

A Journal of
Mahatma Gandhi
Antarrashtriya
Hindi Vishwavidyalaya

hINDI
L A N G U A G E
D I S C O U R S E
W R I T I N G

Volume-9
April-June 2013

Editor
Mamta Kalia



Published by
Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya

हिन्दि

LANGUAGE DISCOURSE WRITING

April-June 2013

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Editor's Note

Why do we write? It's a question that confronts us inside and outside when we have already spent a good number of years in consuming reams of paper and scores of ball pens in writing. An initial answer can be related to our inner satisfaction, whatever that means. Another answer can be the need for self-expression. Obviously we cannot talk more than we already do. So what happens to all the extra words that lie in store within us? I have often wondered that a writer's post mortem report could carry all those suspended manuscripts that he proposed to write but couldn't. A simple incision would bring out his words of all hues-black, green, blue and not so blue. The best part is he would not be held responsible for this attic scrap.

Another question raises its head from an escape route, why does an artist paint or a singer sing? All creative effort has a spontaneity about it and does not like to confront query. Yet the question does crop up in conversations, interviews, research programmes and in academic discussions. Some artists give vague answers like 'it's my inner urge', or 'it's like labour pain and I have to deliver.'

Imagine Maqbool Fida Husain faced with such a question and his response. Oh, he would take up his brush with the longest handle and draw a flash of a line across the horizon. What if the same question was put up to Lata Mangeshkar or Girija Devi. They would answer back with a loooong alap or khayal.

The area of creative writing is more demanding and discerning. We all begin like naive and novice writers ready to imbibe our predecessors' influence. At some point of time we find it burdensome and bothersome. We are ready for our second innings. We look around the times and environment to find

all is not well with the world. Ultimately we write for a better order of things and values, ideas & ideals, dreams and hopes.

The present issue has Mohan Rakesh's famous short story 'malbe ka malik' and his notes of a play chattarian. There are other short stories by Chandrakanta, Doodhnath Singh, Tarun Bhatnagar and Ramesh Pokhariyal 'Nishank.' In discourse Dr. Gopichand Narang discusses Gulzar as a short story writer whereas Dr. Shambhunath brings out Dr. Ramvilas Sharma's uniqueness as a critic. Dr. Ganga Prasad Vimal gives us a candid analysis of Buddha Dev Bose as the point of departure in Indian literature. Bangla literature in particular suffered for some decades from the Tagore fixation in creative expression. Our poetry section has a few important poems of Kedar nath Agrawal. Kusum Ansal has travelled far and wide and her poems present her itinerary as well as an insight into her thought process.

Readers and contributors may please note that I wish to put down my blue pencil from the next issue. I am thankful for the love, liveliness and limitless co-operation that I received from one and all.

Mamta K...

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Rasa Theory and Modern Literature

Dr. Ramvilas Sharma

M.S. Kushwaha

About his new book, *Siddhant aur Adhyayan*, Babu Gulabrai writes : "In these essays I was faced with the problem of placing greater value on my own perspective or on the perspective of the *Shastras* (canonical writings). I decided to express my perspective on the basis of the *shastric* perspective. I did not think it proper to deprive the students of the knowledge of their ancestors by giving a detailed explanation of my perspective". Obviously, in this book, his explanation of literature is based on *Shastras*, though here and there he also mentions Western scientists and thinkers. On certain places it appears that he finds it difficult to measure new literature by old yardsticks. But he is not willing to give up old yardsticks even if in order to employ them, one has to pare the things to be measured.

In the first chapter of the book, sub-titled "*Kavya ki Atma*" (The soul of Poetry), the author, after discussing *Alankara*, *Vakrokti*, *Riti* and *Dhvani*, throws light on the 'soul' or essence of poetry : "Literature re-kindles life in dead hearts, and thus possesses the efficacy of the Ayurvedic *rasa*. Since *rasa* is the essence of poetry, it also expresses the *rasa* (juice) of fruits. *Anand* is its characteristic form; it is transcendental, self-luminous, conscious, indivisible and akin to *Brahmanand* (Bliss of God-realization)". In the context of *rasa* and psychology, Babu Gulabrai has quoted the views of McDuggal, William James, et. al. in support of the outlook of ancient *acharyas*.

After tallying the *anubhavas* mentioned in the works on *rasa* with those mentioned by Darwin, he avers that "in this matter our *acharyas* can keep pace with modern scientists". However, it is difficult to assert that modern scientists are 'scientific' on all occasions. This is specially true of William James and McDuggal. As far as Western Science is scientific, it is based on materialism. According to Gulabrai, the basis of Indian *Shastras* is the theory of *sachchidanand*. He has clearly stated it several times that the indivisibility of *rasa* can be proved only on the assumption of the indivisibility of the *anand-swaroop atma* (*atman*, or soul, whose nature is bliss). Hence similar descriptions of laughing and weeping/crying do not indicate that the viewpoint of the ancient acharyas corresponds with that of Western psychologists.

After mentioning the view of Bhatt Lollata, Bhattanayak, Abhinava Gupta et. al. in the context of *rasa-nishpatti* (*rasa*-realization), he says that the "*rasa* of poetry is *anand* which the *sahridaya* (the sympathetic reader) experiences after tasting his inherent *sthayibhava* (stable emotion), which has been evoked by *vibhavadi* and which, after having been purified of *tamoguna* and *rajoguna* becomes luminous with *satoguna*-dominated light of the self (*atma-prakash*)". Even if poetic *rasa* is blissful, the student's effort to reach it through the author's explanation is bound to shatter his/her indivisible soul into pieces. After this the author mentions the concept of 'type'. It is difficult to ascertain

where in the *Shastras* Babuji (Gulabrai) discovered this concept. If Sanskrit *acharyas* had used any term for this concept, Babuji made no mention of it.

While explaining *sadbarnikarana* (generalization) he had admitted that there is a vast difference between present ideas and the earlier ones. Earlier the protagonist used to be a king or chieftain of a high caste, but now a farmer like Hori could be protagonist of a novel. Babuji states: "In earlier times the hero used to be well-known because it was easier for the *sahridayas* to identify with him. Now the mentality of people has somewhat changed. Aristocracy no longer enjoys that respect. Hence it is easier for readers to identify with Hori." This means that the indivisibility of the soul was experienced earlier in the sagas of aristocratic families but now it is experienced in the stories of the exploitation of farmers. In both the situations there is no change in the indivisibility of the soul. *Sadbarnikarana* is such a *mantra* by which one attains universal love whether one worships the exploiter or the exploited. Babuji says, "*Shringara*, which takes the form of sensual pleasure in worldly life, is purified in poetry and reaches the level of *atmanand* (bliss of the soul). The attitude of the student of literature is tilted towards *satva-guna*". Thus the poets are permitted to depict sensual pleasure in literature. With the help of *chhanda* (metre) and *alankara* (figures of speech) it will automatically get purified and reach the level of *atmanand*. This will not lead only the poet to *mukti*

(emancipation) but also the reader (who is promoted by *sattvik bhavas*) to *Brahmaloka* (abode of Brahma).

Here I am reminded of one of my discussions with Dr. Nagendra. He had asked whether a good poem written on Hitler would be regarded *pragatisheel* (progressive)? From the viewpoint of *sadharnikaran*, this would certainly be regarded a progressive poem, for, from this point of view, both the individual and the type dissolve into the indivisibility of the soul. Since the social aspects of the subject are not taken into account, anti-social elements will also be included in it, and on the pretext of poetic purification they will be called *Brahmanand*. The way this doctrine has been explained makes it resemble the European doctrine which is no longer acceptable there. This doctrine is known as "Art for Art's Sake". Babuji no doubt wants that morality is not neglected/ignored, but if one asserts that literature should aim at the development of society, the spirituality (*chinmayata*) of literature will be endangered. Broadly speaking, there are two kinds of views regarding art. One view regards art as an instrument of improving society, and its success is measured from this point of view. The second view holds that art has nothing to do with the development or degradation of society; its success lies in providing *anand* or entertainment. Babuji states : "To believe that the purpose of art is above and beyond itself is to doubt its autonomy, and to drag it from the heaven of its independence to the pit of darkness." How is this argument

different from that of 'Art for Art's Sake'? If art is not supposed to be regulated by social influence, it will ultimately become anarchical, and it will neither lead to social welfare nor would it yield any *anand*. It should be kept in mind that the depiction or portrayal of an anti-social theme will not yield any pleasure to majority of people. Some people of the aristocratic class may enjoy this kind of art, but how long will they survive? It is, therefore, better to treat the subject-matter as the controller/regulator of art. Let art present the theme embellished with the help of all the devices it has at its disposal so that we are able to enjoy it. The acceptance of art as a means of improvement of society does not refute the claim that art affords us *anand*. It is possible to find a few *sahridayas* and connoisseurs in a feudal and capitalist society who derive pleasure only from those things which are inimical to the welfare of the larger community. But this is not inevitable. The modern critic should make these things clear.

Babuji has argued that when a medical doctor, who dissects dead bodies, and an economist do not think it necessary to have training in art, why should an artist degrade himself by consulting economists? In fact, the crux of the problem does not lie in turning art into economics or economics into art. The problem is whether the artist should or should not write on social and economic issues, and if he writes, what method should he adopt? However spiritual or indivisible an art might be, it cannot survive for a moment without material

sustenance. If it fights shy of philosophy, politics, sociology and economics, it could become an object of angels but it would have no relationship with this world. This is why the exponents of 'Art for Art's Sake' do not say that they will keep themselves away from social questions; their real intention is that they would have full freedom to ignore the welfare of the majority while writing on social issues. Thus they sabotage the social responsibility of an artist. In a sense, an artist's responsibility is greater than a sociologist's. An artist has got a sword made of form, *alankara*, language and *chhand*, which cuts sharper than the blunt knife of a sociologist. To tell him that the beauty of brandishing a sword is more important than the consideration of the heads that are cut off, is simply to be unfair to society. Suppose, Premchand, being an artist, chooses like Kishorilal Goswami to write stories full of *shringara rasa* instead of depicting the struggle of farmers, he would have validated Babuji's statement that "there is a special kind of absorption in *rati* (love) of *shringara*". But he would have not occupied a place in Hindi literature higher than that of Kishorilal Goswami. While writing on political and social issues, we cannot escape from our social responsibility.

Till recently we were afraid of all things originating from the West; we used to call westerners materialist and scientific, and boasted of our spirituality. But now, when we find anything relevant there, we make a mention of it in order to link western materialism to our spirituality. The doctrine

of 'Art for Art's Sake' is the legacy of the decadent capitalist society of Europe. It was accepted neither by European scholars nor earlier Indian scholars. But progressive ideology appears to be inimical to Indian spirit while this rotten European doctrine seems to be akin to it. According to Babuji, "The essential meaning of 'Art for Art's Sake' resembles the Indian concept of *svantah sukhay* (for self-pleasure's sake)." Not only this, if we explore the roots of arts we will find that our *acharyas* had said the same things which the analysts of suppressed desires like Freud and Jung have said. "Jung according to me, is closer to Indian perspective." What is Jung's ideology which is closely connected with Indianness? According to Jung, there are two dominant feelings in human beings : first, the feeling of superiority, and second, the feeling of sexuality. From, this point of view, there are two types of human beings : introvert and extrovert. In the first category, the feeling of sexuality has the upper hand, and in the second, the feeling of superiority. Babuji says that in Upanishads, self-love (*atma-prem*) is deemed the root-cause of all activities. "Both sexuality and the feeling of superiority are the inferior forms of self-love. Both are governed by the feeling of security. Sexuality is also a kind of feeling of superiority and the feeling of superiority is a metamorphosed and self-expressive form of sexuality." In this way Babuji has synthesised psychoanalysis with Upanishads. Psychoanalysts probe very deeply into the mind and its inner recesses,

but they do not assert that human consciousness evolves, and that its evolution is affected by environment and circumstances. Man is a social being who wants to live with other human beings. In this process of living together literature is created as a form of social activity. The psychology which denies the social aspects of human beings is not only incomplete but also inefficient. These scientists throw the light of their science on the slide of the self (*atma*), taking it to be inanimate and static. They do not believe in the conscious and evolving nature of the self. This is why their supporters, on the one hand, consider the feeling of superiority and sexuality as the motivating force of life, and on the other, they "experience in literature an undivided and transcendental bliss" through the process of generalization (*sadharnikaran*). According to them, if some artist, without facing life squarely, creates a utopian heaven, he cannot be blamed. Babuji speaks of "healthy escapism" which serves as a prop in life. This means that an escapist is also a supporter of progress. In the same way *Bhakti* (devotion) is sugarcoated with sensuality, and *Shringara* (sensual love) with *Bhakti*. Babuji states : "A poet, like Freud's dreamer, takes recourse to symbolism in some measure. Sometimes he veils *Bhakti* with sensuality, and sensuality with *Bhakti*. And sometimes poets, in order to render it more attractive, sugarcoat *gyan* (wisdom) and *Bhakti* with sensuality." Perhaps, without such a stratagem, they would not be called artists.

Literature is subject to evolution, and it is an important social activity. The greatest proof of this assertion lies in the fact the theories that the ancient *acharyas* (scholars) had constituted with a view to future application cannot be applied to new modern literature in entirety. Any attempt to apply them will either break the scale or force to clip our legs. New literature cannot be evaluated with the yardstick of nine *rasas*. If such an attempt is made, it will result in the following observations :

- "If a novel contains a condemnation of some bad custom, it will be deemed to have *Bibhatsa* as the dominant *rasa*."
- "The evil which occurs to the oppressed because of the oppressor is an object of *Karuna*."
- "In modern novels it is difficult to determine which *rasa* is dominant, but they may be analyzed from the viewpoint of *rasa*."
- "(In *Sevasadan*) there is a feeling of respect towards prostitutes amongst Hindus. This is an example of *Bibhatsa*."
- "The Main purpose of *Gaban* is to expose women's love of ornaments and men's display of their wealth and its ill-consequences, and the moral courage and the spirit of reformation displayed by the wife prompted by her devotion to her husband. From the viewpoint of *rasa*, we will regard it as a

progression from *Shringara rasabhasa* (semblance of *Shringar*) to true *shringar*."

- "Some utterances because of their relationship to politics, are considered to be of *vira rasa*."

It is clear from these quotations that how difficult it is to apply old theories to new literature. Even after facing this

difficulty, it remains doubtful how far these theories help us in understanding literature. Currents of life are so intertwined together that they cannot be barricaded by nine rasas, and forced to flow according to one's whims. The works of Premchand have proved that for the evaluation of this new literature, new theories, answering to the needs of the times, have to be discovered.

Dr Ramvilas Sharma (1912-2000), was an outstanding Hindi scholar and critic. He has authored numerous books, including *Nirala Ki Sahitya Sadhana*, *Mahavir Prasad aur Hindi Navjagran*, *Bharat ke Prachin Bhasa Parivar aur Hindi*, and *Paschim Asia aur Rigved*. He lived in Agra.

M.S. Kushwaha, retired as Professor and Head, Department of English and Modern European Languages, Lucknow University, Lucknow. He has published a voluminous Hindi commentary on the well-known text of Sanskrit grammar, *Laghusiddhānta-Kaumudi*. He has also edited two volumes of essays on Sanskrit poetics. He lives in Lucknow.

Gulzar as a Short Storywriter

Gopichand Narang

S.S. Toshkhani

The world of films is a strange world of glitz and glamour. It has only one door for you to get in and several doors to exit. These are the times of pop culture. People suddenly reach dizzying heights of success and then suddenly disappear as if they never existed. But there are such people also who come to limelight after years of hard work, shine now and then in their place and show light to those who have lost the way. The world has changed a lot and so have its realities, yet there are some realities that have not changed. For instance, the affairs of Lakshmi and Saraswati. Although Lakshmi is now in the company of the politicians, and Saraswati is sitting alone with her Veena, there are certain things that continue to be as they were. One is on the highest heaven and the other on the ground. It is quite likely that you may win the favour of one of them, but winning the favour of both at the same time is not so easy. However, if your penance is perfect, and your practice as well as your dedication is sound, there is something for you to really marvel about. And the personality of Gulzar is just such a marvel. Some years back when Gulzar's writings had started appearing in the art circles of Lahore — and I agree with the views of Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi in this respect and know that he has turned all sorts of people into pure gold — but since Gulzar had come via

glamour and fame, I always looked at his writings with suspicion. But as I kept reading him, my pleasant surprise continued to increase. And now that I have read his short stories, I am further surprised. You may or may not be surprised, but at least you will not remain what you were after reading them.

That Gulzar is an artist there is no doubt about that. But there is difference between art and art and every art has its own criteria. It is not necessary that an artist in one genre will be equally successful in another genre. Fame in films apart, I could hardly imagine that he would be so good at story writing. With many things in literature it is the same as in love. Planning or formulas do not work there. In fact much that happens in it is unintentional and abrupt with conscious effort not having as much a hand as unconscious inner excitement. Some people start writing late. There is no hard and fast rule about it but practice is an essential condition for propitiating the goddess of art. I believe Gulzar must have been writing from the beginning due to his inner compulsions and must have been deriving solace from it. When writing becomes a means of achieving inner ecstasy and solace and not of any outer attainment or gain, then it begins to assume the colour of creative inquiry. And if you have awareness of what art demands, it is all the more better. As I kept on reading his short stories, my apprehensions about his literary

capacity continued to turn into a pleasing reassurance. It is not often necessary for one to read everything for expressing an opinion, particularly when one feels that the rest is also similar. But Gulzar is a beguiling artist; he tricks you at every step. Often it is seen that when film people write they can hardly come out of romantic or formulaic writing. That is, they return again and again to the same kind of atmosphere in which they have passed their life. Romantic subjects sort of constrict their minds, and this constriction catches hold of them like the original sin, and they can never rise above it. But amazingly in case of Gulzar the story writer in him is not merely the creator of this wavelength or that wavelength. In his case a new aspect of life is unravelled in every story of his, a new level, a new angle, a new experience which reveals a mind or a consciousness not attached to this or that outlook, but to the truth of life in its entirety or that vast experience of life that does not create boundaries, does not raise enclosures, does not stop at any one level of relationship, hates, loves, but looks right through realities and embraces all the varied facets of life and all dimensions of experience.

For any artist this is no ordinary feat. Ghalib had described a musical instrument as a repository of melodies. Gulzar's short stories need only a little tuning and notes of life's music start flowing from them. For an artist who has dedicated his entire life to film-making, it is no small

achievement that he has written short stories which are full of the music of life with each story presenting a different aspect and different experience of life.

Let us have a look at some of these short stories. Addha and Khairu are very interesting short stories in the respect that the characters delineated in them are not of the ordinary type. Addha is called Addha or 'half a man' by everyone; he is neither a whole man nor three-fourths a man, just half a man. He was dwarfish in stature, but he would straighten out everybody's affairs. Though small himself, there was no work that was big for him. When Radha Kamalani was teased by goondas while returning from her college, it was Addha who saved her, and yet everyone called him 'half a man'. Radha also regarded him to be 'half a man'. Then he started a relationship with Satya, who worked as a prostitute in some flats of the same locality. It was when rumours that Satya had given birth to an illegitimate child spread that Addha's manhood was put to real test. Everyone decided to turn her out of all the flats. Addha came forward with his chest swelling with pride and adopted the child. So it could be said that he of whom the whole world made fun by calling him *addha* or 'one half', turned out to be a complete man. In the same way, Khaira is also a downtrodden character, with everyone regarding him as worthless. He does superfluous jobs, like putting small bells round the necks of bullocks, painting

their horns, decorating them, painting designs on earthen pitchers, singing and playing at the village chaupal. In other words, he represents the aesthetic aspect of life, which is obviously unprofitable. To the village people, whatever he did was to earn his board. People thought that he was doing unessential jobs. How long could he live as a parasite. He began to starve, fell ill and died. Then people of the village began to realize that something great was missing, that he, who did superfluous jobs, had much to do with all that made life beautiful.

One of his short stories *Mard* is based on the relationship of a mother and her son. The parents are divorced; their young son is in the hostel. The mother develops relations with another man. The son comes home during vacations and the mother wants to tell him that she is pregnant and is going to marry the man after some time. But the son, whom the mother still considers to be child, guesses it as soon as he arrives and the male inside him screams out, "Whose child is this bastard?" As if it is not the son but the father who is speaking. Or, the son is acting as the father's proxy. Or, in the society that is in the centre of our discussion, it is the men who have all the rights. Or is it that howsoever much the parents may consider their children to be just kids, inside they grow up fast. In the same way, there is another interesting short story that is based on the relationship of a child and his

grandmother. Scolded for stealing ten paise by the grandmother, the boy runs away from home, catches a train, and, clenching the ten paise coin in his closed fist, gets down at a wayside station as he is scared of the night. He is alone and helpless. Waking up in the morning he finds that he has been sleeping clinging to an old beggar woman who has died. People gather and start collecting money for her last rites. The boy remembers his grandmother and throwing the coin in the bowl, runs towards his home looking for his grandmother. Gulzar has depicted not only the child's emotions, but also the fact that it is only when we lose things that we realize their value, or rather, losing and finding are two sides of the same reality.

As has already been said, Gulzar's short stories are a picture gallery of diverse aspects of life, whose portrayal by him is driven everywhere by a vision that penetrates deep into the core reality of things. These include stories of ordinary relationships of common people that present some peculiar aspect, and also stories of the downtrodden and marginalised people that are suffused with human sympathy. Similarly, there are stories of kings and potentates, and also of Thakurs and Rajputs, and likewise of dacoits. Or else, there are stories in which there is the element of fantasy, or magic realism as it is now called. It is not possible to analyse all these aspects in a brief article like this, but the discussion will not be complete without the mention of some

short stories. It is also worth considering that among Gulzar's characters we find all kinds of people — high and low, big and small, women, men, aged persons, children, youth — together with their deeds and conduct. Sanjh is the story of a Lala and his old wife. The Lala is troubled by the fact that his wife has got her hair cropped in imitation of the mother of her son-in-law without as much as asking the old man. This short story is worth reading for its depiction of old age emotions and boasting. In another story this very quirk for glorying becomes a matter of personal honour and creates separate spectra of meaning. In *Zinda*, Raja Sahib's only son, who is a cripple, doesn't like people to take pity on him because he wants to live by the power of his will that "my limbs exist because of me, I do not exist because of my limbs". But when his father gets him married, he loses his patience because earlier when people would take pity on him, he would summon the power of his will to exist; now when those very people start making fun of him, he can accept the fact of his being a cripple but not becoming the butt of ridicule. Both are existential situations, but while escape is possible from the first there is no escape from the second. And that is why it is fatal. In stories about high families also the real issue concerns aspects of the human condition. Same is the case with the short stories about the poor and the distressed, paupers, workers etc. In two of his short stories he has drawn

a graphic picture of the domestic life of washer-men. *Unchi edi wali mem* (The Lady Wearing High Heels) is actually a bicycle given as a gift which has become the cause of discord between Chhabba and Mahku. The story revolves around an incident that shows how false kindness and consideration of the moneyed can sow seeds of bitterness in the lives of innocent people. As a consequence of it, Mahku does not desist even from stealing the ornaments of Chhabba's wife in order to show him down. Another short story *Hath pile kar do*, (Get the Girl Married), is a tragedy of the fishermen of the Bay. It is beautifully structured around a circular course of events in which we see that whatever happened to Malti when she was young is now going to happen to her daughter. In her youth, Malti was in love with Ramnath, a driver who would blow horn three times when bringing bundles of dirty clothes and Malti would come running to him on hearing the tune. One night Ramnath was caught and the washer-men joined together to murder him. Now that Malti's daughter has grown up, Malti's hands suddenly stop while serving food when she hears the sound of the horn on the night that the Bay fills with the water of the tide.

In some of Gulzar's short stories, man-woman relationships, as well as self-deceptions, are shown to break. Man himself invites these illusions and lives by them in mutual relationships. But often

these illusions are shattered, though their magic remains somewhere in the unconscious mind, and men and women depend on this magic to live, though one day the cruel face of truth shows itself and we feel shattered.

Some of the interesting stories are about psychological entanglements of young men and girls belonging to the middle class. *Kaghaz ki Topi* depicts conflict between characters who have reached adolescence of which disagreement is obviously an aspect, but which also points towards the secret throbbing of two hearts caused by their mutual attraction and their ego preventing them to accept it. Similarly, in *Gudi* we are face to face with two sisters of whom the younger one wants to surpass the elder one in everything. Slowly this innocent psychological desire takes the form of deep envy. The story also exposes the love which young men and women nowadays fall into with film actors only to get soon disillusioned over small things and consequently feel awfully shocked. *Navavarad* too is about breaking of imaginary expectations which most people begin to entertain after reading nice predictions in newspapers. Some people seek to apply them in marriage matters also and then feel shocked. These short stories deal with everyday occurrences and humorous aspects of life, which some people take seriously and then face difficulties.

One expects Gulzar to have taken many

of his episodes and characters from the film world, but that is not the case. Only two of his short stories are related to film personalities, and even these are not one-dimensional romantic stories. They are based on the pain caused by the deep sorrow and tragedies occurring in the life of some genuine artists. And they have such an admixture of reality and fantasy in them that it is difficult to describe their narrative style as magic realism. These two short stories are *Bimal Da* and *Sunset Boulevard*. *Bimal Da* is Bimal Roy of course with whom Gulzar had worked for years as an assistant. Bimal Roy was at Triveni, the confluence of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati where the Kumbh Festival is held after every twelve years when nine planets revolving round the sun are in a straight line and the first rays of the sun fall on their confluence. The ninth day of this festival is scheduled as the day for the ascetics' bath called *JogiSnan*. Bimal Da wanted to make a film on the Kumbh Festival, which he started but could not complete as by the time the twelve years period ended, the journey of his own life came to an end on the same very day on which the *JogiSnan* was scheduled to take place. The other story, *Charulata*, is the story of the old age of a faded film star. She is surviving on past memories in *Sunset Boulevard*, a famous mansion of its time which is now only a shadow of its past grandeur. And before even these memories are snatched away from her and a bargain

for the mansion is settled, *Charulata* breathes her last with the visiting card of the buyer in her hand. There are shades of tragedy in both the short stories with the pain of non-fulfilment tingling in both of them, away from the pleasures and glitter of life.

Vahima is an example of pure fantasy. Gulzar himself was not sure of what name he should give to the story. First its title was *Vahima*, which was later changed to *Lekin*, perhaps because what occurs in it is supposed to be a reality. But it is not a reality; it is the commonly accepted conception of reality and non-reality. Through this story Gulzar has put a question mark before the common conception of reality, taking help of Krishnamurti's idea of reality and its difference from non-existence, which he calls a phenomenon of the human mind. In this story there is mention of a man who was moved down by a railway train. The train does not arrive at the station now, the platform, the railway track, the signal all are lying desolate, but every night the narrator meets a man named Devraj who forbids people to walk on the track : "Don't you see, the train is arriving." He says that his young son Shyam was mowed down by the train. After some days Devraj stops coming. The narrator visits him at his home to ask about his welfare and the person who opens the door is that man's son Shyam. Shyam says that his father Devraj was moved down by a train at the

station and killed three years ago. In between the lines of the story the discussion on Krishnamurti's quote that everything is after all what we imagine it to be continues. It is reality only to the extent we accept it as reality, otherwise both life and death are fantasies.

To make a proper assessment of the canvass of Gulzar's creativity, it is necessary to mention the short stories that centre or revolve around religious passion, terrorism or fear. These stories are also as unique as some others are. Undoubtedly, thousands of stories must have been written on the subject of riots, but Gulzar's short stories stand apart and are unique. In the short story titled *Khauf*, he has depicted the kind of terror that paralyses the mind in an atmosphere of religious frenzy. In this story, after hiding here and there for five days to save his life, Yasin, a commuter in Bombay's local train whose bakery has been set on fire, is shown going home by a local train, secretly and in fear. The compartments are deserted. Suddenly he sees a shadow entering the compartment and standing in wait. Yasin fears that it is some unknown person who is going to kill him. As soon as he gets the opportunity, he lifts the man between his legs and throws him out of the running train. After this Gulzar has written only one sentence which is the life and soul of the whole story: "He heard a cry coming from the falling man - Allah!" This short story can be counted among the most effective stories

written on religious riots, showing how religious frenzy becomes a means to negate even one's own reality. Ravi Par is another such unique and intensely tragic story. In this story Darshan Singh comes out of a Gurdwara along with his newly born twins and wife, and walking through the crowd, climbs on to the roof of the special train. Both the children continue to suck the dry breasts of their mother. There is no milk or water and one of the children dies during the journey. When the train passes through the Ravi Bridge, a fellow passenger says, "Sardar Ji, how long will you keep the dead child's body with you. Throw it from here into the river. You will be blessed." Darshan Singh picked up the bundle and uttering '*Wahe Guru*' tossed it into the river. A faint voice of a child was heard in the darkness. The body of the dead child was there, clinging to the breast of the mother, and people were raising slogans - "We have reached Wagah! We have reached Wagah!" It seems as though on passing through the frontiers of freedom, we too threw away our living values, and the dead body of hatred, terror, bigotry and narrow-mindedness, which we should have thrown away, is still with us, clinging to our chest. And what we regard as something exciting is actually our tragedy.

I wanted to keep this article brief, but it would be necessary to mention one or two short stories of his which are different from all other stories, to do justice to him.

The short story *Najum* (astrology) belongs to the genre that is called science fiction today. It talks of the sun, which is now extinct after burning for millions of years and is ten thousand light years away from us on the basis of the speed of light calculated at 1, 86,000 miles per second. Even now if a flash bursts forth, its flames touch a height of twenty to twenty-two miles and their light (after having travelled a distance of ten thousand light years) was seen on this earth once in 1841 and for the second time in 1854. These scientific events have been narrated, linking them with the letters of Mirza Ghalib's employees Kalu and Munir and knowledge of the stars with the beliefs of people of this age. This has been done by identifying the appearance of the new star with the good news for the Mughals in the form of the publication of Mirza Ghalib's *Dewan* (anthology of poems), which surely is the brightest star of Mughal culture. And the reappearance of this shining star in 1854 has been indicated by the death of Ustad Zauq and Ghalib's emergence as a master and eventually securing his literary position. The junctures of astrology and science and history that Gulzar must have passed through in giving shape to this story and the use he has put to the creative fusion of all the three has resulted in an interesting narrative coming before us. Like *Najum*, *Aag* and *Jangal Nama* are also enjoyable short stories, and one aspect of this joy is that young and old, high and low all

can severally exact information from it. Besides having an archetypal element in them, these stories can also be described as eco-friendly. *Aag* has an ambience of prehistoric aborigine imagination depicting how the prehistoric man must have tamed fire and taken it to his house. Today we have such a profusion of ecological expertise and eco-friendliness that one cannot hear anything else. The terrestrial region is on the verge of destruction and in the hands of the creature known as man water, river, mountain, tree, vegetation, beast, bird nothing is safe. Air, cloud, environment, space, everything is becoming saturated with poison, and the depletion of ozone is altogether a different matter. In such a situation Gulzar's short stories are like the puff of a morning breeze blowing from the forest in which man, animal, beast, bird, tree, plants, appear to be bound together by one common thread. And at one end of that thread is Salim Ali, lover and intimate friend of birds, who was as much a human being as an interpreter of the larger meaning that goes beyond human life, the full significance of which is yet to be known.

In view of such a variety of stories, Gulzar has certainly earned the right to be called a skilled storywriter. There could be more aspects of this brief study, but it would suffice to say only this much at this time. The hues of life displayed in these short stories, the vastness of the experience, the art of developing an

incident into a story, the intricacies of human psychology, the problems of the downtrodden and man and woman relationship they articulate, or the way spirits and humans, forests, cosmos or planets have appeared in life — these can help us in having some idea of Gulzar's story-writing and also of the question that whichever aspect of life's experience Gulzar has taken up, his artistic, creative, aesthetic treatment of it is such that everywhere some point, some hint, some secret, some unique thing that Gulzar has presented has taken the form of an event or a character, or

a story. And this is not an ordinary thing. You have observed how there is life's symphony in his stories and how every note is distinct from the other. No story is a copy or imitation of any other story. Gulzar's short stories are the book of life. You will find some pages of this book here. The reader can approach them from anywhere he likes. The ground is luxuriant, the atmosphere bright and there is also provision for hilarity and happiness in the thick of life and, if one has the eye for it, also for meaningfulness and understanding of subtleties.

Gopichand Narang, born 1931 at Dukki, Baluchistan, is a prominent scholar and critic of Urdu who has more than 56 published works to his credit. He has been honoured with Sahitya Akademi Award. He has received honours from Italian, Canadian and Pakistan governments. Recipient of Padmshri and Padmabhushan, he has been vice-chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia University and professor at Delhi, Wisconsin and Oslo Universities. He has been president of Sahitya Akademi and Vice-President, National Council for promotion of Urdu. Some of his famous books are : Beeswin Shatabdi ka Urdu Sahitya, Urdu par Khulta Daricha, Manto : Punravalokan ki Bhumika, Urdu : Hamari Zuban. He lives in New Delhi.

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India, Indianness and Buddha

Dev Bose

Ganga Prasad Vimal

Shobha Narain

Buddha Dev Bose undoubtedly surpassed most of the writers of the post-Tagorian period in richness and variety of his creative output. In many ways his literary activities equal that of Tagore in quality and range, and yet one could say, Buddha Dev Bose chartered a different path for himself out of the shadow of Tagorian tradition in Bangla literature. A very valid example of this could be seen in the association of many of his contemporaries with the magazine 'Kavita' which for more than a quarter of a century led the critical discourse in Bangla writing. Though not basically anti-Tagore, yet there are internal echos of discontent with Tagorian thought. The inclusion of the poetry of Jiwananandadas and partiality towards progressive ideology along with its rejection of a feudal outlook are expressions of disagreement with Tagore and in a way an indirect criticism of Tagore. Today, looking objectively at the history of the development of Bangla literature, we can decipher two strands of writing, one that considers Tagore as the pinnacle of creativity in Bangla literary sphere and the other which believes in forging distinctive literary styles and levels of creativity independent of Rabindranath Tagore. This stream develops in the progressive writings

of Subhash Mukhopadhyay and poets like Bishnu De, whose poetic contributions are considered to have brought about a significant reorientation of Bangla Literature. In fact, the changes that emerged in Bangla writings after Bankim, Sharat, Tagore are the outcome of experimentation in content and styles of writings. Among Bangla writers as also in Buddha Dev Bose one sees the tendency to free themselves from the influence of Tagore, though ironically it is possible only after an extensive study and a deep understanding of Tagore's writings.

Dr. Alope Ranjan Dasgupta in his monograph on Buddha Dev Bose reaches a significant conclusion about him that Buddha Dev Bose discovered with his predilection in literary criticism through Rabindranath or the study of Ravindra Sahitya. It can be said without doubt that the Indian readers came to know of Rabindranath Tagore's greatness — through the discursive writings of Buddha Dev Bose as also through the writings of other Bangla writers, Dr. Alope Ranjan Dasgupta who had worked with Buddha Dev Bose in Jadavpur University in the field of comparative literature clarifies — the best examples of Tagorian criticism are found in the literary studies of Buddha Dev Bose. They are neither biography nor literary criticism but incorporate the qualities of both. This is to say that B.B. created a new type of critical genre to understand Tagore. Buddha Dev Bose understood the

colossal that was Tagore. His study falls in the same category as that of Ajit Kumar Chakravarty, Premanath Vidhi and Prabhat Kumar Mukhopadhyaya.

Certainty Buddha Dev Bose evaluated after serious scrutiny Tagore's significance and relevance to our times. He admitted that Tagore is a literary phenomenon and nature is an important aspect of his literary oeuvre.

Almost all of the initial twentieth century Bangla writings are influenced by Tagore. It is natural that Tagore is not only appreciated but venerated in Bangla literature. But later 20th century literary evaluation of Tagore has been more objective than the earlier criticism, since it could detach itself from the emotional burden of proximity to the great writer. Questions are begun to be raised about Tagore's literary contribution, this is that second strand of writing which recognizes the literary merit of both old and new and their respective contribution to the making of modern Bangla literature. In this context, Tagore should be recognized as a creative harbinger, wielding massive influence on writers and their writings alike. All this could possibly happen when Tagore's multifaceted genius was understood and his literary impact defined. Buddha Dev Bose undertook this task in a planned manner though respecting Tagore's genius yet undeterred by his reputation, he was guided by his own incisive judgement and intellect.

Buddha Dev Bose's writings on Tagore not only reveal Tagore as a great Indian writer, a scholar and a literary genius, but Buddha Dev himself appears as a great critic. This was a new *avatar* for him, if one looks deeply into Buddha Dev Bose's criticism of Tagore, one realizes that Buddha Dev through his criticism was trying to establish the importance of one's own speech and language, though himself a writer in English and also a professor of English, he propagated the glory and importance of Bangla through the medium of English. This sentiment is in 'sync' with Rabindranath Tagore's own commitment to 'Swabhasha'. Even the critics of Buddha Dev Bose have agreed that Bose's purpose of criticizing Rabindranath Tagore's to present an intimate view of Tagore's modernity as opposed to his own traditionalism." This is to say that Tagore's vision is not completely 'modern' as is obvious from his affectionate bias towards orientalism, which is also seen among the Bengali elite. This, according to some is a regressive medieval tendency. Tagore's partisan view of the medieval poetry can be seen in his belief of its contribution to literature and also in his great choice of selection of Kabir's verses and transliteration of hundred verses of the poet. Rabindranath Tagore considered this as an important contribution of his. It would be valid to give three instances to prove Rabindranath Tagore's bias towards Indian languages and

Indianism. It would be right to say that Tagore was well aware of the importance of English and other European languages along with Indian languages. After getting the Nobel Prize, one would think that he would be a supporter of English and other European languages and would consider his own language infradig, on the contrary he preferred to be known as a writer of Bangla though he was not against translations in other languages. He was, as said earlier, a great proponent of Indian languages.

Buddha Dev Bose has defined Tagore objectively with rare insight and incisiveness. Buddha Dev Bose as said earlier was not a votary of the English language, in spite of his training in this language, like many 20th century educated Bengalis. He knew that Anglo-Indian poetry is like "a blind alley, selling a variety of wares but not leading you anywhere," the famous poet W.B. Yeats, in the year 1937, had reminded Indian writers—"that one cannot think or write in other than his own mother tongue" Even those critics who held the view that Buddha Dev Bose was a man of western thinking agreed on one point that Buddha Dev Bose had a deep and life long relationship with the Bengali language.

Buddha Dev Bose was considered an intellectual, but as a novelist he was accused of obscenity. And because of his openness and liberalism of ideas, he was thought to be having a western perspective. Is an

open attitude towards love and transparency in descriptions of relationships to be regarded as obscene? The truth that he stood for was without violence, hatred and doubts against anyone; how could this attitude be termed obscene? In India 'virginity' falls in the same category of regressive thinking as the ideas about prestige of the family or the honour of the clan. Virginity as the supreme idea of human behaviour is nothing but a misguided concept propagated by uneducated religious zealots. Buddha Dev Bose was an iconoclast, who wrote against orthodoxy and misguided traditionalism, even at the cost of his own reputation. The Hindu fanatics did not have the courage to oppose such retrograde ideas as Buddhadev could, who inspired progressive Marxist thinking, though it would not be wrong to say that even the Marxist philosophy suffered from opportunism.

Buddha Dev Bose did not care for criticism of his ideas or even insulting rejection of his view point; he was definitely ahead of his times.

He wanted to create a new but progressive Indian vision. As an extremely prolific writer of about fifty novels and thirty-five collections of short stories, the accusation against Buddha Dev Bose of westernization would be definitely misplaced. His first book appeared even before he turned nineteen. He was part of the 'Kallol' movement. He lived through

the periods of the great Bengal famine, the two world wars and the partition of Bengal. He experienced the pain of Nowa Khali with Gandhi. He might not have dealt with these topics in his creative works, but he had had a first hand experience of these tragedies. He was a modern who had expanded the horizon of Bangla literature. Besides his great contribution to Bengali literature, his literary criticism contributed to the development of methodology, in the field of comparative Indian literature. This has without doubt strengthened the Bengali language.

Buddha Dev Bose does not suffer from romantic sentimentalism *vis-a-vis* the Bengali language. He understands the importance of the usage of the English language, being fully conversant with the national, regional and social realities of India. At the same time, using tools of modern evaluative techniques he tried to procure for Bangla its rightful place as an important Indian language. He initiated a new genre in the field of Bengali literary criticism, using parameters, which later became the foundation of the relatively new field of comparative analysis. In fact this study of literature through comparative techniques was an idea of Tagore. He thought of literature as belonging not only to one race or nation but to the entire world. B.B. integrated and developed this approach in the course of his study of World literature. His interactions with his contemporaries also contributed to the

development of the idea of a world literature, while the theories of foreign writers were also available to him. Dr. Alope Ranjan Das Gupta believes that Sudhindranath Dutt and Vishnu Dey in no mean measure played a role in Buddha Dev Bose's formulation of the idea of Rabindranath Tagore, it was not only to prove his completeness as a writer but also to explore in his writings an Indianism which links him to his roots. We should stop looking at literary texts from a national or a narrow parochial angle, because this limits the base of a text and often presents it as a mere presentation of some old values.

That is to say that literary Catholicism is possible only if one rids oneself from narrow mindedness. This freedom from rigidity of thought and prejudices gave Buddha Dev Bose a new outlook which as already shown, started with his study of Rabindranath Tagore and later developed into a critique of language and literature based on comparison. Buddha Dev Bose's prose style is unparalleled. It is not only meaningful writing, but also has multiplicity of meanings as an artistic creation. He was a scholar of both ancient and modern Indian literature along with English and world literature. He understood the complexity of comparative studies. He creates a comprehensive methodology before he embarks on his study. His role in the making of Indian comparative literature as a discipline of scholarship is undoubtedly unique.

Comparative studies require knowledge of more than two subjects. Buddha Dev Bose developed a comparative methodology that was just right for the Indian situation where there is a plethora of languages though admittedly a common undercurrent links them. The seed, contains many of those characteristics which get revealed when one digs below the surface. Buddha Dev Bose's research developed a scientific outlook on the study of Indian literature that brought out to the surface the common inner core of Indian literature. The real India lives through its traditions and its dialects. The borrowed languages of the outsider cannot have the same status as one's own language or swabhasha. What connects one to one's roots as Ketaki Kushari Dyson admits is the sense of commitment to one's language that translates into one's love for one's country. Buddha Dev Bose was her inspiration.

Indian comparative language studies broadly work on the premise that there are some significant similarities among the Indian languages. One of the similarities happened to be their mythic world, which they share. The shared mythology includes our shared past, its arts, its architecture, in brief all its glory. It would be a cliché to say that both past and future times have for their reference point human activities. When we talk of historical movements concerning society or royalty, religion or race, basically we are referring to man present in the centre of it all. When we

look towards future, through our present, our main concern is man's destiny. In this context it would be right to say that nowhere in the world we have an intellectual tradition that parallels India's. Our thinking is humanitarian, but the focus of our thinking is man, our thinking naturally is different from others, by virtue of the fact that ancient India remained intellectually insular, independent of the rest of the world. Buddha Dev Bose's comparative studies, whatever their aim might have been, have drawn attention to the richness and variety of Indian literature. Buddha Dev Bose understood India and its literature as did Rabindranath Tagore in an objective manner. Buddha Dev Bose integrated the eastern and western tenets in his studies of Tagore. Buddha Dev Bose understood Tagore's India. He has an understanding of India, gained traditionally from others along with his personal experience. All this finds expression in his comparative dialogics in his book Mahabharater Katha. His description of the endless expanse of the forest becomes an entry point to the complexity of the text.

Mahabharat evokes a sense of wonder in its readers, especially among its western audience. The primordial emotions and sense of awe that Mahabharata deals with are very subtly evoked by Buddha Dev Bose in Mahabharater Katha. As far as the mere text of the epic is concerned, a reader can detach himself from it, but the internal conflict of the very human psyche in all

its complexity and variety lingers on; they are part of our collective memory and consciousness. Buddha Dev Bose's comparison of Mahabharat with the forests of India does not exist on a simple level of finding parallels, but on a more complex level of philosophy. The details of this comparison embrace the very idea of existence, which is complete only if it includes all living creatures — plants or animals — the entire gamut of nature in all its hues. It is driven by a desire to create, to annihilate, to protect, to rule, to evolve and to grow. That unseen world of nature, living quietly, is an integral part in maintaining the environmental balance. Modern science is aware of this fact, though it does not take into account ancient wisdom that is known through its myths and its literature. This source of knowledge remains untapped since it is not empirically supported. Should the knowledge of yore be judged on modern scientific parameters. Not many are sure of this. This dilemma can be resolved through comparative studies. Since it is a study not merely of finding similarities but a study of relations.

Buddha Dev Bose has followed this very same method to make the complex structure of Mahabharat intelligible. In fact, to understand the epic with its multiple shades of meanings, this appears to be the right approach. B.B. thinks of Mahabharat as a text, which transcends all definitions of literature not only of the present era but also of the earlier times. Mahabharat

defies the set patterns of known literary standards of both the East and the West. In his discourse on Mahabharat though he has given several examples of western literary conventions yet he did not consider them valid enough to judge the epic. In comparison to other epics Mahabharat sets its own independent rules, surpassing, narrow boundaries. He says, "Mahabharat has no parallel in world literature. It stands by itself proud and aloof. The adjective 'unparalleled' is not one of praise. By this I want to emphasise that in comparison to other epics, whether it be the Illiad or the literary epic Odyssey, the meaning and purpose of Mahabharat is a different primary epic structurally and thematically.

The unparalleled status of Mahabharat is inexpressible in words. It is the same situation with the Indian sub-continent. To understand it fully one should refer to both Buddha Dev Bose and Rabindranath Tagore and their discourses on Bharat. One should try to decipher the primary meanings contained in their works. If one looks only at the surface, missing the various layers of the complex text, there would be a danger of misunderstanding, since Mahabharat in its totality is not mere literature but an all inclusive philosophical text, related to the mysterious and the unknown; Buddha Dev Bose's point of view was that one should not look for verification of historical facts in Mahabharat. To get to the real meaning of Mahabharat our approach to the text

wholly depends on our aims and the nature of our study as well as our expectations from the text. B.B. believed that one should not have a truncated vision of Mahabharat (India is not only the India of Rama Krishna Paramhams or Vivekananda or Aurobindo or Tagore or some revolutionary personalities). B.B. was of the opinion that many of the stories of Mahabharat which appear to be unbelievable fictional tales are the expressions of the longings of the primitive man, but which may come true in some future like many of the fantasies of science fiction. In Mahabharat time is encapsuled, both its past and future appear in one scene. Buddha Dev Bose's comparative techniques are encyclopaedic in nature.

Buddha Dev Bose shows how Mahabharat is an exception in comparison to other epical writings in its range and breadth as it contains several branches of knowledge as astronomy, geography or archeology.

Buddha Dev Bose is truly a modern scholar. His poems, his novels, his criticism are inspired by a modernistic, progressive outlook. He started a new trend of poetic expression different in content and texture from Rabindranath Tagore. The fact that a new poetic movement was started with the publication of "Kavita" does not forebode an assestion of mere differences from Tagorian ideas or writings but to give space and recognition to a new generation of writers which came after Tagore.

"Kavita" was a record of the sense of alienation that this generation felt in the contemporary scheme of things. It expresses the basic difference between two great

writers without undermining their reputations as two literary stalwarts of the Bengali language.

Ganga Prasad Vimal, born 1939, is a poet, novelist and an academician. He has taught at a college in Delhi University and in J.N.U. He was director at Central Hindi Directorate, New Delhi. His latest novel *Manushkhor* from Kitabaghar has been well received. He lives in New Delhi.

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The Concerns of Criticism

Shambhunath

Pramila Garg

Ram Vilas Sharma has said while talking about Ralph Fox, "For Fox human life, society and literature are inseparable. The enthusiasm with which he worked to change human life, the same enthusiasm he showed in writing about literature. He was not the type of critic who dealt in unemotional analysis of facts and figures; rather whatever he wrote about literature, it was from his heart and feelings." (Introduction to Novel and Society) Unquestionably this statement is true for Ramvilas Sharmaji himself. In Hindi literature there had been a crowd of unemotional analysts who as critics had dealt with facts and figures only. He was different from such critics. He raised Hindi criticism to a higher level as a Marxist critic. He had put Hindi criticism to that height which was possible when a critic has got a lofty goal and he tries to raise himself above mechanical analysis and when he has a definite vision of changing the whole human life. Today the place of criticism has shrunk a lot. This is not criticism but blatant praise, image management. Now is the season of brand ambassadors, either it is paid criticism or an issue of management. Sometimes it is intentional massacre of ideologies or an effort to move ahead in competition by treading over others. Now there is dearth of thought in criticism that is why everywhere

there is more flattery and allegation and counter allegation. These are the two sides of the same coin. That is why it is said the greater the dearth of thought the more bloody would be the encounters in criticism. When the society is divided in groups its critical vision decays first. It is a matter of no small concern that criticism has become a thing beyond the tolerance of society, because everywhere — culture, literature and politics people need only followers. That is why logic, democratic feelings and tolerance all have become bankrupt.

In a good criticism, fact, thoughts and emotions speak together. This type of criticism and opportunistic criticism cannot possibly go together. I feel such criticism makes us more insecure and it attacks our ideological fanaticism. Hence criticism has no place in the fanatic world. Even in the world of criticism fanaticism has no place.

Ram Vilas Sharma has continually struggled against three fanaticisms throughout his life, orthodoxies and rituals, technical and physical science beliefs and post imperialistic dogmas. He was ideologically in confrontation with all three ideologies, *i.e.* the dogmatisms of archaic conventionalist, mechanized materialists and eastern subalterns, altogether. He wrote for the society but not for social recognition. It is important to note how he has developed the criticism practised by Bhartendu Harish Chandra, Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, Ramchandra Shukla and

Hazari Prasad Dwivedi. He was such a critic who was standing amidst the challenges of society and writing his criticism and expressing his views not from personal but from the reader's social and racial point of view. His entire writing is to make a place for criticism in the world of dogmatism. Hence his effort to make space for criticism was to make space for human life.

Normally it is expected of critics to develop reader's interest in the contemporary literature and fill the gap between the new literary works and old taste of the readers and also refine their taste. Some such people could understand criticism as a digestive tablet while some others think that a critic is one who cremates any creative work in its infancy. Others call a critic, a hurdle between the reader and the creative perception of any work and request the critic to move out of the way. He has been looked at with resentment and greed, because in the absence of social recognition gradually the writers themselves started desiring criticism. There has always been dissatisfaction among the writers regarding critics' role. Political and commercial organizations have always been intolerant of the critics. Today's materialistic economy has made man copycats and hypocrites thus killing his thinking power. The modernism coming in India through this way is influencing the already existing consumerist thinking and also the feudal narrowness of mind.

On the basis of feudal thinking there are large groups of people agreeing with this while the people disagreeing with it are left alone in our society.

Muktibodh had asked a question, who understands life better, a critic or a creative writer? He says that life is important for the critic also, otherwise while looking at the ocean he would be counting waves only. The critic has to drown himself in the sea of life's experiences and also has to come out of it so that the waves' water does not go into his eyes. Sometimes when we look at something that very sight blinds us after a limit. This is a good metaphor to explain that criticism is neither going out of life's realities or out of politics and culture, nor getting stuck in them. So the relationship of the critic with the writing is to dig deep into it and come out of it also, it need not only flow with it but also swim through it. A critic is also a creative writer. Muktibodh says moving still further, 'A critic and evaluator's job is more engrossing and creative than the artist and creative writer himself.' So it is clear that no big writer can say that a critic is not a creator or that all the other genres of writings have developed but not criticism.

The scope of criticism shrinks when instead of critical discussions on life it becomes an instrument of propaganda or praise or documentation; since common man is unable to say that the means of media are not for him. In modern times media has more or less marginalized

criticism. Literature is being banished from the educated society and from social life. Modern life's content is getting limited so the world of criticism is also shrinking.

It is a matter to be noted that people are losing 'reason' and 'critical vision' and are satisfied with shallow explanations. The critical intelligence is diminishing from Parliament to seminars also. An atmosphere of Para-criticism is being created by parochialism and commercialism. In such scenario Ramvilas Sharma's books came one after the other to expand the area and vision of criticism.

Undoubtedly, the fanaticism of religious bigotry, the post imperialist's collective fanaticism and mechanical materialism together with literary purity became a problem. Even the media focusing and provoking consumerist culture was no less a challenge. Even today all these are big hazards from the point of view of criticism. Facing all these challenges Ramvilas Sharma recognized the implied power of criticism and continued his activities in criticism which carried deep meaning. Scholarship does not ride on him instead he rides on scholarship not only to break the inertness of criticism but also the blockage of intellect which is prevailing in it. We could say that in his criticism instead of scattered comments a highly imaginative insight and profound management is to be seen. A new chain of critical writings was started with 'Nirala ki Sahitya Sadhana'(1969), it meandered

through many books and interviews and reached up to 'Bhartiya Saundaryabodh Aur Tulsidas'(2001) giving many towering triumphs of criticism. Once these important writings came up it was expected that the Hindi intellectual world would be jolted in discussing criticism, collective thinking and exchange of ideas but it did not, still a bit of self-evaluation did start.

Is criticism a parasitic activity or is it a creation in itself? What creations Ramvilas Sharma's writing have done for us? Undoubtedly there is a creator (writer) sitting inside a critic, an artist, otherwise there will be no great critic. Once Ramvilas Sharma had said, "It is wrong to consider criticism as writing. As I trace the similarity between writing and criticism I am reminded of Bhartendu...very few people know that Bhartenduji is indeed the father of modern criticism." (Aaj Ke Sawal Aur Marxwad). We can say a story 'depicts' while the criticism 'analyses'. It is strange that in both there is repudiation and in both there is recreation and rewriting in some way or the other. We can see in each of Ramvilas Sharma's criticism 'repudiation as well as recreation paired together'. He is always repudiating some orthodoxy or European ideology and giving out some new ideas and creativity which come out of his criticism like a sculptor does with hammer and chisel on a stone. Ramvilas Sharma also recreates a new ideology and a new point of view. We consider the pairing of repudiation important because

these days we find everywhere repudiations with reconstruction, while this is also important as to what we are reconstructing.

Criticism is the cultural representative of society's artistic flavour, for its subject is not confined to a few writings but it encompasses the whole human race and the entire culture. The value of criticism springs from writings along with life, neither exclusively from creative writings nor from ideologies. Criticism removes the hurdles of creative writing and allows it to move forward, it opens up the inner thoughts of creative writings, but mostly it opens ordinary reader and student's mind to critical understanding.

The Traditions of Criticism

The first thing in criticism is to know what is to be preserved, what could be relinquished or changed. This wisdom does not build up in the air. In a country like India it gets built by the collision of solid feudalistic and imperialistic conditions. There is a burning question : what we could or could not take from the past and also from the west. The question before Ramvilas Sharma was which elements of traditions would be useful for men and which would not be. He concentrates on that literature which is based on common man's labour and not on the capitalist section of society. He also makes it clear, "In old literature the possibility of collision

between the interests of different sections of society is shown rarely." (Marxism and Progressive Literature). Still by his evaluation of traditions the fact comes up that what is the difference between literature and entertainment industry, the difference between happiness and jollity. There can be four types of attitudes towards traditions-worship of traditions, denigration of traditions, modernization and commercialization of traditions and critical relations with traditions, meaning thereby being critical of the basics of traditions while maintaining relations with it. The critical relation between the two is neither a matter of selection nor of rejection, nor like western modernism making it an object of an article. Rather, it is to understand tradition in the context of its complexities and selecting and rejecting it from the critical point of view. It is not that Ramvilas Sharma was the first person to evaluate traditions this way, Vidyapati did select and reject certain things, Kabir also selected and rejected; Tulsi did the same when he said, "Sangharsh tyag na bin pahichane."

Literature is related to the changes in society. So it cannot be said that there should be eternal and permanent ideals for literature or in order to make literature immortal a writer should present such realities which are not connected with the changing conditions of society. Ramvilas Sharma says while opposing the hardcore traditionalists, "The writers claiming

immortal truths also say that the ancient literature is immortal because it had been depicting immortal truths, hence we should try to avoid the changing conditions of society... those who portray the realities of society should be especially careful about the illusions of eternal truths. They claim eternal truth most wherever there is least relevance of it." (Marxism and Progressive Literature). Inspired by Marxism, Ramvilasji was keeping an eye on the social changes, also he felt that we must study the different goals of social developments in society. For this the evaluation of the old culture was a necessity. And one has to take all those immortal truths from it which was essential for scientific thinking. This evaluation could be made possible only when one understands the different classes and groups of the ancient culture and its historical limits." (ibid)

While talking about Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, Ramvilasji comments on the tradition of Hindi criticism, "Hindi criticism has a racial tradition which could be seen in the brilliant inner glow and acceptance of challenges of new life in Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi's given text (Importance of Literature). Here there is neither talk of sentimental accomplishment nor a worship of art which is antagonistic to society, nor condemning the progressive European thinking in the name of Indian culture, nor the affirmation of religious orthodox rituals which are harmful for society. Here we are introduced to an alert

and awakened attitude which after recognizing our racial uniqueness, gathering knowledge from whatever source one gets and uses them to change human society and also he believes in giving it a modern shape. This is the glorious tradition of Hindi which had been inherited from Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi... Mahavir Prasadji was not the only critic who emphasized and recognized the racial form of society in criticism...Shukulji's criticism is the outcome of Dwivedi age. Both of them recognize the racial face of language and literature. Both of them are eager to liberate Hindi literature from the orthodoxies of 'Ritikal'. In the criticism of both the writers the basic underlying concept is the close relation between literature and society." (Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi Aur Hindi Navjagran).

Ramvilas Sharma emphasizes that the traditional Hindi criticism is primarily racial. It highlights the importance of Bhakti Sahitya movement of Valmiki, Kalidas and Bhavbhuti as a reversal to love poetry. It is a reaction against the blind religious orthodoxies and it supports social changes. The tradition of Hindi criticism is not related to blind following of the western traditions but they do not refrain from progressive western thinking. The conservative people of India in the name of Indianism oppose the entire western culture. This is not our national tradition. Besides, criticism is a continuous evaluation of humanity which has got no end.

Ramvilasji is a major part of that glorious, awakened and alert tradition of criticism which has been talked about earlier.

Sometimes earlier because of the broken relationship between tradition and progressiveness — hurdles were put not only to understand tradition but to understand progressiveness also. Now criticism is becoming only refutation or exaltation, this is also a problem. Ramvilas Sharma had said about Acharya Shukul, "Literature cannot move forward ignoring public welfare, public good and public opinion." Giving due importance to him Ramvilas Sharma accepted the parameters given by him. While criticizing him he had to accept that he was not 'compatible materialist'. He said about Nirala, 'In spite of not accepting Marxism in practice, he was much ahead of any Marxist writer.' He pointed out the failings of the highest poetry of Nirala 'Ram ki Shakti Pooja' and "Kukurmutta". Thus, his 'critical appreciation' has great importance in criticism. He replies to the attacks on Nirala and Ramchandra Shukul and enriches the progressive understanding of literature.

Two types of questions are raised about Hindi criticism. Not one but there are two traditions. One tradition is that of Ramchandra Shukul and the other is that of Hazari Prasad Dwivedi. The second question is raised that along with Ramvilas Sharma all these critics are universal critics. Some call Ramchandra Shukul and Ramvilas Sharma universal critics and are

silent about Hazari Prasad Diwedi. I think both these beliefs are wrong, these are matters of racial destruction.

In spite of their differences and distance with each other, there was nearness also among Ram Chandra Shukul, Hazari Prasad Diwedi and Ramvilas Sharma. All three of them were part of the same tradition of criticism. It is only society and public which binds all the three together. Ramchandra Shukul talks of public happiness, Hazari Prasad Diwedi about public welfare and Ram Vilas Sharma about public awakening. The center of their criticism, in one way or the other, is the world and public only. The public had become important in the period of 'Bhakti' (devotion) movement, and it became the center during the anti-imperialist movement. It is only possible in the public movement where there is no pathway; they will make it by walking on one. His wisdom is the gift of his experience. Public also decides not only about history and culture, but also about the economic development. The public has come up with a new entity in the 20th century. Hence it was natural that all the critics have listened and cared for public instead of books and Government power. They were worried about the public all the time.

One can see that neither Ramchandra Shukul is against Kabeer nor Hazari Prasad against Tulsidas. One more interesting fact is Ramchandra liked Valmiki. Ram Vilas Sharma and Hazari Prasad both liked

Kalidas. Actually the traditions of criticism for both should -have developed on parallel lines, Ram Vilas Sharma should not have written about Kalidas. The important thing is that all the three critics had given higher place to the world (people) than to the books and political discussions. All three of them wanted to see literature as literature. These three critics were against feudalistic narrowness, European thinking and imperialism.

Actually by using the standards of great and little subaltern traditions in a very mechanical way Ram Chandra Shukul an admirer of Tulsi Das, was honoured as a supporter of 'Great tradition' and Hazari Prasad who did great work on Kabeer had been honoured for the 'Little Tradition'. This is a method of sabotaging (destroying) Indian Culture. The idea behind it is that the tradition of Bhakti movement was not compatible with the society of that time and that in India there are innumerable traditions which go together. The collision of traditions is not the only reality; the other reality is intermixing and transformation of traditions also.

Ram Vilas Sharma does not oppose the misleading categories of 'Great Tradition' and 'Little Tradition' but he puts a forceful question, "In order to prove Ram Chandra Shukul and Hazari Prasad Diwedi as reactionary and progressive respectively, we use the social standards of 'Great Tradition' and 'Little Tradition'. Their loved poets Tulsi and Kabeer have also been

put in the category of 'Great Tradition' and 'Little Tradition'. May be in one age there is 'little tradition' and also 'Great Tradition'. It is possible that 'Great Tradition', like big groups may not be progressive, and possibly 'Little Tradition' like small man may be progressive. We move this reference a little further; can we put together Ram Chandra Shukul and Hazari Prasad Diwedi with this division?" (my interviews) Mostly he believed that Ram Chandra Shukul and Hazari Prasad Diwedi couldn't be put in two separate traditions. Especially not at that time when this category is used to uplift the one and down grade the other. This literary division is unfortunate in Hindi criticism. This is a form of internal danger to the genre of Hindi criticism.

The writer struggles with whatever tendencies he has, often some of the traits of those tendencies are left in him. This is possible for these three critics also. Still their achievements are greater than their weakness.

Against the Cultural Division

The great aim of archaic orthodoxy had been to make cultural inter-division. Its influence could be seen recently in the evaluation of Bhakti literature. Some took sides with Tulsī, others with Kabēr. This discussion went on for quite sometime. Ram Vilas Sharma says, "An important speciality of Bhakti movement is that there

are Brahmins along with Shudras, Hindus with Muslims. The only condition is that progressive critic should understand Bhakti movement, they should not try to juxtapose Hindu followers against Sufis, and among Hindu follower from 'Nirgun Panthies' to 'Sagun Panthies', and in 'Sagun Panthies' from Krishna followers against Rama followers. Hindi writers who become aware of their own history, can get together to put the foundation of national unity by their writings." (Indian Culture and Hindi Region). There are two different things, first to understand the diversity of Bhakti movement, second forcefully putting modernism and today's thoughts on them and making the Bhakti poets confront each other. There is a need to see that only on the basis of Tulsidas, Ram Vilas Sharma has called Bhakti movement as opposed to social awakening and feudalism.

Bhakti literature had great importance in view of Ram Vilas Sharma. Today in order to develop our racial culture it is necessary to understand its importance. It is a proof that in the north India the feudal system was deteriorating and literature had been helping this process. (Marxism and Progressive literature). Bhakti literature was the result of deteriorating caste system; it was associated with the popular feeling of the common man. If the feudal system was dying, why was it not destroyed? Definitely it did not happen because of the pressure of despotic feudal authorities, and later on by the oppressive tactics of the European

Imperialism. The imperialists had clothed religion, caste, education and literary intelligence at every level and opposed the views of conventional obsolete cultural divisions with colonial logic and knowledge.

The reason for cultural divisions in India was because of closing their eyes towards extensive realities and stupidities of their communities. It is unnecessary to say that in any society cultural proximity, exchange of ideas and intermixing can take place only when there is free environment besides open-mindedness, scientific attitude and a place for logic. Ram Vilas Sharma after showing the tradition of all these, moves towards Rigveda and Atharvaveda but he emphasizes more on justice, peculiar philosophies, Gautam Buddha, aesthetic materialism of Charak's code of conduct, Krishna cult of poets and Bhakti movement. Following is the abridged picture of this tradition. "In Rigveda there is ideological variety, there are God worshippers and persons opposed to it...like Krishna cult poets, and the great achievement of traditional Indian knowledge is to be seen in Charak's code of conduct. The analysis of the art of discussion in 'Charak Samhita' is related to materialism... the most important declaration of Buddha is, you should not agree because somebody has said it, you don't accept because it is written in books, or because of your faith in something. You should use your own discretion and

knowledge, more than discretion judge with your experience if anything is wrong or right... The dream that Kalidas saw for the unity of India should not be underestimated..." (Indian culture and Hindi Pradesh). Ram Vilas Sharma gave Hindi criticism a depth and expanse and related it to a big goal. He had clarified in 'Tradition and Evaluation', "All the old poets like Tulsidas, Surdas and Kabeer and the modern age writers Bhartendu Harish Chandra, Premchand, Nirala have awakened our community's conscience," On one side for centuries scriptures and ruling powers had been culturally dividing, on the other hand literature had been expanding the mental horizon and bringing sensitivity to it.

We witness in the field of criticism continuous refutation and reconstruction together. Ramvilas Sharma condemns the logic of European colonialism who call Aryans cruel invaders. He continuously challenges the European superiority by giving example of Gautam Buddha, Tamil awakening, and Indian trade up to England and by the popular talk of awakening of Bhakti Age. He forcefully condemns stagnation of Indian society, backwardness of Indian culture and role of the British rule in Indian progress. Along with it comes his rewriting against genealogy that there are enough basic similarities between Aryan and Dravidian Languages. There are innumerable examples of cultural intermixing in India such as in the picture of

Dravid Shiva Natraj that carries Rigvedik's fire in one hand. He relates the capitalist signs in the structure, feudalism and the emergence of provincial languages to the building of different castes and he repudiates the belief that the modern age has started with the British Empire.

Ram Vilas Sharma had further extended the old struggle between orthodox conventionalism and 'Ritiwad', against the age of 'Chhayawad'. He condemns the beliefs that 'Rigveda' was written by priests and Brahmins. India is a spiritual country, Sanskrit is the mother of Hindi, the caste system is the higher part of country's culture and the literary principles of Hindi are in 'Ritivad'. He goes deep into the evaluation of traditions like a philosopher. He does this work standing on the firm ground of facts. It is not known how this thing had been marginalized in Hindi Literature.

Ram Vilas Sharma's evaluation of traditions in literature went in many directions, along with history, economic principles, social science, and study of culture, music and science. His main purpose was to repudiate conventional orthodoxies and thus 'Demystify' India. That is how he had refuted the Orientalist's opinion of Aryan's cruelty and stagnation of India. This is to give an alternative to European colonial thought by decolonizing knowledge about India. Ram Vilas Sharma had opposed those who kept the Indian spirituality a mystery and also opposed

those who called it backward and uncivilized. He 'demystifies' and 'decolonizes' knowledge about India, which expands the field of criticism. He objected to both the colonial as well as bigot's (religious leaders) attitudes.

Ram Vilas Sharma gives a beautiful and compact picture of Indian struggle to his readers, so that they could be free from Orthodox and colonial thinking which fertilizes their explanation. The readers could see with their own eyes the cultural heritage based on labour and logic and rebuild the People's self-confidence. In Ram Vilas Sharma criticism is a continuous combination of 'condemnation and reconstruction'. Even in contemporary times his criticism is quite important when the elements of orthodox conventions and progressive political narrowness are being brought to light.

American thinker Phukoyama had friendship with the deputy of Pantagon, Donald Roomsfield. He believed that in American leadership Liberal Democrats had resounding victory. He felt the necessity to defeat the American and British operations to overthrow their autocracy in the non-Western world. Though he was experiencing an ethical crisis. Phukoyama had said, "End of History" while Ram Vilas Sharma's aim was 'reconstruction of History.' He does this not for the false sense of pride for his country but for knowledge's unique penetration (investment). He neither fights like

conventional reformers to evaluate traditions nor like today's subalterns with post-modern dynamite to evaluate them. His relation with traditions is to fight their luster and not to make himself shine with their vitality.

We should also understand that Ram Vilas Sharma doesn't believe in modernization of traditions. He doesn't see traditions under the influence of global modernism. In place of modernism he uses words like belief, labour culture, people's rising, new awakening, science and progressiveness. He goes deep into the traditions not to fight with them but to re-construct them. For him de-construction and reconstruction go together. On the foundation of progressive awakening he tries to rebuild the national awakening. He does his work differently and logically.

We know that in the western countries the age of theory has passed, and great heroes of principles are marginalized. Actually these were made in the academic institutions of the west, and were part of global vitality. They were part of the market also. They said how can we know 'complete' picture by looking at only one type of financial economy. These principles were made to give a homogeneous structure in the name "Completeness" in the world thought. For this reason war of ideas was fought between South and left and left and left. This was an ideological war to get more importance for some principles.

The book 'Evaluation of Traditions'

(1981) starts this way, "Those who want to change the age, who are not following the trodden path, who want to create revolutionary writing after destroying orthodoxies, such persons must have complete knowledge of literary traditions. This knowledge is as much developed as the literary traditions." The knowledge of traditions is as necessary as its development, meaning thereby that the knowledge of traditions is not limited to the works of a critic only. There is no doubt Ram Vilas Sharma's criticism is mostly not related with contemporary literature but with the knowledge of traditions. His criticism does not see traditions in straight line; instead it is a search for speciality along with tradition. He says, "For any country the evaluation of literary tradition is not as important as it is for this country" (*ibid*) Literature was written in every country then why it is necessary to understand this in this country, about the literary tradition and each literature's speciality?

In Indian literature there are regional memories of people and the dreams of Indians. Indian literature is the story of awakening of India. If we lose literature we lose India. As compared to history, social studies, politics of power and even to religious scriptures Ram Vilas Sharma gave more importance to literary memories and dreams which had been made under the plan of modernism, which he thought had a special meaning. Today we have lost literature amongst ourselves and in society.

We feel that we are studying and writing much literature but actually we have lost it, and we continue losing India also. We must understand why as compared to any other country, literature is more important for India.

Why the knowledge of its tradition is necessary and how the aim of Hindi criticism, should be against feudalism and against the people supporting imperialism.

De-Colonizing Criticism

At any age Imperialist battles were won on the basis of how much self-confidence of the masses of any country, especially of intellectuals, had been broken. How much distortion had been done to their racial traditions and future, how many people were made copy cats and blind follower of their culture. No Indian theory goes to the West, but the moment a new theory comes in the West India starts beating its drum. There is long chain from 'New Criticism' to the theory of deconstruction. In Hindi hardly one comes across any reasonably practical criticism based on these theories, still the bigul of theory continues to harp. It is theory's job to make a space for life in the changing world in one direction only, and the job of their 'discussion' is to make a 'place' for life while the space all-around is shrinking fast for life.

We know even in the west the age of theory has passed. The great propounders

of theory are on the margin only. Actually these principles were made in the academic institutions of the West and they were part of the global mentality of English language. They were also part of the market. They would explain how one could know the 'completeness' amidst one type of commercial economy. These principles in the name of 'perfection' of the thoughts were to give the world a homogeneous structure. For this reason battles of thoughts were fought not only between south and left but between left and left also. This ideological war took place in order to get more importance. Many post-colonial principles also came in existence. These principles were made by keeping feminism, archaic casteism, racialism, environment, similar sex relations in the center. Definitely before talking about some principles we have to talk about some principle, we have to talk about time and place. What we could think depends from which place and time we are thinking. Instead of running away from forceful onslaught of the western principles first he saw that they are the product of an imperialist period and that he was thinking from the Hindi speaking belt of India. His criticism came out after being totally immersed into the Indian life. It had no hypocrisy or verbosity.

Today it appears there is a society of intellectuals who have technical expertise, who have internet. The world is brimming with knowledge. Once Ramchandra Shukul said an important thing — with the

expansion of knowledge emotions are also expanded. Now there are very high waves in the ocean of knowledge still there is no expansion of emotions among human beings. There are so many post chapters of knowledge that it appears that man was never so knowledgeable and he was never so unemotional (insensitive). The more big sea a man is in at the level of knowledge the smaller has he become at the level of emotions like a well. We can see all around us the men who are "oceans of knowledge and wells of emotion."

We cannot look at Ram Vilas Sharma's criticism separated from the ideological struggle against imperialism. He was opposed to new liberal principles which were being presented as universal in an age of globalization and generalization. The following comments of Ram Vilas Sharma seem to be as if on the modern intellectual scenario, "Our head is still half colonial, as our languages have some luster of English and we don't feel bad about it... Since we have the pressure of foreign capital we do accept whatever foreign scholars say or whatever is in the interest of foreign capital." (Today's Questions and Marxism). This is a clarion call for intellectual freedom from the colonialism. The speciality of imperialism is, "It started protecting feudalism. Besides old feudalism it established new feudalism also" (*ibid*). It had a policy of inciting division among Indian communities and languages, and hatred among different groups. In today's

world the traders of hatred and antipathy have increased. To say the truth these intellectual traders are big supporters of foreign capital and they are least bothered about the poor condition of the public.

Today's subaltern's deliberations are badly affected by the imagination of Orientalists and Neo-Colonists. "The more India is divided into fragments the more colonialism will benefit. The politics as a whole does not influence the intellectuals; since they do not understand it properly they don't condemn it. Otherwise also the people of my region are comparatively lazy. They say why to fall into a trap 'Mahajaneh yen gatah sah pantha'. When lots of people are saying this why should we unnecessarily earn ill will specially when we want to progress in history, protect the chair, want to be famous in foreign country, so why should we not walk on the same path. If a western jackal makes *huan huan* Indian intellectuals also make synchronizing *Huan Huan* sound. Ram Vilas Sharma has said so many things in his interview in a very simple manner which had been seriously reconfirmed in his books.

In the economic world there is liberalism but in the educational world there is no liberalism. Instead, a strong professionalism is being developed. This does not teach criticism but teaches only imitation and following. Ultimately everybody today is in a competition. The man standing in competition or rivalry cannot criticize his boss. Today instead of

a period of crisis there is a network of materialism and of consumer goods and opportunities. With the falling standard of education the atmosphere is more of "Less literature and more entertainment." The literary studies in today's universities have gone down so much that neither it gets related to necessary ' professionalism' nor it gives students a critical thinking, nor it produces any novel thinking in students. The highest part of Hindi criticism does not become part of student's perspective. Again the same attitude works here 'why should I get into trouble' the result of it is that even today we are faced with decades' old questions. The views of critics like Ram Vilas Sharma have very small space, the introductory one only. When the Hindi departments of the country don't have any use of his views how will they be accepted in history, social studies and linguistics? These are already overburdened with European thoughts. Hindi departments are mostly over shadowed by the shortcuts of feudalistic and European thinking. That is the reason why no perspective could be developed to look at literatures from the feudalistic, anti-imperialistic and anti-casteist approach.

We know that Ram Vilas Sharma in his life had never taken refuge behind shortcuts or make a comment where some writers were downgraded and others were declared great. Is it the way a critic is made? A critic starts with a lofty aim and puts down his whole life in searching and

establishing it. Basically he looks at how particular communities of a country and ultimately the whole humanity there have expressed themselves in literature. Ram Vilas Sharma never cared for immediate contemporary achievements. He selected a path of deep devotion and long struggle. His criticism is not management, it had deep rationality, transparency and integrity. Whatever he said till the end of his life, was always responsible. He saw India with the eye of Marxism and Marxism from Indian eyes. Now we have made shortcuts for being modern, for becoming a lover of tradition and becoming a Marxist, while this is not possible without the continual struggle of society and also without one's own struggle with self. Marxism is not a matter of research but his creative experiment with country's traditions and solid realities. Marxism has been appropriated in Ram Vilas Sharma's criticism not mechanically but creatively.

Today we are surrounded by the language of power; even if you say a lie forcefully it will be taken as truth. So the meaning of thought has become a deliberation of power. All thought are considered the play of power as if we cannot think that there could be some thoughts outside power deliberation, there could be oppositions, truths — the truths which are often being suppressed by power. The thoughts of criticism presented by Ram Vilas Sharma are not the part of power play because in such games mostly

unprincipled propaganda takes place instead of logic and artifices. Instead of being a part of power politics his criticism is continuous cultural battle of a writer and an intellectual.

Looking at the period of Ram Vilas Sharma's writings 1934-2000 almost 60 to 65 years long, it was an extensive period when in the name of modernization and colonization of knowledge people were making fun of Hindu community's culture and were murdering history. Common intellectual perspective was to blindly follow the western modernism. The influence of 'New criticism', 'Formalism' and the modernist tendencies was increasing on Hindi criticism continually, though not a simple good criticism concentrating on any writing was coming up. Only they would talk of principles and there was a plethora of foreign illustrations. At some places they demanded pure criticism that the critics should only think about literary works and criticism should be contained by the propaganda of writers. We know that Ram Vilas Sharma is not a pure critic. Once Albaruni had said, 'What type of brahmins are these who want to carry purity and knowledge together'.

The country is changing; the server of national popular opinion is down. The communal and feudal powers are surrounding human life. The past is being burnt in different ways. On one side there is communal frenzy and on the other Bhartendu and Premchand are being

attacked. Aggressions are taking place on Ramchandra Shukul, Nirala is being attacked. Besides, there was dire predicament in the culture of Hindi belt. In such conditions Ram Vilas Sharma had to see what is to be protected in the traditions and what is to be changed. We cannot look at Ram Vilas Sharma isolated from the social cultural conditions and discussions where they have been created. Definitely he was not a pure critic only who leaves social question from criticism.

Discussion between Past and Present

The fight with imperialism cannot be separated from history and from literary and cultural traditions. Traditions have great importance for Ram Vilas Sharma, the knowledge of tradition is not related to past. This is not to dig the corpses of past, this is a live interaction with the past and present. To know the tradition is one thing to get to the past like a prized kill is another thing. If you get hold of an old popular book by chance, leaving everything if you look only for places where Hindu feelings are conspicuous or what is the caste of the writer or how much is the vitality of caste there or when past comes to you like a prized kill, it is not knowing the past. Actually past comes like 'foreign' to you. Today many anglicized intellectuals prefer to study in American and European Universities, why to give

names. For them the past of India is a 'foreign' thing. Because of their influence many intellectuals in Hindi belt see Hindi associated with 'Hindu' they do not see Kabeer's condemnation of feudalism, to them he seems to be immersed in love poetry only. And Hindi neo-awakening appears to them 'Hindu' neo-awakening. They could see only caste and man's adoration of it. Bhartendu, Premchand and Nirala all appear to be villains to them. It is not that whatever facts are put forward they are wrong. Rather whatever conclusions they get from those facts are wrong, because many other facts are ignored.

This is not a discussion between past and present but it is imposing present on the past. In the world of thoughts this is the fashion today. This is 'use and throw' relationship with the past which never creates anything. It survives only on breaking. He tries to seek his thought's home like a snail or oyster shell, finds supreme bliss in narrowness. There will be harm if he steps out of it and if he extended his criticism only a bit he senses danger. This is what imperialism wants, *i.e.* to take out the spine of any culture so that people forget their long struggle against feudalism and imperialism. He says like old colonialist that your past is decaying, burn it.

The political aggression of the past on the present is resurrections, and the aggression of present on the past is subalternism. The interaction between the

past and present is possible only when first we believe that everything in past is not good or everything in the past is not rubbish also. When the communal awakening of the anti-intellectual scholars who go to the past with some political motive, for the consideration of political power they look at the past as a floating blanket in the river. Had it been a bear they would have caught it. They feel they do not get anything out of it, they would rather wish to leave it, but it's not possible as it would not leave them. Now the salvation is possible only by killing the bear, or may be the disciple has to jump into the river to destroy it.

The writings of Ram Vilas Sharma are such discussion between past and present which takes us towards love for life, opposition against injustice, logic, labour, culture and national reawakening. For him past is not only a few ancient scripts, some mirror or a chanced quail in his hand. He goes to the past with his communalism and nationalism. For him Hindu race and India both are important. Definitely he sees 'national' and 'rational' by combining them together. In his criticism he carries together the basic abstracts of both racial awakening and intellectualism of neo-awakening. Actually only then there can be intimate critical interaction between the past and present. The type of relations Ram Vilas Sharma makes with the past is where that past changes our concerns with it. Making retail relationship with past is different from

drowning with shame or pride in it. He had made an intimate critical relation with the past and changed it into an aesthetic bliss and social awakening.

The way Ram Vilas Sharma's criticism is joined together with the struggle of self-realization of Hindu race; similarly it is associated with the struggle against imperialism. He has gone into the research of past for the sake of India's peaceful and independent future. He feels that the problems of community, regional narrowness have to be seen outside 'Indian nation' and understand our helplessness against the onslaught of Imperialists on our culture and economic system.

Ram Vilas Sharma felt that the progress of Hindi literature is necessary not only for the progress of Hindu community's cultural revival but for the upliftment of India. Hindi literature's progress is necessary for the progress of Hindustan. The position is that Hindi literature has not been able to make slightest space in the Hindi belt. On the top of it there is the desire of making IT hubs and multiplexes and political parties as if all these things would develop India. This is a great illusion. The reason why communal fights and religious hatred have extensively spread in India is only because we have not used literature to create good will among them. Now we are surrounded by cheap entertainment and a flood of films. Intellectualism has been enslaved by big capitals. Even writers themselves are seen

disrespecting litterateurs; they are more involved in destroying. They have lost their grounds. The cultural level of citizens of any age is shown by the level of honour they give to their litterateurs. Today the people are keener to know about the new consumer goods than to know about the old writers and about new litterateurs. This is cultural poverty even if it is covered with bright colours and loud music, it does not allow us to see racial traditions. Those who are afraid of the present they do not want to face the facts of life. They fear racial traditions also and actually they don't want to face them.

It is not enough to face traditions to make a creative vision but the contemporary confrontation is also necessary, "Without reading contemporary literature I can give answer to this question, the more close a literature is to social realities the stronger will it be. The literature in which contemporary problems are discussed and shown the solutions to those problems, there we should identify the contemporariness." (*ibid*) Ram Vilas Sharma has no relation with the contemporary literature which he has accepted honestly. But he had his eyes continuously focused on his time's crisis of capitalism, problem of communalism, crisis of power and especially of casteism in the Hindi belt. He is alert towards the new happenings of the world. He talks more about people's awakening, neo-awakening and values of freedom struggle

because he is seeing a reversal in the contemporary Indian life. Because of revolution in communication, in the era of the market based culture people's critical vision is extensively deteriorating, his main aim is to rejuvenate it. This is not possible by being indifferent towards contemporary life.

It is unnecessary to say that the criticism that discussed life can only be connected with writings and could take in its range all the cultural developments.

Literature is not Merely Ideology

Ram Vilas Sharma also targeted at mechanical materialists. He understood them clearly. "Only with the knowledge of literary traditions, progressive criticism can develop" (Assessment of Tradition). He could see that there are conditions of divorce between tradition and progress. Some progressive writers are negating Bhakti poets and the romantic poets of modern times. They are repeating the colonial understanding of the Aryan and Darvidian struggle. They are not ready to accept the concepts of Hindi community and they insist that culture is only shadow economy, and literature is being seen as only political literature. Some writers try to compensate the faults of their writings by boasting about politics. There is no dearth of such critics who refuse to see logic in other's ideas, and could not see stupidity of their own beliefs. Criticism is

not to make materialistic ideas logical but to make them baseless. The condition is such that some critics instead of exploring deep into the inner world of any writing have been limited to making shallow commentary about it.

Ram Vilas Sharma was associated with the progressive revolution. He was the General Secretary of Progressive Writers Association from 1949 to 1953. He felt that progressive revolution has to come out from the mechanism of attitude and illusions. This is the reason why he fearlessly opposed mechanical materialism to expand the relation between tradition and Marxism. He also fought with those people who were against the relationship between Marxism and tradition, and also with those who made creative mechanical relations with the two concepts. He collided with Shivdan Singh Chowhan, Rangeya Raghav, Koshambi, Yashpal and many others who are history. He found two big lapses in progressive revolution — 'not assessing the value of non-Marxist writers and not opposing the reactionary tendencies which are spreading inside progressive literature'. He was worried about the ambiguity of thoughts and artistic laxity in progressive literature. Throughout his life he opposed fanaticism and opportunism. Many had to accept the importance of his criticism by suppressing their emotions since whatever he said was true.

Parallel to political narrowness was literary genuineness and such writers had

made criticism a pure literary subject, they wouldn't open a social window. There were many who would immediately comment on any writing without going deep into the ideas of the writing. Sometimes the critic was an interpreter only. This concept of purity of literature had harmed Hindi literature more than the literature of any other language in India. There was greater influence of the Western Modernist principles on Hindi literature that is why the pressure of literary purity was more on this literature. Ram Vilas Sharma has targeted both Political parochialism and literary purity. His views were very clear about the relation of literature with society and the speciality of literature. "In order to understand any age it is necessary to know economic relations, but art and literature are not the shadows of this relationship... Besides economic life man lives a life of a human being also. In old literature the possibility of showing the confrontation of different classes is rare. The progressive literature is progressive only when it is literature also. If it does not touch the heart of people and the reader is not influenced by it, then it is only slogan mongering and talking of propaganda would not make it great literature, not even ordinary literature... Besides aesthetic beauty it should be able to help in the progress of man and society" (Marxism and Progressive Literature). By such comments he is moving away from political parochialism.

Literature is not only a way of thinking. "Art is related not only to thought but to the emotions and their realization through senses." (Faith and Beauty) At this point literature achieves universality along with its raciality. A man's thoughts reflect his social position, but poet, writer and artist at the intellectual level sometimes violate the conditions of society. Ram Vilas Sharma makes an important comment, "Human consciousness has the capacity to rise above this social conditions and rising above thoughts and material limits it can comparatively develop at a higher level freely." (*ibid*) Kalidas and Kabeer could rise higher. This is true even in the context of the pressures of too much global materialism. Man can think rising above consumerism and fanaticism. Though the power of resistance cannot erase, but they are present in all the age. Actually the above statement shows the signs of beliefs in the man's creative, intellectual and aesthetic sensibilities.

Ram Vilas Sharma says something regarding Nagarjun's love for beauty, "The poet loves beauty and the beauty does not mean only a woman's beauty but the beauty of human life, beauty of nature. The more he loves beauty the more he will hate the foul decay of society. He will like to change this society." (Marxism and Questions of Today). He talks about Indian aesthetic sensibilities and understands it by evaluation of traditions. He did not go deep into contemporary literature. It is difficult

to agree with him what he wrote about Agvey, Shamsheer and Mukhiboth. He had accepted, "There is nothing like modern man" (*ibid*). That is why he is alert about the relationship between tradition and modernism. He feels that whatever inclinations we should have towards realism, and whatever relation ought to be with the racial awakening that is absent there. He sees in the literature connected with modern sensibility the accepted elements of poetry are prohibited (banned), the problems of society are ignored, and they look at them with a feeling of confusion and suffocation. After Nirala his most loved poet is Kedarnath Aggarwal, he does not move ahead of this. Definitely he is more liberal towards traditions than towards contemporariness. Hence the importance of Ram Vilas Sharma's criticism should not be evaluated on the basis of what he comments on the contemporary literature, or what he had written about woman and underdogs (Oppressed). The need is to see how extensively he had evaluated traditions how much he had seen India, and how he made the chain of Hindi reawakening which stood on the pillow of solid examples. He has once again revived the Indian aesthetic sensibility, and how this could enlarge our hearts and what it could do for the struggle against Imperialism.

This is Bali Syndrome (Ramayana)

There was an age of Ram Vilas Sharma when people would flock round knowledgeable people, and the meaning of knowledge had not gone down. Knowledge was the part of consciousness of wisdom only then it became more meaningful. These days knowledge is not important. People flock around those persons who have money and power. Earlier there used to be intense hustle and bustle round Ram Vilas Sharma, each person would talk and discuss things among themselves. Ram Vilas Sharma gave Marxism national reinterpretation and to Hindi criticism a prestige. He had once said, "The role of brilliant people in the building of literature is decisive. It doesn't mean that whatever these people do is good only, or that in their excellent works there are no faults. If an artistic creation has no fault in it, itself it is a fault, such art is lifeless. (Evaluation of Traditions). This is also applicable to Ram Vilas Sharma's writing.

Each critic has an ideological freezing point, after that he freezes and his flow stops. The vision with which he opens lots of realities of the world, after a point they become hurdles in his own path. Still whatever Ram Vilas Sharma has given to Hindi criticism it is superb. In his criticism besides the beauty of arrangement (management) there is transparency, compatibility and objectivity.

It is a great paradox that in an age of revolution in media there is utmost lack of dialogue (discussion). Today nobody gives logic, no long discussions take place. There is no dialogue between one writer with another writer, between a critic and another critic or between poet and story writer. Everywhere we find monologues. We cannot imagine any democratic culture without any critical discussions (dialogues). Criticism is the life of democratic culture. Today the 'Critical Vision' of people is in great danger. The main sign of any intellectual person is 'Critical Vision'. Vibhishan living in Ravan's Lanka and Vidur living with Kauravs still remained critical. Gautam Buddha, Kabeer and Bhartendu were critical. The thousand years' long tradition of criticism is in danger. Now everywhere there is worship of dogmatism, thrilling statements and making blind triumphal cheers for power. In spite of the drama of democracy, there has been an atmosphere of anti-criticism, and fear is looming large everywhere.

In Ram Vilas Sharma criticism has developed from long discussions, it is standing on logic. Primarily, he evaluated that literature which was written in religious patriarchal society. It is an important question as to what should be our attitude towards the hundreds of years' literature written in such society. Should it be prohibitive or sensational? Such evaluations are founded on half-truths, one sided and destructive ideas. It is possible

in Ram Vilas Sharma's expansive critical vision and insight, untouchable and women issue were not as much pronounced as was considered necessary in modern times. Still why do we see again and again what is not there, why not see what is valuable there. If we want to look for Kabeer's vision of woman or Meera's vision of down trodden people what would we get? We can disagree with Ram Vilas Sharma on some points but we should understand his historical role. He was regularly blamed for many things. If we agreed with all his views then why should we go in criticism, rather we would have been singing psalms together. It is against the literary ethics to 'Sing Songs' or "rain stones". The most important thing is the development of critical vision and freedom from stagnation and blind following.

There are many writers today who don't want to see the achievements of others and also their own inner conflicts. Those who are aware of their own inner conflicts they fight with them whether they come out of it or not, and those who are not aware of their own inner conflicts they drown in them and are left behind.

Ram Vilas Sharma, in spite of living in a city did not like cosmopolitan culture, because it ultimately makes them rootless. He was a great admirer of Pant but he said, "Amongst romantic poets Pantji was least aware of the racial development of the Hindi literature." (Marxism and Progressive Literature). Pant had cruelly

criticized Bhakti poets. It is worth mentioning that he does not go to them like other romantic poets. But Pant along with (technical) mechanical materialists was associated with the massacre of the literature of the past. He never liked villages and peasants. He is the least vocal of all romantic poets on the question of anti-imperialism. Ram Vilas Sharma commented on this issue, "From the perspective of Pantji casteism is boycotted. On one side he is called conventional because of his worshipping of nearly extinct ideals, on the other side by rejecting the progressive elements of culture and for worshipping English he is cosmopolitan... We have to protect the progressive elements of Indian culture, from Indian conventionalism and also from the fallen capitalist culture." (*ibid*). Ram Vilas Sharma had worked in Pantji's magazine 'Rupabh'. He was in contact with Pant besides Nirala. He had played a role in reducing tension between the two poets. It's a different issue that he did not like Pant's cosmopolitan temperament, and he loved Nirala's indigenoussness.

If a man is of cosmopolitan temperament, he would be hypnotized by English, the English luster or it must be the influence of globalization, hence the level of opposition to imperialism would be low. This will be far away from the community's conscience. In Ram Vilas Sharma's criticism the Hindi community's awakening and opposition to imperialism

are basic points.

What we are finding today is that it is very difficult to criticize. Religious fanaticism, blind communalism, caste politics or politics of ego rule our times, the louder you speak the greater the support you will find standing behind you. Accordingly power will come and stand supporting you. If your criticism is coming out of all these there will be harm, danger and strangeness. In 2012 the political cartoonists and the girls criticizing Mumbai Bandh had to go to jail. This shows the level of freedom and tolerance in the Indian democracy. If criticism has no place in this society there is no place for critical vision, or for historical vision. Even in politics they want only followers. We can see the critical vision has no place in Indian life. Hence one can understand what a unique danger to the tradition of criticism is even in this modern age.

Undoubtedly criticism is for protection of ideas, for life and for democracy. Earlier criticism had more influence of politics, now it has more influence of market. Such a net is spread all over that there is hardly any space left in the mind to think. Earlier criticism was forced to shut up now the intellectuals have themselves put the handkerchiefs of their pockets in their mouths, and filled their pockets with something else.

This is an important question how much people are colliding with the feudalistic and imperialistic situations and

how much they are mixing with it. Mostly these days while colliding at the social and intellectual level they are becoming part of them. One can see that in India feudalism and imperialism are increasing day by day in new forms. This incident can be understood by the story of Bali in the Ramayana.

Whosoever went to fight with Bali his half strength would be transferred to him. Similarly howsoever we fight with sectarianism, superstitions, religious fanfare fanaticism is increasing and globalization is increasing in spite of our dissatisfaction with it. Blind communalism is also increasing in the same ratio. Seeing the Maharashtra of Phule, Gokhale and Ranade, what human frenzy of Marathi blind provincialism is spreading. In many provinces of the country the same caste frenzy is to be seen in some form or the other. The more you fight with the tradition of caste the more casteism is increasing. Was there more casteism in Ram Chandra's time or in today's times? This is to be found among literature and intellectuals. The more the slogan are

shouted against Americanism, globalization and FDI, the crowd in Malls and Multiplexes increases in the same proportion, in the same proportion self-abandonment is also increasing. Many people opposing America send their children to study in America. The bubble of opposition has burst into lifeless lump after becoming a ritual. This is what Bali Syndrome is.

If any society is overshadowed by violence and sensuality of beauty makeups to a large extent, take it that the society's thinking power is finished. Now the era of heroic poetry and era of amorous poetry have come with a new face. In such a period a new fire of criticism is required. A challenge is thrown how we can bring criticism out of the narrowness and dryness. How can we make criticism more critical without paying attention to its popularity and how to make sharper attacks on Indian conservatism and the new depraved capitalism of the west? This is criticism's job, to 'demystify' something and to 'decolonize' other things and make some space for life amidst fanaticism.

Shambunath, born 1948, is a noteworthy progressive critic and former professor of Hindi with a number of published books to his credit like Sanskriti ki Uttarkatha, Dussamay Mein Sahitya, Hindi Navjagran aur Sanskriti, Sabhyata se Sanvad.

He was also director of Kendriya Hindu Sansthan, Agra. He lives in Howrah.

Parmila Garg has been teaching English at a College of Delhi University and is currently associated with GGSIP and Auburn University, US. She has translated Surendra Verma's famous novel 'Mujhe Chand Chahiye' into English. Besides this she has also translated a book of political history 'Undaunted Israel'. She lives in Delhi.

Divik Ramesh's World of Poetry

(On occasion of publishing the translated version of his poems)

Kim Yang Shik

Poetry is like a home for not only poets but also everybody. Because a normal person keeps a poetic sense in one's deep heart, whoever it may be. I am inclined to believe that all people can be poets as long as their hearts turn serene and sublime when they read or write a poem. This means also the way our spiritual world is sublimated.

Having translated Ramesh's poetry into Korean, I have found again how greatly a writer is influenced by the environmental surroundings; where he or she is born and raised up.

Through Ramesh's poetry we can simply sense all the emotional touches from the Indian earth; the heat and occasional wind from the earth, complex but affectionate tie that binds families and neighbours together and the grand nature that surrounds him. These all provide him with sources for his writing.

For bird
There's no bridegroom's party.
For bird
No going to strange family.
For bird
There's no dowry.

—Quote from 'Birds' Wedding

This poem makes us easily see a facet of the Indian traditional wedding customs. With subtlety and satire, he attacks their long determined way and practice in wedding. This might be a poet's

peculiar way of protest against not only the wrong practice that has repressed his mind but also the crooked way in their lives across the country. This nature of his protest is skillfully featured in his other poems such as 'The Secret of Earth' and 'Realization (Forgive me)'.

A mother is like an eternal home for a person. Likewise the poet's emotional attachment to his mother is so fearfully thick that his feminism stems from his Mother Being. While his mother was milling grain and churning butter at dawn, he lies peacefully asleep by the rhythms. Yet no one even praises her in her daily routine. Still he keeps his eye on his mother's every moment with deep respect and compassion;

*Did she ever sleep?
of this I have no memory.
I wonder
what was milled
my mother
or the grain*

Divik Ramesh already has been in Korea for three years as a visiting professor teaching Hindi at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. Being a poet himself he has been hopping around with great interest in Korean literature and so enthusiastic for the Korean poetry, he also has studied even those poems composed by Kim, So Wol and Bang, Jung-Whan (whose pen name is Sopa). In particular, he further appreciates Bang, Jung-Whan's children verses as he himself writes it, too. He easily approaches Kim, So-Wol's poetry

as many Koreans love them. As a result, he has come to compose a poem himself in adoration of Kim, So-Wol;

*Overflowing on the earth
an ocean of azaleas
I feel
As if the fragrance of your poems
is stepping down softly
And reaching me
Making a way
Through my soul.*

*Amazed I am
How the unsatisfied pathos of your
poems
can satisfy
so much!*

Of his works, there are a few poems which are believed to well convey his simple sentiments to readers; For example, 'Love and Wife', 'My Village Now', 'A Beautiful Poem', 'Silence I', and 'Silence II'.

In other poems; 'Fire and Water', 'Stopping the movement of the earth', 'Why Has It to Be So', 'Water I' through 'Water 4', he heatedly reverberates criticism on the reality.

For the Indian people water is holy and adorable and even a divine being. So he addresses 'Let water sway...' in this first line of 'Water I'. Water should continue swaying along the way down to the ocean to reach together where freedom is preserved while remaining as water,

In 'Water 4' he addresses again;

Ocean!
Did I know
To be near you
Means to be water?

This indicates the poets' hope as many Indian people do throughout their lives to be burned to ashes upon their death and scattered over River Ganges whereby they will naturally join the holy water in appreciation of their deep faith in Hinduism. As touched so far, Ramesh's poetry is a crystallization of essences of human life and sense of destiny, which are unresistable against the space and time that surround him.

I hope that my personal remarks on Ramesh's poetry along with my translation

of them into Korean will be of some help for the readers to understand him. In particular, it is significant to have the contemporary Indian poetry published first in Korea in a single book. Thanks to the interest and advice, this occasion would provide for an opportunity to broaden our mutual understanding of both cultures between India and Korea.

In conclusion, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to Professor Divik Ramesh for his friendly co-operation and permission to have his poetry translated and published. In addition, I deeply appreciate those who have assisted in accomplishing my work, especially Miss Lee, Hye-Jin and Mr. Kim, Chang-Yong.

Kim, Yang Shik, is the first and only Korean recipient of Padam Shri Award (2002). She was born on 4th January, 1931. In 1954 she did her B.A. (English) from Ehwa Women's University, Seoul and M.A. (Indian Philosophy) from Dongguk University, Seoul. She is founder and President of Tagore Society of Korea since 1981. Her poems are available in Hindi too (Refer to I.Koriyayi Kavita Yatra, edited by Divik Ramesh and published by Sahitya Akademi in 1999, 2. The Day Breaks O! India Among her 24 books of poems, she has published two anthologies of her poems related to her experience in India. She herself has translated Indian literary works (specially of Tagore) into Korean language. Her translation works include 'Bird's Wedding' poetry by Divik Ramesh (1997). Her first poetry collection 'Chongup-Fusa' was published in 1971. She has edited several books and among them are 1st, 2nd and 3rd book of Indian Folklore in Korean. She edits and publishes an annual journal 'Korean-Indian Culture'. She is a great friend and wellwisher of India.

Radha Worship in Hindi Literature

L. Thillai Selvi

Introduction

Lord Rama, and Krishna emerged as incarnations of Vishnu in early religious and secular literature. Almost simultaneously we find Radha also mentioned, along with Krishna, as an embodiment of beauty, love and art, in fact as the repository of the most cherished feminine virtues and graces. How and when did it happen? It would be interesting to trace the concept of Radha worship in Indian Literature and see how it came to dominate, at least for a time, all literary effort in Hindi and in most other Indian languages and literatures.

When exactly Krishna Bhakti came to include worship of Radha as an integral part of it, is not known for certain. There is no mention of Radha in Vishnu Purana or the Bhagavata Purana. All that the Bhagavata states is that among the gopis with whom Krishna is said to have wandered in the forest, there was one favourite gopi named Radha. Out of this shadowy figure arose Radha who in later literature became the symbol of the most passionate love which the human heart is capable of.

Though veiled references to Radha are found in Panchatantra (5th century) and in some Satsais, particularly in Geeta Saptashati (4th century), yet she does not emerge as an object of worship or a part of divinity. For the first time we find the concept of the worship of Radha in the philosophical system of Nimbarka (12th century) and his teachings based on that system. Next in chronological order came Jayadeva's Geetavinda, Chandidas's lyrics and Vidyapati's Padavali which not only lent support to that idea but made it attractive as also an inseparable part of Krishna-bhakti.

Chaitanya went a step further and made devotion to Radha the basic tenet of the Vaishnavite cult.

In the sphere of literature, the concept of Radha thus emerged as a fully developed theme soon after the twelfth or thirteenth century. So far as the development of Hindi literature is concerned, we may take cognizance of this idea from the days of Vallabhacharya (1479 - 1531). It was he, and more than him, his son and successor, Vitthalnath who laid the foundation of Radha worship as an inseparable part of Krishna-bhakti. Vitthalnath's Sanskrit works bring out clearly the fact that Krishna bhakti is incomplete without the workshop of Radha with equal fervour, from now on Radha worship became one of the tenets of pushhtimarga propounded by Vallabhacharya and his followers. We find nearly all the devotees of the Ashtachhap and the subsequent saint poets of this cult acknowledging it in their preachings and embodying this truth in their poetical works. The founder of the Radha - vallabh cult, Hitaharivansha went still further and equated Radha with Krishna so far as devotion, love and worship are concerned. After him each one of the devotees thought it his religious duty to endorse this view and stress the importance of Radha in his verses.

Radha Worship

What is the philosophy behind Radha worship? There are two reasons generally adduced in support of this worship. Firstly,

Radha as an abstract concept is symbolic of what is most beautiful, artistic and lovable in this universe. She is truly the embodiment of what is described as sundaram by the ancient seers. Secondly, as the beloved and acknowledged the most favoured Gopika of Krishna, Worship of Radha is looked upon as the best way of invoking the blessing of Krishna, for no one can be nearer to him in thought and deed than Radha.

In Hindi literature the full flowering of the "Sringar Ras" may be attributed largely to the concept of Radha. What will be best of the writings of Keshvadas, Bihari, Deva and several other poets if we take away from their works the portions devoted to Radha?

The devotees of the Radha-vallabh cult have done a good bit of hair-splitting as regards the theory and manifestation of Radha worship - For example, some of the questions posed are; does true devotion find its came in union or separation? Which of the two is more conducive to virtuousness? But we prefer to leave such discussions out as they do not fall within the purview of our study.

Shakespeare is very popular for his description of the first sight of love in almost all his dramas. Hence, his aphorism — Love at first sight ?" Surdas describes the first sight of love of the immortal lovers (*i.e.*) Radha and Krishna in a very natural way. To Surdas, their mutual first sight was a divine surprise -"Krishna has set out for playing with his toys and other play-things. He has richly decorated himself with

valuable ornaments and clothes. His body is shining with the applique of sandal - paste. He reached the beautiful banks of the Jamuna. Perchance, he saw Radha there whose beautiful eyes and forehead are broad. She is wearing a blue upper-cloth around her waist and her long pig-tail is rolling over her back. She is very beautiful and the colour of her body is fair. Krishna fell in love with her at the first sight. Radha too saw Krishna for the first time. "Eyes met eyes" "They exchanged glances". This first sight of Radha and Krishna paves the way for their future immortal love.

Surdas has sketched the picture of the most pathetic condition of Radha who is the most grief-stricken lady at the first sight of Krishna. There is a total change in her behaviour. She no longer walks fast. She is not talkative as before. She started blushing due to some thoughts which come to her mind most frequently. There is a kind of stringing vibration in her heart. She lost hunger. She lost the control over her senses. She laughs and cries at the same period. Her hair bristle when she is admired by her friends as the most loved one of Krishna. She has fallen a prey to the feelings of sex. Outwardly, she is calm and possessed. But inwardly she is turbulent and uncontrolled.

Radha is not able to sleep now. To her, except Krishna nothing else is beautiful. Her thoughts are concentrated on the plan to meet her lover. She feels lonely. There is none to whom she can tell about her sorrow. Sur's Radha herself explains her condition to one of her close friends —

"Since I saw Krishna, my eyes have no sleep. The heart is always moving like a wheel. To my eyes, nothing looks beautiful. My eyes plan several schemes to see Krishna. All their thoughts are concentrated on this venue. The condition of other senses is the same? (*i.e.*), My ears want to hear the words of Krishna. My nose wants to smell the sweet smell of the basil garland around his neck. My tongue wants to sing about his virtuous qualities. My skin wants to have a bodily touch of him.

The love between Krishna and Radha is not a new one. It continues to exist from several previous births. So they know each other very well. Radha knows too well about the blemish on Krishna's Character. Krishna too knows very well that nothing of his could be hidden from the sight of the clever Radha.

Radha in Separation

Radha's condition is worse in the absence of Krishna. She gazes at the path of Krishna with fixed eyes. She recollects the past and cries bitterly. She writes the 'patiyaas' (letters) and washes them with her tears. She has no hunger. Her sleep is lost. She has not washed those clothes which she used to wear in the company of Krishna.

Her hair are dry and confused, her body is pale and withered. Here eyes have lost their glow. God gave her a lot of pain. A milkmaid explains her condition. "Oh friend! In the absence of Krishna, everything of Radha's body is changed. Her

hair which were like snakes have now become like the dry branches of a banyan tree... Her eyes were like the petals of lotus. But now, the beauty of the eyes is squeezed... Her back was like the plantain leaf. But, now it is opposite (hard). Krishna has robbed all her wealth and bestowed upon her only troubles."

A companion of Radha explains, "She draws lines with her finger nails upon her hands, cheeks, shoulders and thighs. She broods upon something, sits in meditation to chant the name of Krishna", Radha is almost mad and she has no knowledge of the world around her. She has lost herself in separation.

She has lost hopes of a happy Future. She has her own doubts whether the past will be revived. Radha asks her friends, — "When Krishna would come and take her into his arms? When would he display his postures to the maids? When would he place his flute upon his lips and call us by taking our names, one after another? When would he send the go-between to the thickets to fetch us? When would he press our shoulders with love and passion? When would he fall upon our feet and extinguish our anger?"

Sur's Radha is the most affected lady in the separation of Krishna; many days have passed since Krishna left for Mathura. All his promises of early return have now proved to be false and untrue.

Radha in Swadheenapatika

Swadheenapatika is such a heroine whose

husband or lover is under her perfect control. Her husband is very much enamoured by her beauty and virtue, and does not like to be separated from her for a moment. As Nurmuhammad says, she is flown in the river of love, day and night.

Jo: Swa:dhinaphatika:rahi:

din: aura:ti pri:ti ma:bahi:

Surdas presented Radha In the Swadheena patika condition. Krishna loves her immensely. In fact, he is made after her. Whether he sits or stands, he never forgets to sing about the beauty of Radha. The yellow colour reminds him of Radha's bodice and her jewels. He has not left any grove, in searching of Radha. He sketches the picture of Radha on the ground. The pictures drawn out by him are the sources of solace for the anxious lover. It appears that he would die in the absence of Radha.

A milkmaid reports, - "Oh Radha ! you are very much liked by Krishna. He — while sitting, while standing, while walking and while tending the cattle, — sings about your qualities. By looking at the yellow colours, he thinks about the yellow bodice and the gold ornaments on your body. He searches for you in every bush of the forest and cries, Where are thou? My Radha. He draws your pictures, looks at them and thereby destroys the feelings of separation", you are the life of Krishna. He can't live without you.

Conclusion : In Hindi Literature the concept of Radha, whatever one may think of its philosophical background or religious *raison d etre*, has made a valuable contribution to the growth of Indian

literature in general and Hindi literature in particular. The basis of Krishna-Radha relationship is easily understandable. The element of love, as a basic factor in human life makes it possible, if not easy, for one to appreciate the divine love between Krishna and Radha. As the Sufis thought, the sentiment of love serves as a link between man and God as much as between a devotee and Krishna. It is only practical common - sense that the need of the worship of Radha should be stressed as a means of propitiating and worshipping Krishna. Therefore, the idea gained many adherents and resulted in much literary and

aesthetic output.

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Poetry

Five Poems

Kedarnath Agrawal

Premlata

1. Property Inherited

When father died
the hungry farmer's son found this;
rubble of the house, broken bedsteads
a few hands' length of field
that too infertile

The sole of a rough leather shoe
small, broken and old axle of a cart
cracked table, leaking Hookah,
tongs of a thin iron strip.

A big mountain of garbage
competitor of the golden Meru mountain
standing on the door,
a big loan from the money lender
which never got settled even after paying.

white ants, centipedes, mosquitoes, earth worms,
thousands like these are co-residents.

Not only this the hunger which I got
is a hundred times more than that of my father.

when the stomach is rumbling
and moves around with a wide mouth open
what does it know what is freedom?
and what are the ways of a free nation?

2. People will Sing my Songs

No dependence on religion
or ways of destiny
there is only one dependence
and that is just on this noble pen,
it doesn't get defeated
by disease or death
my words, my poems
people will sing
melodiously.

3. We the Janvadi Poets

We are writers
the story tellers,
we are the commentators of life
we are Janvadi poets.
we are fortunate descendants
of chand and soor
Tulsi and Kabeer,
we are followers of saints
and of brave Harichand.
we are the industrious
supporters of this age
of dear India's
culture and heritage
we are the upholders
of life's cultural entity
we are the creators
of the rule of labour
of joyful prosperity
and of productivity
we are well wishers
and observers
of past, future and present
protectors of eternal laws of equality
we are followers of humanism
we are janvadi poets.

4. To Writers

You are scared
even after holding a sword in your hand!

you are dying
even after holding a lightning pen,
you are the fire, you are the volcano, but a sleeping one,
sowing iced dew drops of tears!

You are the sun but hidden behind the clouds,
you are the revolution but wearing tinkling anklets!

you are an ocean but there is no storm in it,
smile of moon alone gives you life!!
you are a sharp arrow
that can pierce through rocks,
don't sing your sorrows silently!
There is thunder in your emotions,
but lying unconscious under your
dark desires!

you are a song, but you are not humming,
drowning in the dark heart of the night!
you are a cobra but lying in the charmer's basket,
swaying your hood
you never fought with the enemy!

You have feathers but you never fly in the sky,
you don't ride on the chariot of winds:
you get hurt but never challenge
you don't blow the whistle of inquilab!
you bear all the suffering, sitting silently,
you are telling the dead story of death!
O Dadhichi! beat the drum
spread the message of strength!
raise the joyful sun of peace!!
spread the light of red gold!

5. A Farmer

This time paddy crop
has yielded a lot!
single plants are looking double!
the earth is full of produce
there is not a single empty spot!

The farmer has gathered
all his near and dear ones
gathered to reap the harvest
reaching early in the morning,
everyone is holding a sickle
with lots of strength in their arms,
breathing quick and fast,
they are cutting the crop,
with great interest and purpose,
the hard labour of life
has succeeded at last!
they stand up finally
with zest, zeal and rejoice
They have enough to eat at last!

Kedarnath Agrawal (1911-2000), An eminent progressive poet whose poems are full of elan vital. He is equally expressive in recording the rural landscape. Some of his collections of poems are: 'yug ki Ganga', 'lok aur alok', 'hey meri tum' and 'phool nahi rang bolte hain'. He was an advocate by profession and lived in Banda, U.P.

Premlata, born 1946, teaches history at Maitreyi College. Has published several articles and research papers. She translates occasionally. She lives in New Delhi.

Poetry

Seven Poems

Kusum Ansal

1. THE BENCH

When I sit on this bench
so many things flash back in my mind
an extravaganza of images,
bells and whistles...music,
light and shade effects
so many people, so many voices
rude...bitter...alluring and fake
engulf me with confusion.

Over all the audio-visuals
rises the smooth whisper
of your voice with magical note
its sufiana rhythmic cosmic mantra
touches my inner being.

Meeting you was always
as spiritual as a visit to a shrine
a magnetic pull of love
I held you into the layers of my heart
so that no one could steal you from me.

Though you have walked out of my life
and I am emotionally damaged, shattered

isolated, lonely and stained with pain
I still sit on this bench...
dedicated to old memories
waiting in vain, for the soft whisper
of your voice... like the call of a white dove.

Waiting for it, to light my spirit
to transform my being
back to its normal form
I will wait... wait till it happens.

2. KASHMIR

After many years
when I stand
as a silent spectator
near the ruins of
a burnt house

a mass grave of my family...
A strange numbness engulfs my heart
I find myself lost in a
different identity, a different self.
Rootless and homeless,
discovering the great gulf
dividing today's tragic
and yeateryears' beautiful past.

My loneliness, my pain, my distress
my lost glorious past, my family.
It's like travelling into...
the horror of a mental maze
a confused road map
with the experience of...
a new Avtar of reborn Kashmir
a journey where...
one's identity becomes
destabilized... lost
in the stories and incidents
of pain and suffering
inflicted by inhuman torture...
is this the way
a state survives?

3. A COFFIN AND A BOTTLE

In this room
there is a beautifully
engraved coffin
and an empty bottle.

‘What are these?’
I asked him.

With tearful eyes
and constricted throat he replied,
‘In the coffin, sleeps my young daughter
who was raped, before being tortured to death.’

‘And the empty bottle?’
I asked him.

‘Empty’ he shouted, ‘No, it is not empty.
It is filled with her kisses
love and affection
which she presented me
On father’s day..

The coffin and the bottle
were imparting an unusual aroma
which filled the room
with restrained helplessness.

In our residential lane
there are many houses
with such rooms
where terrorized fathers
of young girls
are buried alive
encapsulated in humiliation and pain.

4. THE CHURCH

In the emptiness of the church
I stand near your image
with folded hands Dear God.
Your lean body hanging on the cross
weakens my morale.
I get depressed, O Jesus...
strange it is... that...
in front of your great sacrifice
my own humble mortal self
shrinks and becomes hollow
as your serene image questions
my faith in humanity.

In the silence of the hall
an echo of haunting prayers of the past
fills up the narrow corridors of Church
but in spite of that mystic attraction
strange as it is...
my thoughts about myself
overpower my consciousness
I think of 'me' 'my life' 'my worries'
but not the gracious you, your blessings, O God.

The chiming church bells dispel my obsession
falling on my accumulated memories...
strange it is... that...
subconsciously I chant...Gayatri mantra
unaware of the limitations of the Church.

Will you forgive me, My Christ
as I am not any antagonistic person
but this is the only ritual,
the only mantra deep rooted in my heart
It only brings me closer to your glorious self

The omnipresence of your super image
filling silence and gloominess of Church
into an enlightened sunshine
strange...It is... that...
I bow down my body
In 'Sakshat-dandavat-Pranam'
as my total surrender to Thee.

5. AUSCHWITZ

I stood silently near the gate
which had a cynical inscription
Arbert macht frei (work brings freedom)
enwrapped in a mysterious echo...
echo of bells, bells of the hell.
In the depth of my heart
I could hear innumerable human cries...
of those lives... treated
worse than animals.

It was a 'Death Block' of the innocents
haunting me with its strange hollowness
I could not hold myself from crying...

Tears rolled down my eyes...
when I stood near those photographs
difficult to count
of those Jews who struggled immensely
to emerge free from the Death Trap.
Free from the awful jaws of darkness
The unnamed eyes. The unshed tears
mixed with the horrified fear of death
with tight lips and unspoken words narrated
the cruelty of the inhuman rulers
of that country.

The pile of torn shoes, toothbrushes
heaps of rusted tin plates and broken cups
rough, dirty bloodstained belongings
reminding one of multilayers of misery
suffering the torturous behaviour.
Which still echoes in those dark cells
where human hair tapestry
human skin lamp-shades were displayed.
My words fail me to describe accurately
what exists there in its utter helplessness.

As I look at the black and white prisoner's dress
The stripes conveyed to me.
white... denial of all the blessings of life
black... chaos, surrender, helplessness
leading to a man's deconstruction
leading to a man's crushed identity
in such deliberate sadism
a fanatical hallucination engulfs
from which humanity struggles to emerge.
Even today the echo of death
is more prominent than life,
the cremation pits and pyres
are still miraculously hot and burning
with human flesh and bones
at the dawn of a fateful day
merging into a deep silence
of fearsome mystery of a disastrous illusion.
death is the ultimate end of a human being
but Auschwitz was a never-ending death.

6. RAWALPINDI

Crossing all the bonds of history
I reached the narrow lane
of the old city of my nana and my roots.
I held a white rose in my hand
along with an address of Rawalpindi.

My heart was thumping with images,
self-created images of a long-lost past,
It was a past of a dead mother,
my nana used to tell me.
of her life and time in Rawalpindi.

At the entrance of the narrow lane
hung a freshly painted signboard
which was unable to hide the
bold letters, scripted in Hindi,
which reflected the old glory of
Rawalpindi.

My heartbeat froze... as I stood
in front of the 'Melaram Haveli'
similar to the photograph I held in my hand.
Just the word 'OM' engraved at the
threshold stood testimony to the creed of
lifestyle of my nana who lived in his days
at Rawalpindi.

Few people...passers-by on the road
tried to bring me back to today's reality
reminding me of my own real self.
They said, it was not the old Punjab.
which remains alive in my consciousness
it's not the same Rawalpindi.

But when I touched the door of the houses
unfamiliar vibrations flowed in my veins
rippling with memories and incidents
of my nana's suffering during partition
which were narrated to us, along with his
love his attachment with Rawalpindi.

Suddenly the door opened,
and an old lady peeped out
'Who are you...what are you doing here'
Yes, I thought who am I, what am I doing
here?
Silence animated the inanimate
consciousness.
What am I doing in this city?
City unknown, but of my nana's passion
the city of Rawalpindi.

when I touched the wall of the house
it whispered softly, 'I am Melaram Haveli.'
The voice of my nana, escorted me inside,
'This is my room, and that one...,
near the courtyard, is your mother's,
my daughter, Sheila, she is the life of the family,
but could not live, after your birth,
and after leaving Rawalpindi.'

'Oh, why are you crying my dear?'
asked the lady with great tenderness.
'Come live with me, its your own home',
the partition has not divided humanness
the boundaries of any nation and politicians,
are not the moral agents, to divide love.
She took me in her arms like my own nani,
living in Rawalpindi.

She opened the door of my mother's room.
a familiar fragrance embraced me softly
In that devotional ardour, I was taken aback
when I saw many white roses
neatly arranged in a basket
portraying something beyond reality
they were similar to the white rose
I had carried from India.
similar to the one I offered
every year to my mother's memory
on her death anniversary
similar to the one, I was to offer
to her memory, here in Rawalpindi.

7. LIFE

That day when I entered
a magnificent wedding pandal
the fragrance of flowers, melody of music
the fake smile of the newly-wedded couple
the mystic smoke of ceremonial fire
could not capture my pulse, rather
a strange loneliness stirred my soul,
an unusual pain of withdrawal
Overpowered my consciousness
I don't know why.

That day when I attended the funeral of
my friend
the real smoke arose from
the burning human flesh which
portrayed something beyond reality
I wondered what it was.
A reawakening or a reality of life
Or the end of an illusion?
Or what?

Is death freedom from relationship?
Is death freedom from tomorrow?
Is death freedom from emotions?
Is death freedom from origin?
Is smoke a material realization?
Of beauty, of ugliness... or is it the
wisdom of being without ego?
Is it bliss... clarity and peace
Or what... ?

Courtesy, Roli Books.

Kusum Ansal, born 1940, is a leading author whose oeuvre contains poetry, novels, short stories and travelogues. Some of her well read books are—ek aur panchvati; pate badalte hain; weh aya tha; yadon ke hamsafar. She also writes in Punjabi. Her works have been translated into English, Greek and Russian, Kusum Ansal organises a literary forum 'Samvad' and is actively associated with a number of social service groups. She lives in New Delhi.

Poetry

Four Poems

Mangal Murty

1. PEEPBO SUN

Look, the sun comes peeking at my door
Stealthily every morning, playing peepbo,
And stands momentarily transfixed
Scowling at the criss-cross maze
Of sharp angles and rectangles
Cutting into each other in rage
And creating a fascinating chiaroscuro
Of bright light and deep shadows
Of a magical cryptogram
Written on the perplexed floor
Or is it some visible soundless song
Printed on time's music sheet

2. TEA WITH DONNE

Good Morning, dear Sun!
Come sit with me
And have a cup of tea.
You look so fresh today,
So radiant, so bright-eyed,
Filling half our world
With your golden rays;
Peering into every window,
Every nook and crevice,
Teasing lazy lovers from their beds;
Writing musical scores
On shimmering cobwebs;
Hastening the yawning buds
To bloom soon before noon,
Whispering to their opening petals
That their tender short story
Has a lovely end by the even-song.
Meanwhile, dear Sun,
Come, sit with me
And have some tea.

3. THE WALL

'Something there is that doesn't love a wall'
It stands there silent and enigmatic.
Between desire and fulfilment.
Who raised it? This ugly wall?
How come it stands here brazenly
With its pockmarked face—
Hard, stony, savage, harsh, pitiless-
Grimacing with criss-crossed shadows?
Rugged with malice and contumely.
It divides. It hides. It shuts out.
Blocking tear-filled eyes,
From gentle solicitous emotions,
Choking sighing sorrows,
From piercing its concrete barbarity.
Snuffing candles on vigil
For those who perished in pain.
Will it be there forever this wall-
Indestructible, undemolishable, perpetual?
'Something there is that doesn't love a wall'
That stands forever silent and enigmatic.
Between desire and inertia.

4. HI, KRISHNA!

Hi, Krishna!
What're you doing here
Under this tree on my street?
And where is Radha, your beloved beauty?
And all those Gopis
Whom you had left naked in the pool
As you stole their ghaghras and cholis?
*Ah, today I am not in a mood for all that
Today I am here in your street
Beneath this tree with my flute...
Today I want to tell you something...
Oh, really? How good of you to think of me!*

*Today I come to tell you who you are
You are me—none else—me and me alone.
For days I had been watching you
Going on morning strolls, deep in thought.
I knew you were thinking of me
And of the music of my flute.
So I came to tell you I am only you
And you are always in me.*

Come, come, Krishna,
You are only taking me round and round
In circles, baffling me with your enigmatic words.
Now, tell me seriously about your true self;
Are you only what you look,
As you stand here under this tree on my street,
Wearing that peacock-feather'd hair-band
And playing that divine tune on your flute?

*Indeed, this is how you see me.
This is how I appear in the mirror of your heart.
But let me make known to you my divine manifestation.
I am the Atman that dwells in the heart of every mortal creature.*

*I am the beginning, the life-span and the end of all.
I am the beginning, the middle and the end in creation.
I am the Time without end: my face is everywhere.
I am triumph and perseverance: I am the purity of the good.
I am the knowledge of the knower.
I am the divine seed of all lives.
Nothing animate or inanimate exists without me.
Indeed, my divine manifestations are limitless...*

Oh, enough, enough, my Krishna.
To me you are best in this enchanting form
With your peacock-feather'd hairband
And that lovely flute on your lips,
Standing beneath this tree on my street
Where daily I take my morning strolls.

Dr. Mangal Murty, born 1937 is a retired professor of English and Linguistics, who served in universities in Bihar and Yemen for more than four decades, and has written and edited several books in Hindi and some in English. He has recently edited and published the collected works of Shivapujan Sahay (his late father) and is presently doing translations of Selected Writings of Shivapujan Sahay. He now lives in Lucknow and is working on an English biography of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Email: bsmmurty@gmail.com

Malbe Ka Malik

Mohan Rakesh

Jai Ratan

They had come to Amritsar from Lahore after seven years and a half. The Indo-Pak hockey match was just a pretext. More than the match they wanted to see the buildings and the bazaars which had become alien to them seven and a half years ago. Bunches of Muslims were to be seen sauntering along the roads, looking as eagerly at everything, as if this was no ordinary city but a place endowed with some very special attraction.

Passing through the narrow alleys in the bazaars, they reminded one another, of things which had been so familiar. 'Look, Fatehdeena, how the candy shops in Sweets Bazar have dwindled in number! Do you remember the corner shop where Sukhi used to sell parched gram? It's no longer there. Its place has been taken by that betel leaf seller. And, Khan Saheb, isn't this the Salt Market? It's here that they dye clothes in bulk. And those dyer women! So spicy indeed- each one of them!'

It was after a very long time that plumed turbans and red fez caps were seen in the Bazaars. Among the visitors from Lahore a good many were old inhabitants of Amritsar who had been forced to leave the city at the time of partition. The inevitable changes that had come about in the course of seven and a half years aroused

their surprise and sometimes gave them a stab of pain : 'Good heavens, how they have widened Jaimal Singh Lane! Did all the houses on this side burn down? Hakim Asif Ali used to have his shop here, remember? Now a cobbler has entrenched himself in his place.'

And, occasionally, one could also hear observations such as, 'Wali, this mosque is still standing here in tact. How come they haven't made it into a gurdwara?'

Wherever the Pakistani groups passed, people eyed them with curiosity. Even now some people viewed these Muslims with suspicion and stepped out of their path. But there were others who came forward and hugged them warmly. They would ask the visitors, 'What's Lahore like these days? Is the Anarkali as crowded as before? Is it true that they have completely re-built Shah Alami Gate Bazaar? Krishan Nagar hasn't changed much, has it? Was Rishwatpura really constructed from money raised by bribes? They say burqa is no longer in vogue in Pakistan. Is it so?' The questions had such a ring of personal involvement that it would seem Lahore was not just a city but a personal relative, a friend to thousands of people who were eager to find out how it was doing. That day these visitors from Lahore were the guests of the whole city and the locals were unaccountably happy to meet them and talk to them.

Bazaar Bansan was a kind of neglected market in Amritsar, mostly inhabited by

poor Muslims, before the partition. Most of the shops here sold bamboo poles and wooden materials. All those shops had burned down in one huge conflagration. That was the most devastating fire in Amritsar city and sometimes it was feared that it would spread and burn down the whole city. Flames had already lapped up some neighbouring areas. Somehow the fire was brought under control, but while it raged it burnt to ashes several Hindu and Muslim houses.

In the course of seven and a half years many of these buildings had been restored, but one could still see the piles of rubble lying in between the new buildings. The heaps of rubble presented a strange sight in the midst of those new buildings.

That day too, as usual, there was not much activity in Bazaar Bansan. Most of the people who had been living there had perished in the fire and those who had managed to get away could not muster enough courage to return.

Only a thin, wasted-looking Muslim returned that day to that scene of devastation. At the sight of the new and the burnt-out buildings, he seemed to feel that he had strayed into a maze. His feet rose to enter the lane to his left but he hesitated. He could not believe that this was the lane he wanted to enter. Near the mouth of the lane some children were playing kiri kiri. Further down two women were brawling and flinging abuses at each other at the top of their voices.

'Everything else has changed but not ways of speaking,' the old man said to himself in a low voice, and stood still, leaning on his walking stick. His kness stuck out of his pajamas, and his sherwani which ended above his knees was patched in several places.

A child came out of the lane crying. 'Come here, son' the old man said in a soothing voice. 'Come, I'll give you sweets.' Putting his hand in his pocket, he started to search for something for the child. The child kept quiet for a moment and then twisting his mouth, again started crying. A girl of sixteen or seventeen came running from inside the lane and holding the child's arm dragged him back into the lane. Still crying, the child struggled to free his arm. Lifting him in her arms, she held him close, kissed him, and said : 'Stop crying, my prince. If you cry that Muslim will take you away. Keep quiet my good little boy. Keep quiet!'

The old Muslim had taken out a coin to offer to the child but now he returned it to his pocket. Lifting his cap, he scratched his head and put the cap under his arm. His throat was parched and his knees shook slightly. He leaned against the front plank of a closed shop in the lane and put his cap on again. At the mouth of the lane, where they had once stacked long wooden beams, now stood a three-storied house. Two well fed kites sat motionless on the electric wire above the lane. Near the electric pole was a small

patch of sunlight. The old man stood for a while, watching the flying specks of dust in the sun light. 'Oh Lord of all!' The words fell from his lips.

A young man came along, twirling a key-chain, and stopped on seeing the old man. 'Why are you standing here, Mianji? Is anything the matter?'

A faint tremor ran down the old man's chest and arms. He brushed his tongue over his lips and looking attentively at the young man said, 'Son, aren't you Manori?'

The young man stooped shaking his key-chain, and closed his fist over it. 'How do you know my name?' he asked, giving the old man a surprised look.

'Son, seven-and-a half years ago you were so high', the old man tried to smile.

'Have you come from Pakistan today?' Manori asked.

'Yes, We used to live in this lane,' the old man said. 'My son, Chiraghdin was tailor to you folks. Just six months before the partition we had built our new house here.'

'Oh, Ghani Mian?' Recognition shot through Manori.

'Yes, son, I'm your Ghani Mian. I cannot meet Chiragh and his wife and children but I said to myself that I would have one look at my house.'

The old man took off his cap and moved his hand over his head, trying to hold back his tears.

'But hadn't you left here long before?' Manori's voice was filled with sympathy.

"Yes, son, it was my misfortune that I left earlier all by myself. If I had only stayed back with them I too would have..." He stopped short, realizing that it was not right to say such things. But he could not hold back his tears.

'Let be, Ghani Mian. The past is dead and gone. Why recall it?' Manori held the old man by his arm. 'Come, I'll show you your old house,' he said.

The news had gone round that a Muslim was standing outside the lane and had been about to abduct Ramdasi's son. The child's sister had saved him just in time, dragging him back, or else the Muslim would have decamped with the child. Hearing the news the women sitting in the lane picked up their tuffets and disappeared into their houses. They called out to their children, who were playing in the lane to come indoors. When Manori entered the lane with Ghani, it was deserted except for a solitary hawker and Rakkha the wrestler, who as usual lay sprawled asleep under the peepal tree next to the well. Of course, faces peeped out from behind windows and doors. Seeing Ghani they exchanged remarks with one another in whispers. Although his beard had turned grey, they had recognized Chiraghdin's father, Abdul Ghani. 'That used to be your house,' Said Manori pointing to a heap of rubble in the distance. Ghani stopped in his stride and looked with lost eyes at the debris. He had long ago resigned himself to the death of Chiragh and his

wife and children. But he was not prepared for the shock of seeing his house in this shape. His mouth turned drier and his knees shook even more than before. 'That rubble?' he asked incredulously.

Manori saw Ghani's face changing colour. Supporting him by the arm firmly, he said in a steady voice, 'Your house was burnt down in those days.'

Leaning on his walking stick, Ghani somehow managed to reach the heap of rubble. Most of the rubble was now mud from which burnt or broken bricks stuck out here and there. "Anything made of iron or wood had been pilfered long ago. Miraculously, a burnt door frame had escaped although it was jutting out of the rubble. Further back, there were two charred almirahs blanching under their dark surfaces. 'Is this all that is left of my house?' Ghani asked, seeing the rubble from close up. His knees seemed to give way and he sat down holding on to the burnt door frame. After a while his head also came to rest against the door frame, and a moan escaped his lips : 'Oh, my Chiragh Deena!'

For seven and a half years the charred frame had stood there somehow, protruding from the rubble but its wood had badly crumbled. At the touch of Ghani's head fragments fell from it and were scattered around. Some fell on Ghani's cap and hair. With the slivers a worm also fell down and began to wriggle about, seven or eight inches away from Ghani's

feet, on a brick path near the open drain, It raised its head to look for a hole and finding none, struck its head on the ground now and again in disappointment.

Now there were several more faces peering out of the windows. They were whispering among themselves, fearing something would definitely happen today. Now that Chiragh's father Ghani was here, the secrets of seven years ago were bound to unfold themselves. Maybe the rubble itself would tell Ghani the whole story.

It would tell him that on the evening of that day Chiragh was in the room upstairs eating his dinner when the wrestler Rakkha asked him to come down for a moment as he had something important to tell him. Rakkha was the king of the alley in those days. Even the Hindus lived in awe of him and Chiragh after all was a Muslim. Putting down the morsel he was about to eat, Chiragh came downstairs while his wife, Zubeida and two daughters, Kishwar and Sultana, looked down through the windows. Chiragh had just emerged into the lane from his porch when Rakkha grabbed him by his collar, felled him to the ground and sat down on his chest. Chiragh caught Rakkha's hand that was holding a knife and cried, 'No, Rakkha Pahalwan, don't kill me... don't. Oh, won't someone save me? Zubeida! Save me!'

And upstairs, Zubeida, Kishwar and Sultana screamed in despair. Zubeida ran down screaming, while Rakkha's cronies caught hold of Chiragh's flailing arms.

Rakkha drove his knees hard onto Chiragh's thighs and cried, 'What're you screaming for, you sister fucker? I'm giving you Pakistan. Here, take it.' And before Zubeida, Kishwar and Sultana could reach him, Chiragh had already been dispatched to Pakistan.

The windows of the houses around closed. Those who had witnessed the scene bolted their doors from inside, absolving themselves of any responsibility. Even behind closed doors they could hear Zubeida and her daughters screaming far into the night. Rakkha and his cronies dispatched them too to Pakistan that same night but by a longer route. Their bodies were later found; not in Chiragh's house but floating in the canal.

Chiragh's house continued to be ransacked for two days. When it had been completely looted someone set fire to it. Rakkha swore that he would bury alive the man who had set the fire going, for he had decided to kill Chiragh in order to take this house for himself. He had even bought ritual offerings for the ceremony to purify the house. But he failed to find out who the arsonist was, so he could not carry out his threat to bury him alive. For seven and a half years now, Rakkha pahalwan had been regarding this rubble as his private estate. He would not allow anyone to tie a cow or buffalo here nor any vendor to put up a make-shift kiosk near the rubble. Without his permission

one could not remove even a brick from the rubble.

People expected that the whole story would reach Ghani's ears somehow or other. One look at the rubble and he would surely read the story on his own.

Ghani scratched the earth from the rubble with his nails, poured it over himself and hugged the door frame, crying, 'Speak Chiragh Deena, speak to me. Where have you gone?, Oh, Kishwar, Oh, Sultana, Oh, my children, why have you left Ghani behind, Oh, Oh!' Slivers of wood rained down from the crumbling doorway.

Someone woke up Rakkha Pahalwan sleeping under the peepal tree, or perhaps he woke up on his own. When he learnt that Abdul Ghani had come from Pakistan and was sitting on the debris of his house, phlegm rose from his throat that made him cough and he spat on the well's parapet. He looked at the pile of rubble and a growl rose from his chest as from a pair of bellows. His lower lip flared out.

'Ghani is sitting on his rubble,' Rakkha's henchman, Lachcha Pahalwan told him, sitting down by his side.

'How does it belong to him? It's mine,' Rakkha said in a voice hoarse with phlegm.

'But he is sitting there' Lachcha said in a meaningful voice.

'Let him sit there for all I care. You get me the pipe.' He spread out his legs and stroked his naked thighs.

'If Manori tells him...' Lachcha said,

with the same meaningful look. He got up to fetch the pipe.

'Why would Manori invite trouble?' Lachcha went away.

Dry peepal leaves lay scattered around the well. Rakkha kept picking them up and crushing them between his palms. When Lachcha came back with the pipe and offered it to Rakha after putting the filter cloth under it, Rakkha took a long pull at the pipe and said : 'Has anyone else been talking to Ghani?'

'No.'

'Here,' Coughing, he handed back the pipe to Lachcha.

Lachcha saw Manori returning, holding Ghani by the arm. Squatting, Lachcha took a quick, short pull at the pipe while his eyes darted from Rakkha's face to Ghani's in the distance.

Now Manori was walking a step ahead of Ghani, holding his arm as though he wanted Ghani to walk past the well without noticing Rakkha. But Rakkha was sitting with his legs sprawled as if asking to be taken notice of. Ghani had seen him from a long way off. As he came near the well he spread out his arms, 'Rakkha Pahalwan!'

Raising his head, Rakkha narrowed his eyes and gazed at Ghani. A lump seemed to form in his throat but he did not speak.

'Rakkha Pahalwan, haven't you recognized me?' Ghani lowered his arm. 'I'm Ghani- Chiragh Din's father.'

Pahalwan looked him over suspiciously, from head to foot. Abdul Ghani's eyes had

brightened up on seeing Rakkha Pahalwan and under his white beard his wrinkles had fanned out in joy. Rakkha's lower lip trembled and he said in a booming voice, 'What news, Ghania?'

Ghani was about to stretch out his arms again but finding no response they fell of their own accord. Supporting himself against the trunk of the tree he sat down on the parapet of the well.

The whispers in the windows above intensified. Now that the two were facing each other, things were sure to come to a head. They might even start abusing one another. Rakkha couldn't have his way with the old man any more. Now the times had changed. Lord of the rubble indeed! What braggadacio! The rubble was neither his nor Ghani's. It was government property. And this fiend would not allow anyone even to tie a cow there.

And Manori was a coward. Why didn't he tell Ghani that it was Rakkha who had murdered his family Chiragh Din, his wife and children. Rakkha was not a man but a bull and like a bull he roamed about bellowing without hindrance. How thin and wizened poor Ghani looked, his head gone all white!

Sitting down on the edge of the well, Ghani said, 'Just see, Pahalwan, I left a bustling home behind me and to say I have come all this way to see this mud. That's all that is left of a whole household. Honestly, Rakkha, I don't have the heart to tear myself away even from this heap

of mud.' Tears rose to his eyes.

The wrestler folded his out-spread legs, picked up his shoulder cloth from the wall of the well and flung it on his shoulder. Lachcha held out the pipe to him and he took long pulls at it.

'Tell me, Rakkha, how did all this happen?' Ghani said in an insistent tone, holding back his tears. 'All of you were near him. All of you loved one another like brothers. If he wanted to, couldn't he have taken shelter with one of you? Didn't he have that much sense?'

It happened, that's all,' Rakkha said, his voice sounding unnaturally hollow even to himself.

Thick saliva glued his lips. From under his moustache sweat dripped on to his lips. A heavy weight seemed to press down on his forehead and his spine asked for support.

'How are things in Pakistan?' he asked in the same hollow voice. The veins in his neck had become taut. He wiped the sweat under his armpits with his shoulder cloth and sucking the thick saliva from his throat he spat it out in the lane.

'What can I tell you, Rakkha?' Ghani pressed down on the knob of his walking stick with both hands. 'If you ask how things are with me, only God knows. If my Chiragh had been with me it would have been a different story, Rakkha. How often did I plead with him to leave and go with me. But he was adamant. He said he couldn't go, leaving a newly constructed

house behind. He said this was his own locality, his own lane, and there was nothing to be afraid of. It did not occur to that innocent pigeon that even if his own lane was safe, danger could stalk it from outside. Four people laid down their lives to protect one house! Rakkha, he had great faith in you. He used to say that as long as Rakkha was around, no one could do him any harm. But when death stalked him even his Rakkha could not stop it.'

Rakkha tried to straighten up because his spine was now beginning to hurt him. He was feeling a great stress in his groin. Something seemed to be bottling up his breath in his entrails. His entire body was drenched in perspiration and the soles of his feet tingled. Every few minutes sparklers seemed to rain down on him from above and float past his eyes. The distance between his lips and his tongue seemed to be increasing. He wiped the corners of his lips with his shoulder cloth and the words, 'Oh God, the True One, Only you exist, only you, only you,' escaped his lips.

Ghani saw that the wrestler's lips had gone dry and the circles under his eyes had deepened. He put his hand on his shoulders. 'Rakkha, don't take it to heart now. What had to happen happened. The dead cannot come back to life. May God stand by the virtuous and forgive all sinners! If my Chiragh is no longer here, at least all of you are still here. I am comforted that someone of the days gone by is still

living. Having seen you I have seen Chiragh. May Allah keep all of you healthy. May you live long and see great happiness!' Leaning on his walking stick, Ghani rose to his feet. Walking away, he said, 'Rakkha, keep me in your memory!'

A feeble sound of assent rose from Rakkha's throat. Holding his shoulder cloth between his hands, he folded his hands in salutation. Looking round the lane wistfully, Ghani slowly walked away.

The whispering in the windows continued for a while. Once out of the lane Manori would surely divulge everything to Ghani. How Rakkha's throat went dry in Ghani's presence! Lost face as he had, how could he now prevent people from tying their cattle at the rubble? Poor Zubeida! What a good woman she was. How soft spoken with everyone! And here was this friend, Rakkha with neither home nor hearth to call his own. How could he have any feelings for mothers or sisters?

After a while the women started coming out into the lane and the children resumed their game of gulli-danda. Two teenage girls started squabbling and then fell upon each other.

Rakkha sat long into the evening by the well, coughing and dragging at the pipe. Numerous passers-by asked him, 'Rakkha Shah, we hear Ghani Khan had come from Pakistan today?'

'Yes, he came,' Rakkha had the same reply for everyone.

'So what happened?'

'Nothing happened. He went away.'

As night approached, Rakkha, as usual, came out of the lane and sat down on the front plank of the corner shop. Every night he would accost the passers-by and give them tips about the local stock exchange or the secrets of good health and nostrums which served as short-cut remedies for various chronic diseases. But that night he narrated to Lachcha the story of a pilgrimage to Vaishnav Devi he had made fifteen years ago. After parting from Lachcha as he entered the lane he saw Loku Pandit's buffalo tied on the rubble plot. As he did daily, he began to drive it away-tut, tut! After driving it away he sat down on the door frame for a short breather. The lane was deserted and since there were no street lights it grew dark in the evening. At the edge of the rubble heap there was a drain in which scummy water flowed, gurgling as it went. A medley of sounds rising from the rubble merged into the stillness of the night... chic... chic... chic... chir... chir... r.. ri... ri... ri..

A crow appeared from nowhere and sat down on the door frame, scattering

wood scantlings when it flapped its wings. A dog which was sleeping in a corner woke up and started barking at the crow. The crow sat there, undecided whether to stay or fly away and ultimately flew away flapping its wings and perched on the branch of the peepal tree near the well. After the crow had flown away, the dog advanced a few steps and resumed its barking facing the wrestler. The wrestler tried to shoo the dog away in a lazy, ponderous voice 'Get away, dum, dum, dum.' "Wow, wow, wow, wow!" "Get away! ...Get away! ...dur ...dur ...dur..." But the dog drew nearer and continued to bark. The wrestler picked up a clod of earth and threw it at the dog. The dog retreated a step or two but did not stop barking. The wrestler abused the dog and then slowly rose from the door frame and walking up to the well again, lay down on the parapet. After the wrestler moved away, the dog entered the lane and facing the well, again started barking. It kept barking till it saw that nothing and no one was stirring in the lane. Flapping its ears, it returned to the rubble heap, where it lay down in a corner and set up a low, continuous growl.

Mohan Rakesh, (1925-1972) was a prominent author and champion of the Nayi Kahani Movement in Hindi. He was an equally important playwright with memorable plays like '*ashadh ka ek din*' '*lebron ke rajhans*' and '*adhe adhure*'. He taught Hindi in several colleges before joining as editor of the literary magazine 'Sarika' from Times of India, Mumbai. Some of his famous books are '*andhere band kamre*', '*na ane wala kal*', '*ek aur zindagi*', '*faulad*

ka akash'. He was awarded the *sangit natak akademi puraskar*. He lived in several towns and was living in Delhi where he passed away abruptly in 1972.

Jai Ratan (1917-2012), scholar of Hindi and English who devoted a life time to translation. He worked as P.R.O. in a prominent business firm in Kolkata and was founder member of Writers' Workshop. Hindi owes him a tribute for numerous prestigious English translations including Premchand's *Godan* way back in 1955. Last year he passed away in Gurgaon.

Mad Delight

Mohan Rakesh was as much a playwright as a novelist and a short story writer. In the sixties the theatre of the absurd influenced these notes that were first published in the journal 'Enact' in 1966. They have reference to his play 'Chhatariyan.'

Mohan Rakesh

The script has a certain pattern, but no preconceived design. It started with the idea of attempting something in which the identity of sound and words could be separated from that of the visuals. In theatre, inspite of all the technical peps, there is only a limited possibility of fragmenting the visual; for the most part it has to be accepted as constant and whole. But in case the words can be released from their responsibility of sitting on the lips that are primary to a performance, they could be exploited as an endless source of fragmentation. Sound, which is already used in fragmentation as an effect, could also be elevated to the role of a principal entity, standing almost parallel to words and visuals. It may thus be possible to explore areas of abstraction in theatre not fully tapped so far.

The present script, which is only an outline, should be treated just as suggestions in the matter of juxtaposing sound, words and visuals as parallel entities, all independent and yet very much interdependent; while they exist and grow in separation, they are not at all meaningful separately. Whatever meaning can be discovered in them is only in their collaborative totality. With any shift of emphasis the meaning can, will and should change. That this manoeuverability is a matter of emphasis is yet another thing that can be achieved through such separation.

Originally it was intended to have a fast succession of images in the present experiment; the man struggling to pluck the mushroom was an initial image. But in the process of writing only further variations of the same image were arrived at. Instead of rejecting or interfering with the subconscious dictate, I have let the whole thing stay with its own logic. The difference between the initial draft and the present one is only that a few indicative words have been added in it; these can be further detailed, modified, substituted or eliminated according to the process initiated in each mind while experimenting with a production. One could entirely do away with the 'character' of the Voice; (I did not have this 'character' in the initial draft); or substitute it with a live conductor on the stage; or make any other addition or deletion according to the convenience and requirement of one's production. I should be a willing party in helping to destroy the present framework as much as in lending a hand to build it up further.

VOICE. And that is the crisis of the age. The crisis involves values. The values involve the epidemic of ideas. The ideas involve de-humanizing of human lives. And human lives involve...

A man is kicked onto the stage as a bunch of huge multi-coloured mushrooms is lit up in a corner, the sizes of the mushrooms varying 1' to 3' in height and 3" to 8" in diameter. The man recovers his balance and sheepishly looks around.

VOICE. Human lives involve everything, including the Charter of Rights,

rates of interest, handicrafts emporia, microcosmic research, vacuum cleaners, coal mines, neurasthenia and democratic choices. Democratic choices could be exercised in many different ways, such as ...

The man has by now moved to the bunch of mushrooms and is going around it. He puts his hand on the largest of the mushrooms. As he touches the mushrooms, a shot is fired from a sten gun.

He stays off for a while; then makes a bid to pluck the mushroom. Some continuous shots are fired.

He stays off again; then makes a few more trial efforts.

The sten gun fire synchronises with each of his efforts.

He now touches a few other mushrooms.

No sound is heard.

Feeling reassured, he sneakily touches the largest one again.

Shots are fired again.

He makes a desperate bid to pluck the mushroom, but without success.

A volley of gun-shots.

The man becomes more and more desperate in his actions.

Continuous volleys of gun-shots overtake the action.

The man is stupefied into inaction.

A few moments of stillness.

The man, assured of stillness, starts emerging into action again. Slow rhythmic movements.

He touches the mushroom again.

A whispered abuse is heard: 'Bastard!'

In continuous rhythmic movements, he tries to pluck the mushroom.

The whispered abuses synchronise with his, rhythm : 'Bastard! Bastard! Bastard!'

'Son-of-a-bitch. Son-of-a-bitch. Son-of-a-bitch . . . 'Son-of-a-gun. Son-of-a-gun. Son-of-a-gun.'

The man feels defeated. He stops, frowns and listens.

There is no sound.

The man suddenly spurts into action with vigorous movements.

Clear mocking and derisive sentences are heard this time... 'Pop corn in your ass, you gutter-swine ... 'A bulldozer on your girdle you mamma's darling.'

The man changes his movement patterns quickly in order to run contrary to the rhythm of the words. His movements become more and more sporadic.

A continuous derisive tirade : 'There's a blind hyaena in your wife's bed, you lollypop. A donkey is spraying the tethers of her petticoat. Your granddad's candy is stuck in the slush of your grandma's graveyard. First go and lick the wounds of the puppy dog in your wedding wardrobe. Clear the thorns in your baby sweetheart's kitchen garden. Your dad is dying of guttural cancer. Go and give him a throatwash of gasolene and mobil-oil. . . etc.'

The man jerks himself to shout an abuse at the unseen intruder.

MAN. Will you shut up, you . . . ?

But before he can finish, he is surprised

to discover the mushroom already plucked in his hand.

The last word of the tirade is repeated again and again as if a gramophone needle has got stuck at one place: '. . . mobiloil ... mobiloil. . . mobiloil . . . mobiloil . . .'

The man, sick of the repetitive sound, throws down the mushroom in disgust.

The sound ceases.

The man, shocked at his own action, remorsefully sits down and starts fondling the mushroom.

Sound of footsteps from all sides.

The man gets up cautiously, holding the mushroom.

The foot-steps slowly fade out.

The man looks around to make sure that there is nobody to snatch the mushroom from him. Then runs in one direction.

Sound of collective laughter confronts him on that side.

He runs from one direction to another.

Sound of laughter confronts him whichever way he goes.

He stands still, centre-stage, holding the mushroom tight.

VOICE. The history of all accomplishment is the history of individual action, highlighted by pamphlets, posters and headlines. Headlines provide a clue to the working of both man and machine in direct relation to political upheavals, artistic pursuits, economic onslaughts, religious rituals, assemblies, conferences, processions, walkouts, strikes and gheraos. The real thing, the great thing is one's will and decision to hold on . . . hold on against

all this and again all that is against this ...

The man feels the mushroom flying away from his hands. He starts struggling to hold it back.

Sound of a child giggling, as if trying to loosen the tight grip on his arm and run away from a parent.

A similar struggle between the man and the mushroom.

The giggling becomes more and more playful.

The man successfully subdues the mushroom.

The giggling turns into sulking and protest.

The man slaps the mushroom.

The child starts crying.

The man, feeling helpless, starts fondling the mushroom like a child.

The man is happy for a while; then gets startled as if bitten by the mushroom.

Sound of circus music.

The man now tries to get rid of the mushroom but cannot. The whole thing is like the clown act in a circus. After a hard struggle he succeeds in throwing the mushroom up and is happy to see it fall with a thud.

Snarling of a tiger.

The man looks at the mushroom apprehensively; then pounces on it. A fierce fight between the two ensues.

The snarling becomes more and more fierce. The man is exhausted and defeated. He lies on the ground, the mushroom overriding him.

VOICE. In spite of the duality of

perception and inception in all human designs, the intra-mural processes of one's inner consciousness, that is to say the intra-mural processes of one's inner consciousness as explained and understood, go to determine what can be called . . . what can be described as ... described as ... mauvai honte ... of... of... of you know what. This you know-what is constantly pressurised by the forces at the back, forces in front, forces to the right, forces to the left, forces below, forces above and forces . . . forces . . . forces . . . A number of men and women cross the stage and make for the bunch of mushrooms. The man looks dazed.

Dance music strikes up as the crowd starts plucking the mushrooms.

All mushrooms are plucked instantly. People dance about with their mushrooms. The man staggers up on his feet holding his own mushroom which he is all the time comparing with those of the others. Their colours somehow seem more fascinating. He offers to exchange his mushroom with many of them, but is refused each time. Dance music is suddenly cut short by air raid sirens.

People hide here and there hugging their mushrooms.

Blasts of an air raid.

The man, hugging his mushroom, desperately looks for a corner to hide, but does not find one.

A big blast.

The man springs up and falls as if the blast were just under his feet.

VOICE.' The main thing, therefore,

is the silence within . . . silence that initiates the idea of peace and harmony, helps to bring the pieces together and . . . and it is already time for the National Broadcast by the man who is the supreme Head of State, the Commander-in-Chief of all the forces, the spearhead of all technical discoveries, the symbol of all supererogatory values and the trusted fountainhead of virtue in a land of dehydrated souls. Please stand by for the broadcast.

All people strike postures of listening. Only the man is unable to find a comfortable posture.

VOICE. Please stand by for an important broadcast.

The man keeps adjusting his posture.

VOICE. You are requested again to stand by for an important broadcast.

The man finds the right posture.

VOICE. You are once again requested to stand by for an important broadcast.

People start becoming restless,

VOICE. You are yet again ... no no ... you are no longer requested to stand by. The broadcast;

People are attentive again.

The Broadcast lasts for about one minute. Only sounds emanating from a fast-winding tape-recorder.

Everyone except the man listens attentively. The man is puzzled as he seems to be the only one not following.

Sounds now come to their natural motion. The broadcast continues: . . . can and cannot be achieved. We do not ask for any treaties; because all treaties can always be violated. What we ask for is

weapons and only weapons, to be channelized to us directly or indirectly. Preferably indirectly as the indirect channel is the channel of non-violation which is our equivalent of non-violence. The main point where non-violation scores over non-violence is its greater effectivity both in peace and war : its viability in diplomatic hinterlands and its flexibility in terms of the U.N. Charter . . . etc.'

People start moving about casually, quite indifferent to the address, grumbling now and then in unison.

The broadcast continues, getting more and more jumbled and confused. The man wants to listen attentively, but his listening is interfered with by the people's increasing grumbling.

The man shouts a protest. Nobody cares.

He protests more vehemently.

His protest is mockingly brushed aside.

(Here an argument could be introduced running parallel to the broadcast. At intervals, in the tense silences during the argument, the broadcast could be clearly heard.)

His arguing, pleading and cajoling having become exhausted, the man, now facing a shout-down, hits a person violently with his mushroom.

The broadcast now turns into the chanting of Hare Rama Hare Krishna.

Violence spreads all over the stage. People hit each other with mushrooms indiscriminately.

The chanting gains momentum,

Fighting also gains momentum. Both are synchronised.

The chanting turns into the rambling of a madman.

Fighting goes into cinematic slow motion. The rambling continues : 'Hwa Hwa Hwa . . . balloon in the lagoon . . . yeti yet yeti. . . Science and sentiment ... snow in sunshine . . . hwa hwa yeti yeti etc."

Fighting in slow motion continues.

The sound of a whip.

All action on stage is frozen. The man, however, remains mobile.

Constant whipping accompanied by the moaning and yelling of the madman who still cannot help rambling in the same strain.

The man behaves as if he is being whipped. Tries not to let go of the mushroom in spite of it.

A political slogan is raised. Many voices resound in answer.

The man regains his balance and looks around.

Continuous sounds of a procession of strikers marching and raising slogans.

The man tries to defreeze different individuals but without success. The hands, and feet of different individuals stay in the positions in which he puts them. Only, he cannot take a mushroom out of anybody's hands.

Police whistles are heard from all around.

All people get defrozen suddenly and cluster around the man, who is panting with fatigue.

Someone starts testing a microphone:

'One . . . two . . . three . . . testing

. . . testing ... testing . . .' Also sounds of a restless crowd.

The man tries to squeeze out of the cluster but cannot.

A Union leader's voice on the microphone asks the public to be quiet. He starts giving a call for all-out disorder and destruction. His oratory is interspersed with the testing of the mike. 'What we need is an all-out revolution ... testing . . . testing . . . testing ... We are not afraid of chaos because it is chaos alone that gives birth to a dancing star... One two ... three ... testing ... testing ... I call upon all of you to join us in the great march ... on Parliament . . . the March which is against all the dying institutions perpetuated by that august body ... one ... two ... three ... testing ... testing ... testing ...

All through the oratory, the cluster keeps narrowing around the man who, having become resigned to his lot, feels more and more suffocated all the same.

A school bell at the sound of which the oratory suddenly ceases.

All people in the cluster are released as if from a school task and form a straight line, the man heading it.

A male voice takes the roll call. Different names are called out.

The people in the line answer the roll call one by one. The man is the only one whose name is not called out.

A male voice gives a command : 'School . . . disperse!'

The line is broken and the people run out disorderly leaving their mushrooms

behind. The man remains alone once again, holding his mushroom and surveying the fallen ones. A lady's voice announces the end of the day's programme with a vote of thanks for all the participants hired for the day including the whistlers, clappers and slogan shouters etc. 'Our thanks are particularly due to the owner of the great orchard where such a variety of mushrooms grow, because without the remarkable contribution of these tantalising mushrooms, this splendid performance would not have been possible. We appreciate his generosity in lending us the

mushrooms for the evening with all the risk of their being squashed at the hands of our amateur actors who have no training in handling such delicate objects . . . etc.'

The man is now trying to collect as many mushrooms as he can, many more than it is possible for him to hold.

The orchestra strikes up the national anthem.

The man, overladen with mushrooms, stands still. But as soon as the national anthem comes to a close, he relaxes and the mushrooms start slipping down one by one.

Courtesy Manoj Mohan

Napani

Doodhnath Singh

Sanjay Dev

“Turn off the transistor,” Father told his son just as the car started. “Why the heck, listen in to all this tittle-tattle? Is that news? Who the hell is doing and saying what, does that in any way matter to us? All useless stuff.” He said snappishly.

Seeing the angry mien of father, son turned the transistor off. “Though indeed, I was just going to listen in to the songs” he said by way of explanation.”

“Will songs and stuff like that give you bread and butter?” berated father. He turned back. Seated behind were his wife, daughter and two children of his elder son. The children squirmed at the angry stare of grandpa.

“And where is that Napani?” Father asked.

Son said that Napani, Adhikariji and chaprasi were in the car just behind theirs.

“How far is Bhagalpur?” Queried father.

He was told the distance to Bhagalpur. Father took out a shabby wallet, opened it and counted tenners in it.

“At how many places the goon tax will have to be forked out!” Father asked the driver.

“Wherever you will come across an obstacle comprising brick, bamboo, timber and such stuff,” the driver said looking at the

stretching road ahead.

"And how much?" Father asked.

"The bigger the goon, the higher the tax." Told the driver.

Lest you come to know it might just be anything.

"But we will have to keep account. Will have to make up for it from the girl's father. Why foot the bill?" Father said matter-of-factly.

"That's fair, sahib" The driver said.

"And how the rest will go on, remember do you?" Father asked the son.

Befitting a submissive and obedient son, the son nodded in affirmation.

"Now you are an officer. You have a position. You have a price. Things were different when you were a rolling stone; when you were at the mercy of those bloody examiners and members. Now it is entirely different. This is just about the time to avenge the society. It should not be like on seeing the girl you went weak on her and started slobbering. Your habits weren't good earlier, but now you are an officer. And see, I am not going to fall for any pretence. All such fellows are crafty like crows. Tread carefully and don't show signs of acquiescence. No political debate either. I pretty well understand this political game. All these people are living in plentiful homes and preach others the value of Ramrajya (righteous living). To project oneself in fair light is the way of the world. You are still naive. When you are seasoned, you will understand. You are thin-skinned

yet; and hence susceptible. I'm afraid you will have your tail between your legs when chips are down. Shyness and regard will get the better of you. And the girl's father is a minor leader — an MLA of communist party. So he will definitely boast. Will display simplicity. Will be extra kind. Will try to snare us through talks. All this will be a ruse. All the sublime talks in this world are designed for hoodwinking. Through all these sophisticated things, he will try to distract our attention from the girl. Will present her all made-up, with enough face painting. You don't have to fall for that make-believe.- got that?" turning his neck sideways, father looked at his officer son. Looking askance the son winked his acceptance.

"When we were trapped, did anyone feel for us? That rascal father-in-law of Premlata! He demanded horoscope. We produced and he gave us the run around for three months, kept fathoming us, and when he found the alliance won't work, he evasively said the girl's horoscope showed no sign of offspring. And when I showed him the colour of crisp currency, shoved five lacs up his fissured ass, it brought about the missing sign of offspring. How the heck Premlata is now a mother of four. I sacrificed my life to make money, scrimped and saved, without letting go even a single penny waste. My entire fund was used up. I am gone broke and now I too suffer from fissure. I too will take revenge. You are the society and I will treat you

the way you have done to me. Sathe Sathyam (tit for tat)...or whatever they say." Father looked at the driver.

"Still we have not encountered goons?" he asked the driver.

"Will come up against them soon enough." the driver told.

"And one more thing..." father looked at his son.

The son was in rapt silence.

"If the girl turns out to be Bilarankhi (cat-eyed) then reject." Said father.

"Why?" Dared say son.

"Bilarankhi doesn't believe in faithfulness" Said father.

"What does that mean?"

"Forget meaning" Snapped father.

"Keep quiet, will you, now." Said wife from behind.

"And mind you, attention will have to be paid to complexion also" cautioned father.

"For that you are there." The wife said.

"You know, that leaves a lot of scope for deception. Have heard of beauticians who would do such a 'fair job' that you won't come to know of the original complexion" wondered father.

At this his adolescent daughter sitting behind sniggered.

"O darling, I guess you would see through the original?" quizzed the father.

"Oh, yeah father." The daughter agreed.

"And what's the height of Dulhan (girl) in bio-data?" asked father.

"Five feet six inches." His daughter informed.

"And how tall Napani is?" Asked father.

"Five feet three inches" His daughter told.

"That means standing beside Napani, Dulhan should look three inches taller for which we will have to make allowance." Father said.

"What if she fell short of an inch or so, Saheb!" Bantered the driver.

"How the heck she will fall short?" Wondered father.

"You are right, Saheb. To ascertain beforehand is just the right thing." Added the driver.

"And mind you, no idle talks. Whatever is happening in UP, how does that concern us? We are family people. Somehow managing to live saving our lives. We don't have to dance to the tune of politics" Saying this, father lapsed into silence.

Transverse on the road ahead lay a long green branch of a tree and four guys were motioning with their hands for the car to stop. Father immediately whipped out the wallet from his pocket. From it, he put a tenner in his fist and some tenners he put in his other pocket. And then the wallet in the inner secret pocket Won't be safe to take out purse every time to shell out money at different points. Lest those goons snatched the purse? father thought. Both vehicles stopped in tandem- front and back. Opening the side door, father got out of

the car.

"Tell me what do you want?" father asked with a tenner clenched in his fist.

"Tax" one of them demanded.

"Tax?" wondered father.

"Donation!" one of them added.

"Donation to which party?" Father asked.

"Congress, Communist, BJP... whichever you like"

One of them coolly said.

"So you guys play politics" said father smilingly.

"Are you a stupid cunt?" one of the boys quipped.

Father put a tenner in his hand. The boy rolled the note, spat in it and made as if to hand it back to father.

"What's this?" Father winced.

"Returning your thing with interest, spit... You corrupt rascal, how much you have digested?" The boy flicked the note wet with spit, at father.

Father dodged sideways.

"Where's your home?" asked another boy.

"Dumrao." Promptly replied father.

"Raja Ka Budhwa Jharela Hey Sala!" Two boys laughed mutually.

"Today is an inauspicious day." Father said.

"What did you say?"

"Not to you," Father quickly changed track.

"Trying to act smart. You rascal cheat, you bloody cheat people, government...

Will move in two cars and preach philosophy!"

Father vaguely smiled.

"Look at this green branch? will rudely force it up your bottom to scare the daylight out of you." Said one boy dourly.

"Oh no, I' m happy to have seen you"

"Happy?"

Father again smiled wanely.

"Fork out you craven coward, or else" Threatened the boy.

"How much, Saheb" Getting out of the car the driver asked.

"Seventy for two vehicles."

The driver handed the money from his own pocket.

"Pick up that currency Panditji and paste it on your vermillioned forehead" Saying this the boy moved towards other held-up vehicles.

Thus paying goons a tax at four or five places, father and party reached Bhagalpur. Keep account, father told the driver and got down the car.

Their venue, the hotel was given a facelift and the road was swarming with activity.

It was learnt that his Samdhi had conveyed his regrets. He was in a procession and hence couldn't turn up to receive. Must be on his way. Dumping family and luggage father sulked. "I do understand everything. Everything. Do as you please. But will have to pay for your deeds. You already knew we were coming? In that case, what was more important- procession or

us? They have already begun by standing us up, the future promises only worse. You will change the future of the country? The communists are mistaken for a long time. Though almost negligible in number, they boast they are the entire country. Look, in the process of leadership your bald pate has started showing; cheeks gone sunken, life has turned miserable, how many more such revolutions? You have a young daughter at home to wed and still you went to salute the Red Flag. Escaping from ten petty thieves and thugs somehow we got here staking our lives only to see the Red leader missing? So too we will vanish in thin air. So too we will.. .father made a motion of vanishing with his hand.

"Oye Napani listen." He called out loud.

Napani came up to stand closer- a swarthy, thin and listless girl.

"Did Bhayya measure you correctly with tape-measure? Asked father.

Napani nodded in affirmation.

"You hadn't worn high heels while being measured?"

"Nope" Napani said with head down.

"Presently you have it on." Father looked at Napani's feet.

Napani said nothing.

"Doesn't Upadhyayaji feed you properly?" father cast a glance at the emaciated figure of Napani.

Napani still kept quiet.

"Raise your eyes a bit" father suddenly grew wary.

Napani raised her eyes.

"look straight at me," father asked her.

Napani did.

"She is Bilarankhi, bro" father got up and started pacing.

"Ok, what benefit you get teasing someone? Father's wife said finally.

"Teasing ?" Father glowered.

"What else! Napani, Napani, the refrain has gone all this while! You may go Beti!" Father's wife told Napani.

Napani darted to the next room and started weeping on the shoulder of father's daughter.

"I'm telling her and only her." father bristled, "Women lack intellect in their upper storey. Brahma the Creator didn't bless them with; only hollow-handful. For one she is Bilarankhi, moreover she would cry .That's why we were robbed all the way" saying this father plonked down in the sofa.

"For one, Upadhyayaji sent this girl, and the same Oi Napani, Oi Napani refrain from all through the way" saying this father's wife got up and moved towards the wash basin.

After a while, Dixitji arrived with his retinue in attendance. This word was from father peering out of balcony. Dixitji bade goodbye to his associates from the ground floor, and came up through the lift. He folded hands before father. Father slightly nodded his head in acknowledgement.

"Sorry, Pandiji, in fact I was attending a procession" Dixitji explained.

"Was it necessary today itself?" father asked.

"The matter concerned today; mustn't the protest be lodged today itself?" Dixitji said.

"Protest.. .umm." Father jerked his head unconvinced.

"Hope you got here without any problem?" Dixitji asked.

"Without any problem? Would rather say life was spared."

"Oh...but then the drivers were supposed to know that," Dixitji said.

"That means you know it? And still you are a leader?" Father's brows arched.

"Poverty...unemployment...and uncertain future, dear...there are many reasons." Dixitji offered in an apologetic way.

"Dear who" father queried." Oh, that's a habit. More appropriately I should've called Panditji. But then what do I do. I have been in the party ever since I was 15. It has almost become a ritual with me." Dixitji said helplessly.

"What will come of staying in such a party?" Father quizzed in apprehension.

"What will come of, means" Dixitji wondered.

What will come of means what will," Father smiled.

"In fact, our thoughts don't match." Dixitji said.

"In the name of thoughts some people remain misguided throughout their lives, Dixitji" father threw a clincher.

"And without thoughts too" Dixitji snapped.

"Both are thieves" Father returned.

Dixitji smiled because that's what he could do. But father also smiled.

"Have heard that bridegrooms are poached in your part of the world" Suddenly asked father.

"Poached?" Dixitji couldn't understand anything.

"If the boy turned out to be an officer, his life is at risk. It is heard they prowl around with a list. Are always hunting for the prey. And they are helped by Ranvir Sena cadre. Post determines the wages for labour. It is learnt for a collector it is five lakh. This is for abduction. Kill the parents if they object. And for worse, it could be that you are married to some disabled girl. If married to such a girl, it's curtains to your wedding night ..." Father turned silent after this narration.

"You are very simple, Panditji" Dixitji said smilingly.

"That I am. I raised this issue lest we are in the crosshairs?" Father said in apprehension.

"If you had this wild apprehension, you should have called me" Dixitji said agitatedly.

"My son too is an officer" Looking at his son, father said.

"Panditji is our guest." Dixitji cast a glance at the boy.

"You have raised us to this pedestal; this has only caused doubts in us. Now

where can we get away from it" Father said.

Dixitji wanted to say Oh! But instead said... "Well I must make a move, and should send my daughter and wife. Ideally it would have been better, if the programme was at home. But since you wanted it in a hotel. . . I have a meeting lined up. Rest all is at your mercy." And with that Dixitji folded his hands.

"You aren't required either. Your presence will only make your daughter shy" father said in agreement.

Dixitji took leave of him.

After about an hour and a half, Dixitji's wife came along with her daughter and a friend. Casting a suspicious glance at them, father's wife greeted them with trepidation. Dulhan bent to touch father's feet who shrugged off saying it's all right. The girl was seated in a chair. Her friend stood behind her holding the chair. Both the women occupied a sofa. The bridegroom officer, his sister and two small kids sat on a long sofa opposite the bride. Both kids looked fixedly at the bride. Father's attention was first fixed at bride's feet; that's at her sandals. His head moved smelling conspiracy and with that he alternately looked at his son and wife and winked.

"What's the bargain this time?" whispered Adhikariji in father's ear.

"Six lacs, a car and the entire expenses on marriage" father whispered in the same vein in Adhikariji's ear.

"He is a comrade, wherefrom he will give?" went Adhikariji.

So what if he is comrade and to hell with the fact" said father impatiently.

"You should have thought before fixing the bargain" went Adhikariji.

"It was his job. And what about the trade union donation he collects" father said callously.

"Communists are not that type" went Adhikariji.

"You are a bloody ass" snapped father.

"Only a mule will befriend an ass" retorted Adikariji.

In his happiness, father held Adhikariji's hand. It was not an occasion to burst into a guffaw. The son was "interviewing" the bride and she was blushing. Whenever out of shyness she'd clam up and bow down her head, the officer son would say with a drawling voice. "Oh, look straight at me, no? At this the girl would further blush. It was then that the friend at her back would touch her shoulder to reassure her... But sitting with Adhikariji and keeping an eye and an ear on what was going on, father was trying to sound out his son on whether he was yielding.

"Where is Napani?" suddenly asking father looked at his wife, "What's her name?"

For the first time it occurred to father that she must be having some name.

"Parmita." Father's wife told him.

"Upadhiya Sasur." Contemptuously

laughed father “not a morsel to eat at home, and kept her name — Parmita! Where is she?” Inquisitively father looked at his wife.

"In the room over there."

Parmita entered the room with her head bent down as if she was being shown.

The bride's mother was looking at father with a near stare; how on knowing Napani's name he had used derogatory words for her father. Father had realized what the askance look of his Samdhin meant.

"Look at it this way." Father turned to his Samdhin, "how I got used to calling her Napani. The father of this girl would have a kilogram of boiled rice every morning. When this girl was young, she would take out rice from the earthen pot in the hollow of her hand. Her mother would use this hollow hand as a good measure. Eight-hollow-hand-fulls. So Upadhiyaji would tell, she was his Napani. She measures out rice for his feed. If someone other than her measures out, it falls short or goes excess. So I too got used to calling her Napani." Father bared his white teeth.

Napani looked daggers at father.

His wife was flabberghasted at her husband's convincing narrative style and father's imaginative power which combined impromptu ability to tell a lie. Adhikarji felt his friend could exasperate anyone.

"Now stop that son, you have already heard her voice. What more interview is required. Now leave her alone," father

commanded.

The officer son stood up and moved across to sit on a sofa on the opposite side.

"Beti, remove your sandals," father asked the prospective bride.

The girl looked in a way as if she couldn't understand.

"Sandals" pointing to remove them the officer son-impatient to be husband-gestured.

The girl's swarthy face turned coppery.

Almost shaking, she just started removing sandals.

"And Oi you, just move over from the back of the chair you," Father gestured sternly at bride's friend.

"Why?" Adhikariji whispered in father's ear.

"Can't you see the coal-dark figure made to stand in the background to offset the dark complexion of the girl. I pretty well understand such stratagem" father said in a subdued tone.

Bride's friend moved over from behind the bride and went up to sit beside Dixitji's wife.

"Stand up Bitia!" father asked the bride.

The girl stood up.

"Napani, get beside the bride" father said.

Napani went and stood beside the bride. "Stand level, upright." Father spoke with the precision of a carpenter who is measuring line by line.

Everybody looked at father, his wife, daughter and Adhikariji.

Adhikariji too kept looking with a measuring eye.

"Liar." Father whispered in Adhikariji's ear.

"She's just about the height of Napani."

"Parmita Beti, take Bitia to wash basin and wash her face" father said.

"What next?" Adhikariji asked softly in father's ear.

"It's a big deception" father blurted.

"Well, it is, but then how you will deny them?"

"We will." Father murmured.

"But how?"

"As we have often done in the past." Father looked at his friend slightly losing his temper.

"Will say that your daughter's horoscope bears no sign of offspring" father murmured.

Adhikariji looked at father with consternation.

Father gave a friendly slap at Adhikariji's shoulder.

Parmita (that is Napani) held Dulhan's hand and took her to wash basin towards bathroom.

"I'll wash," Splashing water on her face the girl said.

She was washing her tears and anger simultaneously. Even after wiping her face with towel her tears wouldn't stop.

Her eyes were red from weeping. She looked at Parmita standing mutely. "You are looking more beautiful than before" Parmita said appreciatively.

The girl smiled through tears. Then squirmed. She saw Parmita too was weeping.

"Why are you crying?" Dulhan asked.

"Can't you give a tight slap on the face of this man?" Parmita quizzically asked.

"Do you really mean!" Dulhan got closer. Parmita nodded her head as if she was the Dulhan.

The girl again went up to the mirror. She took out the hair pins from her bun and let her hair loose. She flung carelessly her dupatta across her shoulders and came out of the bathroom. Everybody looked at her in dismay. Parmita slunk away in a corner. The girl's mother rose to her feet. "You are an idiot." The girl gave a rude slap across father's face and stormed down the stairs.

"She was Bilarankhi." Father told Adhikariji on their way back in the car.

"Perhaps" Adhikariji smiled.

Doodhnath Singh, A prominent writer of the post-sixties who has contributed to Hindi poetry, short story, novel, memoir and literary criticism with equal energy. His major published works are — akhiri kalam Mai ka shokgeet, tu fu, raktapaat.

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Rites for The Departed

Chandrakanta

Raji Narsimhan

Seated on the ghats of the Ganga, a little off the steps, all the three sons were performing the last rites of their late father. The priest, Radhanand, was conducting the ceremony with single minded devotion : the two forms of rice neatly-arranged round him were all the ingredients of the funeral ceremony—the two forms of rice—cooked and uncooked — fruits, flowers, clothing, incense. The other priests were reeling off the chants, hurrying through the job, one eye on the look-out for incoming patrons.

The river flowed, leaping across and over the many steps of the ghats. Foamy circles wheeled in the muddy waters off the pillars of the bridge. It had poured in the night. From the embankments earth had got mixed with the river water, making it mud-hued. The black clouds swelling on the sky added to the dolefulness of the hour.

Nearby were two sallow-faced youths, rain-spattered, blowing repeatedly into the firewood to keep it from going out, and rubbing their smarting eyes with the towel over their shoulders. Some others had slung sheets over sticks dug into the ground in a semblance of tents. For the most part they seemed to be coping well enough with their task of putting the souls of the dead firmly on the road to moksha.

But for the three sons umbrellas had been provided. Two junior officers of theirs, Sharma-ji and Verma-ji, had come along in person to make arrangements for the sons' stay here : their father was father to them too, wasn't he? So didn't they owe him a duty too...?

The weather was treacherous, but Sharmaji and Vermaji, in full consultation with the priests had made special arrangements for the sons' stay. The funeral rituals had to go off without hitch; this was a must. The departed one was the father of a special and very high official, was he not?

The ceremony was going on more or less on prescribed lines. Fingers ringed with dried, sacred grass, the sons were offering to the departed soul the cooked funeral rice made into little balls by the priest,; he who was chanting the incantations in ringing tones with a clear accent.

'Name- Father's name'?

'Gokulnath'.

'Gotra'?

'Madguley'.

'Now, then... repeat after me...'

Up there in the dharmshala, the women were busy with the rituals of fasting. After the ceremony there would be milk, sago, fried potatoes, wheat cubes, halwa of wheat flour... to eat what you fancied. Arrangements for pure ghee, milk and so on had been made well in advance. Sharmaji and Vermaji were going about their tasks with perfect dedication.

The sons had been on fast since morning, along with their wives and daughters, as laid down in the rules. The wives went nervous at the wilted faces of their husbands. Worthy son number one had an acidity problem. And as for the other worthy sons, number two and number three — what did they eat, bird pecks at best — but the pecks had to be had in time. Otherwise, it meant problems...

'Ye-e-ess... that's right' the priests drawled, 'but on this day and occasion...'

The children, cameras dangling down necks, clicked away at whatever caught their fancy. Children were, well, children, what were they to make of this world or that, of tradition, reverence for it, and so forth? Mahant jee had said in indulgent tones, looking at them, 'Children are images of god, all is forgiven them...'

Full arrangements had been made in the main ashram for the stay of the three sons with family. It had all the necessary and not very necessary conveniences. Dunlop mattresses, twenty four hour water supply, kosher food, and in addition, trimmed, green lawns: and from the roof, the view of mother Ganga far off, in unceasing flow.

It was all carnival-like, in a way. The funeral food offerings, the rites, the calling out of the fathers' names, the children's antics with cameras, the poses they struck for clicking... Yes, the youngest girl did seem aloof, did seem away from it all,

gazing at the swiveling waves of the Ganga...But...

The priests were in competition: 'Here, come this side here... So, from which state do you come? From that far! Glory! glory! To be free of your obligations to your forefathers, isn't a Benaras Yatra the only way? The rites of death for the dead performed on the banks of the Ganga! For cleansing the thousand sons of the Raja Sagar, didn't the river Bhageerathi, who is Ganga in disguise come down to the earth from the heavens and since then been mother to us earthlings...?'

The destroyer of fear, Ganga, burying in her breast the tears of the afflicted, the dirt of minds and bodies, the ashes of the dead, the food offerings to the dead—Ganga, flowing without easing, looked like a waned great-great-great grandparent, waned with life-long washing of the soiled clothes of generations of children.

From around and about sharp fragments of voices landed, leaping, landing, leaping again...

'Caste?' 'Brahman...'

'You have to be, of course, but what kind? Orthodox? Kanyakubj, Shiv-bound, Vishnu-bound... what? And name and address?'

'Look at this. Here's the name of your ancestor, your great-great-great grandfather. Everything is written down in these ledgers. Vaikunthnath was his name, yes? And here on this page, your great grandfather's name...Neelkanth...and here your father's

name, Shree Gokulnath, see it well. And you will write down your signature here. The family trees of everyone we have here preserved in these ledgers. Priests of long tradition we are, no fly by night sorts we are...'

Ledgers gone yellow with age, worn out and fragile-looking-swelling with pride the priest wrapped them up in red cloth. Rare, unattainable keys of family histories he had in the ledgers.

Dakshina -(fees)! Son! What is this? Do you have the least inkling of the kind of father you are son to? At the funeral feast of his father Neelkanth he fed the whole populace of sadhus, sanyasis and priests of Haridwar city with halwa, poorie and vegetables unlimited. Fed them and fed them. So satisfying that food was, ahaa, you couldn't think of food for the next two days. And topping it all, the fees he gave us! Not a paisa less than the amount fixed!

Receiving the fees, gnarled bony hand upon brow, he scanned the notes with his cataract- afflicted eyes and sighed deep. The breeding that the father had had, devotion unlimited — may he live and live in heaven : may he make rivers of charity to flow without end : may his soul rest in peace.

The sons had made advance preparations for halwa, poorie and vegetables for two hundred guests. They too wanted nothing missed out in the observances. They had a stake too in the

elite section they came from : and they shouldn't be faulted for want of dedication or care.

The ladies of the family personally served the hungry and the afflicted present among the guests. Sharmaji and Vermaji were doing the job with zeal, but the senior daughter in law said : 'Give us too a chance to repay our debts to the dead. Will our father in law die and go to heaven again and again?'

The diners' hunger was endless. Swooping down upon the poories and vegetables like birds of prey, they called for more, more — called unendingly. When their din went up too high the chief priest told them to pipe down and stay calm, meaning eat whatever you get without your din and clear out from here fast.

The younger girl was unwell, or had her periods, perhaps. She was not taking part in any ritual. It did displease her sisters-in-law. The middle one said the departed one was father to her too, she too had some duties to him. The senior sister-in-law said sadly, 'The poor thing! Her services are probably not acceptable to the father himself. Did she have her last sight of him? If she was fated to hold his touch in her hand would she have landed up four days after his death? And now, going unclean at this time — must be having a meaning, her period coming up now...'

The youngest sister-in-law kept quiet, though she too wanted to grumble that

the girl had lost faith in customs. Else, couldn't she have eaten some pill or something to put it off ? So many ways there were these days...!

Her sisters heard it all and got busy scraping out the halwa from the pan. What were they to say? The girl had turned up four days after father's death. By then they had gone half dead with their mourning bouts. Eyes wide open and dry she had kept staring at the lamenting women. And when she did cry it was at the wrong moment, when the soul of the dead feels pain at crying. Everything she did was wrong, ill-timed. Dead set against learning the ways of the world as she was, what was anyone to say to her? And now children of her own too, she has.

The youngest one had actually wiped off the drops of tears risen in her eyes at the sight of the lamenting women : as though making her private grief public had demeaned it : although a competition was on in the room for the most tuneful lament, for the best weave and composition of words.

The city's entire populace of the lame and tottering, of beggars wrapped in rags, scratching dirty heads and thighs, plonked down in rows. Shoveling in handful upon handful of food, bent on filling up with all they could. Someone choked over a puri, someone coughed kha-kha, but the canyons in their stomachs wouldn't fill.

The chief priest came over to the sons, punctuating his speech with sonorous

salutations to the Ganga : 'These poor, hungry ones today are beside themselves at the sight of halwa and puris. Earlier they used to go away leaving half the food uneaten. Who feeds them full meals these days? No, no, nothing to do with the rising cost of living and so forth! What other things are they economizing on, tell me! Just charity work it is that they think dispensable, to be thrown overboard'.

'Look here, look here! What's this you're doing? Paying each sadhu individually one by one! Give me the money, here, I'll take care of the payments...Sadhuram! You there, Sadhuram! Come up here...'

Sadhuram came over on fast feet : and the chief priest now engaged with his patrons more vigorously : 'You need not tarry, sirs. Have something to eat, milk, fruit... Leave this job to us. Tackling these small fry is not for you...'

The three brothers were intelligent, took the cue. Setting out for their pilgrim centre the third brother said to the chief priest : 'Everyone should get his share, you will ensure that, won't you?'

'Of course! Of course! Without doubt! We don't have to be told!'

Lines of displeasure creased the chief priest's brow. Brother number one with a sign made number three pipe down. They'll manage. Don't fret. Meaning, expressing doubt is a sign of small-mindedness. The crowd of alms seekers watched the departure of the patrons with

nervous eyes. Perhaps they had already lost hopes of getting any of the money. Anyway their stomachs were full, for the time being at any rate.

After their meal of fruits and milk, they left straight away for Lakshman Jhoola for sightseeing. The children got busy clicking their cameras at pilgrims by the riverside doing their poojas and other rituals, sacred threads slung across shoulders, at women wrapped in saris dipping into the waters. Roundabout stood the green hills of Rishikesh. Gusts of clean air filtered into lungs and made the body feel weightless. Sharmaji sought permission from son number one for clicking a group photo of them —'Forget it, it's not a picnic we've come on, but for father...' Despite his no's however, a group photo of them all standing at the head of the bridge did materialize, with the whole family wearing the prescribed, appropriate, sad looks on their faces. The children clowned, struck some comic poses, but children from ten to sixteen years of age, how appropriately sad would they be?

At the rows of temples they stood in reverent worship before the gods and goddesses : admired the carvings on the pillars and walls, dropped coins and notes into the collection boxes. Looking at an idol of a goddess with clean, aquiline features, Worthy Son Number Two said to his wife : 'This goddess looks exactly like Parul, doesn't she?'

'Parul?' the wife was well into the spiritual atmosphere of the place.

'The daughter-in-law of our kin, Sujata. Don't you think so — eyes, lips — exactly like these we are seeing'...

Seated in the boat they crossed the river. The children scooped water into their hands and flung it high into the sky like fountains, and the elders growled at them to stop. Sharmaji shook his head like Nandi, Shiva's bull, and reiterated the solemnity of the occasion. The children did not understand this call for solemnity, sitting in the boat, rocking to the jolly slaps of the wind, a float on the broad breast of the Ganga. Hadn't grandfather got relief from his illness by dying, dying in a natural death? The dirty foam swimming on the face of the river led them to talking about the Ganga Cleaning Campaign : this was not the time for debates with the elders.

In the temple across the river a renowned yogi was holding discourses. Devotees from far away had congregated to hear him. Son Number Two had heard that he was a seer and soothsayer. Problems of office and job came crowding into his mind. He might have a solution. Why not meet him? Sharmaji had listed the names of several top ministers and leaders who came to consult the yogi. 'All come to him', he'd said, 'from the highest to the lowest, come to hear him'.

'We'll go, definitely', Son Number One read his brother's mind and said to the

womenfolk, 'You too go along, have his darshan. A proven guru he is; we don't have the time to hear his discourse, our schedule is tight, but yet...'

On the stone walls of the Gita temple shlokas from the Bhagwatgita were etched — the dialogue of Krishna and Arjun in the battle field, the soul's immortality, the significance of karma, lines like 'weapons do not pierce it,' yours is only the right to do your duty...'

The youngest girl set to, reading the shlokas on the walls, while the other members of the family were away seeking the darshan of the yogi. 'Father used to say, "Performing your karma is solely up to you. If your good sense and judgment are with you, why fear public censure and social opprobrium?" Father remained duty-conscious and duty-abiding to the last, but his body failed him at the end. Bore immense pain. Who bears the innate troubles of whom? That is left to the body. Dying far away and off from the shade of trees planted by one's own self is also a strong truth among the truths of time. Work-duties — job — where is there any time and space apart from these? How complex life has become! The youngest son stayed with him to the end, and for this father blamed himself to the end.

The clothes went frayed and the soul took off in search of new clothes. After many years of nightly vigils, father sank into deep sleep. At peace, free of strife.

He won his mukti in that instant of wakeless sleep.

The sons left nothing undone, of course. The casket of father's ashes held in their hands raised above their heads, wading through neck deep waters, they sent afloat his ashes in the quick-streams of the river, into the lap of mother Ganga. Each son clasping the other by the right shoulder, standing in a row they bid their final farewell to father. The daughters and daughters-in-law wiped their eyes with the corners of their saris, the paternal and maternal aunts prayed to Maa Ganga, the giver of release. And the younger girl, her sobs held in her throat, stood watching the ashes skimming over the ripples of the river, skimming away far, far away.

This very same father, rowing across the lake on stormy winds, had come to the small island where he had been staying for many days with his children and their ailing mother. The doctors had advised clean air and weather for the patient. In pouring rain and heavy storm, the children had stood on the shore, nervously scanning the boats coming from far away. Father turned up, finally. And suddenly, from amidst the storm winds, the sun had smiled. The children had been chanting papa-papa even as his boat was far off. Father did not get as fatigued from his day-long toils as from the scattering of his family that his wife's illness had caused. The song he had sung that day, sitting in the shikara, suddenly came back to the

younger girl. 'On this sea are storms and high winds, boats innumerable are swimming on it, some drown, and some, tumbling along on the waves, stay a-swim...!'

Wander, flow, and tumbling along are the givers of life, storms and high winds its given conditions. For the sufis and mahatmas, to drown is to reach the goal, to merge with the beloved, deciphering whose mystery a lifetime goes by..

But father was no saint. Was an ordinary man - with his own virtues and short-comings. About the tribulations of life, however, he neither complained nor sank down on his knees : never sought the shoulders of tantrics or mystics as lean-tos for attaining mukti. In the performing of duty he had unshakable faith. That was why, even after his wife's death, along with keeping his scattered household together, he knocked around for helping relatives and kin too. Not for winning praise and admiration : but solely because of his naturally sympathetic temper that couldn't help reaching out to those in need of being reached. But looking at the hosts of dissatisfied men and women around, he realised that inner peace was not anything you could gift to people, every individual had to earn it himself or herself. And now these ashes of his! Will they stay a-swirl with the swirls of the river? Or will they flow far, far, peacefully riding in the lap of the Ganga like a new born child clinging to its mother's breast?

Is this the truth — this squeeze -out of lifelong hopes, battles and pleasure-pains, this handful of ashes? Or is it once more... 'vaasaansi...')

The cheif assistant or official of the temple stacked into the children's hands, a mound of Prasad made in pure ghee 'you come here so rarely...' he complained with authority : looking like an influential national leader. Son Number One folded his hands with respect.

'You know the problems we have, mahantji...'

The women did some buying in the small, congested bazaar. The aunts and aunts-in-law bought strips of cloth with ram-ram embossed on them, garlands of sandalwood...for their own last journeys. If they kept them after taking dips in the Ganga, there would be some provision standing ready for their last hours. The girls bought garlands made of sandalwood powder. These were in vogue now.

Crossing the river again they returned to their ashram. After a dinner of pure vegetarian food cooked in equally pure ghee, served in silver plates, they went off for rest.

They had secured the mahant's blessings, putting in into the donation boxes mornings and evenings hefty sums fairly beyond their means. The mahant pressed them to stay on a day longer, to which Worthy Son Number One pleaded helplessness. 'Resting at peace on the banks of the Ganga is just not writ in our

destinies, mahantji! It's only because of father that even our coming here has materialised... you know it...'

'True, very true. Only because of worthy sons like you has even a modicum of a sense of duty survived...'

On the way back, Varma-ji pressed for a darshan of the sanyaasini maa who was there at present. Sharma-ji had already been dispatched to maa's ashram — on a reconnoitre, sort of.

The sanyaasini maa was staying in a worn-looking ashram amidst narrow, circuitous lanes. Seated on a platform in a longish room, clad in pure white, she looked like devi Saraswati. Worthy Sons Number One and Number Two tried to ask her questions of spiritual cum everyday import, to which she gave brief replies of a sentence or two. Perhaps they were expecting handy solutions to some problem or the other they were faced with.

Somewhat disappointed, Worthy Son Number one turned to his womenfolk : 'You have any questions for Maa?'

' Maa's darshan we have had : nothing more we need...' Paternal aunt folded her hands and spoke for all.

And then, nobody knew why, the younger daughter, all this while aloof and far-away seeming, burst out in broken tones, 'I am very depressed, Maa...' It was like one who'd struggled long for release from the hangman's rope stifling her, or, like one drowning in deep waters making

a rush for a plank she suddenly sees drifting towards her....

The family members looked at her in some surprise. Sat quiet all along, this girl had, and then speaks-thus?

Not a single rite of the funeral had she as much as touched or taken part in : not participated in any event for the salvation of her father's soul : not even a couple of tears had she shed. Suddenly now this inapt behaviour? In this spiritual, non-material air? But to the girl the mother sanyaasini seemed only like a mother, as she ran her hand over her head with maternal warmth. She spoke a few words too, which the girl did not hear. In her eyes she was seeing her mother's eyes, in her voice she was hearing her father's sayings : she was hearing Krishna's words to Arjun in the battlefield : 'Your duty is your sole release, only duty is your main consideration, all else is secondary...' On the return journey everyone turned busy thinking of the tasks back home they had left pending, and drew up blueprints of future tasks.

Worthy son Number One had landed a chance after much string-pulling, to go abroad with the minister, but his father's sudden death had ...

'Anyway, all the rites and rituals went off well...' he sighed deep and long...'

'Long, long life you'll have, son, Father has attained moksha'. His paternal aunt blessed him.

Worthy son Number Two, who was

an executive in a private firm had been eaten up with worry about the demands of the employees there and their threats to go on strike. His father's death had provided some timely relief, but he'd be facing the music again, once he got back. His expenses had been pretty heavy here, at this immersion ceremony, but the guilt he had been under for not having looked after father when he lay ill had certainly abated a bit. Folding away the holy cloth with raamnaams printed on them, his maternal aunt brought it home to him that their standing in society had gone up by many notches. Who does even half as much these days? At best the eldest son goes to the Ganga and sets afloat the ashes of the deceased. This kind of full, collective participation by the whole family... even a rich merchant or businessman wouldn't have.

Worthy Son Number Three did not say anything. He was the youngest of the brothers. It was in his house that Father had attained release; it went without saying then, that the whole year round the expenses of father's monthly and yearly rites would be his responsibility.

The daughters spoke a sentence or two, recalling the pain their father had endured : already, worries about their families back home were beginning to claw at their minds.

The youngest girl, her head resting on the window, silently watched the flow of the Ganga. The knots of her heart and

mind were beginning to unknot : something soft within her flooded her eyes and poured down. For her father, for her brothers and sisters, and perhaps for her own self too, quiet notes of prayer were beginning to grow within her. 'Jadaanandaan, pangun, prakritividhira, mukti viklaan' 'Goddess Ambey! All those born deaf, lame, dumb and blind, all those who earn release from the load of their sins and for whom all roads are closed, redeem all such afflicted ones'.

Away there, on the banks of the Ganga,

funerals, food offerings, the immersion of ashes etcetera went on; the priests kept taking the signatures of their patrons; wives, holding the hands of their husbands, dived again and again into the river. And the hordes of hungry, naked and disabled who had left sated with the halwa-puri feast spread out for them by the worthy sons of Gokulnath, are today again afflicted by pangs of hunger, and are again on the look-out upon the banks of the Ganga for some other worthy sons of some other Gokulnath.

Chandrakanta, born 1938 in Srinagar, is a Vyas Samman laureate who is known for portrayal of Kashmir in its varied shades and her major books are: 'Ailan Gali Zinda hai'. Katha satisar, mere bhojpatra,' 'abbu ne kaha tha' and 'antim sakshya.' She lives in Gurgaon, Haryana.

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The Voice Which was Progeny...

Tarun Bhatnagar

The Author

It was the time out of this world, from some other era, and never ever occurred again. It ended there.

It was a village in that time.

Was it really a village?

Huts roofed of palm leaves thatches, far scattered and seldom to see in intensely dense jungle. Those were not huts, but something much, much older. They were not made of mud. Three sides closed and one front open in place of door. A horizontally erected wattle made of bamboos and woods, mainly of bamboos that did not look like a wall. A thatch of dry palm leaves resting on bamboo frame tied with barks of trees. There is no word yet for this structure erected in an empty place surrounded by darkness of thick jungle. No doubt they are not huts or homes as we call. In the dialect of the jungle — a shape, that doesn't have a name yet but just a sound indicating it. I will rather call it shelter.

Hardly a shelter it could be said? Even two people couldn't sleep in it properly and is so tiny and low that their legs from knees will be out of it.

The same shelters in dense haunting silence of sagaun and saal tree woods, some much far from each other and some much more far, somewhere deep in green black silence of the forest filled with

numb dense darkness of trees and shrubs. It couldn't be guessed where and when an empty place will emerge with such a shelter in it and one would see two black human figures sitting near scintillating waving fire.

Human figures, because they were not believed as human beings then. They were not human in attire because they were completely nude, they could make sounds but didn't have a dialect, it was only a call, a sound, a symbol and an expression they only could say or could hardly be understood in the mysteries of our forests without parlance of tongue, thus unknown yet, awaiting to be explored even after millions of voyages in the past.

God knows what they ate? Perhaps something never been eaten by human beings. They were not well aware of meals. Whenever they felt hunger they gazed at the deep forest with eagerness and then suddenly jumped in it with their primitive arms made of wood and stones. Deep and deep, whenever they had appetite they ran awfully into jungle, cutting shrubs and creepers, making a hasty way. Women started sowing nearby jungle, but it was not exactly the tillage. They were hunters. Tillage had to wait for decades.

The outside world knew that the world inside the jungle is unchanged and paused from centuries. First of all they were knowing that there are only hills, deep unknown jungles, the streams from mountains, too many kinds of snakes and

insects, dense thickness of creepers and shrubs growing fungus and mushrooms wetting in rains and dropping, that just after two steps one couldn't see further. Only this they knew, but not that there is a secluded and intensely unknown world of black figures look alike humans or so.

The outside world knew just a little about the inside jungle. The outside world was most unaware of the inside jungle. Some people had peeped inside it after a tedious job of cutting wild creepers and trees, going deep within. They told that there are some human beings and it is hard to say whether they are human or some kind of wild animals.

One day someone came near the shelter. They were scared to look at him, those two, the naked man and the naked woman, the primitive man and the primitive woman, the stone aged figures. The man gripped firmly at the raw prehistoric type spear made of slender tree trunk and targeted it towards him. The woman blared, ran and stood behind the man. She held a burning wood from the fire. The man standing in front of them was a human being, a well defined human being and there was no question about it. He wore clothes. The nude man and the nude woman were scared looking at his attire. The woman was waving burning wood in her hands. She had done the same too many times growling and shouting while facing a wild animal. Every time her

growl, blare and shouts had compelled wild carnivores to flee out of her area.

The man and the woman almost attacked the man from outside world, but the man from the outside world sat down. He bowed his head and gripped it in his palms. The man and woman came closer to him leaving their fear aside, started gazing at him with awe. The man had still targeted the spear pointing towards him and the woman holding the burning wood. The man from outside world smiled looking at them. The man and the woman were looking at him with puzzled eyes. The man from outside world placed a radio on the terra just in front of them. The man and the woman didn't see him putting the radio on the ground but were still staring at him, as they had never seen a human being before.

It is said that in those years the government collected *mahua*, wood, *tendu*, *chaar*, *boda*, etc. from that thickly wooded and unknown jungle, so it decided to give radios for that, to the people of the jungle. How nice it would be if someone from jungle might hear the voices from outside world, might be connected with them. So it was decided that somewhere deep and far in jungle a few radios should be distributed.

But it was a risky job, perhaps at the cost of life, filled with suspicions. Who knows what kind of people they are, are they really the people or some zone else? But it is said that even after that the

government distributed some radios in those endless hilly jungles. People who performed the job did a remarkable task. Those were the first people in the most secluded areas of our time.

The man from the outside world went away, leaving the radio there. The man and the woman sat at a distance from the radio. The Radio was making all sorts of sounds. Radio was speaking. The man and the woman were hearing the radio speaking. The man pointed his spear towards the radio. He believed it might be a wild animal left here carelessly and any time it could jump on him. That day and next whole night the man and the woman sat on a small mound, in front of the radio. Both of them did not feel the cold weather, neither summer ever scorched them nor they felt irritated soiling themselves in non-stopping rains. They could keep awake the whole night and whole day. They could sleep the whole night and whole day. They could roam in jungle crossing endless rivers and hills. They could roam whole night and whole day. They could do all this up to too many days and too many nights.

Next night the woman came in shelter to sleep leaving the radio. Deep in the night when the crescent moon was floating in the dark sky and a painful growl of a rhino was coming from inside the jungle, the man got relieved from the fear. The growl of the rhino made him afraid and he also came in the shelter leaving the radio

discarded and alone, not too far from the shelter.

The radio was speaking continuously, It spoke whole night and day. Next morning a stormy wind with rain first filled the whole jungle with dust and dry leaves and then wet it up to all twigs and trickling rivulets from leaves, radio was speaking. The whole night trees were making swishing sound waving in winds and the man and the woman slept embracing each other, radio was still speaking. Fire was burning with bursts, radio was speaking. Next day both of them went deep in forest to subside their hunger and came after two days, radio was still speaking.

...the woman felt pity for the radio.

The woman had seen those animals so many times sitting calmly and growling in a low tone, sometimes wounded and sometimes left out of their groups. She felt mercy for them. The woman had no issue. She had seen infants and had an idea that some day it will come out from her belly. She waited, but it hadn't come yet. The radio seemed something like a small body of flesh and blood made from man and woman.

She had a half eaten prey they got from the forest. She placed a piece of meat in front of the radio, believing that after sometime it will eat it and calm down. But nothing happened. The radio kept speaking.

The woman became impatient. She started sitting near the radio for a while.

The man gazed at her sitting afar. So many times the woman touched the radio, cuddled it, tried fondling it in a low tone—la,la,la, but the radio was still speaking. She rolled about sleeping near her man, man tried again and again embracing her, but she got herself detached from him, sitting on her knees hearing the voices of radio coming from dark silence and slightly blowing winds from outside the shelter. The man also awakened, both of them passed the whole night without even a drop of sleep.

One night the man heard the woman calling—'la,la,la...', with choking throat, pointing her index finger towards outside dark, towards radio. The man came in open, picked a burning wood from fire, came close to-the radio, gazed at it and suddenly threw out the wood in forest and screamed aloud. He shrieked again and again and the voice which was yet not a dialect echoed in the jungle, trembled between the land and the sky. Silence of night and wild animals heard the screaming sound cautiously with erect keen ears.

The radio was speaking, speaking in obscured low tones, it sang and made distinguished voices, the voices of man and woman, the voices as of their own.

The man and woman felt an appetite. They went deep in to the jungle, into the deepest deep.

There was continuous raining for three days. The whole jungle became wet and Tress were dripping. The shelter flowed.

Broken bamboos and thatches strewed all over. While the rain stopped, for almost two days wild dogs and jackals made the shelter their home, chewing bones and eating flesh. After five days it was the man who came first, followed by the woman. The woman had a long piece of leg meat gripped and hanging in her hand. The man suddenly started shooting those wild dogs, holding spear in both his hands above head, making mysterious shrieks. The two wild dogs were barking again and again on him, jumping towards him, growling, but receding and at last the man won, the wild dogs left his area. The man squatted nearby his demolished shelter.

The woman came suddenly close to the radio while looking at jackals and wild dogs running afar. God knows what happened to her gazing at those wild animals barking, voraciously gulping meat and chewing bone running towards forest, she suddenly ran close to the radio, held it up and embraced it to her breast. The man also came there and hugged the woman. A low tone obscure voice was coming from the radio clasped between the naked chests of the man and the woman.

The radio was singing in a murmuring tone. A sound coming out from the depth of an unknown zone and the beat taking it the right way was vibrating slightly her thick black skin. The sound out of perforated metal plate was melting somewhere in the deep. Something was

getting intoned under the skin. Radio stopped a bit, murmured, picked the right tone, some new melody arose, some new voice melted and the metal plate shivered a bit. The woman felt as some unknown infant's fingers are running on her breast holding her calmly. She looked at the moaning jungle spellbound. A tiny drop emerged in her eyes. The man was smilingly looking at her.

She clasped radio in her arms for a long time. The man started making shelter. She was eyeing man with love holding the radio in her arms.

All the night passed away.

The next day also passed away.

The shelter was erected again. The man burnt wood to make fire. Soiled wood burnt with little fire and much fume. The woman baked the leg piece of prey. Both of them swallowed it up to full satisfaction of hunger and came in the radio also came with the woman. Both slept and the radio, as it was, continuously singing in low tone.

A terrifying incident happened that night.

Late night the woman awaked the man. She was holding the radio. The radio was silent. It was saying nothing. The woman was waving the radio in her hands, taking it up and down, clasping it to her chest again and again, but the radio was numb, nothing coming out of it. The woman became perplexed, looking at the man with overspread eyes, shaking his shoulders to do something. The man patted it slightly

with his palms, but nothing happened.

The woman was filled with intense grief and fear.

The man went outside, took some water in his palm making it concave. The woman threw some droplets on the radio taking water from her fingers. They Did this again and again, but nothing happened. Radio was silenced forever. The woman burst into tears. The man tried to console her in unknown voice, sometimes embracing her, sometimes looking at the radio and sometimes aimlessly going outside and coming back.

The man had dug a pit by evening. The woman was holding the radio in her hands and the man sitting knelt down nearby the pit, holding his head in his palms. The woman handed him the radio coming closer to him and he buried it in the bottom of the pit. Both started filling the pit with mud and earth.

The woman was sobbing, while sliding mud in the pit. After filling the man overburdened it with soiled mud and treaded with feet. The woman brought some white and orange coloured powder from the jungle and the man a piece of slender trunk of *sagaun* tree. All night he rubbed the slender trunk thoroughly to make it glazy and then dug it on the place. The women started making some figures of wild animals and insects on it by her fingers from the paste made of coloured powder and water.

Those were the saddest hours of their life.

....sometimes, the woman remembered the radio.

...A voice, her progeny. No matter if it had not taken birth from her womb. No matter if never the semen of her man floated inside her to shape that voice, to frame the call made as of only for her. When she clasped it in her chest her breasts were not containing even a drop of milk.

....voice is made of her blood, undoubtedly.

....voice has the blood of a woman in its veins, the naive vanity of her existence.

....voice, the love. Voice, of too many endless heartbeats.

The woman from unknown, barren, secluded, dense and ghostly dark forests of our times.

...A woman crying with broken heart on the grave of the voice.

The government again called her people and ordered them to go in to the jungle, this time again to those people whom they had given the radio. They must find out how much the people of jungle understood the world outside and what changes came through the radio in their lives. Agents of government had been given forms and papers to gather, fill and submit the correct information regarding this project.

That day, the outside man came very secretly nearby the area of the man and the woman. He sat along with in between

forest and open land. The man and woman saw him and came hastily towards him. The man was holding wooden spear and the woman a burning piece of wood.

...the man saw the long canines and big thorny nails from dreadful paws of that ferocious wild animal. It seemed to the woman that this carnivore is just going to attack her.

The jungle man threw the spear with full power towards him, broached his chest in a sudden blow. The outside man cried and fell down. The woman attacked him with the burning wood. He got up struggling and trembling and tried to run

out of the deep jungle. The woman was crying while attacking him again and again.

The outside man ran away deep into forest. He reached a rivulet coming from high mountains flowing in sharp streams. A perennial stream made its way deep in terra filled with vegetations. The man fell down nearby fainted and lost sense. His back and head was burnt and a flow of blood from his chest was trickling in the rivulet's flow.

The year was 1952.

In deep, dense, unknown, dark and primitive jungles of *Bastar*, it was the first murder of a man from the outer world.

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Shadows of The Past

Ramesh Pokhariyal 'Nishank'

Pramila Garg

It was a wintery night with bone chilling cold but Bhagirathi was fast asleep with the burning charcoal and cow dung cakes in the angithi. From her quivering nostrils came out smothered sound of snoring, which filled their little room. But there was no sleep in Ramrath's eyes. This wakefulness was neither because of cold nor because of snoring of Bhagirathi, all these he was used to. One face was coming up again and again before his eyes. If his Sarju was with him would he look like that boy? He felt like shaking Bhagirathi vigorously to wake her up, why should he face this heartache alone? But he pitied his old woman; she had undergone great pain and misery in her youth. So many years have passed; she might have removed those memories from her mind.

But what should Ramrath do? No sleep in his eyes, he was feeling today more cold as compared to other days and Bhagirathi's snoring was disturbing him a lot. Still, he knew the reason for no sleep was not all this.

A group of local and foreign students had come there for tracking. They had stopped on their way to have tea at Ramrath's shop. Ramrath had made delicious tea with ginger and cinnamon for the boys who were trembling with cold. A boy stepped forward; putting a hundred rupee bill in Ramrath's hand he said something in a foreign language.

"But I have already taken the money," Ramrath was flabbergasted.

"Keep it, he says you have made very good tea," one Indian student told him.

Now Ramrath looked at the foreigner boy more closely. He was smiling, Ramrath again looked. His hand shook and the note fell from his hand. His whole body trembled as if the entire snow of the mountain had entered his body paralyzing his nerves.

'Why this face is so familiar to me?' he thought.

'Sarju. Yes he is Sarju, the same nose and the same mole on the chin, how could he forget him.'

"Grandpa, where are you lost? Keep this money, this boy has come from a foreign country and he is pleased to drink such good tea."

Ramrath woke up as if from sleep.

"Which country he has come from? Where are you people going?" he asked both the questions rapidly.

"Grandpa, do you know the names of the countries?" he counter questioned.

"Yes son," Ramrath smiled.

Looking at the dilapidated condition of the hut and the old wrinkled man he thought, 'how could he know the names of various countries. He must be thinking that we are students.'

"Grandpa, his country is the Netherlands," and looked towards the hillock, "we are going there," he said pointing towards the mountain in front of them.

There was so much facial similarity and

the name of the country was the same which moved Ramrath to tears.

"What happened grandpa? Why these tears?"

"Nothing, only I remembered somebody. But why are you people going there in such cold? Now it will start snowing soon," a natural worry entered his mind.

"Don't worry grandpa, we will come back and have your tea once again."

Gradually that group of boys disappeared from his eyes.

Once again Ramrath changed his side which woke Bhagirathi up from her sleep.

"Why are you so restless? Aren't you sleepy?" Bhagirathi looked at him with sleepy eyes. Because of Ramrath changing his sides so frequently her sleep was disturbed and she was feeling cold too.

"Today I saw Sarju," these words of Ramrath drove away whatever sleep was left in her eyes.

She sat up immediately and started staring at Ramrath thinking, 'Could be, the old man has gone crazy.' Ramrath was looking in the darkness and tear drops rolled down his eyes.

'Sarju' how much joy and happiness this name gave her and after a few years how much pain and sorrow.

After ten or twelve years of marriage when no child was born to them they lost all hope. They got treatment from local medical practitioners, got special prayers performed for the purpose. They followed whatever treatment anybody suggested, but nothing happened. They never had so

much money that they could go to the city and get treatment from the doctors there. But whenever they heard of any saint or sage from the nearby villages they would go and offer their obeisance to them.

After fifteen years of marriage when they had relinquished all hopes of a child, a miracle happened. Bhagirathi was pregnant. This heartening news at this stage of life instilled a new life in them. Ramrath almost became crazy with joy. He took care of Bhagirathi with utmost effort, would not allow her to do any household chores.

"You remain fit and healthy, don't lift any heavy thing. If you feel like eating something do tell me, I will make." This untimely happiness made even dim wit Ramrath more intelligent.

Bhagirathi used to laugh and felt titillated by such behaviour of Ramrath, still she did not like him doing household work. On this account they would often have tiffs.

As the time passed Bhagirathi gave birth to a baby boy. The whole house was filled with unspeakable joy. There was no old experienced person in the house to tell them how to bring up the child, but Bhagirathi was such a sweet tempered woman that all the old women of the village would come and help her. Both of them named the child 'Suraj' but with time it got distorted to 'Sarju'.

With time Sarju grew up, became a darling boy of three years. He would follow his mother wherever she went. Then came the day when their whole world was shattered and they were filled with

unspeakable sorrow.

After finishing the day's work Bhagirathi had gone to the village pond to get water and wash utensils, Sarju followed her. Otherwise also it was not a new thing. Sarju mostly remained glued to his mother all the time. But that day something unusual and unexpected happened. Like other days Sarju did not reach home following his mother. They started searching for him in every home, each pond and each ditch but Sarju was not to be found. Bhagirathi and Ramrath were very agitated, they looked for Sarju in all pits and gadhoras lest he might have fallen in one of them. As they could not find him in the village they started looking for him in nearby villages and complained to the village headman. The headman was a good man and he could not bear to see their agony.

The case was taken up at the government level, and more extensive searches were made. They came to know that their child was seen with a boy of nearby village. That boy didn't have a good record; he was arrested earlier for petty theft. After serving the jail term he had run away to the city. He remained there for quite some time but last month he was seen in the village again. Somehow by putting pressure on his parents his address was found; but by then it was too late. He was found in Mumbai, but for a few thousands he had already sold the child.

When further investigations were made with the help of these leads, once again

Ramrath and Bhagirathi's fate gave way. There was a very big gang which abducted children and would let foreign couples adopt them against very heavy monetary compensation. Sarju was already sold to some foreign couple.

The only thing they came to know was that some couple from the Netherlands had purchased and adopted their Sarju, as if Sarju was a commodity which could be purchased and taken away with them. That's all. They couldn't do anything beyond that. Whatever was done was also beyond their reach. Actually it was done because the villagers had helped them; otherwise they would have been completely in the dark about their son.

In spite of so much effort since they couldn't find Sarju a pall of gloom spread over their lives. Earlier they were unhappy that they were childless but now after having a child they once again became childless. Sarju had shown them a beautiful dream and then vanished from their lives. Now on, neither could they pass their lives peacefully nor could they end it. This misery had made them old before their time. Many years passed and Bhagirathi and Ramrath had more or less settled themselves in their childless existence. Though it was not possible for them to forget Sarju, gradually the layers of time started settling on his memories. Today peeling all those layers of time Sarju's memories stood before them.

"Have you gone crazy with old age, from where Sarju will come now?" Bhagirathi asked Ramrath shaking him

vigourously.

"No Bhagirathi, I have not gone crazy, he was Sarju only. Just imagine how Sarju would have looked at the age of twenty. That boy looked exactly the same, then he told me the same name of his country." Thus Ramrath told her the complete story. Bhagirathi started thinking 'was he really their Sarju, if yes, how would he recognize them, what did they have to prove that he was their son?'

"Will they come again?"

"Yes, they did say that they would come again to drink tea made by me." Ramrath replied in a lost tone.

"From tomorrow onwards I will also sit at the shop, the day Sarju comes I will fold my hands and tell him that he is my son."

"Woman, have you gone mad? He doesn't even know our language, don't be so foolish." For some time they argued but Ramrath got defeated by the overwhelming love of Bhagirathi. Ultimately he permitted her to sit at the shop on the condition that she would not say anything after seeing Sarju.

From the next day onward Bhagirathi would go to the shop with Ramrath after finishing her household work in the morning. Ramrath was surprised to look at the agility with which she finished her daily chores. Very early in the morning Bhagirathi would make tea and breakfast for them and would pack four chapatis in a cloth. The desire to meet her son infused a new life into her fragile frame.

Sometimes Ramrath would be worried

to see her, if that group of boys didn't return this way Bhagirathi might lose her balance of mind at this old age.

While sitting in the shop her eyes would be fixed in the direction by which they were supposed to be returning; and she would ask again and again when would they return? Ramrath would be irritated, "How do I know when would they come?"

Bhagirathi was flabbergasted still she would once again start looking with doubled enthusiasm, but by evening she would be disheartened. Now it was getting very cold, the higher peaks of the mountain were covered with snow and Ramrath would have liked to close the shop early. Otherwise also there were hardly any customers in the evening, but Bhagirathi would not allow him to close. Facing the arrows of biting chilly winds she would continue sitting near the open hearth wiping her nose.

One day her penance bore fruit. That students' group returned to have tea at his shop. Ramrath saw them coming from a distance. He had recognized his Sarju amidst that group of ten or twelve boys even from a distance. But he kept quiet as he wanted to get confirmation of his belief from Bhagirathi. The boys came nearer and he looked at Bhagirathi sideways. She was staring at the foreign student steadily.

"Baba, give us tea, didn't we tell you we will come back," the Indian student took off his gloves and stood near the burning hearth enjoying the warmth of the

fire. "Sarju" as the whispering voice of Bhagirathi reached that boy he looked towards her.

"Amma, what are you saying?" that Indian boy was rather talkative.

"Nothing, son nothing, she is old and keeps on babbling," before Bhagirathi could say anything Ramrath spoke.

Bhagirathi acted as if she didn't hear anything and kept on staring at Sarju, 'the same features, the same mole at the chin and the same habit of smiling by slightly slanting his mouth.' Bhagirathi felt that she would go mad, tears started rolling down her eyes.

"Amma, aren't you feeling well?" Looking at Bhagirathi's condition the Indian student asked.

Bhagirathi looked up as if she had suddenly woken up from sleep.

"No son, I am ok," and looked at Sarju who was standing in front of her. She thought 'where he is now and where they are. True they had brought him up for three years only, but how the other parents are bringing him up. Could they have given him such fair, healthy and blooming life? No, never. If he had been with them he would have probably been sitting in this shop only.

Bhagirathi looked at the boy and asked the other boy, "Son, do ask him where he has come from and what his parents do?" What went between two of them neither Ramrath nor Bhagirathi could understand, but whatever was told them it confirmed Bhagirathi and Ramrath's belief that this foreign student was no other

than their son.

That boy knew this much that he was not the biological son of his parents and they had adopted him from India's Mumbai, otherwise he knew nothing about his biological parents. His father is a big businessman in the Netherlands; he visits India quite often in connection with his business. This boy often visited India with his father but had come to this area for the first time.

As Bhagirathi stepped forward fear gripped Ramrath's heart, God only knows what she is going to do. He wanted to stop her but his voice failed him.

Bhagirathi came and stood near the boy and put her trembling hand on his head. Once again tears streamed down her wrinkled cheeks, her eyes got blurred with

tears which she wiped immediately so that she could see her Sarju properly. All the young boys with him were amazed and worried at her behaviour.

"Come again son," Bhagirathi said in a trembling voice, hearing this Ramrath heaved a sigh of relief. That Indian student again played the role of translator, "Sure I will come," saying this that young boy waved and running and jumping on the meandering road disappeared before her eyes. Bhagirathi was standing like a statue and kept on staring in the direction.

Once again their life started on the old pattern but definitely a difference came in Bhagirathi's life. Now daily she started sitting at the tea shop with her husband. After all her son had promised to come again.

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Arundhati Roy in Indian Languages —What Distances?

Vijaya Kumaran C.P.V.

Alice Truax wrote in her literary review in New York Times (25 May, 1997) that 'the quality of Ms. Roy's narration is so extraordinary — at once so morally strenuous and so imaginatively supple — that the reader remains enthralled all the way through to its agonizing finish.' Roy uses a variety of English in *The God of Small Things* and she is successful to communicate to the world the culture she represents. The beauty of her novel lies in the use of Indian English and the varieties of techniques she uses. She uses that English, which is a distorted one from the standard conventional use of words and sentences from regional languages in India apart from the use of subjectless sentences, faulty spellings, capital letters, use of italics, single word sentences, change of parts of speech, clustering of adjectives, nouns and deviation from normal word order etc., in English. That English is a kind of 'Manglish' (Malayalam-English) and 'Hinglish' (Hindi-English) as far as the Indians are concerned, but for the international readers she had the Oxford and Cambridge versions too. In her forward to the Malayalam translation of Arundhati Roy, the acclaimed story writer Smt. Priya A.S. disclosed that '*The God of Small Things*' is a book which is intranslatable, and this sounds like the referred title of Raji Narasimhan in Hindi Discourse Writing. Priya took it as a challenge to pen the whole discourse which felt her like 'a sea of sorrow.' To make more clear specifically, 'it is the sorrow of those, who are haves and who have all but, those marginalised.' Raji took it for granted the language

of power of the original to be translated for making the effect of the original. The opening comment of the translation critic in Hindi is that "The language of *The God of Small Things* is overpowering. For the translator this strong, fore-grounded presence of the parent language creates problems." Raji, is quite convinced that mastering the target language Hindi is not enough to create the nuances of the original since the content of the novel is encoded in two-three languages, by deconstructing the traditional writing style.

As the English publisher of the book took meticulous care about the typeset, cover design and other details of the quality and publication and the publicity the book received was undoubtedly the result of a well-planned strategy, a fact so much emphasized by her detractors, it is binding on the translators to keep all of them in their re-renderings. We have both Hindi and Malayalam, the Indian language translations of Mrs. Roy, which had the similar cover designs of the original. Arundhati took freedom to arrange each word as in English Capital letters, which she retained from her childhood. That is said to be an innovation in language of source text. In characterizing Baby Kochamma, the novelist had the same technique of depicting her life backwards. Regarding the calligraphy of English what the original text attracts and creates best impact on the context of rendering, is the capitalising of the beginning of some selected words, wherever there are stresses and intonations. Non-English phrases

which are italicized include those in Malayalam as well as the Latin "*et 'tu: bru:te?*" the Hindi & Malayalam mixed slogans '*Inquilab Zindabad! Thozhilali Ekta Zindabad!*' (Arundhati, 66), and the Tamil '*Rombo maduram*'; expressions in Malayalam, such as '*Ruchi lokathinde Rajavu,*' and its literal translation of 'Emperors of the Realm of Taste' (Arundhati, 46); (The novelist herself had committed that the translation is ridiculous.) To quote: 'It was a literal translation of *Ruchilokathinde Rajavu,* which sounded little less ludicrous than *Emperors of the Realm of Taste.* (*Ibid.*) Malayalam translator did some overt translations on similar occasions and added both the source and target idioms and phrases, *viz.* in transliteration and shifting, to communicate the original (Priya, 65). Hindi translator had a recreation of the original as he translated the term as — *Swaad Ke Sansar Ke Samrat,* (Neelabh, 60) to be faithful to the TL readers, where he could create the alliterations by using the repeated consonants *S & K* in each word, and we have to forgive for making the meaning of the whole phrase in plural - *viz. Ke Sansar, Ke Samrat* etc.

The children's extraordinary habit of reverse reading, of words as seen reflected in a mirror, is also given emphasis in a similar way : "ehT serutnevda fo eisuS lerriuuqS. enO gnirps gninrom eisuS lerriuuqS ekow pu. None of the translators in Malayalam or Hindi could become faithful to this craft. They would hesitate to tell that the Indian Language scripts

cannot be scribed as English language. To recreate such idioms in other languages is a Herculean task, even though the word MALAYALAM has the reverse reading and writing pattern.

Let's see the transference of some of the source subtitles, which paved way for the enthusiastic reading of each subtopics of the novel. There are 21 subtitles in English, and Hindi translator transformed them with equal numbers (Malayalam translator did not put the numbering, but the chronological order kept as such). As some of the phrases in original are of phrases in colloquial Hindi and Malayalam the translator has to adopt both languages in TL also. The opening subtitle is with alliteration using the syllable 'P' in "*Paradise Pickles and Preserves*". The first distancing translation of this phrase in Hindi to make the TL meaningful is — '*Paradise Achar Aur Murabbe*.' In terms of loan words in SL, the translator has to transliterate or carry them into TL. So did for the faithful translator in Malayalam, without changing a single word of the original. The 7th subtitle phrase in English '*Wisdom Exercise Notebooks*' could have in transliteration as such in Hindi, but Neelabh made it absurd when got literally translated as '*Gyan Abhyas Pustikayen*.' Every Malayalee is quite aware of the notebook '*Wisdom*' (with its globalised marketing strategy) for exploiting the buyers, just like 'Ganga' soap advertised for cleaning body or removing sins. Similar is another cultural term used for an elephant — '*Kochutombhan*.' This word is coined by the novelist in resonance to the

collective noun — '*Kochukomban*' meaning — small tusker. Neelabh's choice of this word created some other nuances in the cultural milieu by a similar word '*Kochuthomman*'. Besides, the title *Kochu Thomman* is denoting a satirical poem of modern Malayalam poet N.V. Krishna Warrior characterizing a common man. While translating the cultural terms 'Mrs. & Mr.' as well as 'Ms.' into any Indian languages including Sanskrit, the intranslatability lies in coining the cultural equivalences in the TL. Here Neelabh had tried the dynamics of equalizing them with 'Smt. & Shri.', as one of the subtitles where there are three Smts - viz. '*Smt. Pillai, Smt. Eapen, Smt. Rajagopalan*'. The referred Malayalam translator did not go for that extreme to undervalue Indian culture by substituting those terms, but merely carried over the SL to TL.

With regard to the title of the book, it was a difficult task for Arundhati to put some apt title, and that came only after finishing the total discourse, that she remembers: "...When I read the book now, I can't believe the amount of references there are to small things, but it was absolutely not the case that I started with the title and built the novel around it." Shashibala Talwar and R.S. Sharma trace the origin of the title to Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. Saleem, the hero of that novel is worried about a slight error in specifying a certain date. Padma, his beloved, remarks under the circumstances: "What are you so long for in your face?" Everybody forgets some small things, all

the time. "That raises a question in the mind of Saleem : "But if small things go, will large things be close behind?"

With those reminiscences we can reach the conclusion that Mrs. Roy had used the term 'Small' and its contrast 'Big' as binary opposites, throughout the novel, to fabricate her theme. The translator in Malayalam had made those terms sound like the original and found it easy to literally and faithfully translate as '*Kunju*' (viz. *KunjuKaryangalude Odeythampuran*) for 'small' and '*valiya*' for 'big'. Nowhere Priya had to think to distance these words from one another with alternative terms. *Odeythampuran* — the compound phrase is coined by two words — *Odeya* (colloquial word literally meaning — Creator) and *Thampuran* (master or King). There is a transition from Raja — King (Kshatriya) ruling to democracy, such ruling castes prevalent in Kerala in Travancore and Trivandrum dynasty and their female subjects are also honored as *Thampuran*. But this colloquial idiom bears the nuances of the caste hierarchy and supremacy of the wealth and power in the society. Hence, the Malayalam reader could get the suggestive meaning with the well structured phrase, more than that those readers in English.

Neelabh has to play hide and seek game with some words like 'small' as '*nanha* (2 times)' (literally 'innocent' - p. 32.), '*chhoti chhoti*' in page 15, '*mamuli*' in rest. Even the title of the book '*Mamuli Chizor ka Devata*' is the acquired expression in TL. But in choice of words in TL this odd

word and phrase with deep cultural value does not match the contrasts which sounds in its original. The reasoning is clearly mentioned by Raji : "The immediate effect on the translator of this thrust of language is that it thwarts him, from sufficiently distancing himself from it, and focusing on the thought/thoughts behind it. Such distancing is a necessary step in all translation exercises. The aural incursion of the source text has to somehow get toned down sufficiently, to enable the translator to go past it and make contact with the cerebral-cum-psychic propellers behind the cascade of voice and tone." (Raji Narasimhan, 2013, 138)

The language of Arundhati is extraordinary as remarked by several veteran International authors, so to quote the remarks of Kamala Das : "We didn't take English lightly... But Arundhati Roy uses English as plaything. She can spit at correct English. She is Cinderella and fame is her prince." She further added : "She is lucky. We are not. But she is our child and we are happy for her. Because she is young to enjoy it." Soozan Douglas, another journalist found its reading "like eating a chocolate bomb — you take small bites and slowly savor the layers... The book is about the gorgeousness of language." (Amitabh Roy, 2012, 39) Anita Desai praised Arundhati Roy and observed : "When we wrote, we tended to write based on the literature we read, not on the way people spoke. I congratulate Arundhati Roy" (*ibid.*) But there are certain critics who found Arundhati as copying some

others style. It is C. Satyananda who revealed that the language innovations in Arundhati Roy's work were done fifty years ago by Enid Blyton and *The God of Small Things* was no better than an imitation of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.

In discourse analysis, let us go back to the same passage referred to by Raji Narasimhan : "He didn't know that in some places... Worse things kept happening." She did deconstruct this paragraph into three sections and came to a conclusion that it left behind a semantics for the natural poetry of free expression. Whether we get the beautiful construct of semantics and poetic fervour from Hindi translation? (Raji Narasimhan, 2013, 139) The paragraph is full of finite noun clauses introduced by the subordinator that follow the main clause verb. They function as subjects, direct objects, or complements of the main predicate. The Hindi syntax having complex structure began with '*Use pata nahin tha ...*', and the rest of the syntactical arrangement is in support of the same main clause subordinating with the word *ki*. viz. '*Ki jab niji uthal-puthal ek raashtra ki vishaal, prachand, chakkarkhati, eid lagaati, haasyaspad, unmath, asangat, saarvajanic uthal-puthal ki, sadak-kinaare bani, samaadhi par pahunchti to kuch ghatit hotaa. Ki vah badaa devta garm hava ki taraf chikhata aur sijade men sir jhukane ki maang karta.*' (Neelabh, 2008, 32). The deviation that can be mentioned here is in the tense of the verb, in those subordinate clauses, which distanced the whole sense of the TL. Main verb is put

in simple past as that of the original, but then Neelabh changed the latter phrases in conditional past, that deviated the sense of TL text. But it is made clear with the beginning of each adjectival phrase with the conjunction *ki*. Raji also made it clear that 'scrambling up the language is a prominent feature of Roy's prose style and form. But the scramble you come up with, alas, is devoid of the method gone into Roy's creative scramble.' (*ibid*, 140). The readers in Hindi can also reach the same conclusion. Three sub-clauses are there in the original paragraph, without much semantic variations — '*that something happened*' / '*worse things had happened*' / '*things kept happening.*' So beginning with the past and continuing with the perfect and going to the eternal present the whole sequence of narration is taking the reader to strengthen the character of Larry, the husband of Rahel to look into the third world citizen in tears always, and that becomes the predicted ending of the relation between that couple. Towards the end of the paragraph, the novelist made it literal : 'In the country that she (Rahel) came from, poised forever between the terror of war and horror of peace, worse things kept happening.' (Arundhati, 2002, 19)

It is Arundhati the novelist who uttered that 'I don't see a great difference between *The God of Small Things* and my non-fiction. In fact, I keep saying, fiction is the truest thing there ever was... *The God of Small Things* is a book which connects the very smallest things to the very biggest.'

The novelist was translating her own life into this fiction. The experiences at the village Aymanan in the district of Kottayam in Kerala seem to have left a lasting impression on Arundhati. Novel completed on April 6, 1996, with four years' time. She told Vir Sangvi, the editor of Sunday : 'I just started putting down what was going on in my head... It was all just coming out of me, like smoke I suppose, and I kept putting it down.' As observed by Arundhati's critic that her novel is not an imitation of some western model, but has behind her a long and rich tradition of socially committed writing in Indo-Asian novels. It is relevant here, therefore to have a look at this tradition and discover her roots.

On translating some of the folk verses and lyrics in the original, Priya could easily omit the English version, where sometimes the author had given simultaneous Malayalam and its translation in English. Like the one Kuttappen's appeal to an over-ripe guava (Arundhati, 207). For the translator in Malayalam, Priya could choose only those lines as in original Malayalam without caring for the re-renderings of Arundhati. Will it be more liberty on the author to surpass her? Hindi translator had to transform both languages into target — *Paa pera-pera-perakka* (Mr. gugga-gug-gug-guava) *Ends parambil thooralley* (Don't shit herein my compound); correspondingly — *Paa pera-pera-perakka* (*Shri am-am-am-amruda*) *Ende parambil thooralley* (*yahan mere hate men mat hag dena*) (Neelabh, 225). Here the translator had taken

phonetic adaptation to utter the Hindi world for *gua* — *amrud*. He did it with a vowel ending — *amruda*, in the first line, but the same is not opted for the coming lines, that which are of different endings in original. Again the adaptations for some aspirated consonants in Hindi are not scientific as those used in Malayalam script. Arundhati herself scribed those tabus — *thoorikko/thooralle* with the beginning dental consonant as aspirated, but in real pronunciation of that is non-aspirated. Transliteration of that into Hindi did the same adaptation of making that into *aspirated dental consonant*. Similar problem lies in pronouncing the word *gua* = *perakka* and *compound* = *parambu*. The allophones *ra* and *ra* (as in Raphael) in Hindi intonations are not specified. But in Malayalam those two are distinct. Priya could differentiate them in her TL, but Neelabh was helpless (as Arundhati too was). Arundhati did this with some of the proper nouns also like the names of *Esthappen*, *Kuttappen*, or compound proper name coined like *Esthapappychachen*, *Veluthapappychachen* etc. Here again the translator went in tune with the novelist, but quite aware of the demarcation between those phonetic adaptations in Malayalam Smt. Priya did coin the exact word. Taking for granted the ending three consonants as that of the original, in their translations Neelabh opted the same phoneme *e* (spelled as in air). Hence, those words re-rendered in Hindi as *Kuttappen*, *Esthappen*, *Veluthapappychachen* etc. School rhymes are also finding its place in Arundhati's

memory - "Koo-koo kokum theevandi / Kooki paayum theevandi/ Rapakal odum theevandi/Thalarnnu nilkum theevandi." The explanations in the brackets are all the more evident in the depiction of popular Malayalam folk as well as film songs. The discourteous-sounding lines of the boat song that Estha sings in the pickle factory are rendered alternately in the native language and in English :

Enda da korangaxha, chandi ithra thenjadu? (Hey Mr. Monkey man, why's your bum so red?)... (*ibid*, 196 & 211-12). Later, the same technique is used by the paralyzed Kuttappen while shouting repeatedly in his desperation : *Pa pera-pera-pera-perakka* (Mr. gugga-gug-gug-guava,) *Ende parambil thooralley*. (Don't shit here in my compound.) (*ibid*, 206). For depicting a song from 'President's Gold medal winning film *Chemmeen* the same bracketed illustration is applied by the author, (*ibid*, 219-20). Arundhati uses the technique of brackets in *The God of Small Things* to explain her own point of view, to make the narration effective and to show the innermost feelings of the characters. The former translator Priya is free from the brackets that carried explanations by the author. (Priya, 235). She could also take liberty in transcribing the folk songs, or film songs in Malayalam as if Arundhati did it in one language.

In stylistics, what is referred as deviation, distortion etc., can be observed in Arundhati. On some occasion this researcher has to mention that there is faulty spelling and notion of Arundhati

while describing the Kathakali and some folk rituals of Kerala. But deliberately when the author had used faulty spelling on some words like — Amayrika= America; Angshios= anxious; Verry= very; Hell-oh= hello; Orlways = Always; Mint = Minute etc. This can be taken as occasions if a prejudiced man and woman who try to create the Occidental Culture by learning English. Neelabh tried similar constructions in Hindi, whereas Priya did some alterations in phonemes with colloquial usage of Malayalam. Both of the translators did free rendering to avoid such emphatic usages.

Repetition of determiners, prepositions, negatives etc., are also common in the original : "One corner for cooking, one for clothes, one for bedding rolls, one for dying in."; "Past floating yellow limes...Past green mangoes...Past glass casks of vinegar with corks...Past shelves of pectin and preservatives...Past trays of bitter gourd...Past gunny bags... Past mounds of fresh green peppercorns..."; "No miles stones marked its progress, No trees grew along it, No mists rolled over it, No birds circled it." Apart from these repetitions, Roy uses variety of repetitions. For example :

"In the lobby, the orange drinks were waiting, the lemon drinks were waiting, the melty chocolates were waiting, The Coming Soon! Posters were waiting'... Shutup or Getout. Getout or Shutup."; "Went where they went, stopped where they stopped."

"Nothing mattered much. Nothing much mattered." From the second to the

13th paragraph, Arundhati used the same syllable *P* to begin with (Arundhati, 193-4), but none of the translators could adapt this style of the original. But, the translators also have their own versions that inside those referred paragraphs, there are some words in repetitions or alliterations, which make some musical re-rendering of the original.

In the subtitle 'Kochuthomban', there is a recreation of cultural milieu of Kerala by depicting the 'kathakali.' The novelist mentioned two stories — one of 'Karnasapadham' (Karna's Oath) and other 'Duryodhanavadham' (killing of Duryodhan). Neelabh by mistake misspells the former as 'Karnasabdam' (Neelabh, 234) which literally means the Oath of Karna, may be by mistake of giving stress on the latter phrase in the compound word — *Sapadham* as *Sapdam* (replacing unaspirated *d* to aspirated *dh*). Hence the wrong transliteration appeared in Hindi. We have to make the novelist more authentic to define the latter story, where she had taken 'Duryodhanavadham' as — *the death of Duryodhana and his brother Dushasana*, but in practice nowhere in stage the killing of Duryodhana took place, the version will be complete after killing Dushasana, his brother. Kathakali is a traditional art-form of Kerala depicting the Mahabharata into stage-play observing the *natyasastra* techniques.

We can take the discourse of the funeral of Sophie Mol- '*...Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*' (Arundhati, 7) which derives from the English burial service. The

text of that service is adapted from the biblical text, genesis 3:19 (King James Version). Arundhati depicted the last rite performed by the sad priests' voices muffled with mud and wood. Towards the end the narrator tells that 'Her funeral killed her. The Epitaph on Mol's tombstone is also in italics. '*Dust to dust to dus to dus to dus*'. On her tombstone it said *A Sunbeam Lent To Us Too Briefly*.' Both the target texts had their own transformations to this. The connotation that Neelabh's readers in Hindi after reading the tombstone will be little impressed as it is human to lose her - *Atyalp Kaal Ke Liye Hamen Mill Ek Suryakiran*'. (Neelabh, 19). Priya did a faithful rendering here by translating this idiom literally — *njangalku kshananerattekkku katamayikittiya oru suryarashmi*' (Priya, 23) If the word 'Lent' is carefully omitted from the original diction, then the suggestion of creator-created relationship will be totally lost. Hence from the believer's point, nuance of the original that human being is being lent by the Almighty, got lost in Hindi but retained in Malayalam. In addition, Priya kept the original English diction untranslated, to make the effect of the original.

There are some other occasions, where the Malayalam translator is devoid of carrying the bi-lingual interpretation of phrases used by SL text, since Arundhati coined most of them by her mother tongue. Contexts like describing each alphabet in the word *POLICE*, the Hindi translator had to transcribe them both in

English and its transliteration, whereas Priya got rid of by penning them in English only, and if she tried to interpret each Malayalam word after scribing *Police*, no meaningful idioms or phrases in the language can be created. That's why we have to take for granted what Priya disclosed in the foreword to her Arundhati's translation that she has been rolling stones for a long time, and the pain and pleasure of that rolling is to be released with the one in black and white what she could produce, but without any prejudice. Neelabh has not produced any *Translators' Note* or forward to his translation as if he is prejudiced to have this acclaimed book into the skies of Indian National Literary Treasure, in Hindi.

To conclude, if we could compare both translations of Arundhati in Indian Languages, one of the Aryan tongue and other of the Dravidian, we could see the translators are blessed with their own creative intelligence in Malayalam and Hindi and they had a tremendous task as well for compensating and substituting the author. Neelabh even took pains to explain so many foreign and culture bound contexts, and re-create his own style in the re-renderings. Priya had some hesitation to pen that she was not too much close to the original, even though she had very many contexts of leaving Arundhati with her bilingual interpretations to

monolingual in Malayalam. This masterpiece is a sea of language inventions and interventions in *The God of Small Things*. Even if, Raji Narasimhan with sufficient proofs comes to the conclusion that Neelabh took a wrong book to translate, when we go through the other Indian Language translations of Arundhati, the same opinion can be repeated. Taking for granted the translator's choice and liberty in translation, the overt and covert translations that we do have with a perspective to knit Indian Literature through Malayalam and Hindi with that of the Malayalam bound English author, the trios referred above, can be proud of illuminating the Indian Culture and Tradition to the World of Letters. We can also have a view of Arundhati's own views of her language use to put this discourse to an end: "Language is a very reflexive thing for me. I don't know the rules, so I don't know if I've broken them. As a very young child my mother gave me a book called *Free Writing* and we were encouraged to write fearlessly. The first coherent sentence I ever wrote, which is actually in this book, was written when I was five. It was about an Australian missionary who taught me. Every day she would say, 'I can see Satan in your eyes.' So, the first sentence I ever wrote was: 'I hate Miss Mitten and I think her knickers are torn.'"

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The Challenge of Translation

Kanan Jhingan

Ravi Nandan Sinha

Translation has become a powerful medium for exchanging cultural, spiritual and scientific knowledge in the world. The message of the universality of human emotions and feelings generated by the reading and teaching of the literatures of various countries takes the world towards a greater sense of unity. This is the need of the modern times.

In order to promote the art of translation, efforts were made at two levels : the governmental and the non-governmental. Under the Rajbhasha Act of 1963, instructions were issued that along with English translation Hindi translation too be used. The Hindi translation of orders and regulations issued under any central act was considered to be the authorised version. In the High Courts also, the alternate use of Hindi was accepted. Because of the training curricula of the Central Translation Bureau opportunities for employment in the field of translation grew. Apart from this, the Commission for Scientific Technical Terminology too did a great deal of work. Some two or three years before that, over eight lakh words had already been created. This effort proved very useful in simplifying the process of translation. There is a facility of translation through the computer but as yet, mechanical translation cannot be considered as successful as done by man. At the non-governmental level, the translation into Hindi developed in three streams : the

translation of literature in English and other foreign languages by publication institutions; the print medium and the electronic medium.

Newspapers occupy an important place in the print media. Articles published in English have regularly been translated into Hindi. Earlier in Hindi newspapers there used to be news published in English newspapers but now because of quick translation articles are published in both languages at the same time.

In this context, in the electronic media the contribution of cinema and television is noteworthy. Almost all the classic novels in English have been made into Hindi films. 'Wuthering Heights', 'She', 'Pride and Prejudice' and 'Guide' are some such examples. Apart from these, the works of Shakespeare, known as the father of English literature, such as 'Comedy of Errors', 'Macbeth', and 'Othello' were made into Hindi films titled 'Angoor', 'Maqbool' and 'Omkaara' respectively. A Hindi film was made on Ruskin Bond's 'Blue Umbrella' with the same title. 'Manpasand' was a film based on Bernard Shaw's 'Pygmalion' and 'Dharmatma' was based on Mario Puzo's 'Godfather'. The films 'Anamika' and 'Kohra' were based on Daphne du Maurier's 'Rebecca'. Films were made on 'Namesake' of Jhumpa Lahiri, a writer of Indian origin, and on a number of novels by Chetan Bhagat.

Television serials on the works of Indian English writers were made and they were also appreciated. R.K. Narayan's 'Swami and Friends' and 'Malgudi Days'

are examples of this. The Hindi version of foreign channels such as National Geographic and Discovery can be accessed only by changing the frequency a bit. On channels like Animal Planet, Disney, Pogo, Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon etc., there are English programmes dubbed into Hindi. Everyone is familiar with the fact that these channels are extremely popular among children. This kind of work is being done on a large scale. Discovery channel gives the English programmes made by it to a number of dubbing producers. A large number of translators are involved in the exercise. Experts edit the translated scripts. Discovery Q-See gives its comments on these. Artists under the guidance of directors lend their voice to these finally edited scripts. In this way, knowledge, science and entertainment comes to Hindi speaking people.

A large number of publishers belonging to the non-government organizations have taken up this kind of work. Apart from those of literature, a large number of books on science and other subjects have been translated into Hindi. These activities are not recent; they began a long time ago. Under the British rule innumerable copies of the Bible translated into Hindi were distributed among the people. This process continues even today.

In fiction Ramanath Suman translated Washington Irvin's 'The Sketchbook' in 1848 and called it 'Bikhare Chitra, which was published by Rajpal and Sons, Between 1915 and 1931 Lala Seetaram of Allahabad translated the plays of Shakespeare into

Hindi. He translated 'The Tempest' as 'Jangal mein Mangal', 'As You Like It' as 'Apni Apni Ruchi', 'Comedy of Errors' as 'Bhoolbhulaiya', 'King Lear' as 'Raja Lear', 'Much Ado About Nothing' as 'Manmohan', 'Macbeth', 'Hamlet' as 'Denmark ka Rajkumar', 'Othello' as 'Jhootha Sandeh' and 'Romeo and Juliet' as 'Prem ki Kasauti'. Premchand translated George Eliot's 'Silas Marner' as 'Sukhdas' published by Bamba Hindi Granthagar, and in Calcutta Ishwari Prasad Sharma translated 'Woman in White' titled 'Shuklavasana Sundari'. Bernard Shaw's 'Back to Methuselah' translated by Premchand under the title 'Shristi ka Arambh' was published from Banaras.

In 1950, Mahavir Prasad Poddar translated Mrs. Beecher Stone's famous novel 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'. Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi had written its foreword. The English translation of Lara Ingalls Builder's novel 'Little House in the Big Woods' was published in Allahabad in 1953- Ganga Pandey translated Pearl Buck's novel 'Good Earth' titled 'Dharti Mata' (Prabhat Prakashan, Lucknow) in 1955 and her another novel under the title 'Mrigrishna' in 1956. Surya Narayan Singh Sharma translated Cameron Howell's novel 'Executive Suite' under the title 'Adhyaksha Kaun Ho' in 1957 (Pearl Publications, Bombay). Malini Viz translated Stephen Cane's collection of short stories 'The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky' under the title 'Navavadhu ka Grampravesh' (Pearl Publications, 1958). In 1959, Gyan Chandra translated Helen Mackins's 'North

from Rome' (Pearl Publications). In 1960, Devendra Kumar translated Pearl Buck's 'My Several Worlds' (Rajpal and Sons) and in the same year Shree Shyam translated her 'Nor Five Nor Three' under the title 'Na Paanch Na Teen' (Pearl Publications).

Umapati Rai Chandel translated Mark Twain's 'Roughing It' under the title 'Yaadon ki Ghantiyan' (Rajpal and Sons, the page giving the year of publication was torn). In 1967, Virendra Kumar Gupta translated Jack London's 'The White Fang' and 'The Call of Woods' under the titles 'Paltu Bhedia' and 'Jungle ki Pukar' respectively. In 1968, the translation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby' was published by Rajpal and Sons. In 1970, Ramesh Bakshi rendered Herman Melville's American novel 'Moby Dick' into English (Radhakrishna Prakashan) titled 'Safed Whale Machhli'. In 1972 Mridula Garg translated 'Man Never Know' as 'Tikona Daira' (Akshar Prakashan) and in 1977 Amrit Rai translated Howard Fast's book as 'Samar Gatha' (Allahabad). In 1993 Anand translated Alice Munroe's short story collection 'Something I Have Been Meaning to Tell You' (Viplav Karyalaya, Lucknow) and in 1995 Deep Shikha Ghosh translated Henry Rider Haggard's novel 'She' under the title 'Mayavani' (Startrek Publishers). In 1998 Gurucharan Das translated Ernest Hemingway's 'Farewell to Arms' (Vidyarthi Prakashan, Delhi). In 2003 the translation of 'Arrowsmith', a novel by the American writer Sinclair Lewis was published. The translator was Satya Prakash. Rajkamal and

Sons published it under its Tradition and Heritage of World Classic series.

Lal Bahadur Sharma translated Jack London's 'Iron Heel' in 2004 (Itihas Bodh Prakashan, Allahabad). Around this time, Sanjiv Tanwar translated Ernest Hemingway's 'The Old Man and Sea' under the title 'Boodha Sagrik', and also 'The Reivers' by the Nobel Prize winner William Faulkner and Steinbeck's 'Travels with Charlie' under the title 'Charlie ka Safarnama' (the publishers were Bharat Cyan Vigyan Prakashak, Delhi and Rashtrabhasha Prakashan, Shahdara, Delhi respectively). Ashok Pandey translated Irwin Stone's biography of the painter Van Gogh in 2006 (Samvad Prakashan). In 2006 itself, Indu Prakash Kanungo translated Balzac's collection of short stories under the title 'Lal Sarai' (Surya Prakash Mandir, Bikaner). In 2007 Udaykant Pathak translated the short stories of Ernest Hemingway under the title 'Adivasi Basti' (Nav Prabhat Sahitya, Delhi). In 2011 Chandrabali Singh translated the poems of Emily Dickinson for Vani Prakashan, Vardha. In the same decade Uma Pathak translated the stories of Grimms, Hans Anderson and Kipling and also Naipaul and Paulo Coelho.

The Indian English writer R.K. Narayan's 'The English Teacher' ('Jeevan Mrityu') and 'Bachelor of Arts' were translated. In the same category the translation of almost all the novels of Vikram Seth, Naipaul, Amitav Ghosh and Paulo Coelho are available. In the contemporary times the literature of

spiritual gurus like Osho, Dipal Chopra and Shiv Khara has been translated very quickly.

Between 1848 and 2012 a great deal of literature in English was translated into Hindi and is also being read with great interest. In the library of Sahitya Akademi there is a separate section for translated fiction. One can guess from the worn-out condition of books kept there that they have been read frequently. This is an encouraging fact for translators and publishers.

I had the opportunity of translating the English literature of two authors. The first is Khalil Gibran, the philosopher, poet, short story writer and novelist of the 19th century, and Amitav Ghosh, a novelist of modern times. Translating my favourite authors was a labour of love for me. It was the reiteration of the pleasure of reading them in the original that I wanted to share with the perceptive readers of Hindi. I had begun to read Khalil Gibran in my youth. His literature is available in both Arabic and English. His famous works in Arabic are 'The Spirits Rebellious', 'Tear and Smiles', 'Broken Wings', 'Thoughts and Meditation' and 'The Voice of the Master'. Khalil himself wrote in English 'The Prophet', 'Jesus Son of God', 'Wanderer' and 'Sand and Foam'. While translating him, there was always a doubt in my mind. Khalil himself translated into English some of his works written in Arabic while others translated some of his other works. Thus whenever the source text is translated first in one target language and

then in another, there is a danger of the loss of meaning, or misreading of the intended meaning. If the first translator makes a mistake it can find its way in the work of the second translator. That is why there was a great deal of risk in translating the works of Khalil Gibran. Dr. M. M. Khan, the Head of the Arabic Department in Delhi University helped me greatly in understanding Khalil in the context of Arabic literature. The origin of Gibran's creativity is in his spiritual life. To capture his meaning from the second language into the third is in itself a great challenge. For me, the process of first internalizing the second language, and the emotions expressed therein, and then expressing them in a third language has been an adventurous journey.

Among his popular works I have translated 'The Prophet' as 'Ishwar ka Doot', 'Wanderer' as 'Yayavar', 'Broken Wings' as 'Toote Pankh', 'Spirits Rebellious' as 'Vidrohi Atmayen' and the selected parts of his remaining works 'Sand and Foam', 'Tears and Smile', 'The Forerunner', 'The Madman' under the title 'Vividh'. 'The Prophet' is written in the prose-poem style. In it, instead of long prose passages there is a wonderful rhythm in the consecutive sentences that are written like an unrhymed poem. Many times, even after a full stop Khalil Gibran begins the next sentence with 'And'. The syntax of Hindi is not like that, but to retain Khalil's style and rhythm as it is, I have used the word 'aur'. To give a feel of his tender emotions and his subtle thoughts, I have tried to use a euphonic

vocabulary in my translation. While doing this, Urdu words have naturally been used : for instance, though both 'soul' and 'spirits' are used as synonyms, when Khalil talks about his beloved Salma, I felt that choosing the word 'rooh' would be appropriate because 'rooh' means 'life breath' and 'life' and Salma was his life breath. When the context is spiritual I have used the word 'atma'. Similarly, Hindi words such as 'phusphusana' or 'kanaphoosi' for 'whisper' cannot express the feel of two lovers talking in a low voice. For 'whisper' I found the Urdu word 'sargoshiyan' to be the most appropriate. The word 'gosha' means a corner, or solitude or the ear. That is why 'sargoshiyan' expresses better than any other word the meaning of someone saying something in her/his ear when there is no one around. At another place I had to use Urdu words while translating lines expressing great pain. Away from home, and tormented by the memory of his beloved, Khalil requests his friends :

"Ah! You friends of my younger days living everywhere in Beirut! Whenever you go to that graveyard in the pine forest, walk with soft steps. Ensure that the sound of your feet does not wake those dead, and approach Salma's grave with great humility, bow to that land that holds Salma in its lap. Mention my name with a deep sigh, and tell yourself, 'Here the hopes of Gibran are buried, Gibran who lived as a prisoner of love across seas. It was here that he was robbed of his happiness, it was here that his tears dried, and it was

here that he forgot to smile."

After translating Khalil Gibran I had the opportunity of translating 'The Glass Place', a novel by Amitav Ghosh, the popular Indian English novelist. The canvas of the story in this epic novel is vast. The primary and secondary actions in the novel take place in Burma, Malaya and Calcutta. The main story is set in Burma. It is therefore natural that the names of characters, geographical locations, rivers, festivals and religious events are all in the local language. While translating the novel into Hindi my problem was that if I wrote those names as they were written in the English version, it would have meant being twice removed from the original. That is why I decided that I would write those names in the devnagri script with their original pronunciation. Because I did not know the original language, it was not an easy task. I received no help from the Myanmar Commission. I went to the registration office for foreign students in Delhi University. There were many Burmese students registered there but I could not locate them. It was there that someone suggested to me that I could meet many Burmese students studying at the institute for Buddhist studies. Ashinkumar, who is a research scholar there, introduced me to their professor. In the early chapters of the translated novel, the Burmese words are written in the manner he suggested. He then went back to Burma. Then I sought help from Bhante Shree Sayado Uegga who lives at 'Samta Vihar' in Pashchimpuri. I had to pay a number of

visits to him. With great patience, he taught me the pronunciation of some three hundred words. Some the examples are as follows :

What is written 'The Baw' in English is pronounced 'Tee Baw' in Burmese. The queen of Burma 'Supayalat' is called 'Suphyalat'. The minister 'Wungyis' was called 'Wonjee', his assistant 'Wundauks' was called 'Bonda', the courtier 'Pudeinwun' was called 'Patewan'. The dress 'Htamein' that women wear below their waist is called 'Thamein'. 'Angayi' worn like a blouse is called 'Enjee'. A popular snack of that place is called 'Bayagyaw' that is 'Byajo'. The name of a place of worship, that is a pagoda, is called 'Shwedagon' and is pronounced 'Shwitakon'.

It was necessary to gloss many words used in the novel. For instance, those who look after elephants are called 'usi' and 'pasi'. Kneeling down before the king and queen with hands spread on the ground to pay obeisance to them is called 'sheekho'. In China, Malaya and Malayasia there is a religious sect called 'Hakka.' Among its followers, there have been people following teachings of Confucius, the Buddha and Jesus. The language of this religion too is called Hakka. I should have explained the meaning of such words in the introduction, or the footnote or at the end of the chapter, otherwise the flow of the reader's pleasure would have been hindered, but all that was deleted in the editing. Perhaps the editor's purpose was to make the book appear original.

In modern English writing, an involved

and elite style is being preferred. It sometimes becomes difficult for the reader to follow this labyrinthine or confusing style. Translating such places becomes an exercise in solving a riddle. Prose passages full of long complex sentences often act as a hindrance for the reader to understand the meaning.

Sometimes a single word has many alternatives. Of them, the word that can best convey the meaning in a given context is used. Two lovers, Alison and Dinu are about to be separated because of war. In the last moments they are together, the philosophy of love has been presented in terms of a positive being made from a negative in a darkroom. The author writes, "The darkness of the one becomes the light of the other. The first time I saw it happen I thought what must it be like to touch like this — with utter absorption. For one thing to become irradiated with the shadows of another." *"Jab aap negative ko kaagaz par rakh kar unhe jeevit hote dekhte hain. . . ek ka andhera doosre ka prakash ban jata hai. Jab maine pahli baar yeh ghatit hote dekha to maine socha ki sampoorna vilayan ke sath is prakar ke sparsh ka anubhav karna kaisa hota hoga...ek vastu ka doosari vastu ki chhaya se jagmaga uthna, kaisi anubhuti.*

In this context, the words for 'utter absorption' given in the dictionary are 'tanmay', 'antarlayan', 'shoshan', and 'samaveshan'. But in that context, I felt that 'sampoorna vilay' was the better alternative to express the pinnacle of love described therein. In 'He is a difficult man'

the words suggested for 'difficult' are 'bedhab', 'adbang' and 'adbanga'. The adjective 'khadoos' too is sometimes used in the spoken language. All these words are ill-sounding. In that situation, and for that particular character in the story and for his background etc., words or sentences like 'jiddi', 'tedha' or 'jiske saath nibhana mushkil ho' have been used. Similarly, for 'fog' words like 'kohra', 'dhundhalka' etc., did not appear apt in the given context. The fog coming out of the fields of Malaya was sticking to the workers' clothes which they were pulling out. In this context, I found the word 'kharpatwar' to be the most appropriate to express the meaning. This word was given in Reynolds' English dictionary.

In ('Sheeshmahal') 'The Glass Palace' an Indian soldier uses the proverb 'dhobi ka kutta na ghar ka na ghat ka' for Saya John. The reader in Hindi understands what it means therefore the explanation given by the writer was not translated. To translate an English proverb for which there is no corresponding proverb in Hindi, I have used in my translation a simpler language to express my meaning.

Translation is not merely changing the text from one language to another—there is enough scope for research in it. What are the bases of the development of the story in the original work, what is its social, political and historical background, and what are the tools of expression used in it—without researching these it is impossible to do justice to the author. In 'The Glass Palace' ('Sheeshmahal') there

are the opulence of royalty, struggle for power, slave trade, cultural and social festivals, the colonialism of the British, the Second World War and its consequences, the work culture in the army, photography and similar subjects were such areas which needed to be researched in order to

understand them. I took the help of related books and the internet. I also talked to former soldiers and tried to understand the finer points of photography from experts in photography, and only then could I begin to translate the text.

Kanan Jhingan : born 1938, Karachi (undivided India), educated and worked at Delhi. Kanan was reader in Hindi at Daulat Ram College, University of Delhi from 1961 to 2003. Author of seven books, she specialises in writing on films and philosophy. She has translated Amitav Ghosh's novel 'The Glass Palace' for Penguin India. Kanan lives in Delhi.

Dr. Ravi Nandan Sinha : has published poetry and literary criticism in India and elsewhere. He has also translated poetry and fiction which the Sahitya Akademi and National Book Trust India have brought out. He is the founder-editor of *The Quest* (estd. 1987), a journal devoted to Indian literature and translation. He has been a member of the awards committee of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. Presently he is the Head, Postgraduate Department of English, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Ranchi. Email: questranchi@gmail.com

Globe on Potter's Wheel : Climbing Steps of Media

Pradeep Trikha

Madhav Hada's *Seediyaan Chadhataa Media* is a landmark contribution to the media studies in Hindi. This is a timely and welcome addition to the current wave of books on a range of contemporary issues. It demonstrates the method of literary and cultural evaluation as multiple ways of shaping popular consciousness. It is a known fact that media have played an important role in the process of globalization and there is ever growing academic material on the subject but rarely do we find a formal, systematic and convincing detailed study on the issue. He has elevated media to the centre stage of globalization discourse. This is also an attempt to fill the gap in the burgeoning globalization literature. Hada defines globalization as 'the process in which worldwide economics, political, cultural and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space'. This is a first-rate resource book for research students and for general readers and even the beginners who are interested in details of contemporary issues on media. He traces the process of globalization to the beginning of the fifteenth century, with the onset of European powers for trade with the rest of the world and in search of new countries. According to him a fresh phase started in 1492 with Christopher Columbus' voyage to America that ended in 1800. The second phase came to an end in the year 2000 and since then the third phase has started which in literal sense gave rise to a unified globe due to steep decline in prices, of personal computers, cell phones, satellites, fiber optical cables and expansion of world

wide web (www) which has created a phenomenon of 'knowledge explosion'. In the opening essay 'Globe on the Potter's Wheel', Hada refers to Thomas L. Friedman's *The World is Flat*, (2000). In his overview of contemporary media scene he submits to the historical facts such as Britain wood's Agreement among forty-four nations after the Second World War to revive global economy which later renovated into open market economy. During 1997, in order to counter global economic recession globalization became inevitable. In India its cumulative influence could be seen on culture, literature, society and media. Hada skillfully installs logical line of reasoning in order to substantiate his analysis in the ensuing essays such as 'Concurrence of Short Story in Hindi *vis-a-vis* the Media', 'Poetry in the Realm of Media', 'Newspapers in Villages and Small Towns', 'You Have come a Long way Baby', 'Hindi on the Flipside of Hinglish', 'Changing Perspectives', 'Constructing & Deconstructing Jargon of Media' and 'Climbing Steps Media'. In the post script to the anthology an interview with Swayam Prakash, Hindi contemporary writer is titled as 'Mahabharata is on in Minds', is a significant addition to the book. Hada emphasizes that literature is a cultural product and thus like any other product in global economy it should have marketability. According to him rumpus and entertainment have become the keywords for the writers as well as the publishers and the readers also for now the society is in constant search of voyeuristic

desire-fulfilment, by peeping into the private lives of the politicians, administrators, actors and sports persons. It is not that masses are only interested in reading books on Clinton-Lewinsky affairs; they are equally interested in Nehru-Edwina Mountbatten affairs even today. In Hindi the writers such as Rajendra Yadav, Ashok Vajpayee, Maitriyee Pushpa, Surendra Verma and scores of others have switched over to mode of creating ruckus, for it sells and generates economic gains for the writer-publisher nexus, no longer the trepidation is for sensitization.

'Poetry in the Realm of Media' deals with contemporary scene of Hindi poetry in which the number has grown exorbitantly but the quality declined, the reason for this is extensive use of blank verse, which is more often, prose-converted poetry and thus neither it remains a prose piece nor turns into a poem. Thus it hardly sensitizes its readers or its listeners and yet it is extensively flooding the markets. 'Kitaab Se Katti' Apathy to Books} is an interesting essay on onslaught of television on children's life style in India. Hada retraces 1960s and 1970s that witnessed mushroom growth of children's magazines like *Champak*, *Nandan*, *Parag* and *Chandamama* which were spitefully read and fervently anticipated by the hordes of kids around the country and were published even in regional languages Keeping in view their marketability during the 1990s, the divide between books and children grew due to the 'plug-in-drugs' (44) *i.e.* television, computers and now

even cell phones—the devices that have unique mesmerizing end product for children and that have even delinked them from reading habits or even making attempts to do so.

Hada, deliberately or unconsciously avoids to say anything on 'Policy' and 'Politics' of contemporary media scene in globalised India. But he does not hesitate in emphasizing the peculiarity, possibly even uniqueness or bifurcation in politics' of perception and 'politics of practices' on media. With further implication that nirvana could practically be within reach, no longer through transcendence of class struggles in communist utopia, but by rescuing 'policy' from the ghostliness of clashing social and economic agendas. In the essays like 'Advocates of Middle Class' 'Newspapers in Villages and Small Towns', 'Hindi on the Flipside of Hinglish' and 'Changing Perspective' he deals with multi-faceted issues in the domains of telecommunication infrastructure and broadcasting practice. Hada critically evaluates a brief history of discourse between 'Information Society' and 'Civil Society'. He goes on to summarize in detail the empirical issues, the global institutional actors and their social impact on Indian society.

On one level the book is a masterpiece of compression. Yet at times especially in the earlier chapters, this virtue also sometimes becomes its vice. The details of the arguments are so densely delivered, the thickets of information so tightly clustered, that for a student reader at least, it would

require additional commentary from an instructor.

Notwithstanding this drawback, the book's particular merit is to link together socially relevant issues in which most Indian academicians delve into off and on and grope for the way out from the area of darkness. The analyses of such topical issues are muddled over much published research in the field. Hada however, due to his careful handling of the arguments establishes that international variety of changes entailed in the globalization process should be perceived in affirmative mode. The essay 'You have come a Long Way Baby' is a fine example of how the international variety of changes has radically transformed the image of Indian woman as a whole conventional perception of an ideal woman is replaced with 'self-empowered', 'independent' and 'smart', though it appears to be realistic and imaginary but at the same time it is in concurrence with and within the domain of Indian long-established value system. It is rich fare, and thus hard to summarize passably in the course of a review. As intermittently is the case, not all essays can be made to fit in the confines and categories provided but frankly this is not an instance with Hada's present study, as each essay incorporated in the book is worthwhile contribution to our knowledge, and on the whole it can be said that any reader or researcher would agree that it is indeed a very stimulating work in the field of media studies. The title of the book has hidden metaphors in it but the contents

in it move beyond Cultural Studies or Politics of media. Economy divide that is often interpreted in a melancholic tone by the essayist provide some very indispensable take off points for the task ahead for those

who would like to take it as a challenge. But, one feels persuaded to conclude that the writer has systematically engaged himself in connectional issues with a transcultural approach.

The Book Reviewed Seedhiyan Chadhta Media

Author : Madhav Hada

Published by : Adhaar Prakashan Panchkula

Price : Rs. 250/-

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Apni Dharti, Apna Akash : A Discourse on Hope

Oma Sharma

Satya Chaitanya

The monstrous terror of two world wars, the horrendous atrocities unleashed by Hitler, the program of the Jews by the Nazis, the conflicts culminating in the end of colonialism, the rise of neo-colonialism, the emergence of the Soviet Union as a super power following the Bolshevik Revolution, its subsequent fall, scientific discoveries and technological inventions that set the flag of human ingenuity aflutter in the terrestrial and non-terrestrial spaces of a world born anew and the shamefully contrasting dire poverty, malnutrition and epidemics, the collision of numerous and diverging ideologies — these form the soul of the twentieth century. The century's passage through a decisive stage in the history of humanity has amply been painted vividly both in its human and psychological hues by its literature. To take a good look into the creative outpourings of the great masters of literature who have been honoured by the Nobel Prize is to understand the alternative history, philosophy of life, and the deformities and crudities of contemporary social realities; and that calls for the art and the pen of a master with sensitivity so that these could be comprehended in their true nature and being. True, great literature does not depend on any prize for its greatness — even if it is the universally reputed award for literature, the Nobel

Prize. Wasn't it in the early years of this very century that we saw brilliant masters like Premchand, Joyce, Stefan Zweig, Tolstoy and Chekhov ignored by the Prize? But it still remains a fact that the Prize is given to great masters of the letters from across the world — to such writers whose literary contribution is beyond questioning; whose art is peerless; who have portrayed humanity's consciousness, faith, love, savagery, suffering, hopelessness, loneliness, displacement, and woes in such depths that their writing transcends the boundaries of time and place and attains universal significance.

In this book, Vijay Sharma has presented before us the creative urges and passions of fifteen writers who have been honoured with the Nobel Prize, at the foundation of which are the lectures they gave in response to the Prize given to them. Just as the Nobel Prize, the Nobel lectures too have been accepted as important events in world literature because through these each writer shares with the world his personal reflections on such topics as his times, the society, art and literature, values and ideals, the creative process and literature, and so on. It is clear that each of these lectures gives us material for understanding the literary work of the eminent author and its place in our life.

Among the chosen writers we find, on the one side, such masters as playwright Harold Pinter and poet Pablo Neruda who are advocates of social politics in their own ways and on the other, such novelists as Isaac Bashevis Singer, V.S., Naipaul, Gao

Xingjian, Toni Morrison and Naguib Mahfouz who protest against looking at the writer's art and the freedom inherent in it through the spectacles of a political or ideological thought system.

The speech of each awarded writer is an outstanding statement but the words of the Chinese writer Gao Xingjian on the contemporary and timeless issues of literature appear to be most powerful — as for instance, when he makes statements like:

"In order that literature safeguard the reason for its own existence and not become the tool of politics it must return to the voice of the individual, for literature is primarily derived from the feelings of the individual and is the result of feelings."

"Controversies about literary trends or a writer's political inclinations were serious afflictions that tormented literature during the past century."

"Once literature is contrived as the hymn of the nation, the flag of the race, the mouthpiece of a political party or the voice of a class or a group, it can be employed as a mighty and all-engulfing tool of propaganda. However, such literature loses what is inherent in literature, ceases to be literature, and becomes a substitute for power and profit."

It is a fact that a writer like Xingjian is only marginally known in Hindi though not altogether unknown — this in spite of his winning the Nobel Prize. And to this category belongs the name of Hungarian writer Imre Kertesz at the source of whose creativity are those hair-raising atrocities committed in the concentration camps like

Auschwitz that he had personally experienced as an inmate. If Gao Xingjian was being distanced by the communists because of ideological differences, Kertesz was paying the price for being a Jew. But the work of neither of them is altogether limited to the terrible life experiences they had to undergo. On the contrary, treating these experiences as mere manifestations of the basic human nature, they rise beyond the cesspits of those experiences and become precious documentations of art and literature in the form of *Fateless* and *Soul Mountain*. Every writer selected here displays in his writings faith and a positive attitude towards life in the middle of conditions of wretchedness and darkness.

While painting the canvas of the writer's creativity, thought and artistic uniqueness on the basis of their Nobel lectures, Vijay Sharma proceeds with the drive and enthusiasm of an eager guide. Through her thorough research and efforts she does address those aspects of the writer and his work that may generally be unknown to the common Hindi reader; but more importantly, going further, she presents to us the heart of the creative impulses in the writer and the innermost messages of his writing, drawing these out from details of his personal life. She also relates writers to one another, thus helping the reader understand them more deeply. For instance, she relates Naipaul's tendency to shy away from public speeches to what Proust said about a writer being the owner of two different personalities. In the same way, while speaking of Czeslaw Milosz, she

points out how there is similarity of thoughts between him and Giordano Bruno; while speaking of Singer, she points out how he and Oswald Spengler share the lifestyles of cultures; and speaking of Toni Morrison, she brings up Nat Turner and the first slave revolt in America led by him. These cross references add to the ease with which her purports could be comprehended.

In her analysis of the authors, Vijay Sharma speaks about what their early life was like, what the financial conditions at home were, how they began to write, what incidents and what books influenced them, and what their inspirations were. She gives us lots of minor but fascinating details related to the way creativity finds expression in each of them [for instance Gao Xingjian's way of drawing with ink, Gunter Grass's way of reading with fingers plugged into his ears, Singer's love for feeding pigeons], discusses the difficulties each experienced in getting their books published, what fame means to each of them, the unique shades of each writer's language, the roles and limitations of literature in our times when the market and consumerism dominate the world and so on. These discussions are among the rich aspects of Vijay Sharma's work, reflecting her commitment to her work.

At a time when systems are being globalised and along with that a new world is emerging as a powerful reality in which all aspects of life on the planet are becoming more and more complex, it is hoped that this rich book that gives us

deep insight into the life and works of Nobel Prize winning writers will energize writers in novel ways and stimulate readers with hope.

The Book Reviewed : Apni Dharti, Apna Akash
Author : Ms. Vijay Sharma
Published By : Samvad Prakashan
Price : ...

Oma sharma, born 1963, has published three collections of short stories. Besides he has also translated stegan Zweig's book 'The World of Yesterday' in Hindi. He has also translated many other classic works. He received Vijay Verma Katha Summan in 2006 for his creative writing. He resides in Mumbai.

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