

Macrocosm through Microcosm in Kolatkar's *Sarap Satra*

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Abstract

The present paper is an analytical study on how a piece of art (a poem) is a microcosm reflecting the macrocosmic world. This article is an evaluation of how beauty of mother earth has been ravished since ages to comfort man. With Kolatkar's microscopic eyes he has dealt with subtle precision to depict the repercussions of destruction on human civilization at large. In way his poetry is an intimidation /alarm to the danger lurking at the corner.

Keywords:

Microcosm, Sarap Satra, Kolatkar's, beauty of mother earth, macrocosmic world

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The concern of this paper is to bring out in Kolatkar's poetry microcosmic elements which give macrocosmic view of the world at large. Some people have the foolish idea that poets dwell in an ivory tower, completely removed from the everyday world about them. Poets live and breathe and work for a living just as everyone else. Poets express themselves more forcefully on certain issue than an ordinary person does. Poetry expresses a relation between man and the world .So, it is a microcosm which reflects macrocosm .Kolatkar's poetry reveals mortal man and the interaction of mind and world in poetry .He possesses an unusual synthesizing capacity that often enabled him to achieve in his work a successful integration of various divergent elements. Microcosm is the centre of the macrocosm. Through microcosmic images we are able to understand macrocosm. The writing of a writer is microcosm of the society. The writer projects his thoughts feeling and ideas regarding a topic through his / her writing. The unconscious thoughts suppressed by the society finds its ventilation through writing. The writer presents in certain instance character, images and symbol related to writer's own life. As the characters of Dickens's novel are what Dickens himself has suffered in his life. Shelley's philosophy finds its expression in his poetry. The poem is an image of something other than the poem it appears the poet's own project of poetry making. Modern poets, to name only Eliot, Yeats, Spender, Steven and Auden, have been occupied in the exhibition of the unrealities of development and devastation of the human spirit. They have always in mind the barbarian society of ours which flourishes on the degradation of the spirit. It is worth noting here of Kafka's novels, specially *The Castle* and *The Trial*, which deal brilliantly with the theme of man's predicament. Likewise, the meaninglessness of human existence, the spiritual confusion and the demeaning

loneliness of man are the centre of preoccupation in Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Camus's *Myth of Sisyphus*, Jean Paul Sartre's novels and stories, and Samuel Becket's *Waiting for Godot*. Hence, Kolatkar's poems are representative work of the twenty-first century because it attempts not only a psychosomatic analysis or religious declaration but also represents the wretched human situation in our age. Of the modern Indian poets Kolatkar is most obsessed by the problem of predicament of man.

For a poet of Kolatkar's susceptibility, the problem of man and his society become the problems of his own heart. Kolatkar deals with the larger life outside the individual – a life which is never without a close link as well as a direct and deep impact upon the individual's life. The use of images in Kolatkar's poetry of various stages reveals his steady reliance on the imagistic structure of poetry, instead of purely sequential one.

In his assertions of poetry's dependence on real life, Kolatkar goes beyond the repetition of the self –evident and undeniable truth that all art ultimately has its roots in life. He not only insists on the everyday quality of occurrences that inspires the poet ,but actually declares that life with its minute details is poetry .From this it follows that artistic creativity is discovering and revealing to the world that which is inherent in the cosmos but which cannot be perceived without the help of artistic vision. Art has always existed alongside life, and therefore one cannot speak of its beginning or end .An artist succeeds not by resisting or avoiding life but by giving in to it. The artist expresses reality by identifying himself with the genius of the nature he contemplated, at the same time that by ordering and recomposing these essential elements he makes them in their turn expressive of his own mind. Kolatkar's poetry is remarkable as “the poet presents

through a special kind of consciousness a microcosm reflecting in some significant way the macrocosm of the universe” (S.K. Desai, 58) .The great merit of Kolatkar ‘s poetry is that it is written out of the centre of our cultural pattern .Neither narrowly local nor fanatically personal , it speaks the language of our time ,and expresses, more fully than any other living poetry quite does, as well the roots and the flowers of the civilisation in which we live. That civilisation is principally urban and industrialized .

In the poem *Sarpa Satra* Kolatkar in the manner of Goldberg’s *Lord of the Flies* highlights that man is inherently evil, bad and suffers from animal vengeance. This fire of hatred will continue as long as man lives on the earth. The destruction of Khandava forest by Krishna and Arjuna in order to build palace is humorous and mocking

Arjuna, the great superhero....
But he received divine weapons
-a divine bow,
two inexhaustible quivers-
and god know what happened to him,
what came over him!
Just went berserk, I guess .
For the very first act of heroism
he performed
as soon as he got the new toys in his hands
was, well, this .
he burnt down one of the largest
rainforests in the land,

and what a thorough job he made of it.

Reduced it completely

to ash.(CPE 194-5)

The massacre resulted in massive destruction as:

Not just the trees, birds, insects and animals

(herds upon herds

of elephants, gazelles antelopes),

but people, Aastika,

people as well.

Simple folk,

children of the forest

who had lived there happily for generations,(CPE 196)

The aftermath of Khandava forest destruction by Arjuna and Krishna which Jaratkaru describes as:

And it was these together

that did this thing

-burnt down the khandava forest.

And when they were done,

no one green leaf ,

not a single blade of grass

was left behind.

Just miles of ash that kept shouldering

for months afterwards. (195)

These lines describe massive destruction that result from vengeance. The poet, with animate poetic heart, recreates the scene and the use of appropriate imagery gives intensity, vigour and immediacy of appeal and freshness. Kolatkar highlights what would be the result of such absurdity as every nation in the world is developing weapons of destruction to sort out disharmony between them. These microscopic details give us hints towards the present horrid tragedy of Utrakhand. These lines highlight how construction leads to destruction. By any literary and critical standard, it is a magnificent piece of poetry and it is at once a blend of delicate pathos and artistic beauty. In the following lines Kolatkar has mirrored the mentality of ruling class as:

wondering
which neighbourly kingdom to attack next
or what new taxes to levy
to refill the coffers ,
and ask their ministers to come up
with recommendation.(CPE 212- 13)

Kolatkar depicts that how people in power are busy in filling their coffers and not working for the welfare of their people. Mythic perception leads paradoxically to a greater awareness of Kolatkar's function striving neither for social relevance nor economic reform but pricking the consciousness of the reader. *Sarpa Satra* is Kolatkar's commentary on individual and responsibility to conserve nature as our forests which are destroyed by ruthless cutting and examine the cause of ethnic cleaning. By using myth of Mahabharat as its base Kolatkar argues that this unending cycle of revenge is going on through generations. Though Kolatkar is not a political commentator but in this poem

when Janamejaya decides “-a complete innovation- / called the Snake Sacrifice”(CPE 190) is a pointer towards all political regimes of the world, particularly American who in order to take revenge the death of their fellow Americans kill lakhs of innocent people and species. The revenge theme of *Sarpa Satra* reminds of Spender’s “The War God” where Spender describes that hatred is transmitted from generation to generation and children of the slain. “And avenge their fathers again”(http:frisbeewind.blogspot.in/2006/07/Stephen.spender.html).

The destruction carried by Arjuna and Krishna to burn Khandava forest in order to build Indraprastha describes how our modern creation of magnificent structure (concrete jungle) has its seed in destruction. In Kolatkar’s *Sarpa Satra* he gives us details of species exterminated, it draws attention towards incessant struggle between Europeans and Asians, colonizers and colonized, ancient and modern. Another point which is presented in the poem that distrusts, disharmony and duel are in this world and will remain. Through this poem we examine the question of decision making power of those who hold power. Through irony Kolatkar makes his reader to think on piercing problems as lines:

*Not spoilt by reading too many books yet,
or ruined/ by smoke of too many sacrifices ,
or clouded by rage, power, ego, pride
or any other/common diseases of the eye .(CPE 206)*

These lines hints that reading many books, rituals, power, and pride can not lead one to right judgment instead it requires a person who is free from these flaws. Kolatkar writes:

*great thinkers, all/ the finest minds of our age,.....
at the first sign/ of any wrongdoing in the land
or whenever the mighty strayed / from the path of justice-
seem strangely silent/ and worried about just one things:
how to wrangle a job from themselves/ as officiating priests.”(CPE 1901)*

Sarpa Satra is a bitter satire on political inaction in face of communal violence as of Godhara, Mujaffarpur and so on and so forth. Kolatkar referred Takshaka as “an extremist” (CPE 193). “It only shows what cowards/ all terrorists are/ behind there snarling ferocious masks.” (CPE 193). What Kolatkar wants to make out through *Sarpa Satra* that the celebration of hatred would never end. Although the fire has stopped, the smoke will keep hatred among men. By this Arun Kolatkar presents modern world of hatred, massacre, atrocities, bloodshed, revenge, animosity, massacre, and destruction. The clash between Janamejaya and serpent is like colonizer and colonized. Various rituals such as religious sacrifice is mocked and satirized. He presented how people with vested interested beguile other.

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