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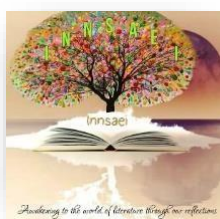
INNSÆI

And

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VISION

An honest voice having the vision to provide a vibrant literary culture with creative writers, artists, translators, and researchers to promote peace and humanity in society.

MISSION

1. To provide a vibrant literary culture among creative writers, artists translators, and researchers.
2. To encourage young writers, artists, translators, and researchers in society.
3. To initiate the promotion of peace and humanity in society.
4. To provide an ambience among the literary communities to work together for a common cause.
5. To provide a platform for the deep inner expression of suppressed thoughts.
6. To encourage hidden voices from the grass-root contributors giving them an opportunity to express human values.
7. To promote translation as a medium of exchange of cultures around the globe

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Founder's Voice

Founder's Voice

Dear Readers and contributors....

Greetings... !!!!

Poetry provides a unique avenue for individuals to express complex emotions, thoughts, and experiences that might be challenging to convey through conventional language. It allows for the exploration of both personal and universal feelings, creating a powerful emotional connection between the writer and the reader.

Poetry is an art form that combines language, rhythm, sound, and imagery to create a multi-dimensional experience. It challenges writers to distil their ideas into precise and evocative language, resulting in beautifully crafted verses that can resonate on multiple levels. Reading and writing poetry encourages contemplation and introspection. Poems often delve into deep philosophical, moral, and existential questions, prompting readers to consider their own beliefs and experiences in new and thought-provoking ways.

Throughout history, poetry has been a vehicle for preserving cultural heritage, traditions, and stories. Poetry has the power to evoke empathy by allowing readers to step into the shoes of others and experience their emotions, perspectives, and struggles. This empathy-building aspect of poetry contributes to greater understanding and tolerance among diverse groups of people. Poetry can be a source of inspiration and motivation, providing readers with a sense of hope, resilience, and determination. Many poems offer encouragement during challenging times and inspire individuals to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

Poetry celebrates the nuances and beauty of language. It encourages readers to pay attention to the rhythm, sound, and aesthetics of words, fostering a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of linguistic expression. Poetry transcends language barriers, cultural differences, and historical contexts. It speaks to universal themes and emotions that resonate with people from diverse backgrounds, promoting a sense of shared humanity.

In essence, poetry enriches our lives by offering a means to communicate the depths of human experience, provoke thought, and connect with others on an emotional and intellectual level. It continues to play a vital role in shaping culture, fostering empathy, and inspiring change. It is therefore necessary for institutions to organise poetry conclaves.

There is no doubt that International Poetry Day serves as a global platform for poets, writers, and enthusiasts to come together in celebration of the written word. It is a reminder

that no matter our differences, we share a common human experience that can be beautifully expressed through poetry. This day encourages us to explore the diverse forms, themes, and styles that poetry encompasses, revealing the depth of emotions and thoughts that connect us all. In a world sometimes divided by language barriers and cultural distinctions, poetry acts as a bridge, allowing us to empathize with each other's stories, struggles, and joys. It encourages empathy and broadens our perspectives, reminding us of our shared humanity. Through poetry, we find solace, inspiration, and a means to articulate the ineffable.

Team INNSÆI Journal worked together to celebrate the upcoming International Poetry Day by organising the wonderful **INNSÆI INTERNATIONAL POETRY CONCLAVE (IIPC'23) PUNE, 2023** in collaboration with Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar College, Aundh, Pune and Arts and Commerce College, Kasegaon, Maharashtra (INDIA) on **10th and 11th** February 2023. The conclave was inaugurated at the hands of Eminent Poet and Essayist Dr Nurul Hoque, from Bangladesh. Renowned poets like Dr R. S. Bhaskar, (Sahitya Akademi Awardee), Molly Joseph, (Yunnan Gold Medal, China.), Raj Babu Gandham (Hyderabad), Dr Ranjana Sharan Sinha (Nagpur), Rishikesh Singh (U. K.) Nandini Mitra and Debdoot Mukharjee from West Bengal, Orbindu Ganga (Kerala), Sushmindarjeet Kaur (Punjab) and Achingliu Kamei graced the occasion with other eminent scholars like - Dr Seema Jain from Punjab and Dr Shridhar Gokhale from Maharashtra.

The Plenary Sessions discussed the topic **“Poetry: The Only Hope”**. In the daylong event, there was session of Book Release Program in which Four Books were released. In the Paper-Presentation session, chaired by Dr Rishikesh Singh, few research papers were presented. Two of them are included in this Issue.

The Editorial Board of INNSÆI Journal decided to immortalize the event with this Poetry Issue. Because of certain issues, we couldn't realize the attempt earlier.

We express our sincere thanks to everyone who joined hands to make the event fruitful. The lines by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore are appropriate regarding Poetry and Its Role in human life. The lines inspire the writers to innumerable possibilities of meaning. A Nature poem, symbolically speaks of the role of a poet to create joy in his surroundings.

Let's read it

Paper Boats by Rabindranath Tagore

Day by day I float my paper boats one by one down the running stream.

In big black letters I write my name on them and the name of

the village where I live.

I hope that someone in some strange land will find them and
know who I am.

I load my little boats with shiuli flower from our garden, and
hope that these blooms of the dawn will be carried safely to land
in the night.

I launch my paper boats and look up into the sky and see the
little clouds setting thee white bulging sails.

I know not what playmate of mine in the sky sends them down
the air to race with my boats!

When night comes, I bury my face in my arms and dream that my
paper boats float on and on under the midnight stars.

The fairies of sleep are sailing in them, and the lading ins
their baskets full of dreams.

With the hope to continue the Literary Journey, so, see you again...

Yours sincerely,

Tejaswini Patil, Ph. D.

Founding Director

Aditi Barve

Director of Content and

Director of Lit Fest & Conference

INNSÆI Journal,

International Journal of Creative Literature, Art,

Translation and Research for Peace and Humanity

Featured Writer



Nurul Hoque, Bangladesh

Nurul Hoque is predominantly a poet and time-conscious rhymers, novelist and editor. His acquaintance with literature is quite wide. He is skilled at composing poems, rhymes, stories and songs. He has been working as a writer for almost three decades. He is being praised globally for his tireless work. He was elected World Laureate in Literature in 2018 by the International Organization World Nation Writers Union, Kazakhstan www.wnwu.org. Now he is an Executive Director of Munir Mezyed Foundation for Arts and Culture, Romania. He was the Editor of Odyssey International Anthology of World Poets 2020 and Chief Coordinator of Odyssey International (Head quarter in Romania).

Poet Nurul Hoque was born on 08 March, 1965 in the District of Comilla (Village Porikot, Gunabati) of former Tripura, Bangladesh.

His father, Latu Mia was not only a down-to-earth person but also a rural social worker. His mother Mrs. Ambiya Khatun who closely observed by passing more than 100 years, lived a very

modest life as a house wife. Recently she left this mundane world. They are the fountain of his creativity.

Nurul Hoque has written several books among which twenty-five are well known in his mother tongue, Bengali. He has been engaged in creative writings for more than 30 years. Nowadays poetry has been much developed and Nurul Hoque's poetry is like a whiff of fresh air and it creates mind-blowing aura of its own on a variety of themes, chiefly on peace, nature, love as well as womanhood and divinity. His poetry is marked for the elegance of beauty and the intimacy of appeal. His writings focus on the importance of English for a multi-lingual world society and for the inter-cultural communication among nations; the need for value-based education for the youth in the context of globalization; fostering peace, fellow-feeling, awareness of ecology, love for nature.

Nurul studied up to fifth class in a government primary school of his village. He then passed the Higher Secondary Examination with distinction from Gunabati High School. He did Diploma in Engineering Mechanical and Bachelor's Degree in Engineering (AMIE) from Swedish Bangladesh Institute of Technology, Kaptai, Bangladesh.

Poet Nurul Hoque's educational life was full of diversity. He was sometimes a student, sometimes a ration shop worker and sometimes a manager. He ended his education by struggling. Shortly after being a Diploma Engineer, he joined Vrinel Corporation, an international construction company registered in the United States, as an Assistant Engineer in the Karnafuli Hydroelectric Unit 3 construction project. At that time, Nurul had the honour of being Mr. Kim's assistant, the number three ranking Engineer of the world.

In 1980 after leaving the job, Nurul became an unemployed. At that time he travelled all over his country, Bangladesh. He later served as a Chartered Engineer and Project Director of many important projects including Bakhrabad Gas Pipeline Project, Chittagong Urea Fertilizer, Feni River Closure Dam, Bangladesh Railway Optical Fiber Telecom Project with world largest construction company like GEC UK, Shimuzu Construction company Japan, Taisai Construction company Japan, Toyo Engineering Japan, NKK Japan Italmontagi Pvt Ltd Singapore etc.

Mr. Nurul Hoque has been writing since childhood. His literary practice did not stop even in the midst of adversity in his personal life. Besides in the first class daily, monthly, fortnightly and weekly of Bangladesh, he is regularly practicing literature in various International Poetry

Sites and Bangladesh Television. The legendary poet Al Mahmud of Bangladesh opines that Nurul Hoque has been practicing poetry tirelessly for quite some years. His writing is full of spontaneity and it reflects time, love, nature, reality and of course global peace & harmony.

Mr. Nurul with his creation is like a banyan tree rooted in the fertile soil watered by the rivers and spreading fresh air of peace, love, humanity and brotherhood globally. His English poetry has already attracted the readers world-wide. Mr. Nurul Hoque is a Bangladeshi citizen by birth but he is a global citizen in mind & heart and creation & expression. He is a soft and humble person as well as a great lover of the universe. His poetry has been translated in many languages i.e. Romanian, Taiwanese, Uzbek, Japanese, Spanish and Chinese.

He is an official member of World Nations Writers' Union (Headquarters in Kazakhstan) which conferred upon his International Diploma, 'TEMIRQAZYQ- the Best Poet-Writer of the World, 2018 (www.wnwu.org).

Poet Nurul Hoque has gained so many awards for his special contribution to literature which are as follows: -

World Laureate in Literature in the year 2018 from World Nations Writer Union., Kazakhstan for his lifetime Achievements.

Odyssey International Literary Award, Romania, Kafla International literary Award India, and Yasser Arafat

International Peace Award 2019, Palestine is the most enriched achievement in his career.

He is the Editor of monthly periodicals, Amader Buriganga, which is published from Dhaka almost regularly and he is the Founder Chairman of Buriganga Foundation Bangladesh. Nurul wrote many books both in Bengali and English. Some of them are remarkable.

His books in Bengali are -

Jora Patar Shoko Gatha (Poems)

Nishither Podaboli(Poems)

Doly Mon Shonkay (Poems)

Aloukik Ondhokar(Poems)

Jol pori Nil pori (Rhymes)

Kanday Porbot Kanday Bristy (poems)

Chinnovinno Pongthimala (Poems)

Sonnet Gucca (Poems)

Amakey Khondito Kore (Poems)
Ek Muthu Chaya (Poems)
Chander Chokey Jol (Rhymes)
Vhorer Choke Putche Pul (Rhymes)
Dughobati Joler Nodi (Poems)
Nirbachito 100 Kobita (Poems)
Barae Uthi (Poems)
Bristly Vejaa Batasera (poem)
Pahari Konnar Upakhan (Novel)
Ghumer Prithibi Jurey Rath (Poem)
Bristi Bheja Batashera (Poem)
A Desh Amar Lal Sobuje Anka (Rhymes)

His English Poetry books:

Pain of Innocence
What Do You Need
The Images of Reflected Lines
Edited International Anthology
Odyssey International Anthology of World Poets 2020

My Poetic Thoughts

Nurul Hoque, Bangladesh

Bi-lingual Poet, Novelist and Chairman, Editor, Amader Buriganga, Dhaka

Founder, Chairman of Buriganga Foundation Bangladesh

Once, while sharing my perception about poetry I read a short article at a literary event. In that program, I said that poetry is a kind of soliloquy, a kind of intimate utterance, a kind of self-dialogue. When a poet gives expression to his thoughts that echoes through his entire being, through all his bones and marrows. The poet's flesh and blood erode like a river, and gradually gets entwined in the mystical charm of the supreme being, and in a state of ignorance discovers from the unimaginable abyss the soul of his poem, the resounding echo of poetry forever. In the language and words of poetry, the sound of the breath has to be embedded with which world's love and desire, prayers and smell of the wild interweave. It seemed to me then that like the sound of incredible flight of unimaginable birds in myriad dreams poetry is also a silence.

I thought I knew poetry. I can write down the definition of poetry easily. After all these days I now realize that I have never fully understood poetry, just as I have never been able to touch a shadow; This is just like that.

Relevantly I can say, did Rabindranath know how he was writing, how he was singing. Did Shakespeare or Ferdowsi or Milton know that the lines they were writing in solitude will one day be marked as eternal immortal poetry; that the thirsty readers of all ages would love their poems? Did they know that they were endowed with unimaginable sense of technique and brilliance to immortalize poetry or were they themselves like nature, from which all immortal sounds and music were born through the ages?

If someone asks me, how do I write? So, what will be my answer? Poets do not have answers to these questions? I believe such questions do not have any meaning nor any need. And needless to say, there is no real answer.

Does a poet discover everything from darkness. Who also controls the poet's emotion, whose dreamy utterances are called poetry. Then? Why do we want to drag a poet into a limited circle, between numerous questions and the responsibility of his answer, between commitments. Some rightly ask, why a poet should be above all touch. They are also a part of this society. To survive they also need all the facilities and comforts that everyone else aspires for. A poet does not survive by craving the wind, nor envelops himself in the close embrace of the wind. He is not outside the society. So, rule and discipline should be equally necessary for

them. Yet more distinctly, it is not fair to judge a true poet in the court of the words above uttered.

So, according to me a person who composes poetry lives in a trance and it is considered that he who lives in such a circle, cannot do any injustice or evil deeds. But it has been seen that many revered poets have done works which were not accepted by the society. In the societal norms which is unacceptable, that is, the existence of the poet whenever he enters into his worldly debt from his grave, is marked as fallen by the society, by the country. So, the person who possesses the existence of a poet may not be revered and worshiped at all times in my opinion. In almost all the countries of the world, including our country, a poet is still labelled as nefarious when it comes to love and women. I think that a poet's commitment to the core that makes him a poet, rest all are secondary. But let's skip the topic for now. To discuss this complex context requires a long time and a long range. And many will not agree with me in this discussion, not even many poets. So, I am bypassing this complicated issue for now.

For whom a poet composes his poem? At whose command? If I have to answer this question, I can only say, I really don't know. I don't even know how to write poetry, and for whom I should write. All I know is that I have to write, and I am writing. Rabindranath said, 'I don't know for whom I sing?'

I think he is the true poet who never wants to know or does not know the purpose or need of his poetry? I never want to compare myself with or stand alongside an honest and noble poet. Please don't misunderstand me. I want to express only that truth whose imperishable thread binds a true poet all the time. I know why a real poet seems very lonely, very helpless. No one understands a poet's loneliness. The poet is as lonely as the sea, the space, the constellation, the river, the night or the woman's body, the valleys of the earth, the twilight, or the trees. Actually, I wanted to say that a person who is a poet is always immersed in that unthinkable imperishable whirl. He is always floating and rotating like a piece of grass in the great vortex of the great flood. A companionless aimless drifter trapped in the cycle of emotions. Where he is disintegrating every moment, breaking into a deep cry continuously, in an endless echo of sound.

I am just an ordinary human being. I am not a sage. I compare eternity with a moment in my poetry, billions of eternities are just tiny moments to a poet. Does a poet or novelist or dramatist or prose writer need to be a sage? Does he have any chance in this 21st century. Maybe there is, or maybe not. However, I strongly believe that for all honest and noble poetry in the world, some kind of spiritual achievement is necessary. Because a poet's mundane

existence is intertwined with everything else. Even cosmic and spiritual existence. In the beginning I have said that poetry is a kind of intimate expression, not only in the worldly sense, but I have accepted it as universal in the spiritual sense as well. All these are in an inseparable position with all my mundane and metaphysical ideas and meditations. This accepted being of mine is engaged in a continuous worship. And I live with the outcry of that worship, my nature, the sky, the universe, my grains, the appearance of the green leaves, the sound of the falling leaves, the extended sun and the incessant rain. All my words, all my emotions, all my patience, all my cries are my poems. My world lives in the poetry created by me holding my joy and pain.

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Poetry by Nurul Hoque, Bangladesh

1.

Forgive Us Lord

Forgive us, O Lord.

We are all ungrateful beings.

Constantly cheating on ourselves

And gradually invited our own destruction

And sinking in the dark abyss.

The air that you have borne for our wellbeing,

Have been ruthlessly contaminated by us

To strike a balance in the ecology

The mountains that you have created,

Have been bulldozed for no specific reason

For enjoyment and lust, we waned

The beautiful hearts of animals and birds

Burnt the forest's, the lungs of our planet

We have forgotten today

The history of our birth

Not soil

A drop of filthy water's lore

Liquid foamed with hatred

To suppress our unethical moves

You did not send any forces from the sky

Corona – an organism

Very petty and invisible lifeless virus

Before its arrogance nosedived

Our nuclear vanity

The submarines stopped down in shame

On the faces of our world leaders

Those creases of anxiety

Are no longer concealed...

Today there is no end to our regrets

We have surrendered ourselves in the vastness of your grace

We have cocooned ourselves in our soul's existence

Forgive us oh Lord.

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2.

You Will Come Again

From the parched bosom of
Kaliganga
Came flying some grains of hot sand
I am waiting there near the Beutha shore
Fluttering fragrant handkerchief of love
You will come again
Trampling the fire of Chaitra
To poetry.
Towards mischief of poetry holding to subtle beauty
Towards life.
Finally
You came holding the rim of silence
Wet in emotion
Shedding belligerence towards poetry
For years fathomless
Neither of us are poetry
But every life is embellished in poetry
Your advent in this world
Erases sin, hardship, filth and drought.

3.

Mahbuba, Let's Go Somewhere Else

There is no sign of Corona wounds to dry up
Insecurity looms around the world
Let's travel to another earth
To get rid of this terrible virus.
This world is now unworthy of living
No one understands the hymn of peace
Cool, soothing breeze no longer blows in this world.
That's why My beloved,
Let's go somewhere else
Some other corner
Some other planet
Let's fly to an unknown sky.
Virus... virus-game
Filthy politics in the wrap of lockdown
People are now toys in the hands of autarch few.
Beloved!
Why to delay anymore.
Last train of avidity awaits us
It didn't leave the platform yet
Let's board the train now.

4.

A Rally of Lugubrious Animal

Some birds are not seen anymore
No previous tale of disappearance recorded yet
Though several young girls have gone missing
but this is probably for the first time
that a favourite bird has disappeared
From the hills.

There was a miking
with great emotion
all around in the absence of the beloved birds,
the people of lugubrious mountain,
Bowed their heads in sorrow
all over the Larma Square,
mourning processions, meeting and so on!
But never did the birds return.
In mourning,
Tears of wild animals showered like rain on the hills
From one end of the mountain
to the other,
the clouds hovered on all the inaccessible areas,
but the birds could not be seen anywhere.

Eventually, from the stomach of some of the bird-hunters
Came out indistinct cries of the dead birds.
In this fertile green country,
It is tough to perceive
why people are so ruthless.

5.

She Is My Mother

What a gift from God, she is my mother
And my mother who never grows old
She cherishes me for all the moments
By moulded her heart as precious gold

She is my garden of multiple colours
I looked her eyes bright as shining rock
She is really a mother of wonderland
And I am always her little Nurul Hoque

She is a mother of humanity and peace
She is a symbol of goodness and care
I can dedicate my soul for her happiness
She is my first love is seemed quite fare

I could sacrifice all in hot or move in rain
If she stays with me, I will never feel pain

Poetry



Sanket Mhatre, Mumbai, India

THE FESTIVALS OF MIND

We roister when a word bursts into a million atoms
Each atom carrying the ink of a thousand suns
from one infinity to the next through blood streams
We gyrate when we find the skin of our pages
sticking to the history of our conscious
We revel secretly when the universe whispers a dark truth
Like a firecracker that erupts in our bones
For hours, we keep tying and untying tributaries of time
disentangling one soul from the other
until we hold the shape-shifting truth in our alphabets
and tie them together with the uneven hooks
of kaanas and mastras, rhasvas and dirghas
in a string of verses that light up against the evening sky
Their blinking pattern a language of the unspoken
We gambol on discovering the lost sheets of an age
and we raise a toast to an empty labyrinth of chairs
when a poem gets published, unexpectedly
An accidental child
a rocket that dies a fragmented death
by morphing into countless crackers that sends ripples
through a Prussian vault
we celebrate the festivals of our mind
unknown to any calendar
uncharted by any astrologer, yet.



Molly Joseph

SEEKING THE MUSE...

Seeking the muse
the blue bird
to fly over
to peck at
the hard
exterior
of the inane
mundane
I sit, wait...
a nut
too hard
to break...
empty morns
where life
has rushed out
after frenzied
dressing up
getting ready
for office,
the quick devouring
of breakfast...
the kids
gulping down
an unwilling feed
noisy snack box
filling ...
rushing of
little feet
pushing on
to the school bus...
Hah!

morning drama
over!
muse!
time for
you and me...
talk to me
of my fond images
over the
fleeting time...
how the
green slopes
allowed, the
care free cattle
to graze
in abandon...
how waves
swished over
the mossy, rocky
sea shores
kissing
whispering
sweet nothings...
how the lazy
breeze
lingered
around the
reed in water
wooing,
her head
nodding,
bending
in love
demure

so sweet...
yes, morns
and eves
repeat
life sprouting
sprinting
sobering down
the cycle
of repeats...
only the traces
fading traces
bespeak
the stories
shrouded
in dust
told, untold...
Oneness...
the whole
world
an
umbrella...
we all
huddle beneath...
gusts of
wind
may
shake
send
shivers
through
our spine...
be it
a war,

pandemic
break up
of relations
illness,
death,
the worst
isolations,
afflictions
of mind
love denied...
under the
same umbrella
we are
one!
no walls
deciding
race, caste
divisions,
based on
ideology,
domination.
nationality,
how
skin deep
are our
discriminations...
we the
human race
with blood
and flesh
the same,
pain and pleasure
the same...

we speak
and sing
in different
langue
hail from
locales
so different...
but can't we
discern
the symphony
that runs
through all?
how a piece
of music
from a langue
unfamiliar
can hold us
captive...
a poem
from a face,
voice from
shores so
different
resonates
with a vibe
different...
hah!
blessed are
we
to huddle
under
a common
umbrella

to share
our
togetherness,
let divisions
melt in

golden glow...
let us sing
and dance
making, marking
the moments
of our
sojourn here...

INNSÆI Journal March 23



Tahera Mannan

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THE EPIPHANY IN THE NIGHT

The Epiphany in the Night

Oh, terrible night

You've brought with you such dark horrors

of one that's passed me by,

and now roams around the corridors

of my mind in sleep

and even when I'm awake

Oh, terrible night

How can I forget when her name was on the door plaque?

Oh, horrible night

You've taught me how to leave my love

and shed real tears on her passing away

Though whenever I see the dove

that silently coos thru the night

I know she is there

Oh, horrible night

How can I not need her when I miss her care?

Oh, stormy night

You've brought such sweet despair

that I can't regret the starry sky

The worst thing I can't compare

getting over her not being there

I can feel it in my mind

Oh, stormy night

How can I not love her guiding hand?

Oh, quiet night

I can feel her in my heart

Her smiling face gentle and serene

getting ready to depart
I'm afraid she won't be mine,
as I'm not hers anymore
Oh, quiet night
How do I control these musings crowding evermore?

Oh, humble night
You've made me realise her worth,
her true place beside Him
blooming under his divine mirth
She is at rest and happy,
my very own guiding star
Oh, humble night
Do you think it's she shining that far?

Dedicated to the memory of my Grandmother



Brinda Bala Srinivas

CHANGE

The puzzled expression on your face,
On the faces I see around me,
Indicates that I have changed.
It was only till yesterday
I talked of old times;
I bobbed up and down
Like a buoy in the waves
of a nostalgic past.
(We all, as a matter of fact,
Take refuge in our 'good old days '
When time permits...)
I rarely came up
To the surface of the ocean
to smell the humid brightness.
Our past moments are kings and monarchs in slumber.
When up and about,
they drag us into their citadels,
Whose windows open to faraway lands.
I had been a dreamer; an escapist!
Not any more...
Now, though I take regular flights
To the shores where the rulers sleep,
I come back to the humid brightness
And etch my memories in letters of Gold.
Now you can call me a Poet!

.....



Unmesh Mohitkar

HANDS OF THE GIVER

Vinda Karandikar, the famous Marathi language poet said

The giver should keep on giving

The taker should keep on taking

And one day the taker should take the giver's hands

I thought this was a joke on the giver

I read the poem again, It means to keep on the cycle of giving alive

The taker should take the hands of the giver and keep on giving

Sometimes I think, what has the world given to me?

I don't own anything to anybody

It's my life!

But, It's not true

You are alive on the freebie

The air, the water, the land

Even your birth is free, death is free

Your loved ones are free

How can you say that, I don't own anything to anybody

Let's not be scared that what you give will not be received with the respect you deserve

Just imagine the warmth you feel when you help someone

Just imagine the fresh air you breathe when you help someone

Yes, your help will be misused, you will be manipulated

But why do you care?

You are living for smiling

Your smile, your happiness is important

And the guaranteed way of getting it is to bring a smile to abandoned faces, blank faces

Faces refusing to give up

Remember, life is a flowing water

Today you are safe at the banks

Tomorrow you are struggling to stay afloat

At times you will need a giver

Who gives you a hand

To bring you back to the land

This hand keeps on changing

Sometime known

Sometimes anonymous

But the hand keeps on giving

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Shivkumar S. Agrawal

TAKE ME TO THE WORLD WHERE . . .

Take me to the world where I meet my schoolmates
And chat with them on the topics, old
Lord, take me to the world where I can forget myself
And love for my foe, at no loss, is told.
Lord, take me to the world where no wars no battles
Love itself is liked and loved by but all
Where all is maintained by thought and goodness
And head is ready to receive heart's call.
Take me to the world where man questions his God
And asks his race to smile from within
And has courage to say "No" to his dear-most ones
When, it all comes to the human being.
Father, hold my finger and show the world where all
Men and women but walk their word.
Take me to heaven or to the hell, but where, their
Cord is not defused with their Lord.



Dr Ranjana Sharan Sinha

INNSÆI Journal

MADNESS OF MATERIALISM

Nature's worst enemy for selfish ends,
Man descends into material madness
With gold fever and inner discontent:
The mania is quite difficult to prevent.

The heaving roses, the weeping willow,
Scentless breaths mid feathers yellow--
All disclose the stark materialism
Causing distortion in man's prism.

Alluring and psychedelic mirages of life--
With hunger for power, they remain rife,
We're restless and wanting selves
Imprisoned in our hollow delves.

Obsession with wealth and money
In the real sense can't make us happy:
The more we value things materialistic
The less we are humane and empathetic.

Ego- inflating lust for possession
Ultimately becomes a curse Midasian
Depriving you of friends and family--
Oh, why the greed for money... money?

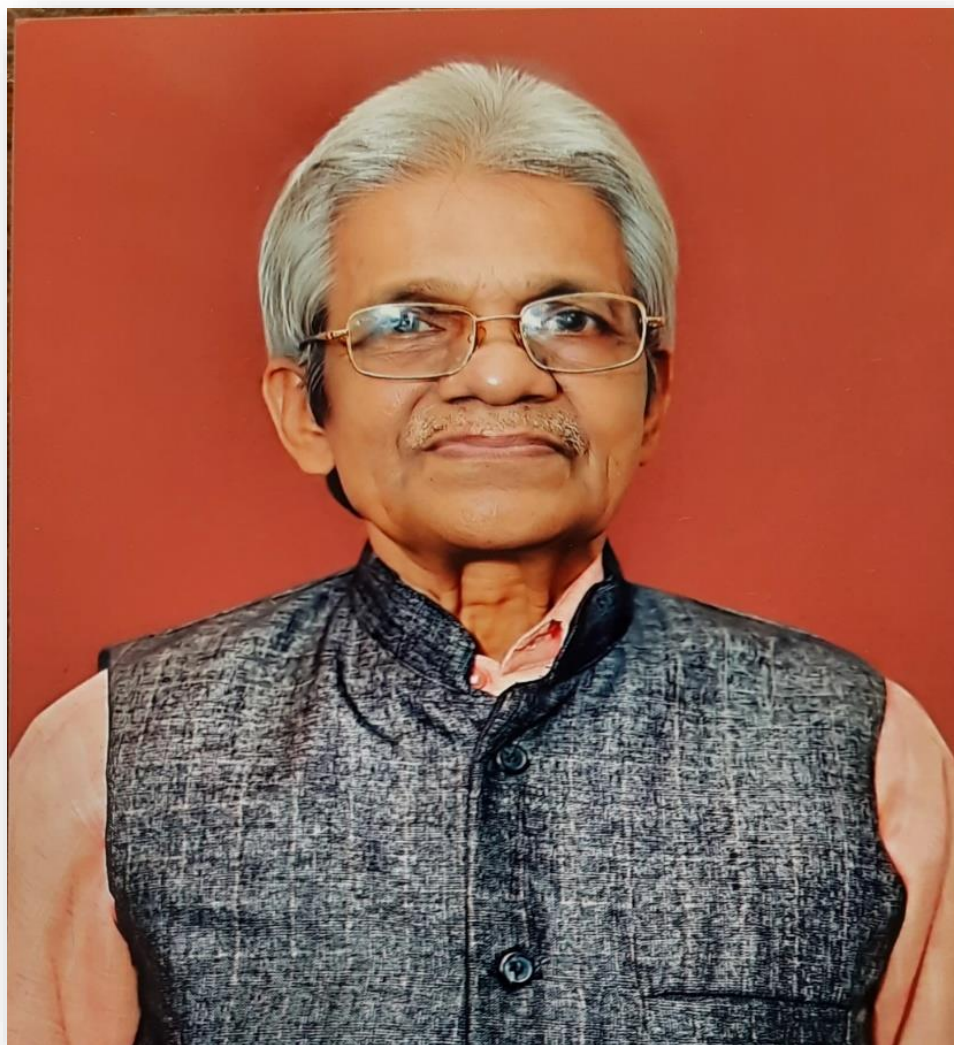
The desire for material accumulation
Manifests itself in bankruptcy of emotion,
The heart cries for concern and love
But the feelings always fly from the cove!

We can't drink sea water when thirsty,

Midas couldn't eat gold when hungry,
From euphoria to despair the story goes,
Rise and fall-- from gain to great loss!

The boundless empire of Alexander
The consolidated power of Caesar
Acquired on earth stayed on earth!
But for thousands of years the worth
Has lasted creating a big wonder,
Prompting us to pause and ponder!

INNSÆI



Dr R.S.Bhaskar

A HEAP OF GOLD

(Bhaangra Raas Original in Konkani Translated into English by R.S.Srinivas)

Yesterday night
In the dream I had,
While ploughing the land
I got a heap of gold
At first
I was wonder-struck
Afterwards
I was filled with joy
Since to ponder over
There was no time,
With utmost speed
I began to apportion
Since I had in advance
Prayed to the Almighty,
A handful of gold
I made an offering to God
To the priest in the temple
Who used to bless me sincerely
I placed in the platter
A small piece
For my daughter, tomorrow
To give on her wedding's occasion
Sufficient quantity of gold
I put aside in the box
To Shetty the social worker
Who regularly gives gruel
To the poor without fail
I gave a big piece
Small pieces
I gave to each of my relatives

And small pieces I distributed
Among the neighbours
The remaining days of my life
For me to survive
The remaining gold
I stashed away

2

At this moment
The alarm in the clock sounded
From the deep sleep
I woke-up suddenly

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Sonia Pateker Gaonkar

HEY KRISHNA**Be With Me Forever**

My heart filled with love for you
A feeling I will never lose
You feel my life with sweetness too,
I know that I can't ever choose you

Let's stay together and never a part
You and I were made for each other's heart
So don't ever let go
Forever with me let it show

Your love is like a burning flame
AS I cry out your sweet name
I dream of us together
Now forever and ever

Let's stay together and never a part
You and I were made for each other's heart

If you Love me the way I do
That would be good enough for two
We'll be together till the end of time
Just let me be yours, you'll be mine

Let's stay together and never a part
You and I were made for each other's heart
So don't ever let go
Forever with me let it show
Hare Krishna



Dr Achingliu Kamei

SOME THINGS YOU FORGET. OTHER THINGS YOU NEVER DO.

Some things you forget. Other things you never do.

The perpetrator rearranged his lies and called it truth,

Honoured by a medal, no new revelations in the modus operandi

Each member of his family bragging his bravery and courage

He even believed his lies. The spineless 'Major.'

His wife, in her soul, knew otherwise.

If a house was burnt down, it was gone, but the place stayed,

If a people were put through great injustice,

It remained in their memories, and also passed on to the next generation

And out there in the world, the air carries it

If a person was ravaged, there was no healing-wholly

Some things you forget. Other things you never do.

The broken woman did not know how to heal or mend

Like a wrung and tightened cloth, Spring ended

Emotions unnavigable waters, twisting, turning, and screaming

Space stares-early winter, frost stayed- everything else died

Emotionless being, pain, anger, raging inside

A dry thing and spreading thing that makes everything cracks

Loneliness and sorrow roam and spread

It is alive. It won't fade or die. A cell of consciousness multiplies

Circles and circles of sorrow, ever-widening rings

More yesterday than a tomorrow.

The feet of people walking home. Wandering and walking.

Shooting star

Brightens the dark sky

Fireflies dance.

Some things you forget. Other things you never do.

Waiting for a tomorrow, a tomorrow, the heat of life burning low, sorrow so profound

The word itself had no meaning but from the centre of desperate terrain

Her people each create healing nets, weaving from a gossamer thread

A patchwork of relationships, the pieces they gathered back

Slowly reign in the night and process, there are more tomorrows than yesterday.
Shed tears, for the deaths of tiny creatures, for broken branches
For houses and huts battered by the guns, for women raped and killed by the army
For toddlers raped, left behind, who will never know the joy of birthing
For the men tortured, maimed, and killed in the name of maintaining law and order
Shedding the burdensome past, dead cells fall away, growing wings again to fly beyond
Write and sing to re-memory, to right the wrong
Grow your hearts, increase your love, the beating heartbeat beat for the people.
Some things you forget. Other things you never do.

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Maitreyee Joshi

THE SOUL OF AN INDIAN 1 - A NEW SERIES

They all say to each other,
"Til Gul Ghya, Gode Bola"
There's a mantra for everything in India;
A slogan for every festival,
And we have faith in our mantras,
Even more than ourselves.
As if by saying, it will happen,
And sweetness generated.
A positive vibe, as the Indian youth perceives;
He has been explained, by the wise elders
He may say, "Til Gul ghya, gode Bola."
To his heart's content,
But not eat that much, you see,
The elders are suffering the consequences;
Then someone, shares some new research
Of calcium in sesame seeds; every cultural norm
Is passed through the test of American research
That's his licence to follow his heart, finally.
He is discouraged from flying kites too,
For now theories of birds being hurt,
By the sharp kite threads have arrived.
Maybe its test of research is still pending.
The elders, have already parted,
With heavy heart, their own boyhood joys
So, the young Indian carries it dutifully,
To his generation, and also ahead.
It makes one feel like an evolved,
Elite Indian, a citizen of the world.
I too say it, "Til gul ghya gode bola"
In a matter of fact way,
Or say out of habit, which I maintain

For social convenience, or thinking,
Maybe it will attract new acquaintances
As if I need, or can deal with more than I have,
Or say, they would bring the sweetness
Lacking in my life.
Finally, I decide not to say it to those,
Who I blame for the bitterness,
I let life unfold, and its mysteries unravel,
Finding sweetness in its surprises,
And trying to make what's already sweet,
Sweeter, with the mix of sesame and jaggery
You know, I am used to the flavour in January.

**There is a custom in Maharashtra on the day of Makar Sankranti, which falls on 14 or 15 th January every year to distribute sweets made out of jaggery and sesame and say "Take the sweets from me and speak sweetly with me" It marks the beginning of Uttarayan, the winter solstice.*



Marina F. Martins

FINDING REST

Why do I pine,
For what cannot be mine?
Things that seem,
Like a distant dream.
I asked my Maker,
“Why do you slumber?
Why does your Providence,
Ordain my misery.”
My spirit sullen,
Despairing life,
Lo! Through the darkness,
I see a dim light.
I was never abandoned,
He walked with me.
Brought me to Lady Wisdom,
Who gave me clarity.
In time I found
My will to be fractured;
Borne down by
The burden of my existence.
He took away my yoke,
And asked for my pain;
He asked for the desires,
I had pursued in vain.
He took upon himself,
My malady and disease,
In peace I let go,
I had naught else to give.
Now I repose in tranquillity,
Under the sycamore tree;
He sits beside me,

While I soundly sleep.
All along, I had what I needed
If only His sweet voice I had heeded
He is my comfort, my Bread and Water
He is my rest, my heart is His altar.

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Ms. Ratika Chandrakant Rane

INNSÆI Journal

A THING OF FRIENDSHIP

What binds us together is the bond of friendship,
Even though shaken badly by the hurdles,
Yet not torn the feeling of love.
The world may find delight
and the things may give pleasure.
But in the middle,
If the emptiness surrounds you
and you find yourself all alone,
My friend,
I promise to swallow all your pains,
and bring a sparkling smile on your face.
Because at the end,
It's only 'ME'
and it's only 'YOU'
my 'FRIEND'



Manju Viswabharathi

THE INK-BLUE FOREST

Flashes of blazing yellow at dawn
As the window opens; staccato shrieks
Spur an avalanche of thoughts,
A cacophony of deafening silences follows;
Electric blue scribbles and quirky doodles grow
Into a forest on the leaves of your book.

As the hinges creak, you turn the pages:
You, with your haggard morning face,
Fingers smeared in late night's ink,
See for sure

A momentary line, smouldering yellow,
setting the horizon ablaze
slashing the calm grey square
Into two asymmetric slices;
That's how words soar
from an ink-blue forest.
Now you hear your thoughts
Sung by a hundred voices,
Your poem being performed
in a morning sky of winged words.



Dr. Sudipta Mishra

A DEEP SECRET

On the walls of the golden sky
The Moon hangs like a lonely tree
Nobody except me longs to see
I wait for hours to watch the movie

Like a circus, the moon glides
Through the foggy, blue evenings
The ceaseless moon cruises along,
Like a pearl of the sea, it sails in my fantasy

The silvery crescent moon often winks at me
Sometimes, it surges like the ripple of the sea
Often, it fades away like the untamed waves,
In the live theatre, I'd only stare like a mad

I merge, emerge and marvel at the spatial wonder!
Nothing can quench my thirsty desires
It is a deep secret between the moon and me
Nobody can measure the depth of my eyes...



Runa Menezes

RAINBOW-BUTTERFLY

I love to peek into your world,
My Rainbow-Butterfly;
Your hues and charms and myriad moods
I cannot help, but spy.
You flit about from room to room
With a song and rhyme on your lips,
You've always got a mission or two
On your fancy, 'girly' trips.
You're talking to your reflection now
Believing it's someone else.
Oh! Look at that pout, that frown, that smile
Ah! TROUBLE! That's what it spells.
The elf on the window, the fairy in mid-air,
You're scheming with them again.
Rushing and dodging from bed to chair,
Now you come to me to complain!
Bows and badges and skirts in pink
Your kingdom constitutes.
And if he's lucky, your little bro
Is allowed to contribute.
Oh whirlwind, volcano, glistening dew-drop,
I watch you in your fuzzy-bed curled,
And wonder, when you're a little lady,
Will you let me into your world?



Raj Babu Gandham

QUEST

“ who am i

“where am i

what am i

why am i

who am i

.

my hands my feet

my body my mind

my thoughts my ideas

then who is this me

.

my wealth my position

my cars my food

my tours my games

still, i feel lacking

.

my girl my boy

my woman my mother

my father my god

yet, i feel empty

.

i pray i play

i chase i catch

i love i cry

why, i don't know

.

i eat i drink

i store i hoard

i spend i gamble

still, i am unhappy

.

why this life
when one to die
if not later, sometime after
can i escape my own acme

.

my own death
where i am moving
each day of my birth
i am running towards my own death

.

let me know let me teach
to be good to be true
nothing can change me
only i have the key

.

to open the door
of my own salvation
my thought my speech
and my deed, has to be true

.

what i think
what i say

what i do
should be the same

.

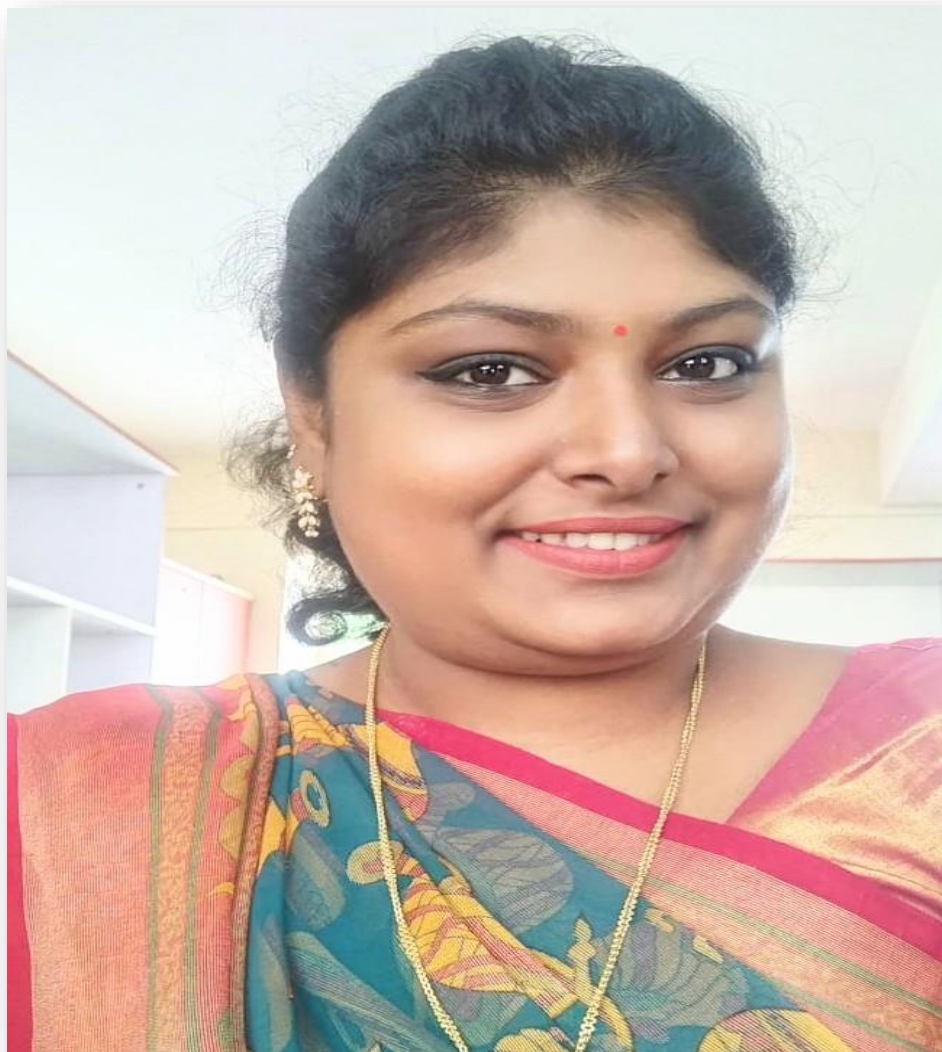
this is the oath
i am here to take
O my universe
O my mighty cosmos
~ yathi



Nitusmita Saikia

VOICELESS ...!

Behind the locked-up mouth,
Entrapped dirges prick our heart,
And there
A loud sigh in its tiptoes,
Breaks the silence of our eyes,
As we mourn for
our broken soul; wounded pride...!
Suffocated by your fancy lies,
Our voices lose its voice,
So, we do live with your illusive progress,
Under the surveillance of our malnourished existence,
We the downtrodden section of the society...!
Bound to walk we are,
On the path that you have laid upon our fortune
And there the world witness,
The death of our comrades
Who lie down like the dried bread or piece of loaf
On some dirty railway tracks ...!
Afraid to see dream for our future,
Tired and sad is our present,
Our sleep breaks in midnight
When your laughs haunt our happiness,
As if lightning bolt in our tears ...!



Dr Mrs. D. Pearline Priscilla

WHITEWATER

Towards the deep seas,
Wanders my eyes weary,
Ice cold through my bones,
I sat blank amidst the white skies...

"Sweet dreams" was just a mirage,
With every breath a battle,
A silver lining, so surreal
I gasped, running into whitewater.

"Dancing to the tunes of the world,"
We do lose a day more;
"A Perfect life" is a non-existent tour;
I sigh, lying on my back, on the ocean floor...

The Touch of the Supreme dawned!
With my eyes opened in Utter disbelief~
I Escaped to disappear, yet
I was rescued by the White Warrior!

Forward to the scented land;
Walking cheery eyed, I sprung;
A thousand days were One;
I felt like I owned the world.

Whitewater is now my door!
An Invisible Cassock I wear;
Fighting my fears, forever more;
I am the Father's child, so much Loved!



Debdoot Mukherjee

INNSÆI Journal

HER OCEAN EYES

She smiled at me in a time of turbulence,
When chaos reigned my realm of existence.
There was something coying in that smile,
I stayed where the smile glowed,
Revising the contours of her face.
An invisible hand drew me closer,
Closer to her moment of presence, emotions burning within.
Bursting forth glaciers, waves thrashing, boulders losing control...
Moving towards the pearl, in the prison of affection
Forgetting self, forgetting duty, forgetting the darkness within.
I remained there, through hours of change
Travelling across past, into my typical present
In search of hoary future, translucent.
Then there was she, in the depths of the depth
Where I have sunk, lost amidst the wild waves
In suspended animation, resting in her ocean eyes.



Dr Archana Pandit

DEDICATED TO ALL MOTHERS

Ask your mother?

What's the meaning of monotonous?

You have seen her...

Doing the same monotonous things,
Following the same monotonous routine,
Every passing minute, day, week and years,
But she rarely complains,
And you always ignore her,
Monotonous life,
Because you think you are busy,
In your hypothetical,
Creative Life,
Which is Creation of Hers
But she barely emphasizes,
Busy, submerged in her real,
Monotonous life,
You are bored at weekends,
With your monotonous routine,
Escaping to nature, pubs, wine and dine,
What about hers?
Give a second thought...
Isn't she bored like you?

The answer is...

She is doing the same monotonous things,
Over the years,
With sincere dedication,
Every time in a Creative manner,
Without Vocalisation,
To build your Beautiful Life...

If it has been otherwise,
You wouldn't have,
Regretted Your,
Monotonous life...

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Saisimran Hidayat Ghashi

LAST BREATH

I'm a Soldier.

My heart is beating for the land,

I fight for country, as I walk upon a sand

I remember tear and fear of my family,

I remember cheer and roar of my battalion.

Oh! Blood, it's like a pool of blood.

I am counting drops, every drop,

but it's increasing and spreading nonstop.

Breaths, coming out like dried ice,
and hammering ears this very big noise...

Noise of fires.

Yes... it's a war land.

Everywhere just pity-cry,

but still fighting no one is accepting to die...

Just one thing that ruined everything,

That is 'ruling'

Crores of lives have ruined,

Lakhs of buildings have collapsed.

Childhood of children is ruined by 'toe'

Dead bodies are everywhere, in the row.

But... still we are fighting for land.

Land of innocent people, land of love, land of heritage,

Then why 'someone' trying to make it 'a cage'...??

My question... unsolved. - It's last breath.

Research

INNSÆI Journal March 23



Dr Indrayani R. Jadhav- Kuduchkar

INNSÆI Journal

Sri Aurobindo's Panoramic and Profound Views on Poetry: A Reflection

Dr Indrayani R. Kuduchkar

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Maharashtra, India.

Abstract:

Literature has always been the source of knowledge and pleasure for human beings. Poetry, as a major form of literature, has embellished the literary scenario with beautiful jewels over the period. Its range from simple songs and lyrics to epic poetry is splendid and noteworthy. The structure of poem, grandeur of theme, style and language are the key elements of epic poetry. Along with famous English epics like Homer's *Iliad*, Dante's *Divine Comedy* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Indian literature is also blessed with great epics like Maharshi Valmiki's *The Ramayana*, and Maharshi Veda Vyasa's *The Mahabharata*. In modern age, Yogi Aurobindo Ghosh composed an epic named *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol* in nearly 24,000 lines in blank verse. He has given symbolic significance to the tale of Savitri and Satyavan in *The Mahabharata*. Sri Aurobindo's another major work *The Future Poetry* [1953] was first published in the monthly review *Arya* from 1917-20. After its partial revision by Sri Aurobindo, the book was published in 1953. This book sets the ground work by examining the essence of poetry, its rhythm and movement, its vision and power, its style and substance along with his insight on how poetry evolves as an expression of the national mind and spirit. It is a need of time to read, digest and brood over his thoughts as poets and readers of poetry.

As said earlier, the paper excavates the views of Sri Aurobindo on the essence of poetry.

Research Paper:

Literature has always been the source of knowledge and pleasure for human beings. Poetry, as a major form of literature, has embellished the literary scenario with beautiful jewels over the period. Its range from simple songs and lyrics to epic poetry is splendid and noteworthy. The structure of poem, grandeur of theme, style and language are the key elements of epic poetry. Along with famous English epics like Homer's *Iliad*, Dante's *Divine Comedy* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Indian literature is also blessed with great epics like Maharshi Valmiki's *The Ramayana*, and Maharshi Veda Vyasa's *The Mahabharata*. In modern age, Yogi Aurobindo Ghosh composed an epic named *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol* in nearly 24,000 lines in blank verse. He has given symbolic significance to the tale of Savitri and Satyavan in *The Mahabharata*. Sri Aurobindo's another major work *The Future Poetry* [1953] was first published in the monthly

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As said earlier, epic, or classical poetry is different in nature, theme and language from personal poems which are written to express powerful feelings of poets. Readers understand and experience the mental state undergone by the poet while reading the poem. In this connection, Sri Aurobindo has made important observation. According to him, poetry has the power to give infinite meanings to words which have finite intellectual meanings. It means, poet can transcend his readers with the power of his expression beyond common place worldly, finite meanings of words to the infinite possibilities of meanings. Very few poets have been successful in carrying out such arduous task. The chosen rhythmic words of such poetry can transcend the ideas of the poet to readers and can engulf their minds.

Sri Aurobindo further says that when the poet becomes successful to cast deeply revealed truth of spirit in his poems, he utters the 'mantra'. As Indians, we know what 'mantra' means. 'Mantra' is a Sanskrit word meaning 'a sacred message or text, charm, spell, counsel'¹. It is a collection of orally transmitted poetic hymns. In Indian literature, there are Vedas, Puranas, Shastras and epics apart from hymns devoted to specific gods and goddesses written in the form of mantra. Even today, we chant these mantras on a regular basis as we know their power. Sri Aurobindo wishes all poets to reach that heightened state of mind where he can transform common words to words with power.

The pleasure which we receive from poetry is not merely intellectual or imaginative. Apart from that, poetic words must have that power to raise us on the height where lives the Mantra. The poet attempts to embody in his speech truth of Life or truth of Nature. This greater truth and its beauty is a joy forever because it helps our soul to bring the delight of the soul in the discovery of its own deeper realities. Sri Aurobindo says, "It [the source of that intensity] is the spiritual excitement of a rhythmic voyage of self-discovery among the magic islands of form and name in these inner and outer worlds."² Readers can witness and experience this rhythmic self-voyage of poets when they get transformed to their world with their poetic creation. That's why, poetry has the capacity to enlighten the souls of its readers.

In Chapter III of *The Future Poetry*, Sri Aurobindo has talked about the basic poetic elements like Rhythm and Movement. According to him, the creation of mantra becomes

possible for poets only when there is fusion of three highest intensities of poetry like the highest intensity of rhythmic movement, of interwoven verbal form and thought-substance of style and of the souls' vision of truth. All great poetry all over the world comes about with the unison of these three elements. The rhythm is the first fundamental element of poetry which gives immortality to a work of art. Here, rhythm is not a technical thing to be achieved by poet. Sri Aurobindo expects a 'deeper and more subtle music³' which reaches and satisfies the deeper creative spirit. The great poetic movements become possible when the soul begins to make its direct demand and yearn for satisfaction.

The relation between Poetic Vision and the Mantra is elaborated by Sri Aurobindo in Chapter 5. For him, vision is the characteristic power of the poet because poet is considered as the seer and revealer of truth. He is expected to open inner sight of readers through poetry. Therefore, the greatest poets all over the world have always been those who had powerful intuitive vision of Life, Nature and Man. Maharshi Valmiki, Maharshi Veda Vyasa, Mahakavi Kalidasa, Homer, John Milton had that vision apart from their supremacy over emotional expression which makes them great.

Today, we are living in an age which is in a great intellectual trouble. We are seeking to decipher the enigma of things with intellect. And for the most part, our very busy living and thinking to have pleasure to become silent and to see, to experience this world with our mind's eye. Here, we expect the poets to help us in this endeavor with their great mastering of language. We expect him to give us glimpses of his vision through his poetry as a message to our perplexed minds. The poet alone cannot attain intensity of vision and expression. His success depends on the mind of his age and country, its level of thought and experience the adequacy of its symbols and the depth of its spiritual attainment.

Reference books:

1. *Sri Aurobindo: The Future Poetry*. Nesma Books (2nd Edition), Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 2000. Print
2. *Website: Vocabulary.com*. Web



Durva Kishor Mandrekar

Unveiling Transparency: Post-Independent India in Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy.

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Abstract:

This analysis delves into Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* exploring its portrayal of truth in post-independence India. The novel vividly captures Indian culture, including religious rituals, musicians, courtesans, and classical music. It offers insights into post-independence politics, encompassing both honesty and dishonesty within Indian political parties. The narrative highlights India's inaugural general election and Nehru's secular development approach. The story unravels the impact of partition, exemplifying Hindu-Muslim riots. Gender roles are depicted, illustrating male privileges and women's confinement to marriage and childbearing. The novel strikingly blends Western and Indian cultures, reflecting the evolving cultural landscape of the era.

Key Words: Vikram Seth, *A Suitable Boy*, post-independent India, Indian culture, religious rituals, musicians, courtesans, classical music, politics, honesty, dishonesty, political parties, general election, Nehru, secular approach, partition, Hindu-Muslim riots, gender roles, marriage, childbearing, Western culture, Indian culture.

Research Paper:

Vikram Seth, an illustrious Indian novelist, poet, and travel writer, elevated Indian literature to new heights with his remarkable contributions. Born on June 20, 1952, in Calcutta, he was raised in a privileged background as the son of a wealthy businessman and a judge. Vikram Seth pursued his education in prestigious institutions, culminating in his graduation from Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He furthered his academic journey by obtaining a postgraduate degree in Economics from Stanford University, U.S., in 1978. His thirst for knowledge also led him to study at Nanjing University in China. Vikram Seth initially did not achieve widespread recognition for his debut Poetry Volume, "Mappings," which was published in 1980. However, his trajectory toward success began with the publication of the engaging and humorous travelogue *From Heaven Lake* in 1983. In 1985, he unveiled *The Humble Administrator's Garden*, a work characterized by metered rhyming 14-line stanzas. This collection drew inspiration from Charles Johnston's translation of Aleksandr Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. Seth continued to uphold poetic

structure in subsequent works such as *All You Who Sleep Tonight* (1990), *Beastly Tales from Here and There* (1992), and *Summer Requiem* (2015). Vikram Seth's debut novel, *A Suitable Boy*, published in 1993, marked a significant turning point in his career. The novel's distinctive true-to-life narrative, psychologically intricate characters, and straightforward chronology propelled it to tremendous acclaim. In 1999, he followed with *An Equal Music*, a captivating romantic tale centred around professional musicians. Seth's literary achievements were duly acknowledged with a series of prestigious awards. Notably, his novel *A Suitable Boy* earned him the Commonwealth Writer's Prize. Furthermore, his work *A Golden Gate* was recognized with the Sahitya Akademi Award. In 2007, he was bestowed the distinguished Padma Shri in Literature & Education. Vikram Seth's novel, *A Suitable Boy*, boldly addresses a myriad of issues that were prevalent in Post-Independent India. Aptly characterized as a "Tranche de vie" or Slice of Life, the novel offers a vivid portrayal of the intricate tapestry of Indian existence during the 1950s. It delves into the very fabric of Indian society against the backdrop of the country's inaugural General Elections, capturing the essence of a crucial period in its history. Within its pages, *A Suitable Boy* masterfully unravels the essence of Nehru's visionary ideology, emphasizing unity amid diversity. The narrative shines a spotlight on Nehru's remarkable political accomplishments and the doctrines that shaped the nation's course. Moreover, the novel skillfully underscores the imperative of a secular approach to religion, affirming its indispensable role in the development of an independent, democratic India. In a landscape fraught with communal discord, the novel advocates that the path to evolution and progress necessitates the embrace of secularism. In essence, Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* serves as a captivating chronicle, capturing not only the pulse of an era but also the timeless struggles and aspirations of a nation on the cusp of transformation. The novel astutely lays bare the privileges entrenched in the patriarchal structure. Lata, a young woman of sharp intellect and acumen, finds her aspirations for a career subdued by societal expectations that prioritize marriage. Her mother's resolute words, "You too will marry a boy I choose," (Seth, 3) underscore the prevailing norms. Lata's affection for a Muslim youth is quashed by her family, driven by the barriers of religious disparity. Even her interactions with Arun Mehra, the brother of Meenakshi, draw disapproval from her mother. In a post-independence India that boasts of freedom, Lata's exclamation, "India is a free country now," (Seth, 141) prompts a critical inquiry into the extent of that freedom for women. Evidently, the so-called liberated nation imposes multifaceted restrictions on its women. While men revel in newfound liberties, the female experience is marked by constraints. Maan's unrestricted visits to Saeeda Bai, his immersion in her music, and their intimate relationship underscore male privilege.

Arun's authoritative control over his younger siblings, stemming from assumed patriarchal entitlement post his father's demise, reinforces this gender imbalance. A discernible trend emerges as pivotal decisions within families are primarily orchestrated by male members. Mahesh Kapoor leverages his wife's participation in his election campaign for his political gain. The majority of women are confined to the role of homemakers, shackled to conventionally labelled "womanly duties." Saeeda Bai, in contrast, navigates her livelihood through both singing and prostitution, emblematic of the complexities women face in securing financial independence. Tasneem's seclusion, forbidden from interacting with men and confined to her room, symbolizes the stark limitations imposed on women's autonomy. The portrayal of elite women basking in the indulgence of kitty parties further accentuates this contrast. Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* vividly captures the intricate web of gender disparities, offering a potent critique of the uneven terrain that Indian women tread, even in the wake of the country's hard-fought independence. The novel adeptly illuminates the religious tumult that marked Post-Independent India. Through the creation of the fictitious state Purva Pradesh and Brahmapur, Vikram Seth underscores the religious and cultural tapestry of actual places like Delhi, Lucknow, Agra, Benares, Patna, and Ayodhya. Employing a Nehruvian-inspired secular lens, Seth navigates the narrative with a balanced approach, encapsulating the era's diverse religious landscapes. The treatment of untouchables finds its voice in Seth's narrative, echoing the advocacy of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, India's pioneering Law Minister and leader of the untouchables. Seth portrays Ambedkar as "the great, already almost mythical, leader of the untouchables" (Seth, 1132), emphasizing his tireless efforts towards their upliftment. The novel also draws from Gandhi's occupation-based caste ideology, advocating for individuals to remain in their respective roles, regardless of its implications. Vikram Seth ingeniously contrasts the portrayal of Hindu-Muslim characters, illustrating a spectrum of personalities within each community. Muslim characters are depicted as ambitious and disciplined, while Hindu characters range from undisciplined and spoiled to conscientious and mature. This contrast is evident between characters like Maan, the carefree individual, and Rasheed, the sensitive soul. Similarly, the dynamic between Haresh and Kabir demonstrates differing temperaments, with Kabir embodying introversion and melancholy and Haresh radiating generosity and optimism. These character depictions extend to Mahesh Kapoor and Nawab Saheb, who possess distinct personalities, yet maintain a bond of friendship and respect. Within this tapestry, Seth subtly weaves the effects of religion on individual psyches. The melancholy that envelopes certain characters is subtly linked to their Islamic faith. Kabir Durrani, Rasheed, Tasneem, Saeeda Bai, Firoz, and Nawab grapple with personal tribulations,

and their struggles are often disconnected from a joyous, communal existence. This poignant portrayal highlights the complexity of intertwining personal experiences with broader religious contexts. Vikram Seth's narrative orchestrates a symphony of emotions, encapsulating both joyous and sombre moments, and brilliantly capturing the interplay between self-destruction, disillusionment, and the resilience of the human spirit. Through multifaceted characters, Seth paints a vivid picture of the intricate interplay between religion and individual lives, reflecting the nuanced tapestry of Post-Independent India. The novel masterfully captures the essence of traditional Indian culture, enriching its narrative with vibrant depictions of religious festivals. From the grandeur of Kumbh Mela to the fervour of Ramnavami, Ramadan, and Eid, Vikram Seth paints a rich tapestry of Indian cultural celebrations. Through these festivals, the novel encapsulates the spirit of unity in diversity, where different faiths coexist harmoniously. However, this harmony is intermittently disrupted by religious tensions, notably during the Ram Rath and Islamic processions. The serenity of Sadhus during the Kumbh Mela and the virtuousness of those observing Ramadan underscores the religious beauty embedded in these practices. The depiction of Saeeda Bai refraining from her usual pursuits during Ramadan highlights the depth of spiritual commitment. Traditional Hindu marriage ceremonies, like the seven rounds around the sacred fire, add another layer of cultural authenticity to the narrative. The portrayal of musicians and courtesans unveils a world steeped in artistry and tradition. The mention of Ragas such as Raag Bhairava, Raag Ramkali, and Raag Malkauns not only delves into Indian Classical music but also encapsulates the emotional spectrum of these musical compositions. The inclusion of Urdu ghazals provides a glimpse into the realm of Urdu poetry, contributing to the cultural richness of the story. The novel's vivid imagery extends to its landscape descriptions, with the land itself becoming a symbolic representation of various layers of identity and history. Amidst this backdrop, the novel lays bare the cruelties of the Zamindar system, portraying the exploitation of impoverished labourers and their struggles against landowners. The novel doesn't shy away from reflecting on the impact of colonialism on India. Western influences manifest in parties, western clothing, and British-oriented mindsets among characters like Arun and Meenakshi. The aspirations of post-independent youth, encapsulated by the Praha shoe factory and Haresh's ambitions, exemplify the dreams and aspirations of a nation in transition. Amidst these intricate layers, the novel also captures the pivotal moment of India's first General Election, showcasing the excitement and enthusiasm of citizens as they cast their votes for the first time in an independent India. Vikram Seth's skillful weaving of cultural, historical, and societal elements creates a narrative that is both a homage to the beauty of Indian traditions and a

reflection on the complexities of a nation's journey through the challenges of post-independence transformation. In conclusion, Vikram Seth's novel *A Suitable Boy* authentically captures the essence of India in the aftermath of its independence. The narrative intricately weaves religious observances, the realm of musicians and courtesans, and the resonance of Indian classical music, all of which contribute to a vibrant portrayal of Indian culture. Simultaneously, the novel delves into the political landscape post-independence, exposing both the virtues and vices within Indian political parties. The narrative effectively embodies Nehru's secular ideals, exemplifying his commitment to the unity of a newly formed nation, while also portraying the excitement surrounding India's inaugural general election. The novel unflinchingly confronts the turmoil stemming from Hindu-Muslim conflicts and the enduring impact of partition on the nation's fabric. In parallel, the novel sheds light on the unequal gender dynamics, contrasting the privileges enjoyed by men with the roles women are confined to within marriage and family. The story evocatively merges Western influences with Indian traditions, reflecting the evolving cultural fusion of the era. Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* is not merely a literary work; it stands as a poignant testament to the multifaceted dimensions of a nation undergoing transformation. Through its rich tapestry of themes, characters, and events, the novel immortalizes India's journey into independence while capturing the intricate nuances that shaped its social, political, and cultural landscape.

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19th Century Poetry: Reflecting, Challenging, and Shaping Socio-Cultural Norms

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Abstract:

This research paper delves into the multifaceted role of 19th-century poetry as a reflection, challenge, and catalyst in shaping socio-cultural norms. The 19th century was a period of immense transformation, characterized by industrialization, political upheaval, and evolving societal values. Poetry emerged as a powerful medium through which poets engaged with the pressing issues and dynamics of their time.

Through a multidisciplinary approach encompassing literary analysis, historical research, and cultural studies, this study explores how 19th-century poets mirrored the prevailing zeitgeist. It examines how poets celebrated nature, grappled with gender roles, critiqued social injustices, and delved into intellectual and philosophical movements. The analysis demonstrates how poetry served as a reflection, offering profound insights into the values, beliefs, and concerns of the era. Furthermore, this research paper highlights how 19th-century poetry went beyond mere reflection, becoming a catalyst for change. Poets advocated for social reform, challenged political power structures, and provoked societal introspection. The impact of poets like P. B. Shelley, Emily Dickinson, and others is underscored in areas such as abolition, workers' rights, and gender equality.

In addition to this, the study elucidates the role of 19th-century poetry as a medium of cultural discourse. It shows how poets celebrated cultural values, challenged established norms, and engaged with intellectual and philosophical currents. Their verses became essential components of the cultural discourse of the time.

The paper concludes by emphasizing the enduring relevance of 19th-century poetry, not only as a historical artifact but as a source of inspiration for contemporary cultural discourse and as a testament to the enduring power of art to shape and reflect the ever-evolving socio-cultural landscape.

Keywords: Challenging Norms, Cultural Identity, Historical Context, Socio-Cultural Norms, Reflection, Romantic Poetry, Social Reform, Gender Roles, Political Critique, Intellectual Movements.

Introduction:

The 19th century stands as a pivotal epoch in the annals of human history, marked by profound socio-cultural transformations. During this period, societies across the globe witnessed significant shifts in values, ideologies, and norms. It was an era of burgeoning industrialization, colonial expansion, political revolutions, and the exploration of new frontiers. In the midst of this dynamic and tumultuous era, poetry emerged as a powerful and influential form of artistic expression, playing a pivotal role in both reflecting and shaping the socio-cultural norms of the time.

The 19th century's socio-cultural landscape was characterized by complex changes in gender

roles, class distinctions, and political ideologies. As societies grappled with the repercussions of rapid industrialization and the impacts of colonialism, poets found themselves at the forefront of conversations about the human condition, societal justice, and the evolving nature of culture. Through their verses, poets such as William Wordsworth, Emily Dickinson, Lord Byron, and many others engaged with the contemporary norms, offering insightful commentary, criticism, and even solutions.

This research paper embarks on an exploration of the profound and multifaceted role played by poetry in shaping the socio-cultural norms of the 19th century. It delves into the ways in which poets, through their creative expression, contributed to and challenged the established norms of their societies. This study employs a multidisciplinary approach, combining literary analysis, historical research, and cultural studies to illuminate the interplay between poetry and culture during this transformative period.

By delving into the thematic, linguistic, and stylistic elements of poetry from the 19th century, this research aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which poets engaged with their socio-cultural milieu. It investigates how poetry served as a mirror, reflecting the prevailing norms, while also acting as a catalyst for change, advocating for social justice, and prompting introspection within readers. Furthermore, this research considers how poetry facilitated discourse and debate among diverse groups, amplifying its impact on societal transformation.

In tracing the role of poetry in shaping socio-cultural norms, this study not only sheds light on the dynamic relationship between literature and culture in the 19th century but also underscores the enduring relevance of poetry as a medium for reflecting, challenging, and shaping societal values. As we embark on this journey through the poetic landscapes of the 19th century, we gain insights into the enduring power of words and creativity in influencing the course of human history.

19th Century Poetry as a Reflection of Socio-Cultural Norms:

The 19th century was a period of profound societal transformation characterized by changing values, ideologies, and norms. Poetry, as a prominent literary form during this era, played a pivotal role in reflecting, critiquing, and sometimes reinforcing these evolving socio-cultural norms. This discussion explores how 19th-century poetry served as a mirror, offering insights into the prevailing beliefs and attitudes of the time.

Themes and Representations:

1. Nature and Romanticism:

Romantic poets like William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge celebrated nature as a

means of reconnecting with a simpler and purer existence. Their verses reflected a cultural shift away from the industrialization of the period, emphasizing the importance of a harmonious relationship with the natural world.

2. Love and Gender Roles:

19th-century poetry often explored themes of love and relationships, shedding light on evolving gender roles and expectations. The works of poets like Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Lord Byron challenged conventional ideas about love and passion, addressing issues of agency and autonomy in romantic unions.

3. Social Injustice and Reform:

The poetry of this era was not silent about the injustices of society. Poets like William Blake and John Keats critiqued the social inequalities and hardships faced by the working class. Their verses provided a platform to call for reform and change.

Critique and Commentary:

1. Political Discourse:

Poetry in the 19th century frequently engaged with political issues of the time, such as the Napoleonic Wars, revolutions, and nationalism. Poets like Percy Bysshe Shelley and Alfred Lord Tennyson used their verses to critique political institutions and advocate for liberty and social justice.

2. Moral and Ethical Questions:

Poets of this era often delved into moral and ethical questions, grappling with the complexities of human behaviour and the consequences of societal norms. Works like Robert Browning's dramatic monologues explored the dark corners of the human psyche, challenging conventional notions of good and evil.

Reflection of Society's Concerns:

19th-century poetry reflects the concerns, anxieties, and hopes of the societies it emerged from. It captures the essence of an era marked by industrialization, urbanization, and social upheaval. Whether by celebrating nature, critiquing social injustices, or probing moral dilemmas, poetry served as a barometer of the times, offering readers profound insights into the socio-cultural norms and values that defined the 19th century.

Poetry as a Challenge to Socio-Cultural Norms:

Poetry has often been a medium through which writers challenge, question, and confront prevailing socio-cultural norms. Poets, as keen observers of their societies, use their craft to disrupt established conventions, provoke thought, and advocate for change. In this context,

poetry becomes not only an artistic expression but also a powerful tool for social critique and transformation.

Challenging the Status Quo:

1. Subversion through Language:

Poetry allows poets to subvert traditional language and communication norms. Through metaphor, allegory, and symbolism, poets can express dissent and criticism indirectly, evading censorship or backlash. This subversion enables them to challenge societal norms while preserving the beauty and complexity of language.

2. Critique of Power Structures:

Poets often challenge power structures and hierarchies that sustain socio-cultural norms. They may use their verses to question political authority, expose injustices, and advocate for the rights of marginalized groups. Poetry becomes a potent tool for voicing dissent and holding those in power accountable.

Provoking Societal Introspection:

1. Cultural Reflection:

Poets compel societies to confront their own values and behaviours. By highlighting contradictions, hypocrisy, or injustices, poetry forces readers to re-evaluate their beliefs and actions. This introspection can lead to collective soul-searching and social change.

2. Promoting Empathy:

Through the artful portrayal of characters and situations, poets engender empathy in their readers. They challenge prevailing stereotypes and prejudices, encouraging individuals to view the world from different perspectives. This empathetic understanding can be a catalyst for breaking down socio-cultural barriers.

Historical Examples:

1. Feminist Poetry:

Feminist poets like Sylvia Plath and Adrienne Rich challenged patriarchal norms in the mid-20th century. Their works critiqued gender roles, domestic expectations, and societal constraints on women. Through their poetry, they catalyzed conversations about women's rights and equality.

2. Beat Generation Poetry:

The Beat Generation poets, including Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, challenged societal norms of the 1950s and 1960s. Their poetry critiqued conformity, consumerism, and the

suppression of individuality. They became voices of counterculture movements advocating for freedom of expression and personal exploration.

19th Century Poetry as a Catalyst for Change:

The 19th century was a period of significant societal change and upheaval, marked by industrialization, political revolutions, and evolving cultural norms. Poetry, as a medium of artistic expression and communication, played a pivotal role in catalyzing change during this era. This discussion explores how 19th-century poetry acted as a catalyst for social, political, and cultural transformation.

1. Advocacy for Social Reform:

1. Abolition of Slavery:

Poets like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Blake used their verses to advocate for the abolition of slavery. Their poems powerfully conveyed the moral imperative of ending this inhumane practice, contributing to the growing anti-slavery movement.

2. Workers' Rights and Social Justice:

Poets such as Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats addressed the hardships faced by the working class, emphasizing the need for social justice and labor reform. Their works inspired discussions about workers' rights and ultimately influenced labor movements.

2. Critique of Political Power:

1. Political Revolution and Reform:

Poets like Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley were outspoken critics of political oppression and authoritarianism. Their verses challenged the status quo, advocating for political reform and societal change. Shelley's "Ozymandias" and Byron's "The Prisoner of Chillon" are notable examples.

2. Nationalism and Patriotism:

In an era of shifting borders and emerging nation-states, poets such as Giuseppe Ungaretti and Victor Hugo celebrated the spirit of nationalism through their works. They ignited a sense of pride and unity among their fellow countrymen, contributing to the political changes of the time.

3. Exploration of New Ideas:

1. Intellectual and Scientific Revolution:

The 19th century was marked by profound intellectual and scientific advancements. Poets like Alfred Lord Tennyson and Walt Whitman embraced these changes in their verses, reflecting the spirit of inquiry and innovation that was reshaping society.

2. Challenging Gender Norms:

Female poets like Emily Dickinson and Elizabeth Barrett Browning used their poetry to challenge traditional gender roles and expectations. Their works advocated for women's rights and empowerment, contributing to the evolving discourse on gender equality.

19th Century Poetry as a Medium of Cultural Discourse:

The 19th century was a period of immense cultural transformation, and poetry emerged as a vital medium for engaging in cultural discourse. Poets of this era not only reflected the values and concerns of their societies but also actively participated in shaping cultural narratives, beliefs, and identity. This discussion explores how 19th-century poetry served as a vibrant medium of cultural discourse.

1. Reflection of Cultural Values:

1. Celebration of Nature:

Romantic poets like William Wordsworth, John Keats, and Percy Bysshe Shelley celebrated the natural world in their verses. Their poetry not only reflected a growing appreciation for nature but also helped shape the cultural value of the sublime in the face of industrialization.

2. Exploration of National Identity:

As nation-states were emerging and boundaries were shifting, poets like Lord Byron and Victor Hugo contributed to the discourse of national identity through their works. Their poetry fostered a sense of pride, unity, and shared cultural heritage among their respective countrymen.

2. Challenging Cultural Norms:

1. Critique of Social Hierarchies:

Poets like William Blake and John Clare critiqued social hierarchies and class distinctions in their verses. Their poetry challenged the established norms of their time, giving voice to the marginalized and advocating for social justice.

2. Gender and Feminism:

Female poets, including Emily Dickinson and Christina Rossetti, used their poetry to challenge traditional gender roles and advocate for women's rights. Their works contributed to the discourse on gender equality and women's empowerment.

3. Intellectual and Philosophical Exploration:

1. Engagement with Intellectual Movements:

The 19th century was marked by significant intellectual movements such as Romanticism and Transcendentalism. Poets like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman actively engaged with these movements in their poetry, reflecting and shaping the intellectual discourse of the time.

2. Moral and Ethical Questions:

Poets like Robert Browning delved into moral and ethical questions, often using dramatic monologues to explore the complexities of human behaviour and societal norms. Their verses prompted readers to contemplate cultural and ethical dilemmas.

4. Cultural Preservation and Revival:

1. Folklore and Tradition:

Poets like Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Butler Yeats drew from folklore and oral traditions to preserve and revive cultural heritage in their poetry. Their works helped maintain a connection to cultural roots in a rapidly changing world.

2. Literary Movements:

Poets played key roles in literary movements like the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which sought to revive and reinterpret earlier artistic and literary traditions. These movements contributed to the preservation and evolution of cultural expression.

Conclusion:

The 19th century was an era of profound socio-cultural transformation, and the poetry of this period emerged as a powerful medium that both reflected and influenced the changing norms, values, and aspirations of society. Through an exploration of various themes, representations, and poetic movements, this research paper has shed light on the multifaceted role of 19th-century poetry.

As revealed through the analysis, 19th-century poetry served as a reflection of the times, mirroring the zeitgeist and capturing the essence of an era marked by industrialization, political revolutions, and shifting cultural norms. Poets like William Wordsworth, Emily Dickinson, Lord Byron, and many others became cultural mirrors, offering readers profound insights into the socio-cultural norms of their respective societies.

Moreover, 19th-century poetry was not merely a passive reflection but an active catalyst for change. Poets used their verses to advocate for social reform, challenge political power structures, and provoke societal introspection. Their words were powerful tools for bringing about transformation in areas such as abolition, workers' rights, gender equality, and more. Poets like Percy Bysshe Shelley and Elizabeth Barrett Browning were not content with merely reflecting society; they actively engaged in shaping it.

Furthermore, this paper highlighted how 19th-century poetry facilitated cultural discourse. It celebrated cultural values, challenged norms, and explored intellectual and philosophical movements of the time. Poets engaged with questions of identity, nationhood, and ethics, contributing to a vibrant discourse that extended beyond their verses.

In conclusion, 19th-century poetry stands as a testament to the dynamic interplay between art and culture. It was a mirror, a catalyst, and a medium for discourse. Its enduring relevance serves as a reminder of the power of literature and creativity to shape and reflect the ever-evolving nature of human society. As we delve into the poetry of the 19th century, we gain not only historical insights but also a deeper appreciation for the enduring impact of poetry as a reflection, catalyst, and medium of cultural change.

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