



The Poetic Opus of Dr. Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar : A Review



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Review :

We, born with a purpose

Die with a promise

Live with a hope

In the trap of His joke

(Dr. Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar, Not of One Life but Lives, P. 9)

Not of One Life but Lives is a genuine creative creation. It manifests permanence and redemption of spirits of the cyclic pattern of birth and death. Used the simple but the straightforward language by the poet, therefore readers experience a deeper *nada* with a spiritual contemplation on varied phases of human life.

Two selves everyone feels

One is in you

And the second

Surrounds you

(Dr. Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar, Not of One Life but Lives, P.10)

Peter Jewkes, UK :

The poet's prose displays a delicate lightness of touch, where subtle repetition slowly builds to create an atmosphere which encapsulates the entire spectrum of human life. Short staccato pulses of text are writ large with emphatic tautologies, which are then twisted, morphed and finally stripped bare to show us the true heart of its meaning. At times we are treated to both sweeping sadness and humour, with allusions to both that of Shakespeare and to more mundane and homely situations. When viewing the poems as a whole, the body of work attempt to reveal to us the cyclical nature and often futile endeavours we partake, whilst ignoring what is truly important, the importance of human life and of our fellow man. With lofty ideals, the work reveals our innermost nature and both attempts to free of this.

In one of my favourite verses it says:

“To a human brain
All knowledge never it teaches
Deepest be it rooted
Uprooting beyond our reaches”

It shows man's own failings and our insignificance when compared to all of nature. The poet also exposes man's own arrogance in another verse':

“God does everything
And says 'I did nothing'
Man does nothing
And says 'I did everything'”

This stanza demonstrates how as in Kierkegaard's philosophy would say we stand before God alone and here our failings are put on display, where we appropriate creation for ourselves. Human life itself is significant and worthy of veneration however we ignore this and concentrate on the unimportant and trivial matters in life, believing that we ourselves can better God.

But these poems are not a mere academic exercise and successfully avoid overt moralizing or lecturing. The titles of the poems, short and succinct, are a testament to their accessibility and directness. These poems are meant to be read and to be enjoyed but if we take a moment to reflect upon the ideas presented to us; we see a chiasmic weight of life's most important questions. If we take into account Schopenhauer's analysis of the arts we can see that the poet's work manages to show us the innermost insatiable will of man and how we must break the chains of quick gratification and elevate ourselves out of the cycle of death and birth.

And all this from someone whose first language is not English! It is somewhat incredulous that the poet is not a first language speaker of English. It is clear that through a love of English literature and of studios reading the poet has imbibed a great depth and understanding of prose and verse from both the English cannon as well as other far reaching influences. However these poems are infused with a sense of the poet's own personal beliefs giving us a rich texture and tapestry of cultures. One cannot help but to be reminded of other second-language English writers such as Conrad or Nabokov.

In conclusion, I hope that you will enjoy these works by the poet. Once finished reading, I implore you to read them again and to take a moment to reflect upon the wonderful ideas and beautiful imagery they invoke. This book can be both read as a whole or one can dip into a different poem the odd occasion where one is in need of guidance or simply to enjoy its mastery.

Dr. S. S. Kanade :

Like the *satsang*, the collection is a divine medicine of young but matured mind to the aficionados of Indian Poetry in English. It is deep-rooted into human transcript with a novel dream to humankind by releasing new horizon, where human is leading for a noteworthy and significant life. It is sheltered in age by casting light on authentic colour and organ of Indian culture. These testimonials with personal consciousness offer a fresh and unparalleled passion and consideration.

Natasha Warren, UK & Peter Jewkes, UK

Dr. Pramod A. Pawar has once again treated us to another volume of his poetic works and I have been most humbled in being asked to write a foreword to the book.

What strikes the reader first about this work is the form in which it takes. The poems are presented as a set of geometric triangles, reflected and connected, with repeated motives mirroring each other. One's first reaction is a visual one as the reader's eyes pour over the undulating text. This creates a distancing effect similar to the *Verfremdungseffekt* akin to Bertolt Brecht's writings and plays. The reader becomes aware of construction and formation of the words and how the sentences are put together. I personally am reminded of modernist avant-garde poetry of the early 20th Century, where futurist poets prized word novelty and an awareness of the form in which the words are presented, whether it be novel formatting so that it becomes an inseparable part of the understanding of the poems.

The poems almost uniformly begin with a proposition and in each successive line; the meaning is whittled down to ever sparser phrases until the central 'I' is revealed. The poem then mirrors itself after the 'I' and turns the previous words on themselves, a subtle shifting

the readers perspectives of the words. Who would have thought that such a simple conceit could reveal yet more in the text. This once again brings me back to the point of the writer's skill. Not any order of words could have worked and so the poet must have slaved over the particular choices of phrase so that their meaning could be reflected and their power doubled. Yet this is no gimmick; the reader, if they chose, could only read the first part of each poem and be treated to an inspirational and insightful gaze at our innermost feelings and their outermost consequences.

The central theme, in my understanding, is the questioning of what the most basic idea of the 'self' is. In this treatise on what we perceive to be that eternal 'I' or 'self' we are treated to an array of arresting and affecting imagery. We are shown both introspective analyses alongside nature poetry akin to the blunt force of Ted Hughes. This is work from a man who has imbibed classical as well as current poetic trends and synthesized them to create his own unique work.

The poems can be viewed as short individual flashes but similarly the poems can be viewed as part of a greater whole, an intentional decision on the writer no doubt. The whole collection can be seen as a dichotomy between the intent of the poems and the structure. The poet's aim is deeply rooted in Hindu tradition and the belief that we can overcome our base desires and rebirth ourselves. However, the dichotomy arises from the structure in which they are presented. However, is this a dichotomy at all? Can religious transcendentalism be portrayed through distancing post-modern western European structuralism? Or is that interpretation merely another example of the false sense otherness from western European viewpoints as described by Edward W. Said in 'Orientalism'. The real question is whether it becomes a problem for the work? Of course not! The poems rise above petty squabbles about cultural standpoints. Rather, it is more an example of Hegelian ideas of synthesis and antithesis, where two opposing viewpoint fuse to create a synthesis creating new paradigm in which new can flourish. However, this debate was not the poet's intention at all. The 'intent' of this collection is the same as all poetry ; which is to select the best words in the best order so to create something that is both beautiful and thought-provoking.

Peter Jewkes, UK

Once again I have the honour of writing a foreword for Dr Pawar Pramod latest poetic opus. In his previous work 'Time Am I Am Time' there was a great focus on the form in which the poems took, both visually and structurally, however the writer has returned to a less fussy presentation and this work the prose is short, direct and visceral, with smaller embellishments and flourishes. Previous works of the author could be considered collections of poems with a

unifying theme and could be considered and read in isolation. This latest collections of poems is much grander in length and scope and feels much more like a sustained narrative, with its insights coming through as the work progresses. This is a work to be gorged upon in one sitting, compared to the other works in which one can dip into each insight and aphorism at will.

The middle section of the poems focuses more on the ineffable and the mysterious, that which is hidden. It is reminiscent of the British metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, with their fascination of the mysterious and the ancient and their liberal use to simile and metaphor in order to highlight what by its very nature cannot be highlighted. Whether intentional or not, there are some clearer influences that raise their head in the prose such as mentions of Shakespeare and other classical writers from the English cannon and of classical stories from antiquity. However, what makes these remarkable is that rather than viewed from a western insular version of the self, well-known stories such as Romeo and Juliet are assessed from a different perspective. Whereas most lament the tragic death of the young couple, the author here places this story in the greater scheme of the entire universe. In a deceptively off-hand manner declares that rather than love conquering all, their loves doesn't count in the greater scheme of the all conquering world. It is refreshing to see such different perspective and that is what the author brings to his poetry. As English is the writer's second language, there is a detachment that comes from learning something academically. The writer is removed from ingrained tropes and features of western style poetry and reading this book is all the more immersive for using western structures and forms to expound an Indian perspective. Although this is not to say that book is parochial, but it in its vision and scope, it has international reach, and especially in later parts of the book, its intended reach would be to transcend nations entirely.

The natural world, nature and creation are recurrent themes and motifs of the author's work and our own on personal relation towards it is of great concern to the writer. In one arresting section, there is a conversation between the sun, rays, sand, a traveler and other characters and we are granted an insight into their attitudes and existence. At times this book is cynical and despairing, especially in the latter sections, yet in this vignette there is a palpable sense of wonder and mystery.

As the book progresses, there is a surprising shift in tone and content. Whereas before the writer had aimed his sights on comparing the transcendent with the mundane, there is now a more overt political and nationalist strain running through the later pages. Here the writer, in my opinion attacks what he sees as the failure of post-independence India to fully address the

huge social and economic inequality in the country. There are none too subtle attacks on the venal and self-interested nature of politicians. Throughout this section, you feel simultaneously the writer's anger and frustration at what might be the betrayal of Mahatma Gandhi's vision of India. But far from being a sterile and vitriolic attack, the words are cloaked in twisting and coy similes and form is never sacrificed for subject, nor one for the other.

The work then moves on from the political to a topic close to the writer's heart, religion and our need of it. A topic prevalent in nearly all of the works from the author is that man is in constant contrast to nature and creation. The poems often address man's base and fickle desires, but is not so despairing as to deny us some hope of redemption and this can be found in the author's devotion to Hindu tradition and belief.

To conclude, this collections of poems is a far different beast from what we have experiences before from the same author. The author himself states in his closing words that this was not a poem, rather the conscious mind spilling over the page unintentionally, which is an apt metaphor for the work as a whole. It is not a work focused on the minutia of a single issue or emotion, but it is the very outpouring of an entire mind in its attempt to contain the world whilst it is in fact the world that contains the entire mind.

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