of their texts but physically concerned regarding their physical wellbeing as a relative would feel like. This relationship gives the writers strength to face the threats of extinction and persist in their endeavour to enlarge their family.

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# Women as Narrative Props and the Problematics of Women Rights in Mahashweta Devi's *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha*

Koyel Chakrabarty

The scope of studying a society and its parameters of administration through the status of its citizens is quite common. If scrutinized deeply, it becomes very clear that the concept of Public Administration is very much akin to the concept of Human Rights as both the disciplines deal with people. Public Administration and Human Rights are both macrocosmic concepts plying in a microcosmic plane in individual societies. It is interesting to note that what may be a convention of public administration in one society, can be an impingement of human rights in another. But talking from a wider perspective both concepts simultaneously strive for achieving social good and try to produce maximum benefits to the people. But if Public Administration contradicts Human Rights at any particular level the real sense of Public Administration looses and the whole country starts deteriorating. Arundhati Roy, the famous Indian writer and activist opines in this context that the government who does not realize the relationship between power and knowledge is harming its people the most. The biggest problem, she states, is that, the distance between power and powerlessness between those who take decisions and those who have to suffer those decisions, has increased enormously. It's a perilous journey for the poor-it's a pitfall filled to overflowing with lies, brutality and injustice.<sup>1</sup> And this is where lies the pity of such big establishments and irony of social systems working on the whole. Again, "the concept of Human Rights is as old as literature. Being about life, literature takes its sustenance from life and as such, it is not only an artistic manifestation

revealing a profound aesthetic construct but also is a bearer of social and human significance. At one level, this artistic concern manifests itself through the exploration and postulation of Human Rights. Literature in this process not only engages itself with human-right concepts, their vicarious possibilities, but also paves way for interdisciplinary readings of these two interrelated disciplines. These seemingly distinct subjects inform each other at the level of theory, praxis and pedagogy. Literary works can, therefore, be seen as potent and rich resources to correlate and study the concepts of Human Rights as both literature and Human Rights become complementary to each other."<sup>2</sup> This paper purports the concept of Human Rights as a critical framework in deciphering Mahashweta Devi's *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* as a case study to analyze critically the state of women in the villages of Bihar (Barha Village, as sketched by the author), predominated with the marginalized Dalit sect. It further problematizes the issues of marginalization with special focus on the delineation of the rights of Dalits/tribal women. The paper also dissects the mechanization of exploitative system in which the Dalit/Tribal women are trapped and the repercussions thereof on their lives and consciousness.

With the world wide acceptability of Human Rights, as laid down by the UNO, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), a consciousness for and an awareness of Human Rights have become central to human existence. Consequently a culture of Human Rights and their sanctity have acquired literary-imaginative center stage. Being about life, literature, if dissected critically, takes its sustenance from life and as such, it is not only an artistic manifestation revealing a profound aesthetic construct but also is a bearer of social and human significance. At one level, this artistic concern manifests itself through the exploration and postulation of Human Rights. Literature in this process not only engages itself with human-rights concepts, their

vicarious possibilities, but also paves way for interdisciplinary readings of these two interrelated disciplines. These seemingly distinct subjects inform each other at the level of theory, praxis and pedagogy. Literary works can, therefore, be seen as potent and rich resources to correlate and study the concepts of Human Rights and serve as a gauge to highlight the state of development going on in a country, as both literature and Human Rights become complementary to each other.<sup>3</sup> This paper understands Mahashewta Devi's *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* through Human Rights perspectives and involves a critical dissection of the text thereby highlighting and problematizing certain Human Rights concepts embedded in them.

As a writer and human activist, the canon of contribution that Mahasweta Devi has provided the readers, is vastly inspirational. She is one of the most prolific Bengali writers of modern times that talk about the alarming condition of the Dalits in the Indian villages of interior Bihar and Bengal. Her receiving of the Padma Shri award in 1986, Jnanpith Award in 1996, Magasaysay Award for literature in 1997 and most recently the Officier Des Arts et Des Lettres in 2003 and her several times nomination for the Noble Prize for Literature, not only prove her as a great writer, but being a hard core social activist, Mahashewta Devi's writing gives voice to the silent and her social activism arises hope in despair.

A large part of Mahasweta Devi's writing is inspired by the status of the tribal communities of Bengal and Bihar. Her work is a valuable documentation of these communities that have been marginalized and yet they remain forgotten to a great extent in the developmental process. Mahasweta Devi translates her perception of society through the lives of her well-etched characters as they journey through the harshness of life, struggling to maintain their dignity amidst the indifference they face along the way. Her writings reflect a lot of her own work as a social activist

with the Nomadic tribes, non-tribal poor and people generally isolated by mainstream society.

Mahashewta Devi, a social worker on the denotified tribes, projects in *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha*, from her real life experience and eye witness the traumatic details in the lives of the Dalit. Her corrosive humour and cryptic style are brain hammering in nature, as she takes on issues of agrarian land relations, inter-caste violence, so-called rural development and discusses the position of women in rural India. Her style eludes a sense of compassion for human suffering and vulnerability, but at the same time she depicts the strength and courage of the human spirit which rises against all odds through her powerful and effective characterization and new historic revelations. The plot of the novel tells us of the lives of the Lachhimas, the Rukmanis, the Mohors and the Haroas – as a contrast to the lives of their all-powerful Rajput Zamindars-the Medinis and Ganeshes, who despite all odds and ends of a crippled existence rises in a revolt in the end for the upkeep of their identity and make their voices heard.<sup>4</sup>

Before looking directly into the novels taken for study, we must first analyze the inherent problems lying in the Indian subcontinent directly related to the Dalit. India, being a religion-dominated country has its own socio-religious traditions that influence the cultural hierarchy of the country. Indian society which is a veritable product of Hindu culture has in its deep structure the caste system based on the nature of the primary occupation of the sect. India from time in memoriam has suffered heavily because of the ill-effects of caste system. One of the most confusing mysteries of India is this caste system which seems to have its root in the past three thousand years history. The Indian caste-system is probably the longest surviving hierarchical system in existence in the world today where a section of society is regarded by others to be so inherently inferior that it pollutes other human beings and thus are demarked

as untouchables. The Dalit, who make up one seventh of India's population with approximately 105 million people<sup>5</sup> have been assigned to the dirtiest, lowest paid jobs and are landless slave labourers, shunned socially by higher castes and neglected in social services and education. The segmentation among the various castes is so rigid that no one can change from one caste to another caste and it is something in which one is born and remains until death.

The Dalit community of India is even denied a status in the traditional caste system of India. They are even considered lower than the Shudras. They have been called by various names such as 'Untouchables', 'Harijans', 'Exterior Castes', 'Depressed Classes', 'Outcastes', 'Pariahs', 'Avarna', 'Ati-Shudra' etc. The term 'Scheduled Castes' appeared for the first time in April 1935, when the British government issued the Government of India Scheduled Caste Order in 1935, specifying certain castes, races and tribes as Scheduled Castes. <sup>6</sup>

The term 'Dalit', taken from Hebrew 'dal,' meaning crushed or broken men, which was first used in the journalistic writings in 1931 and then taken up by Mahatma Jotirao Phule in Maharashtra when he led his anti-Dalit campaigns, gained currency with the Dalit Panther Movement in 1970s'. Dr. A.A. Carvallo, takes the traditional view held by most scholars that the Dalit were a part of an ancient highly developed non-Aryan civilization living in what is now seen as South India. Generally referred to as Dravidians, Dyasas by most historians, these people have distinct African physical features and cultural characteristics, as V.T Rajshekar puts, relating to the fact that Africa and India was a common land mass until it was separated by the ocean.<sup>7</sup> They have their different cultural identity, own food habits, own gods and shrines, unique anthropological living patterns that are very different from the Hindus and as a result of it are called low, heathen or pagan. Though the Indian Government has formulated and implemented

various laws for the protection of the Dalits yet the question arises how much can the national and international law assist to evade the exploitation done to the sect which has been maligned and chided for thousands of years and has a counter psycho-religious and customary support of belief dominant in the majority of the population till today.

*The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* presents the miserable hard-hitting lives of the low caste class where we are petrified to read about their tragic existence; this gives the novel its realistic flavour. Caste as an institution and ideological structure has served as the striving force for communal authority in India. But with the unequal division of wealth and property among the merchant class in the pre-independent era, when the merchant class had enough money and a voice to make their presence, the norms of social equation started changing slowly. Now the Brahmins who were the head of the Hindu caste system, were respectable and authoritative only in the religious and social spheres but the major economic rise and control went into the hands of the Khatriyas and Vaishyas as they gradually took over the position of the Feudal Lords in the villages having huge shares of land and low caste tenants to work for them. This transformation was simple because with the initiation of the Land distribution and settlement schemes introduced by the British, much of the land holdings were automatically transferred to the people working directly or indirectly for the Company by dint of favoritism and personal pleas. As a result of it the existing Zamindars who were the original Feudal Lords of the land were now added with a handful number of newly born rich landlords, irrespective of their caste or status. The society went on with the existence of both the Brahmins and the rich landlords at its head, which added to the natural doom of the Dalits all the more.

*The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* reproduces the torments in the lives of the male and female Dalit/Tribes pressed below

the ruthless domination of their Maliks (Feudal Lords). It is due to their grinding poverty that the Dalits/Tribes lose their voice, identity, confidence and the power to revolt. What lies before them as the ultimate reality is that they are the bonded labourers or *gotis* of the Zamindars to whom they owe their lives and labour for borrowing a meager sum of money for some dire cause. Both the novel plea for the space and free play of Human Rights in the lives of the downtrodden and thus satirizes the existence of the concept on the whole both nationally and internationally.

Mahashweta Devi once in her interview in 2002 angrily exclaims, "I have been going through the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and questioning myself, which article is really true for India from articles 1-30? None. In India, the society is caste and class divided. Casteism is not the only curse. Indian society is thoroughly indifferent to the word "tribe." Then comes the ultimate truth as it exists. For India's millions of deprived ones living either below the poverty line, or on the fringe of it, the word "human rights" is non-existent. Right to have a living, proper housing, drinking water, education, electricity, health facilities, communication, right over the land, they are denied everything. And they are the people whose poverty is really a big capital for the Country's ruling powers. Their poverty, depravity of their lives, the non-development of their areas form this capital. Showing this, the ruling powers make big projects and get money..... Whatever I say here, is born of three decades of day-to-day experience of India's poor. And, amongst them, India's tribals share a worse fate. Their's is a faceless existence. They are in India from ancient times, for thousands of years, yet the mainstream India has continually refused to recognize them. In the tribal society there is no caste division, no dowry system, divorce and widow remarriage is socially sanctioned. They are, after centuries of oppression and neglect, still so civilized!"<sup>8</sup>

The novel taken for study largely underscores the Human Rights problems both social and economic. This features the state of Indian villages at the contemporary society plagued all over in public administration. The major issues that *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* as representations of society mainly highlights are social, political, economic and ethical in nature. The prominent and dominant concerns that the novel explore are the social evils of poverty, castism and untouchability, class division and economic inequality, illiteracy, child-labour, pitiful living conditions, abuse of human dignity, exploitation of women and the repression of the fundamental and human rights by the high-class society and its establishments, including the government machinery. But this paper will strictly confine itself to the exploitation of the women. Literature as a form of Art upholds the real picture of the society in general thereby hammering the intellect of the people through raising different questions. The above-mentioned Human Rights concerns tend to take shape in literature through different characters and vicarious events in the lives of the characters, which focus on the compromise between the appearance and reality of Dalit/Tribal existence in the presence of a just and concerned legal system in India.

One of the major issues that the novel explores is the exploitation of women. The women sect remains the worst sufferers amongst the suffering lot. They are triply marginalized. They die not only of economical and social reasons but also are sexually assaulted. They are the victims of both the landlords and their kinsmen. They are pressed to the margins by the State, the local rulers and their male folk. They bear pains of a sexually cursed life where women are treated as baits and are substituted for the insatiable sexual pleasures of the rich.

Beside the violation of the civic rights and sexual exploitation, Dalit women also suffer from political, economic and educational rights. Unfortunately, enough

studies are not available on the human rights violation of Dalit women in the underdeveloped areas, nevertheless the limited evidences indicate that Dalit women suffer from discrimination and unequal treatment in the field of economic activities, social status and education. The lack of income generating assets and heavy dependence on wage employment of Dalit women under the high caste landlords, provide a situation for the latter to exploit them sexually and otherwise. So, the economic condition of the Dalit women compels them to surrender their civic political and economic rights before the high caste rich. In this connection it is wise to enumerate that Human Rights violation of Dalit women has a close relationship with the status of women in general and the Dalit women, in particular, as prescribed in the Hindu social order. The high-caste wives also like the Dalit women do not enjoy the happiness and prosperity of belonging to high class but are equally tortured. The irony amongst all these lies in the fact that these 'Malkins' despite their wretched position, are called *Malkins* without any power and they lose their dignity as low caste women only with the painful liability of their designation: 'Malkin' on them.

*The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* portrays the severe haplessness of the women sect from every possible corner thereby adding to the novels a high degree of pathos and misery. The characters Lachhima, Rukmini, Gulal, Mori, Ganga, Putli face similar wretched predicaments in their lives. They are exploited, bruised, maimed both physically and philologically. Here the term 'Human Rights' stands meaningless to them in such a caged existence. The novel taken into discussion mainly focuses on two major points of women exploitation- sexual and economic. The other two very much interlinked and adjacent to them are their issues of their underrated social status and their shattered human dignity.

The plot of *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesha* starts and continues with women subjugation; with Lachhima as its subjective portrayal. The novel starts with Medininarayan's

wife Chotki in her labour room. 'Her anxiety was natural. Her husband Medini Narayan was pacing the courtyard in brass studded nagra shoes... Another daughter and I turn you out. Terrified. No place to go if turned out. (P.1) The domination is such that the women become physiologically subject to the imperialism of male-patriarchy so much so that they find themselves locked and hegemonized, both socially and politically in the socio- domestic spheres. In such a situation of grinding poverty and vicious circle of patriarchal dominance where women have no economic, educational, civic rights of their own, women adapt themselves to face life from the male perspectives. They suffer heavily from a castration complex for being born as a girl. When Chotki is in the filthy 'birthing room', the other two co- wives of her husband, Badki and Majhli, sat like vultures just outside the door. They were also mothers of daughters and if the youngest wife birthed a son, it would be bad for them'. (P1) When Ganesh grew up to be a rouge, like his father or more, he too discarded his wife and frantically hunted for a voluptuous body to satisfy his lust, Putli saw nothing unjustified in such behavior "Any wife who was unable to satisfy her hot-blooded, virile husband was a total failure as a women. In their family too men knew that women that - that is, wedded wives were bound to fail in this task. So her grandfather Barkandaj used to go to Mori, Father Nathu to Lakhpatiya. In every Malik household, it was usual to keep a woman." Despite the psycho- social acceptance of this 'kept-keeping' practice in the Maliks, both the wives and the kepts faced no basic difference in domestic treatment by their lords. They are awfully chained to imbibe in them such practices where they can only realize and understand their helpless positions, suffer its writhing pain but have no way out. This is basically because women in the villages of Bihar are so much marginalized, that irrespective of their caste they are given no basic education or economic right and so they

find no scope of escape from this infernal circle.

Ideologically speaking, the women are sized down to their existing condition as they know they are born as a curse and would have to lead life as a curse. 'Yes, men could do anything in their society. She [Nathu's wife] hadn't seen it with her own eyes, but she'd heard that in the days of her grandmother-in-law in the villages of Rajputana that girl children was so unwanted that they were packed into tight-leaded earthen pots and buried in the ground as soon as they were born. Oh Ma! She remembers her daughters scared and pleading glances. If one gives birth to a daughter is it the mother's fault?' (P. 101)

Mahashweta Devi candidly reports what women are to Ganesh and the like who are the Maliks: 'For the likes of Ganesh, women were only commodities for their use. At the time of Independence, a unit from the Mission came to Barha village to do drought relief work. Gajomoti abducted one of the girls, raped her and let her go. No one even recorded the unfortunate girl's complaint' (P 89). It was the rule of the day that a Rajput Malik would be unsatisfied with only his wife and so he would need women as keeps for the rest of their lives as 'kharidi bandis'. When Ganesh fails to find any interest in his wife Putli, his insatiable lust takes him towards his moral downfall. 'Cutting the bhangis down to size filled Ganesh with great glee, and suddenly his flesh too felt a different kind of hunger. That night he fertilized Nathu Singh's daughter but even that didn't satiate him. He roared in rage like a wild beast. You Mud-Doll! He kicked his wife aside yelling. 'Get Out.' Now he realized why Lachhima was indispensable to Medini Singh. He said in disgust, 'Don't you get enough to eat? Can a creature like you bring any man pleasure?' (P 83)

Mahashweta Devi ironically presents the fate of Rukmini, also, who is impregnated forcibly by Ganesh and shows that neither there is a scope for the girl's wish

fulfillment nor there is an other alternative for a *kanin* girl (unmarried pregnant girl), but to die. We feel the pity when Rukmini pleads her illegal father, Nathu and her mother, Mori not to send her to the demon Ganesh but to marry her to Kamu, she is nullified on spot with the consolation that if she leaves the house then Ramrup, her father's legal son, cannot play vulgar tricks to violate her. Such is the scene that a girl in this situation is a prey to the Maliks, father, brother, husband and the outer world. Here the expression, Rights for women stands dejected. The readers are ashamed to read Rukmini's earnest appeal that "I don't want to be the mother of the malik's *kaanin* son." (P.113), brings tears to our eyes. The level of torture becomes highly vulnerable when Rukmini again cries to her mother the night before her death and says, "Ma, I've been in that house so many months now. They promised to give me five rupees a month. I haven't got a single paise." (P.115).

The women in-house or out-house are objects of pleasure and torture both at a time for the Malicks. Be it Putli or Nathu's wife, wives of high class families or Rukmini, Lakhpatiya or Ganga, the keeps, are all subject to physical assault and torture. Medininarayan's first two wives Badki and Majhli, who were unable to gift him sons, were threatened and sent off to their father's house by falsely accusing that they would be experimenting black magic on his new born *devangshi* (part of the God) boy and try to kill it. His own daughters, his prior produce, too were let of with their mothers and then were married off to men found suitable. According to Medini, he has done his duties right, dispatched right people in the right place, like a responsible husband and father, and because there were chances of neglect and physical risks to his only heir, so he has kept a maid, Lachhima for his upkeep. Lachhima and Rukminis were socially available objects to Maliks. Medini bought Lachhima for three bighas of land and a cow, 'No gold no silver, ten rupees a month'. Lachhima

was mortgaged to the Malick for sixteen - eighteen years with the vow that she would be released as soon Ganesh would come of age. But it is the way that the Malik does. Lachhima is mercilessly betrayed when Medini strongly refuses to let her go to her fiancé Mohor Karan who had been waiting for Lachhima since many years. Medininarayan, who has been using Lachhima both as a very competent house maker, a nurse for his son and a sexual toy for his nights, felt his ego severely hurt to let such a perfect puppet go out of hand. "Lachhima kept pressing his feet. Her head bent lower and lower then she burst out sobbing... 'If you're getting rid of me anyway let me go now, Malik. Let me have someone to lean on... I've served you all these years shall I serve Chhota Malik for eight more years?'... Medini Singh pulled his feet back kicked out at Lachhima, shoving her aside, and sat up. Said, 'Take the lower casts to bed and they forget their place... you've have eaten my salt and now you're biting the hand that fed you? ...You're being kept in comfort for the sake of the boy'...Lachhima swallowed her tears, wiped her eyes calmed herself. Said 'forget it Malik. I made a mistake. Forgive me'. The force of the kick had torn off Lachhima's earrings casing the ear to bleed" (P.p 24-25). The sacrifice that Lachhima takes on her part is appreciated by all people of the village may it be the Rajputs or the Dalits. She refuses Mohor and asks him to marry Dhanpatiya.

Medini becomes the doyen of a perfect benevolent dictator in the eyes of the village folk as the Rajputs envy his position and the kept women, Lachhima's. Lachhima becomes a symbol of sacrifice and devotion to the Malik which all Maliks had always demanded. When the kept women are told by their Maliks to replicate Lachhima, to pay devotion to their Maliks as her, they retort that Medini has given Lachhima land which they have not. The Maliks used to defend 'Does everyone who gets land work so hard?' Mahashweta Devi here tells "the women did not

reply. Impossible to their role in this life had not been freely chosen by them. The Rajputs were the high caste in this region. The lower caste had different roles to play at different times; sometimes these men and women were bonded laborers, sometimes debtors, sometimes they were landless farmers evicted from their land, sometimes kept women-these roles were decided by the higher castes. Who usually spoke while the lower caste listened. This time too the women remained silent. Even without getting any land they were expected to donate unstinted service and companionship, which they did" (P. 28).

But Lachhima could not feel the happiness of being the owner of the three bighas of land as her life price. It was highly insulting and humiliating for her to bare the pains of being a kept woman— pitilessly valueless and uncared of – she spent sleepless night afeared. "The darkness gave Lachhima some relief in the light she was stark naked, Medini's kept woman, Ganesh's nurse, her nani's mortgaged property. The darkness covered her shame in the depths of the night" (P.p 37-38). But the most surprising matter that novel portrays is that all negotiations made between the victims and their predators or Maliks is a woman who herself is a victim of sexual, social and economic depression. Gulal in *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesh* is the intermediate between Medini and Lachhima, who sell her grand daughter for three acres of land and a cow. She defends her point that a hut and land would feed her till the end of her life. Ganga too becomes money-minded and delays Rukmini's marriage with Kamu and demands a sum of hundred rupees which Kamu is incapable of giving as a brideprice and this result in Kamu's departure to other land for income and the meanwhile disaster of Rukmini and her death.

The real scenario is so frustrating that these old women who were loving kepts to their Maliks once are now thrown away by them to starve and die on the streets as soon the lose their physical attraction. Now these old women unable

to get any source of income sell their daughters and granddaughters in lieu of a small sum of money or land which they think would serve them as their last resource in their old age. Poverty as an existing major evil encapsulates all other forms of evil in society. The situation in which Gulals and Lachhmas are trapped is pathetic and is a proof to the above fact. Ganga with a devastated fortune leaves Barha with Mori as companions to beg in the streets of Tohri. "These two one-time mistresses of Barkandaj and Nathu, father and son, who had dedicated their lives and youth to the service of their maliks, became the symbol of all such low-caste mistresses of all malik-mahajans as they took to the streets. In rags, with bundles under their arms, stained aluminium bowls in their hands, Ganga with walking stick." (P.p 126-127) Here the crestfallen women await their freedom only in death and circumstances alike. "Freedom, freedom, Mori and Ganga felt free so free. Rukmani had gifted them freedom." (p.127) The irony is severe. The old women who had served their entire lives for the Maliks are not only jilted, economically and socially violated, but also are ruined mentally because of the Maliks. Freedom is a heavily expensive concept for them. Its freedom to them when there is nothing left for them to lose: money, land, shelter, daughters, kinsmen, physic. Lachhima waits for freedom and gets when she has no more desire, Putli waits freedom, but its hard to get, Rukmini finds freedom in her death.

Rene Cassin, the principal drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) defines the science of Human Rights as a particular branch of social sciences- the object of which is to study human relations in the light of human dignity while determining those rights and faculties which are necessary as a whole for the full development of each human being's personality.<sup>9</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Charter which had been framed to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights,

in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women, have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom among member nations, takes special care to safe guard the necessary human dignity and fundamental necessities in every person of the nations. India's concern for its citizen and the universal social order is proved as it had had readily become parties to the Economic, Social and Cultural Covenant and Civil and Political Rights Covenant with other states in the United Nations. But India has refrained herself from signing the mentioned optional protocol in the Human Rights Committee which said that the committee established under the protocol will be empowered to receive complaints from individuals who allege violation of their rights set in the covenant. This means that no individual can complain to the Human Rights Committee against any violation in India of any right protected by the treaty of the United Nations (UN). India's official excuse on this matter is that the ratification of the Optional Protocol would mean foreign countries interfering with its sovereignty. Though the matters seem partly handicapped yet India is reported to have implemented the International Declaration of Human Rights and Covenant on the Social and Economics Rights and that all parts of the International Covenants which may have significant impact on the situation of the Dalits and other minorities but this will have to be interpreted to suit the will of the ruling group. Nation wise also India has implemented certain progressive Rights for the protection of the Dalit and the Scheduled Castes which have been rendering positive results. Moreover, Part III of the Indian Constitution deals with the Fundamental Rights, which up to a major extent do have a similarity and do abide with the clauses of Universal Declaration. Part IV of the Indian Constitution deals with the Directive Principles of State Policies which support the other civil, social, economic rights as described in the

Universal Covenants. The main difference between part III and Part IV of the Indian Constitution is that the former is justifiable whereas the latter is not. This imbalance the equation if scrutinized from the Human Rights perspectives as every right mentioned in the Constitution remains unrecognized fully, as without legal support most of the times rights fail to perform in reality.

On 18 December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It entered into force as an international treaty on 3 September 1981 after the twentieth country had ratified it. By the tenth anniversary of the Convention in 1989, almost one hundred nations have agreed to be bound by its provisions.

The Convention was the culmination of more than thirty years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, a body established in 1946 to monitor the situation of women and to promote women's rights. The Commission's work has been instrumental in bringing to light all the areas in which women are denied equality with men. These efforts for the advancement of women have resulted in several declarations and conventions, of which the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is the central and most comprehensive document.

Among the international human rights treaties, the Convention takes an important place in bringing the female half of humanity into the focus of human rights concerns. The spirit of the Convention is rooted in the goals of the United Nations: to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity, and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women. The present document spells out the meaning of equality and how it can be achieved. In doing so, the Convention establishes not only an international bill of rights for women, but also an agenda for action by countries to guarantee the enjoyment of those rights.

In its preamble, the Convention explicitly acknowledges that "extensive discrimination against women continues to exist", and emphasizes that such discrimination "violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity". As defined in article 1, discrimination is understood as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex...in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field". The Convention gives positive affirmation to the principle of equality by requiring States parties to take "all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men"(Article 3).

The agenda for equality is specified in fourteen subsequent articles. In its approach, the Convention covers three dimensions of the situation of women. Civil rights and the legal status of women are dealt with in great detail. In addition, and unlike other human rights treaties, the Convention is also concerned with the dimension of human reproduction as well as with the impact of cultural factors on gender relations.

Dalit women are among the poorest of the poor and often bear the brunt of violence both from members of the dominant castes who view their bodies as 'available' for their use despite considering their caste 'unclean' and from within their own communities, where entrenched patriarchy turns them into scapegoats upon whom frustrations can be vented.

The results of a detailed study presented before an International conference at Hague in 2006 by the Indian group Institute of Development Education, Action and Studies, revealed the true extent of this violent reality. The study, spanning five years and four Indian states and based on interviews with hundreds of Dalit women, found that

23 per cent of the Dalit women interviewed had been raped, 43 per cent had experienced domestic violence, 46.8 per cent sexual assault, 55 per cent physical assault and 62 per cent verbal abuse. Of all the cases studied only 0.6 per cent ever made it to court, due to obstruction by the police (who often harbour caste prejudices themselves) or by the dominant castes. Indeed many women simply accept that no-one is going to help them and don't even attempt to seek justice. The discrimination against Dalit women is an issue that has been brought in front of international bodies as early as 1995, culminating with the drafting of the Hague Declaration on the Human Rights and Dignity of Dalit Women which occurred at the Hague Conference on Dalit Women's Rights, in November 2006. Ruth Manorama, a Dalit human rights activist and recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, claims this international exposure crucial. She opines, 'The world is now global; no issues are local. We are talking about violence and human rights violations with impunity against Dalits for 3,000 years. If people have to get justice, then the matter needs to be taken to the international level.'<sup>10</sup>

One can only hope that such studies change the stance of the Indian government which has often reacted to reports of caste oppression by claiming they are 'highly exaggerated' and which tends to brand advocates for Dalit rights as propagandists relying on 'anecdotal evidence'. The Indian authorities prefer instead to highlight the positive - reservations for education and jobs for Dalits in India, which cause the Government no end of agitation from the more privileged castes.

If such stands the case of the present state of the marginalized in today's India, where rights are at bay, it is high time that we probe into and try to read the politics of Human Rights and its legal existence on the whole. Arundhati Roy in her *Conversations: 'The Colonization of Knowledge'* in this context puts: "The biggest problem is

that what they say in their project reports and what actually happens are two completely different things. They've [government and courts] perfected the art of getting it right on paper, but that has nothing to do with what is happening on the ground.<sup>11</sup>

The task of relating human suffering in literature and human rights remains incredibly complex as the entire process engages a telling and showing method but the remedy lies in the hands of the people and society. "The Left legalists now tell that unless "the politics of human rights remains vigilantly self-reflexive, 'a politics organized around publicizing pain constitutes a further degradation of subaltern selves into a species of sub-civilized non-agency".<sup>12</sup> This study through the representation of certain instances from Mahashweta Devi's translated Indian fiction has brought into focus how realistic literature as an art form can depict the society and its people amidst the social, economic, cultural and political trajectories and thus acts as a measure-stick determining the status of Human Rights enjoyed by them. This work is a veritable outcome of a research that Human Rights concepts and literature are inevitable inter-disciplinary interfaces that inform and complement each other as critical scaffoldings.

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## Individuating Flashes in Shiv K. Kumar's Poetry: A Select Study

Shishu Paul

An octogenarian, Shiv K. Kumar, a senior academician, served as the vice-chancellor with the Osmania University, Hyderabad, started writing poems when he reached fifty. He belongs to a Hindu family, originally from Hafizabad, now in Pakistan. He was born on August 16, 1921 in a small suburban town in Lahore. At present he is residing at Secunderabad, Hyderabad. He is a winner of many awards and prizes.

Kumar was already a professor and critic of standing when he suddenly turned to poetry. He calls himself, "a late bloomer" (Iyengar 722). What set him to creative writing was the traumatic experience of divorce in 1966. It took him about four years to get over it and come to terms with the new reality and seek release through poetry. He brought out eight collections of poetry: *Articulate Silences* (1970), *Cobwebs in the Sun* (1974), *Subterfuges* (1976), *Woodpeckers* (1979), *Trapfalls in the Sky* (1986), *Woolgathering* (1998), *Thus Spake the Buddha* (2001), and *Losing My Way: Poems* in 2008. The first four reveal at once "his sense of form and feeling for precise evocative language, as also his restless cerebration and his edged sensibility" (Iyengar 722.) Besides, the poetry of Shiv K. Kumar is "a vital contribution to his literary credentials" (Singh 85).

The objective of this paper is to unravel the individuating flashes in Shiv K. Kumar's select poetry and his growth towards maturity. Kumar in the poems selected for analysis in this paper comes before the reader as an individuating poet because he boldly faces the surroundings and realities around him. Rather than getting trapped or repelled, he firmly comes out declarative about his

experiences. Jung analyses such a pattern of conduct as anybody's individuating flash with the energy field of the psyche (surroundings and realities): "The call to individuation is contained within this dynamism . . . That which merely attracts or merely repels is also something to be dealt with . . ." (qtd. in Whitmont 62). The images of Kumar's choice figure repetitively in the poems selected in this paper. His subjects and themes also relate to his liking; however, the way he deals with his experiences and expresses himself, makes it clear that he wishes to associate with the phenomena around him. He does not run away; nor does he escape. His conscious mind being in his control, it appears that Kumar reaches a level of sublimation indicating his growth as a poet.

Kumar's mind is almost tranquil and serene and he is close to himself. He accepts every shade of reality now and does not complain of his surroundings and sufferings. He becomes aware of his environs and his atmosphere around. He becomes ". . . a realist . . . a writer [not] turn[ing] away from pain and ugliness of life" (Mukherjee 232). He shows his alertness and agility regarding the life. It is seen that in his poems the poet's self responds positively to the agitation of raw experience.

Albert Mordell's observation is befitting as one goes through his poems: "Works of imagination open up to the reader hidden vistas in man's inner life, just as dreams do" (1). Kumar's beloved themes of love, sex, consummation and death figure in various poems in his poetry collections. Moreover, Kumar's poetry is never subordinated to social propaganda. Instead, "it is always an expression of the innate feelings of his protagonist in the subjective mode" (Singh 92).

The following are some powerful poems in which Kumar with the theme of love and sex displays his individuating flashes marking his sure progression towards maturity: 'Cerebral Love,' 'The Dark Mood,' and 'A Letter From New York.'

The poem 'Cerebral Love' brings out the poet as lost in a state of metaphysical speculation. It deals with the theme of sex. Indeed, the poet uses sex as a possibility for transcending the limitations of existence. This is what Eliot does in poetry, Lawrence, in fiction and Tennessee Williams and Albee, in drama. In this poem total failure in sex-act disturbs poet and he wants to get some relief. The poet states:

*Even in bed  
my self  
copulates with its own dry bones  
leaving her body  
pensile on the tide's crest (CS 11).*

The poet in the above quoted extract, however, shows that now he is not interested in love-making. He is leaving may be his wife's or female friend's body without having any sexual intercourse. It reveals the poet as rising above any base sexual act. At a deeper level, it is his progression towards assimilation with his desire-motive projected upon a woman figure.

'The Dark Mood' convincingly sums up Kumar's different attitude towards love and sex. In this poem the poet pleads for the whole-hearted love of man for woman, and unnaturalness of love is also depicted in it, because the poet asks the woman not to "exchange nudities tonight" because: "A man should come to his woman whole- / not when the mind / is a perverted sunflower / turning face to darkness" (CS 43). The poet in the extract obviously says that a man should tend "his woman" with care. He suggests that no perversion should hinder his assimilation with a female. This in Jungian terms is close to accepting the dissolution of anima with the animus. Here it is at a projection level which is a strong individuating flash in this poem.

In 'A Letter From New York' the vision of Kumar is quite perceptive. Journey to an alien land leads the poet to self-discovery. In the following extract Kumar reveals his individuating projections through which he makes it clear

that he is quite aware of his self:

*But my soul is still my own.  
The other evening they came—  
Allen and Linda, Dick and Grace, Jack and Su  
dripping bourbon from their lips.  
They mated in my kitchen  
behind the book-racks,  
even brought me a blind date.  
But something held back my hand.  
Was it damyata?  
Or my mother's last wish,  
or a diffidence nourished  
on black coffee and white bread? (S 21).*

Here the poet is bold and confident as he possesses his soul to be his own. He disapproves of the sexual perversion of his friends who have done sexual intercourse in the “kitchen behind the book racks.” But the poet shows much self-control in doing such an act which reflects his maturity. He is above all these things.

The subject of death and suffering holds special charm for Kumar. He boldly accepts the reality of death. The following poems show his individuating flashes on death: ‘Married Too Long,’ ‘Self-obituary,’ and ‘Felling a Tree.’

In ‘Married Too Long’ the subject is not the death of a human being or a living thing—but of love. Laced in a subjective tone, this poem gives a glimpse of Kumar’s progression towards maturity. In the following extract the poet reflects his cool mind with little conflicting appeal that death is an all-encompassing reality: “I see you hung / on every wall / like an obituary” (CS 46).

Kumar’s ‘Self-obituary’ is a beautiful imagined experience of death. The poet, while exploring this experience, says: “If they’d not roasted him on the pyre, / one would have seen on his palms / all the zodiac signs of heaven and hell” (TS 31). Here the poet in a quiet manner accepts that when a person dies all the influences of the

stars and zodiac signs elope with him to another world. Suggestively he refers to the dissolution of man’s struggle (conflict and discord) ending with death. These words mark the height of awareness and maturity that Kumar has attained. Now he is not undergoing any over-riding tension while dealing with death.

‘Felling a Tree’ marks the growth of the poet towards maturity. It shows that the poet is aware of his environs and, whatever he says in this poem, shows his intelligence and awareness attained by passing through conflicting experiences and awareness in life:

*How can wood stand up against steel,  
water against oil,  
statement against its counter?  
Humiliation is lethal  
when the victim has no weapons for defence,  
when you have to carry your own cross  
and you are your own pyre—  
fuel, flame and ashes (Wg 39).*

The poet in this extract is of the opinion that it is not possible that wood can be compared with steel; water, with oil and statement, with its counter-statement. His maturing mind observes that loss of one’s dignity is not less than death because in such a situation man is unable to defend himself against all the odds from his surroundings and man himself becomes everything.

Nevertheless, it is not only while dealing with the subjects of love and death that Kumar has shown his rising over his conflicting environment, but he has also found tremendous coolness in the face of suffering in life. One such poem is like “Reclamation (for Keith F. McKean)” which brings out the poet crossing the threshold of maturity. In this poem Kumar says that there is always a hope in the sprouting of new seeds sown:

*Deep in the earth's bowels  
there are seeds*

*that may have lain  
untouched by moisture  
awaiting reclamation (CS 35).*

The poet here speaks like a prophet who avers if land is properly irrigated and cultivated; it will certainly sprout with the seeds sown in it. This observation reveals the individuated self of the poet. The projection of “land” and “seeds” is a Jungian admixture of assimilation of the “Conscious” with the “Unconscious.”

There are many other poems as well which mark Kumar’s pleasing progression towards ripeness: ‘A Dead Bird on an Electric Pole,’ ‘The Looking Glass,’ ‘Clouds,’ ‘Dal Lake: Srinagar,’ ‘Adam to Eve,’ ‘Shadow Lines,’ et al.

The idea of death is changed into reality in ‘A Dead Bird on an Electric Pole.’ Death is unbiased. It makes no difference between the rich and the poor; the man and the animal. The electric chair at once focuses attention on the instrument of death and the executioner executing death-sentence on a condemned person by seating him in an electric chair and putting an end to his life simply by pressing a button. Whether he is good or bad; man or bird; human being or an animal – all are treated with one eye and meet the same fate, “The electric chair is neutral / to bird, assassin and saint” (Wp 36). This observation by the poet is really precise and forceful. In this connection C. J. Chinneswara Rao remarks, “The precision of his observations has the force of truth” (49). The poet, here, behaves as a sage which brings him out as a mature poet.

The poem ‘The Looking Glass’ shows Kumar’s maturing brain. In this poem, the self gushes forth its projections: “I may lie to the trees, flowers / or clouds, stand up to the sun’s / probe, but with you nothing / works-tears or self-delusion” (TS 25). These beautiful poetic words underline the truth that one may lie to all the natural objects but can never conceal one’s self before the mirror. Everything becomes clear when one stands up before the looking glass.

And in Kumar’s case his looking glass is his self ridden with conflict and discord in his life.

Kumar is an abler poet in the field of making maturing statements through his individuating projections. The poem ‘Clouds’ deals with a life-in-death situation and the faithfulness of clouds during love-making act. The enemies of clouds are the sun and the wind. The poet says, “But to fade away is not to die / for there’s always resurrection” (TS 30). The poet is hopeful and optimistic like Robert Browning, that there is rebirth after leaving this world. This statement reveals Kumar’s yogic and divine spirit lifting him out of mundane existence.

Kumar in a state tranquillity again speaks in a saintly manner in the ‘Dal Lake: Srinagar.’ The poet paints a beautiful word picture of flora and fauna of the Dal’s surroundings: “But the Dal waters are neutral. / You many defile them, or hold up a palmful / to the sun like soma” (TS 34). The poet, here, maturely reflects that if anybody pollutes the waters of the Dal lake, it does not make much difference as the waters of the Dal lake behave like a neutral agent. The most significant aspect of Kumar’s speaking like this is that he is sure of what he says. He has no confusion. He is declaring and observing as a matured poet.

‘Adam to Eve’ deals with the theme of ignorance turning into knowledge which Aristotle also has used in his remarkable work Poetics as *Anagnorisis* which means the recognition of truth. But here Adam asks Eve, “And if to know is to die, / why not perish together? (TS 75). The poet says that he knows getting knowledge means death. It is a deep leap into his psyche.

In ‘Shadow Lines’ Kumar speaks as a seer or prophet reflecting his spiritual rising:

You cannot dodge the past all the time;  
it resurges more sinisterly  
during moments of complacency  
reminding you

that you may see your doom  
even in still waters (Wg 44).

The poet, here, is of the opinion that it is no use for the people to keep on avoiding the past deliberately. It is so because the past revives, suggesting evil in the moments of calm satisfaction, reminding that doom or destruction can come in the period or time of serenity.

In brief, all the individuating flashes in his poems establish him as a mature poet who does not buckle under any pressure. He shows the signs of his cool learning mind in these poems. The projects appearing as different symbols in his poems carry him forward. He is driven towards assimilation with his self. Consciously or unconsciously Kumar knows that the solution to his conflict and discord in his psyche lies in his oneness with his self. The projections in his poems thus make him tread the difficult path of individuation. For Kumar his individuating endeavours are his tools to get rid of his tension and frustration. The kind of success that Kumar attains brings him out as a soothsayer or prophet or yogi in his poems. He gains the conviction of an articulate poet when he comes before the reader with his individuating flashes. Kumar's poetry, therefore, "shows a luxuriant growth and sustained development" (Das 17). His dynamic efforts reveal him as a mature poet on the Indo-English poetic scene. He, thus, is a major and important voice to be reckoned with.

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What will be my fate as a writer is very simple. My talent for portraying my dreamlike inner life has thrust all other matters into the background; my life has dwindled dreadfully, nor will it cease to dwindle. Nothing else will ever satisfy me. But the strength I can muster for that portrayal is not to be counted upon: perhaps it has already vanished forever, perhaps it will come back to me again, although the circumstances of my life don't favour its return. Thus I waver, continually fly to the summit of the mountain, but then fall back in a moment. Others waver too, but in lower regions, with greater strength; if they are in danger of falling, they are caught up by the kinsman who walks beside them for that very purpose. But I waver on the heights; it is not death, alas, but the eternal torments of dying.

(From **The Diaries of Franz Kafka**)

# Collective Consciousness: A comparative study in Indian context

Dr. Jayshree Singh

## Introduction

The writings of B.R Ambedkar and the novel *Kanthapura* by Raja Rao extend the discourse to study the cultural orientation of the people belonging to Hindu community in the pre-colonial and post-independence period. The former's utterances are not of an artist but of a human being who had experienced the usurpation, substitution, and discrimination on account of his status from a deprived section of the society. But the later's work there is an amalgamation of art and reality. Raja Rao as a visionary, belonging to upper caste/class background of the Hindu society, had realized that anguish of victimization impersonally due to casteism and as an Indian he had observed the results of casteism and the cultural anarchy. Ambedkar is a citizen, a human being, a sufferer, a rebel, a realist, a reformist at the end, whereas Raja Rao a humanist, an artist, a citizen, an observer, a participant who identifies himself with the society's needs and wants to perform his role to revolutionise the readers. Hence the comparative analyses of both the writings would definitely draw the attention of the readers and critics towards the fact that Ambedkar's writings presents the grimness of casteism, the necessity to save the nation from its catastrophic impact on those sections who are discriminated not only as the most down-trodden but the gender discrimination becomes more garrulously absurd because of this power play of victimized and victimizer in case of caste and then gender both outside and inside the house, city, nation, This reality of the Indian nation has been visualized through a subjective analyses of the psychology and the behavior of the natives for each other

in the region and how Raja Rao through the character Moorthy becomes a priest to annihilate the evil of casteism.

Raja Rao's impelling and revolutionary voice is visible in the words of Moorthy, who speaks to the natives to join in the movement of national struggle for freedom by forgetting their internal differences of their caste, class and gender. He in the novel is the replica of Gandhi's thought, which he feels his ideal and duty to spread among the villagers of Knathapura, so that they may be streamlined in the Gandhi's aim to unite local, regional and national inhabitants of India in one consciousness, so he says:

"Now," said Moorthy, "we are out for action. A cock does not make a morning, nor a single man a revolution, but we'll build a thousand-pillared temple, a temple more firm than any that hath yet been builded, and each one of you be ye pillars in it, and when the temple is built, stone by stone, and man by man, and the bell hung to the roof, and the Eagle-tower shaped and planted, we shall invoke the mother to reside with us in dream and in life. India then live in a temple of our making. Do you know, brothers and sisters, the Mahatma has left Sabarmati on a long pilgrimage, the last pilgrimage of his life, he says, with but eighty-two followers, who all wear khadi and do not drink and never tell a lie, and they go with the Mahatma to the dandi beach to manufacture salt... Brothers and this too ye shall remember, whether Brahmin or bangle-seller, pariah or priest, we are all one, one as the mustard seed in a sack of mustard seeds, equal in shape and hue and all."<sup>1</sup>

The writings of Ambedkar which have been prescribed in Indian English Literary Studies after 1995, while Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* that had been added by educated elite academicians long before 1980s have aroused awakening among the masses in their own style. Ambedkar's critical, true and direct condemnation of casteism in India show the culturally embedded ethics of the mindset of Hindus, that has caused unemployment, poverty, illiteracy,

backwardness and ignorance, while Raja Rao show the poignant pathos of the pariahs, women of the pariahs as regards their state of living conditions, which these Brahmins in the name of scriptures never want to lift them up from their wild savage life.

### **Collective-Consciousness**

From the contemporary political and social, cultural and ethnic point of views, post colonial literature in India has standardized literary independence of India that reflects their deconstructed imagination in performing modernity and resistance in the context of post-colonial consciousness for the better prospects of governance and globality. The writers have set a caution against prejudiced pride of upper castes of Hindu society that has suppressed the basic human rights, creative urges of the suborigines/ subordinate class i.e. phariahs, Sudras- who are engaged in menial jobs, which made them known as untouchables. Their literary independence shows conscious oppression of the downtrodden has resulted in regression unconsciously, that is visible in the form of Dalit Literature and the writings that upholds humane and secular attitude towards the victimized class of minority. These writings delineate from Indian perspective, the psycho-analytical study from the social, economic, political and cultural point of view to understand the class/caste conflicts in order to recreate the spirit of nationalism in the post-colonial period. They want to deconstruct through their writings the myths and the attitude of Hindu society towards the class-conflicts and casteism. Their scholarly literary talent demystifies the higher caste Hindus- Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishayas from their ego and to imbibe in themselves "collective consciousness" or the feeling of Sangathan, so that redemption for their disobedience towards humanity may be rediscovered by their creative writings. They have tried to recultivate the values of global-consciousness, self-

dependence and self-reliance by emancipating the deprived and neglected section of the society- women, children and untouchables as well as the upper caste. They have set counter malignant factors of the society so that it may not become susceptible to cultural sterility and disharmony resulting from poverty, illiteracy, fetus infanticide, juvenile crimes, gender discrimination, casteism, corruption and reservation of minorities etc.

### **Insurrection against indigenous past**

Kanthapura is a short novel written by a man of Brahmin origin, whose past memories and recollections about Indian situations are delineated minutely in the form of a story in which the plot of the struggle against casteism is embedded in the main theme of inciting insight for nationalism. The author has done it through symbolic reference of the realistic account of the impact of the Gandhian struggle for India's freedom in the South India in 1930. Ambekar's Writings (especially The Annihilation of Caste), are the speeches or paper presentations delivered in America while completing his thesis. The author tries to justify that the myth of casteism in Hindu society that is an obstruction in the organic unity of the whole country i.e. India and this misconception about the division of labour or labourers on the basis of birth or caste deprives Hindu society to have 'collective consciousness' against the bigger goal of unification in the pre-independent and the post-independent period of Indian history.

Their literary protest signifies inherent weaknesses of their nation-India that have been exploited by the brahminical powers of Hindu religion. Both the literary figures contemplate upon the physical and mental state and stature of the untouchables in the context of disunity of Hindu society against the invaders or imperialists. For nearly one thousand years i.e. since the attack of Mahmud Gazni on India to ransack the wealth of the Somnath Temple

in Gujarat, Indian Hinduism has shown its fatal front to combat unitedly, because their divisions and sub-divisions into caste and sub-castes never led to think collectively for their nation. The advent of education, literary writings through newspapers and print could raise the public-consciousness for the sake of survival, existence, federation of Indian states, and feeling of community bonding as an integral whole. Raja Rao, one of the Brahmins tried to change the mindset of Brahmins towards Hindu culture and rituals, whereas Ambedkar made efforts that the non-brahmins i.e. minority section of Hindu society to be assimilated in Hindu culture and rituals with equality and he blamed that the dogma of predestination, Hindu Scriptures and Hindu's ideology of purity of blood or eugenic origin have been responsible for the class or caste conflicts and feuds.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar writes:

"The literature of Hindus is full of caste genealogies in which an attempt is made to give a noble origin to one caste and an ignoble origin to other castes. The "*Sahyadrikhand*" is a notorious instance of this class of literature. This anti-social spirit is not confined to caste alone. It has gone deeper and has poisoned the mutual relations of the sub-castes as well."<sup>2</sup>(AW 266)

This sort of disintegration in the socialization of human beings is the transgression of divine law of humanity; it is hazardous to inter-personal interaction and intimacy. As long as the slave-master relationship, dignity of human beings continue to be disrespected and encroached upon in some or the other way there will remain conflicts among the dissidents (that suffered cruel treatment from the oppressors) and the conformists (that pretend to follow in a pseudo manner the customs and traditions of Hindu culture), even though India may get advanced in science and technology, may feign to have secularism and democracy. It will result only into cultural degradation, cultural sterility and cultural disintegration of values, and

cannot promote nationalism, oneness, patriotism and fellow-feeling. He further condemns by saying that-

"Not only has the Hindus made no effort for the humanitarian cause of civilizing the savages but the higher caste Hindus have deliberately prevented the lower castes who are within the pale of Hinduism from rising to the cultural level of the higher castes."(AW 269)

The conversation between Bhattare and Rangama in *Kanthapura* authenticates the opposition and mean mentality of the Brahmins and other higher caste Hindus for not letting pharisees to enter temple, to get educated or to be allowed to have inter-caste marriage. Bhattare says to Rangamma-

"But really, aunt, we live in a strange age. What with their modern education and their modern women. Do you know, in the city they already have grown-up girls, fit enough to be mothers of two or three children going to the universities? And they talk to this boy and that boy; and what they do amongst themselves, heaven alone knows. And one, Too, I heard, went and married a Mohomedan. Really, aunt, that is horrible!"(Kan. 38)

### **Metaphysical Condensation**

The endeavours of both the writers when understood jointly and separately in their own perspective and perception then it can be realized how it might have been difficult for the Brahmin to overrule the old traditions of class and caste bars among their own community people because Moorthy and his mother had to face ex-communication, imprisonment on being treacherous etc. and how painful it might be for the non-brahmins to imagine themselves to work shoulder to shoulder of Brahmins.

It can be appropriately quoted about the two authors that,

*They have tried to transform social and historical differences into universal differences that collapse persons into animals and prevent human contact and exchange.*<sup>3</sup>

The savagery of Hindus has been ironically sensitized

to delineate the discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, sex, birth respectively. Ambedkar's attitude is full of disgust towards the higher section and he wants to resurrect the position of the lower caste as equal as to the higher one. He wants equality, liberty and justice, whereas Raja Rao's attitude is full of sarcasm and mockery for the higher class Hindus who hoard money and crops to become richer and then cheat the lower class by being generous deceptively and harming the nation and the countrymen implicitly for their own selfish ends. Due to this very reason Ambedkar vehemently criticizes the liberal theory of *Chaturvanya* and realizes that segmentation of class of people on the basis of their worth and work may develop segregation of responsibilities for the particular group or class of people and that can mismanage the capacity of human resource and distribution of the national resources socially and economically will never be justified. He says

"That the Brahmins should cultivate knowledge, that the Kshatriya should bear arms, that the Vaishya should trade and that the shudra should serve sounds as though it was a system of labour... The defenders of *Chaturvarnya* give it the first meaning. They say, why the *Shudra* should need trouble to acquire wealth, when the three varnas are there to support him? Why need the *Shudra* bother to take to education, when there is the Brahmin to whom he can go when the occasion for reading or writing arises? Why need the *Shudra* worry to arm himself because there is the Kshatriya to protect him? The theory of *Chaturvarnya*, understood in this sense, may be said to look upon the *Shudra* as the wards and the three *Varnas* as his guardians" (AW 281)

### **Metaphorical Displacement**

Both the writers from their own perception and perspective prophesies that the oppressors inflicting sufferings upon the victims that are victimized on account of being akin to low caste; their attitude is liable to inhuman

and unkind behaviour, injuring the sense of nationalism and patriotism, spreading alike Britishers another form of neo- colonialism by depriving the rights and privileges of marginalized class of human beings. Such objectives of casteism are hazardous to harmony, peace and progress and can destroy the civilization which has a legacy of *Santana Dharma*. The troubled sensitivity and sensibility of both the writers' express that there is the possibility of the sterility of culture and civilization, if the nation's goals are formulated on such ideologies. In this context it is apt to understand what the culture and civilization stands for:

"The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with readymade judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely.-nourished and not bound by them."<sup>4</sup>

Thus the literature written by Ambedkar cannot be undermined just because it is not a piece of aesthetics but it has to be valued on account of his vision that has been awakening Indians toward the system that separates all men and women and the children of the country into homogenous units of caste, class, creed, respectively and it risks the status quo of the gender and their roles and responsibilities toward the society and nation as a whole because in India there is not only one religion but it is pluralistic, heterogeneous because of many religions. He feels

that such kind of disparities and indignity to all concerned at large endangers humanity and engenders estrangement. It vindicates the quintessential identity of the dalits/phariables in the nation India. It also discusses the hierarchical virility of the society over the matters of the autonomy, choice, freedom of action and thought of women and also of the men of the minority class. The women who are the counterpart of all men belonging to any *Varnas* are also affected by this sort of caste and communal segregation. He says-

“The protagonists of *Chaturvarnya* do not seem to have considered what is to happen to women in their system. Are they also to be divided into four classes- *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra*? Or are they to be allowed to take the status of their husbands. If the status of the woman is to be the consequence of marriage what becomes underlying principle of *Chaturvarnya*, namely that the status of a person should be based upon the worth of that person? If they are to be classified according to their worth is their classification to be nominal or real? If it is to be nominal then it is useless and then the protagonists of *Chaturvarnya* must admit that their system does not apply to women. If it is real, are the protagonists of *Chaturvarnya* prepared to follow the logical consequences of applying it to women? They must be prepared to have women priests and women soldiers..... But that will be the logical outcome of applying *Chaturvarnya* to women..... ”( AW 281)

The visionary Raja Rao too portrays the same feelings of Brahmins who bear disgust against the advancement, emancipation and empowerment of both women and the low class people. He develops insight in the readers mind towards the problem of casteism prevailing in the undeveloped areas of India such as -Kanthapura, Harshapura and Talassana etc. One of the characters in the novel speaks-

“That is horrible’ repeats Satamma. ‘After all, my son, it is the *Kalyuga* floods, as the sastras say, there will be the confusion of castes and the pollution of progeny. We can’t help it, perhaps...”(Kan. 39)

According to the both literary figures *the social idea of*

the men of culture stands for equality, liberty, fraternity, social and economic justice in matters of attaining education, availing good conditions of life and opportunities. There is a conversation between the two characters in *Kanthapura* that clearly explicates the protest of the writer Raja Rao, who presents the hatred and intrigues of the higher caste against the lower caste, and that same was opposed and discarded by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his essay *The Annihilation of Caste*.

Seetharamu: I want your help, Bhattare.

Bhattare: What can I do for you?

Seetharamu: The Swami is worried over this pariah movement, and he wants to crush it in its seed, before its cactus roots have spread far and wide. You are a Bhatta and your voice is not a sparrow voice in your village, and you should speak to your people and organize a Brahmin party. Otherwise brahminism is as good as kitchen ashes. The Mahatma is a good man and a simpleman. But he is making too much of these carcass-eating phariables. Today it will be the phariables, tomorrow it will be the Mohomadians, and the day after the Europeans... We must stop this. The Swami says he will outcaste every Brahmin who has touched a pariah that is the right way to begin. Bhattare, we need your help.

Bhattare: Well Seetharamu, this Bhatta who has been a pontifical Brahmin cannot be on the side of the phariables. And I know that in our good village there is no Brahmin who has drunk of our holy Himavathy’s water and wants caste pollutions. I shall speak to our people. And that is why I have come to see you.

The demonic influence of casteism on the common masses has increased the state of violence and corruption; it is just for overpowering each other. This lack of collective consciousness has stifled the elevated vision of *Sadbhavana* and the total structure and system of society appear to be uncivilized and non-legitimate. This feeling is well expressed by Moorthy, the representative of Gandhi’s ideals, the emissary of performing post-colonial vision. Although he is an ideal youth for being a bridegroom in

the village, but his idealistic national pursuits to entertain pharisees on Hindu festival within the premise of temple get him ex-communicated and rejected. He says in spite of following *ahimsa* he is unable to convince his people the ideals of Gandhi because- "The fault of others is the fruit of one's own disharmony" (Kan.)

Thus we can conclude that both the writings have captured the issue of sustainability of unpredictable future. Their volatile emotions have sketched disobedience of divine providence; they have tried to rediscover the constituents that can help in building the capacity of all types of Indians affected by casteism, religious clashes. They have reassessed the cultural diversity and unity from the point of division of labour, work culture, work ethics, values, family relations and system depended on the casteism because Mahatma Gandhi said "Caste is harmful both to spiritual and national growth." (AW 314)

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## UPSTREAM HILSA

Anuja Mohan Pradhan (Jamshedpur-Jharkhand)

Stormy waves of blue Atlantic,  
Crash on the rocks of St. Helena,  
Deafening them, not to listen,  
Last stories of a lost Napoleon,  
About the long salt fields, vine yards,  
Behind the childhood home in Ajacio,  
Enough to give a living to his sons,  
If they ever cared, when empires are lost.  
Salmons are wise,  
Not to forget way back to Minnesota,  
So are the Hilsas of Indian waters  
The magnanimity of sea can't bind them,  
Fragrance of cradle that pulls  
The strings of heart to return,  
From azure waters, daring the way filled with  
Trapping nets and hungry crocodiles,  
Dotting over miles and miles.  
Where am I today?  
My home blazed and dreams crushed,  
Exiled in the war of gods,  
Closure of relief camp left me to join,  
The band of homeless, forever?  
I too wish to show my siblings, the trees-  
under which shade my forefathers laid in peace,  
homestead of my childhood,  
where I played with my demised sister,  
why am I made a stranger  
in the land I knew mine,  
and still lives in me,  
oozing in every punctuation of my poetry.  
The whole world is a family,  
Vasudhaivakutumbakam,  
Wisdom of India echoes the world,  
Where the Romas trace their genetic fossils  
In the dancing numbers of Banjaras,  
I do long to for the damp corner of my home,

Where I hid my marbles, grandmma stories.  
Kudos to you, dear Salmons and Hilsas,  
Lend me a pair of fins to swim upstream  
To reach my land of birth,  
Before I die.

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## TO NEW LIFE

Chitra G. Lele (Pune-Maharashtra)

The butterfly within me  
spreads the pollen of glee  
placating its wings of mirth  
it flowers the spirit of rebirth.  
With its holy angel soar  
it buzzes away the thorns of bore  
with its hues of honey dew  
it clears the mask of misty view.  
Its periwinkle blue  
keeps away the inner blues,  
its lavender blush  
surges in me an adrenalin rush.  
It wilts away the flower of gloom  
with its boundless bloom  
and then flutters by my side to help me cope  
by unfolding the petals of hope.

Flying beside this winged wonder  
I am no more in fear  
and it fills my bareness  
with its splendor of success.  
Its wings bestow on me a new life,  
metamorphose small miracles, every day  
and renew the buds of joy all along the way.

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## S H E

Dinko Telecan (Zagreb-Croatia)

her heart was a tramp  
and all the flowers beneath her  
dreamt of her chanting pace  
with their empty attempts:  
all the longing roses she laughed at  
the colourful space she seemed to belong to  
never listening to its lament...  
she longed for nothing but run  
afraid of nothing but nothingness  
that betrayed her dim hopes.  
it was the warm ground she admired  
painted with vivid shadows of proud stars  
and trembling with expectations.  
she was somewhere in between  
always gazing upon the heights.  
and then she fell;  
the ground became cold as a destiny.

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## TO HAVE A PEACEFUL TODAY

Hiraman Tulshiram Lanje (Nagpur-Maharashtra)

One should have a house,  
    With support of four pillars,  
And roof above for shelter,  
    From hot sun, cold and rain.  
One should have a house,  
    With door to knock at times,  
And to show a way to strangers.  
    A house should have a courtyard  
With a secrete basil plant  
    And an open space to use.  
A house should preserve the past  
    Dream for the coming future  
To have a bright peaceful present

A house should have a window  
To observe a distant horizons  
And sun and stars in the sky  
To have a peaceful today.

<Ph. 93728-588894>

## UNITING THE DIVERSITIES

Harekrushna Mahanta (Bhubaneswar-Orissa)

A great Indian  
Who delineates the real  
Spirit of the great sub-continent  
With his Kafa Intercontinental  
And International Writers Festivals  
Not only in many parts of India  
Uniting the diversities;  
But in many nations of Europe  
And rest of the world  
Preaching the message of  
Global peace and universal family –  
Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam.

To some Dev Sir  
And to some other Bhardwaj Ji  
The matured tall Indian  
With a soft heart  
And a very sweet voice  
I salute you  
And wish you to go ahead  
With your message of  
Universal brotherhood, benevolence  
And peace initiative.

Whether Luciana of Italy,  
Iwako of Japan or  
Juhi Sharma of Jalandhar  
You have encouraged them all,  
Inspired them all, blessed them all  
Delineated them all  
Before global readers.

May the Lord of Universe  
Give you enormous energy and  
Good health to serve humanity  
For many time to come.

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## MY CITY OF JOY !

Harish Ch. Pradhan (Bhubaneswar-Orissa)

This is my city of joy  
The city of golden sunshine

The city of rolling hills  
And swaying meadows

This is my city of joy  
On the banks of river Prachi  
Where the morning wakes  
You gently and spreads  
The smile of life  
Where the night holds you  
Softly and whispers  
The melody of eternal bliss

This is my city of joy  
Where there is hope  
On the face of despair  
Where there is smile  
On the face of demise

## RUMINATION

Harish Mangalam (Ahmedabad-Gujarat)

Of course education has made me smarter ma<sup>1</sup>!  
Perhaps you won't find on the torn shorts  
and the collar of the tunic  
that I wore in childhood,  
the dirt of the culture of Hind.  
How relieved it used to make you ma<sup>2</sup>  
to be given a potful of buttermilk at sunrise  
to quell the fire in our belly.  
Wasn't it thus that labour, buttermilk,  
untouchability and rotlo filled our empty lives ?

Such was Jethabha's weaving skill  
as would put a weaver bird to shame.  
In the whole of the land  
they used his pachhedis<sup>3</sup> to sleep  
Whereas we were robbed of our sleep!  
Now when I revive the memory,  
the loom lies still,  
the spinning wheel laments,  
and the spindles longs for  
the gentle touch of fingertips.

And yet the land is no longer the same.  
The people standing on their heads,  
the people here and there,  
to the right and to the left,  
to the left and to the right,  
the people distorted in this city.

And miles away they are from themselves,  
I can't help feeling nauseous.  
Sitting on a broken cot  
I have been waiting for ages  
and hoping for my condition  
to be flung away by a powerful cyclone.

1 & 2 = Ma (Mother)

3. Pachhedhi - Hand woven bed-sheet

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## THE MASK OF HAPPINESS

Harish Thakur (Shimla-Himachal Pradesh)

I could notice  
The mask of happiness  
That you have worn  
Over the crumpled face  
Charred by the burns of  
The atrociously white eyes.  
Your name sounds nice,  
It gives you a nice camouflage  
To mingle in the dreaded lands,  
And pass a countenance  
Fully equipped  
With happiness and prosperity.  
But what about the thick nose  
Dark eyes, black curled hair,  
Oblong face,  
And the pigments  
That turn you dark  
And unfold the gates of past  
Into a realm of gold  
That just languish  
And rot  
Inside your  
Sinking hearts.  
I could also see  
The sad volcano  
Rolling over and over  
In your heart  
And seeking a crevasse  
To explode and level  
The lands of inequality.  
Is there a place  
For my concern,  
And feelings of brotherhood  
In this land  
Where I have also seen  
The blue eyes

Hawking at me  
 As if another Gyppo has entered in.  
 Then there is a race  
 Nonchalant towards the movement  
 Of life and people.  
 The speed  
 That is life and time,  
 Gathers all the moss  
 And what is left behind  
 Is the odd creature  
 Having nothing to do  
 Except raining wrath  
 At the peppered will of racism.  
 I could also notice  
 That you have turned immune  
 To the dented-scapes of life  
 And have evolved a philosophy  
 Of your own,  
 A philosophy of peace and transcendence  
 That will engulf all the oddities.

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## THE MASKED SNAKE

Janardhan Pathania (Jammu - J & K)

Hai o Gypsy people !  
 A devil has sneaked among us,  
 He is a very greedy dog !  
 He fraudulently poses as a true Rom,  
 And shows of himself as a very intelligent man !  
 He is a liar who tarnishes the Gypsyhood,  
 and praises himself,  
 He is a cheat who steals the poor Roma's money!  
 If somebody ask him for the Romano Road  
 this dirty man misleads him,  
 This dirty man is enemy of the educated people!  
 For his bad deeds he expects good results,  
 What you sow so shall you reap the fool doesnt know !  
 What is humanity the devil doesnt know !

He is an insect of cow dung and lives happily there!  
 One fine day I removed the mask from the devil's face.  
 I found in front of me an old naked snake  
 with open hood!  
 Shyly the two-tongued snake told me,  
 You do friendship with me  
 and become wise like me!  
 Shut up! I wont obey you,  
 you dirty snake !  
 To me the Gipsyhood is very good  
 Oh you devil Snake!  
 don't stop my romani work you stinking snake!  
 Go to hell! Oh you dying old snake !

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## WHERE WAS THE SUN?

Jayanti M. Dalal (Mumbai-Maharashtra)

Where was the sun  
 When the trees  
 Swaying in the breeze,  
 The whimsical waves  
 Of the seas,  
 And the lush  
 Greenery of the earth  
 Absorbed the innumerable  
 Tears showering  
 From the sky?  
 Where was the sun  
 When the blazing earth,  
 The stony hands  
 Crucifying jesus,  
 And the blissful smiles  
 Of the dying men  
 Absorbed the drops  
 Of blood  
 Gushing forth from  
 An anguished body?

Where was the sun  
When the barbaric  
Satan blinded by  
Knives and  
The explosions of rifles  
And pistols,  
The demon thirsty  
of human blood  
Quenched their thirsts  
Through communal wildfire

*(Translated : Pavankumar Jain)*

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## MY MAMMY

Kasum Cana (Zagreb-Croatia)

Do not cry mammy because of me.  
I know I am your son, and do not  
Forget you are my mammy,  
I live far from you, maybe it is  
The will of God.  
I am hale and hearty, being no child any more.  
My eyes would like to see you.  
I shed tears, hair is getting grey and my eyes are  
Getting dark.  
I am mute, do not speak to anybody.  
Mammy, I pray God for you  
And for your health.  
God is every where and sees everything – you used to  
say.  
So now , God sees both you and me.  
Do not cry for me, mammy wait for me.  
I will come back.

*Translation from Croatian language in english by Mrs.Zlata Šimenc  
& Mr.Vlado Šimenc. Original written in Rromani (Gypsy)  
language by Kasum Cana*

Ph. 00385 91 253 71 54, <<romacana@yahoo.com>

## EYES

Leslie Tripathy (Bubhneswar- Orissa)

The World goes ga ga  
Over the eyes  
Films are made  
Poems written  
Promises cooked  
Worlds made  
Heavens explode  
But eyes are windows  
To soul  
Rainbows on hell  
When you are alone  
Eyes are skies  
Of a dreamless world

<touchstoneleslietripathy@gmail.com>

## LITERATURE AND WORLD PEACE

Minimon Laloo (Shillong-Meghalaya)

We are the world  
We are the family  
We are all friends  
None is our enemy  
Spread love in this world  
Haltred none at all  
Violence should be shun  
By each and every one  
Anti social elements must be curbed  
All are brothers and sisters to be loved  
Arms and weapons are enemy  
Of goodness who lived in tranquility  
Evil thoughts that provoked  
In the minds of those invoked  
Who disliked peace and harmony  
Who wants only bloodshed and militancy  
People lived in fear

Eyes full of tears  
Not knowing what 'll happen  
Their spirits dampened  
To avoid unwanted militancy  
We must respect national integrity  
And treasure Unity in diversity  
Only then peace will reign globally  
The whole world is one family  
Differs in the name of country  
Language as well as culturally  
But Unity will live in divinity.

Ph. 98630-97146

## HAIKU

N. P. Singh (Delhi)

Flowers bloom across  
barbed wires - splitting people  
in Jerusalem

Most of the people  
live one country - some in  
another country.

Earth has been soaked  
in the blood of the innocents  
a new race would spring.

Bullets can kill or  
maim but the dream of joy and  
hope will never die.

A rainbow balloon  
soars deeply in the blue sky  
generating hope.

Jerusalem would  
one day become the hyphen  
between Jews and Arabs

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## ONE+ONE=ONE

P.L. Sreedharan Parokode (Thenhipalam-Kerala)

Since the colour of  
blood does not say  
any difference in accepting and abandoning  
should the veins have  
quarrels and conflicts?

Since the sweat  
is treated as purified sweet  
should the labours have  
category and classifications?

Since tongues have the habit of  
saying the true vision only  
should the mouths have their wonderful  
openings?

Since there is nothing to be reckoned as inferior to or  
superior  
or more equal or lower than  
should we have the unnecessary adjectives as good  
and bad?

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## SPARROW

Dr. R. L. Thanmawia (Aizawl-Mizoram)

Dawn comes as wont,  
Sparrows flutter,  
Lighting on lines,  
Singing and chirping.

Feet light on lawn,  
Feeding on ants;  
Happily feeding,  
May it suffice.

Up comes the cock,  
Commands the lawn,  
Little sparrows,  
Flit fleetly off.

Being small of size,  
No match have they,  
Up tree they flow,  
Chirping ruely.

Up comes the sun,  
Hot boys running,  
With slings shooting,  
Scared birds cringing.

“Fly, fly, for life !  
We are undone !  
Whither shall we ?  
Whose blame is it”?

Come, dear Sparrows !  
Light on our lawn,  
Sing loud as can,  
On our clothesline.

For your day’s come;  
“Let none harm they”  
Nothing to fear,  
For you our joy.

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## HOIST THE MAN...!

Rama Krishna Perugu (Andhra Pradesh)

Not the arrival of spring  
But what is needed is the blooming of smiles  
The robe end of soul  
Ought to flutter like a white flag  
In the flowing river of blood  
Not as a warehouse of flesh and blood  
But a vision is needed to view the man  
As a tender leafy tower of friendship  
If the resting places of yester years  
Turn into today’s graveyard ruins  
The gardens of humanity of the day

Will turn to be desert lands of morrow  
And lay shattered as fragmented dreams  
In the storm of the despotic breaths  
To quell the fire of hunger is scientific,  
Than to create a nuclear warhead  
Not the sensational news about successful cloning  
It is noble to breathe fire into a lamp on the wane  
The blaze of Hiroshima violence  
The grief of corpses at Nagasaki  
Stand as signs of clamped ban on the breath  
The crushing of the young at the Tiananmen Square  
And the hate ritual of corpses in Lebanon  
Are undoubtedly the brutal axe blow  
On the roots of humanity  
What is to be achieved by killing the man?  
An empire of the graves?  
Or a rule of the waste lands?  
Forget your identities  
And come, forgetting your enmities  
Chisel the man as the heir of the Christ and Buddha  
Erect him as the refulgent white peak,  
And hoist him as the flag of peace!

Telugu original: Perugu Ramakrishna, India

Eng trans: jagaddhatri, India

Ph. 98492-30443, <perugu.ramakrishna@gmail.com>

## ISADORA DUNCAN

Ramesh B. Veluskar (Palem-Goa)

leaves  
of pipal tree  
trembled melodiously  
lost in trance  
like Isadora Duncun  
quietness  
on the calm water  
of lonely lake

wrinkled on it  
like dancing relief  
of Isadora Duncan  
memorizing  
torrential rainfall  
and uncontrolled river course  
the twinkling feet of  
Isadora Duncan  
Isadora:  
ballet of  
thousand of water streams,  
a choreography  
of lone coconut tree  
on the shore  
near the thundering waves  
engrossed in tandav ,  
a trance  
of dancing pipal tree  
leaves

Isadora  
Isadora

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## JOURNEY

Rrashima Swaarup Verma (Gurgaon-Haryana)

The hills that may have seemed so high,  
The sea had stretched so endlessly  
The mountain that had touched the sky,  
My heart was young, my spirit free

Did I hunt the endless lands?  
In search of God I'd never met  
Did I cross the seas and sands?  
For love I may someday forget

I walked for what had seemed like years,  
The summer days, the pouring rain

Sometimes my will succumbed to fears,  
But never did I think of pain

Many a time I'd stop a while,  
And visions then my heart would see  
Day after day, mile after mile,  
They'd come and go so fleetingly

I wondered where my steps would lead,  
I wondered where they'd take me to  
Dear God, did you then hear me plead?  
In times of pain, I ask of you!

Oh! There were times when fears had crept,  
Into my heart, into my mind  
Night after night I'd lain and wept,  
What wealth had I set out to find?

Dear God, I ask you to bestow,  
Such strength upon my restive heart  
That every time the winds may blow,  
I have again the will to start

There is a place I want to be,  
Where oceans deep and mountains high  
And all the joy my eyes can see,  
Behold the earth, behold the sky!  
Another day, another night,  
And I will walk a little more  
The sun and stars will lend me light,  
Until the waves will reach the shore

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## HUMANISM

Sham Singh (Chandigarh)

Perhaps it's not apt to say  
But streak of humanism is missing in man

All get divided into Sikh, Hindu and Muslim  
But none of them belongs to God.

Atheists are born as per God's will  
But God seems not be belonging to all

Blood that flows daily is the blood of human veins  
It is no body else's but of man

When Sham picked flame of his burning heart  
He ceased to be afraid of any other fire.

(Translated from Punjabi by Dr. Kulbir Kaur)  
Ph. 98141-13338

## SEED OF LOVE

Tidolis Snaitang (Shillong-Meghalaya)

I am a tiny seed,  
Human eyes cannot see me;  
Actually I am not hiding:  
God carved me on the palm of his hand-  
Until he restore me to become the seed of love.

I am a tiny seed,  
Human hands cannot touch me;  
As no one could touch the apple of my Father,  
So, I am precious in his eyes:  
And he'll plant me to become the seed of love.

Like a tiny seed under the hard cover.  
Break me as you break the cover of the seed:  
Cover of jealousy or boastfulness,  
Cover of ugliness, arrogant and rudeness,  
Cover of haughty spirit and proud;  
Cover of ill-manner, selfish and irritable,  
And all the filthy things that is within me.

I am a tiny seed in the hands of my Lord,  
And he has decided where to plant me;  
As the roots has grown deep where he has planted:  
There would be no one to pull me out,  
Like a tiny seed that sprang up and blooming-  
That tiny seed would become seed of love.

My heart like a fertile soil,  
Where the seed of love had grown;  
Little by little like a drop of water,  
Day by day overflowing in my heart:  
That comes from the heart of my Ffather-  
And I must treasure it until my last breath:  
For if I give my life as a living sacrifice,  
Or I lay down my live as burnt offering-  
But, without love it will not be accepted;  
I might have the pleasure of happiness,  
I might have the treasure of wealth ;  
I might have the power on earth-  
But, without love everything would be in vain.  
Lord! Thank you so much! for the seed of love,  
Let me not choose hatred but eternal love.

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## THINK YOUR SELF A BIRD

Vijay Rathore (Janjgir-Chhattishgarh)

Think yourself a bird  
Which has a never ending sky  
Think yourself a flower  
Whose fragrance has no limitations  
Think yourself the earth  
Which has an inexhaustible  
Treasure of tolerance  
Think yourself the sun  
Which has no darkness  
In its dictionary  
O, man,  
Do think ever  
That your knees should be bent

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## A FLOWER TREE

Uktamoy (Uzbekistan)

(I saw enormous flower trees in India - Author)

Capricious flowers are making charm  
To their cheeks hands would not reach.  
On my breast pressing their breathes  
On the lips I would lay my face tight.  
For a thousand years no word being uttered  
The feeling would seem flooding out.  
These trees might be lovers  
Whose patience has blossomed  
Expecting long their beloved.

## WITH A FINGER I'D WRITE VERSES

Uktamoy (Uzbekistan)

With a finger I'd write verses,  
Coping down the earth's pains.  
The painful picture in my eyes,  
Can't be wiped out by bygone days.

Over my head the Sun is shining,  
Around me the wind is blowing.  
The Sun a Giant is blocking,  
Alas, my body the wind is not touching.

My father, not earning enough in life,  
His tears with his sleeves wiped.  
Before the poverty he bended,  
An unbending proud head he had.

With a finger I'd write verses,  
Dipping it into my green heart.  
Until the ink of the heart,  
Pouring by God's will, dries out.

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## Book Review

Dr. Aparna Buzarbarua

*DEVASHRUTI (Anthology on Indian Classical Music)*

Edited by Parinita Goswami & Dev Bhardwaj

Published by: **Kafla Inter-continental (Chandigarh) &**

**Shruti-the School of Music (Guwahati-Assam)**

Pages : 240, Hard Cover, Price Rs. 300

### **DEVASHRUTI : A valuable collection**

*Debashruti* is a bilingual (Hindi & English) anthology of Indian Classical Music which was released recently. It has been edited by Parinita Goswami, a devoted and well known classical singer of Assam and Dev Bhardwaj, a famous fiction writer of Punjab. Both the editors have showed their worth in editing and compiling the book. It includes twenty articles which are contributed by scholars and artistes from various States of India like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Assam.

The first article includes the contribution of Dr. V. Gowri Rammohan, former Head of the Department of Music, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam who has described the influence of some factors which are very essential for a person at different stages of learning music to become a successful musician. Dr. Trushit Piyush Vaishnav, a music lover from Baroda (Gujarat) has explained some important aspects of music in the second article. In an analytical paper, he has scientifically described the concept of sound, frequency, musical intervals (i.e. frequency ratio) among the twelve notes. This subject will be of great use to the learners to understand the concept of mathematical science behind music and will thus help to

enhance their talent for better performance. The third article, written by Dr. T. Unnikrishnan, Prof & Head of Department of Music (Vocal), Indira Kala Sangit Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh, Chattisgarh, dwells on voice culture. Here, the writer has described elaborately on the need to practice correct breathing while singing by controlling the voice apparatus for melodious way of voice production without any strain.

The Hindi section includes nine articles describing the nature and importance of 'Bandish' in the Raga, the composition of Ragas in North Indian Music for its ascertainment and expansion which are contributed by Dr. Abha Chaurasia and Dr. Vibha Chausasia respectively.

Parinita Goswami, one of the editor of the book, has also contributed in the Hindi section about the 'Bargeets' of Assam. She has described nicely the language used in the 'Bargeet' and about its nature, time and style of singing. She has also showed the notation pattern used by Sri Sri Sankaradeva by taking the Raga Dhanashri as an example.

The other articles included in the book has also provided good source of knowledge regarding Indian classical music from the medieval period to its present day form. This book will be of immense value to the students, performers, researchers and teachers who are in the field of music.

## *Devashruti*

(an Anthology on Indian Classical Music)

ISBN : 978-81-907118-5-2, Year 2010, Pages: 240, Price : Rs. 300

### **Contents :**

#### **English Section**

Psychology of Music: Learning and Memory of Music by Dr. V. Gowri Rammohan; Scientific Analysis of Ragas of Indian Classical Music by Dr. Trushit Piyush Vaishnav; Voice Culture : A Branch of Knowledge Inevitable for all Singers by Dr. T. Unnikrishnan; The *Khandmeru* Method and its Practical Application in the *Gayaki* of Ustad Amir Khan by Dr. Ibrahim Ali; The Incomparable Chitravina by Chitravina N. Ravikiran; Music in Vedas by Dr. B. Pushpa; Journey - Royal Court to Public Auditorium by Snigdhatanu Banerjee; Changing Form of North Indian Classical Music in Modern Environment by Manoj Sharma; Syama Sastri: an Introduction by Dr. E N Sajith & Dr Mini N; Significance of the Musical Form *Krti* by Dr. Rajshri Sripathy; Thumri, Dadra and Tappa: Origin, Evolution & Synthesis by Priyaanka Mathur

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*Published by:*

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