

*A WOMAN SAVIOUR OF MANKIND AND OTHER POEMS*

**By Aju Mukhopadhyay**

When on 16 April 2014 Sewol, the South Korean boat,  
Was sinking with 476 passengers on board  
Frigid water filling up its hold  
And the crew with its captain fled  
Betraying all the hopes of the passengers  
There appeared a courageous woman head  
Rising to the occasion, raring to go ahead;  
22 year old young Park Ji-young, a cafe worker  
Took the lead in helping children and half-dead sea farers  
Supplying them with life jackets, courage and burning hope  
Keeping not a single jacket for her to elope  
Promising not to leave till a single of them remained.  
Many were saved but she was drowned.  
Among the dead by the divers her body was found,  
Buried in chill watery ground.  
A savior of mankind, entirely humane  
Igniter of the sacrificial fire  
With the fire glowing within her;  
Inspired by the Divine will and bliss  
She lives in man's heart for her selfless sacrifice.

***INDIA THE MOTHER***

Mother India has snow capped Himalayan crown  
She sits with her feet on sea washed by the three;  
Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea

The ancient peninsula is Bharat Mata renowned.  
On her left hand is Bay of Bengal and Sundarbans  
Full of history, biodiversity and maritime commerce.  
Farther to the north-east the land is rich  
In biodiversity, wildlife and Nature's bounty.  
On her right hand is the turbulent Arabian Sea with maritime history;  
Foreign merchants and missionaries from an early age  
Reached attracted by the spicy smell, carrying Christ's message.  
The rest of India, secured by coasts and mountains,  
Is equally rich in natural wealth, holy breath and sweetness.

Humans of different faith colour and race  
With quest for adventure and zest for life  
Charmed by her noble face  
Mingled with her pristine body of humanity.  
Some outsiders ravished her time and time again  
Some pseudo-civilised people tried to establish their reign;  
None is here now; it is India with her people sovereign.  
The perpetrators of crime were from the other age;  
None presently is responsible but none can the past crime assuage.  
Religions, racial bigotry and weak democratic structure  
Divided the holy country; those are at work wreaking damage further.

The real enemies are insiders holding powers  
Who stealthily rob her wealth and beauty; the cheaters.  
But Mother the mighty will ruin the rogues, stop the trend  
To give birth to unity  
In accord with her inner harmony  
And wholesome spirituality.

With all admixtures India is a cauldron of culture;  
Present looks back to greet the past  
Past comes back to harmonise the present;  
With all imports and revivals, looking to the future  
India is unique in her original essence.  
Let all those who left come back to make a single race.  
Let all try to fulfil themselves in her 96racting96  
With a heart vibrant and roseate.  
In peace let India shine among the nations  
To fulfil her mission of creating a world United.

***THE GRASSHOOD***

just few leaves  
few stems and seeds  
with light body  
humble under feet  
mowed by machine  
neglected like street urchin  
but head always high  
grass lives and dies and lives  
feeds innumerable herbivores  
who are food to carnivores;  
grass like paddy undulating in moonlight  
feeds millions of men and mice  
grass like wheat feeds the hungry human tide  
grass like bamboo covers large chunks of wood  
raising its head high, characteristic of grasshood,  
helping elephants rats and men to lead healthy life;

grass grows covering miles and miles  
but man reduces its size  
killing it with might  
telling the earth with perfect satire  
that he never wishes  
such trifle thing and slight  
as grass to interfere  
in his high-handedness,  
that man can prepare  
uprooters, satellites and cutters  
poisonous nuclear arsenals  
et al to put grass to death;  
happy grass never dies  
living humbly with the head high  
man lives and lives  
dying to himself many times  
until one day to realize  
that grass like earth  
and wind and space  
and water and fire  
and breath  
is superior  
to man  
naturally.

***SKY THE TRUTH***

Sky is infinite from eternity  
earth looks at it from its birth;

the sky of innumerable shapes and colours  
ever changing;  
creating and recreating  
beyond any dolour and mirth.  
The flight of distance loving birds through it  
passing of supersonic jets, other flying objects  
lightning flash like sparks of clash on earth  
sounds of explosion and song  
all are facets of truth  
like the many faces of the sky.  
Sky has no hue no smell no face  
it creates and recreates the surface;  
infinite from eternity  
Sky is the Truth.

***AT THE RIVER BANK***

And quiet flows the river  
without a ripple or shiver  
trees stand windless  
not even a whiff in space  
no leaf shakes, no sound;  
fishes are sleeping  
sweating fishermen around  
have lost all zeal  
in the act of rowing  
their boats stand still;  
the water shines like a mirror  
naked boy in it looks at his figure.

The world without a name  
halts at the bank of the river  
no one knows when it came  
none knows if it was there.

**Bio**

**Aju Mukhopadhyay** has written more than two hundred Essays for books and journals besides larger numbers of features in newspapers. As an essayist he received Albert Camus Centenary Writing Award, 2013. His essays and books contain such important subjects as Sri Aurobindo (Life, Philosophy and Literature), The Mother of Pondicherry, Subhas Chandra Bose, Rabindranaath Tagore, Sant Kabir, Albert Camus, Saadat Hasan Manto and among the latest writers and poets he has written number of essays on Mahasweta Devi, Jhumpa Lahiri, Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyay, Satyajit Ray, Khushwant Singh, Arundhati Roy, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and others. He has written some essays specially on India like Rebirth of India and other essays and books on India. He has critiqued large numbers of contemporary poets of India besides such important subjects on Poetry as Sufi and Bhakti Poetry, Devotional Poets of Modern India, Spiritual and Mystic Poets. On animals he has contributed mainly to Creature Feature, Cyprus besides in some Indian journals and has written essays on Environment and Adivasi Life.