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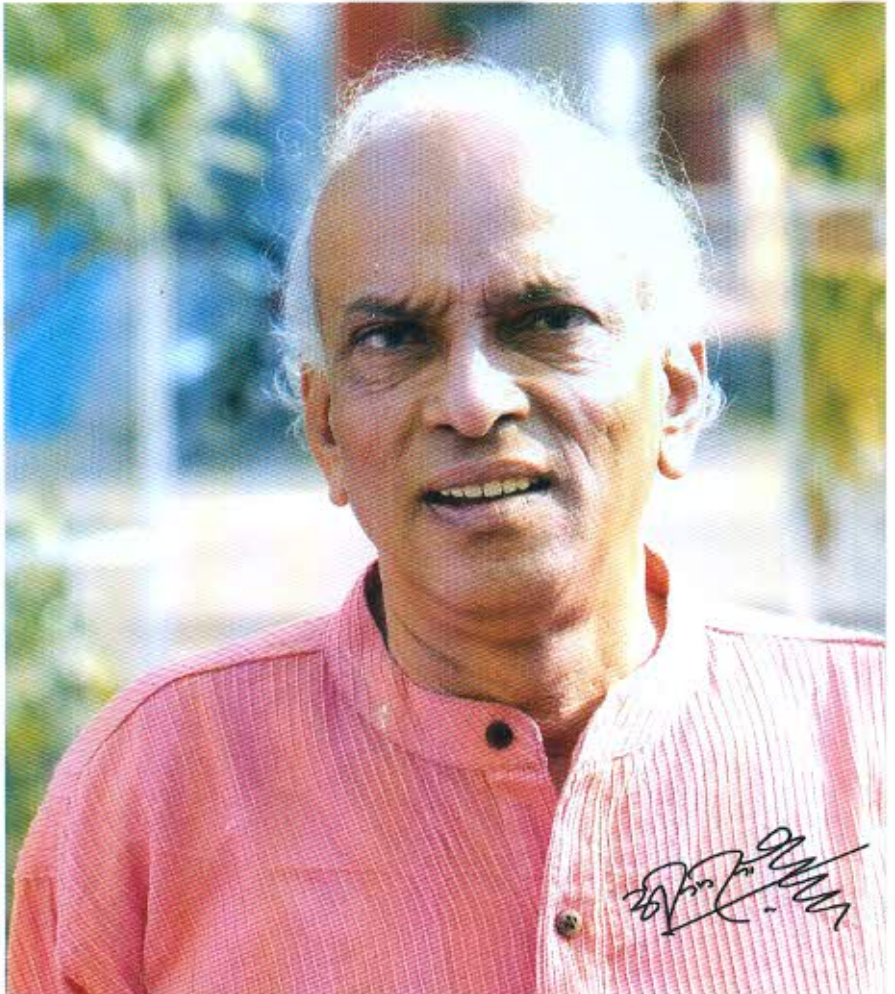


Sarvajanik Wachanalaya  
Belgaum

invite you to

**meet the author**

**Arun Sadhu**





*Manoos*. He wrote the story of Chinese revolution in an year-long serial for the weekly, which elicited thumping response from the contemporary youth movements in Maharashtra. It was later published in a book form. Sadhu also penned for Hansa Wadkar, romantic actress of Marathi films, her matter of fact narrative of her life in *Manoos*. The storm that created unleashed waves of similar narratives by other Marathi thespians. During these five years in Pune - between 1962 and 1967- Sadhu also witnessed from close quarters the rise of a number of radical youth movements that eventually rocked Maharashtra. Before he left Pune to join mainstream journalism through the *Indian Express* in Mumbai, Sadhu had published a few short stories in periodicals.

In Mumbai he delved deeper into most kinds of 'ordinary' or mundane journalistic beats that dealt with crime, murder, vegetable markets, courts...in short with ordinary human beings of the metropolis. When the radical movement of Dalit Panthers leapt roaring on the scene, Sadhu with calm objectivity chronicled in *The Times of India* its birth, growth and ultimate fall. But before that, the throbbing, pulsating spirit of the great metropolis had so filled his heart that he was obliged to pour it out in a creative form. That was *Mumbai Dinank*, his grand debut as a novelist. There followed in quick succession another one of the same genre, *Simhasan*. None had read these kinds of novels in Marathi - a creative flourish that was direct, matter of fact,

**L**ong before his first novel *Mumbai Dinank* catapulted him to prominence in Marathi literary world in 1973, Arun Sadhu was acknowledged as a perceptive writer of revolutionary fervour with passionate commitments to egalitarian leftist ideals. As a writer for *Manoos* edited by S.G.Majgaonkar, Sadhu's proliferate writing in 1966-67 covered myriad issues from Vietnam War and Cuban revolution, to Shankaracharya, and the rise of Shiv Sena. Majgaonkar, who gave full freedom to Sadhu in writing and coverage, was an editor with prescience, trying to fathom minds of the youth and groping to make a sense of different political ideologies in vogue during those turbulent years.

Sadhu roamed through half of India for journalistic coverage for



Receiving The Samagra Rachana Award  
Of The Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad, Kolkata In 2010

un-emotional and yet painfully sensitive and devastatingly realistic particularly in regard to the contemporary politics. A film, combining the two novels, scripted by Vijay Tendulkar and directed by Jabbar Patel, titled *Simhasan*, is still considered a vintage political film of India.

Later, Sadhu wrote another novel *Tadjod* on politics of elections in a small district town when its idealistic and dedicated young hero is stumped by the play of different forces that oblige him to compromise and reconcile with practices that seem corrupt but are essential to win the election. And of course, by that time the hero comes to believe that 'good people' should not fret about 'small compromises' in order to change the system for better. His play *Padgham*, a musical produced in 1985 on a grand scale by Theatre Akademi and directed by Jabbar Patel, presciently portrays the timeless revolutionary processes in a human society of creating and establishing a system that protects the society and regulates its behaviour for survival. The revolutionaries gradually become part of the exploitative system and then there arise the younger revolutionaries who bring down corrupt establishment and ensconce themselves in power. The process goes on round and round. The daunting question remains: does the system always corrupt men holding power? The stories in his collection

*Glanirbhavati Bharata* persistently raise this question. Nothing happens in this world without paying a price.

Politics in Sadhu's novels, short stories and plays is not merely about mindless jostling for power by ambitious men and women; Sadhu goes deeper, identifying social, economic, cultural and human forces that shape politics. His political characters are not portrayed in black and white. Most believe they ought to be in power to serve people and do good to the society. And while he is acknowledged as having pioneered the political genre in novel and short story, it will be unfair to confine Sadhu to that bracket. His novels *Mukhavata*, *Trishanku*, *Shodhyatra*, *Bahishkrit* and *Ziprya* belong to an entirely different category raising questions about meaning and purpose of life, the unending complexities of human relationships, the raw instinct to live and stick to life as long as possible and the passionate desire to ensure eternal continuity through progeny.

*Mukhavata* is an unending story of an extended ancient family from the 15<sup>th</sup> century desperately struggling to preserve its caste 'purity' with a breathtaking range of characters having unfathomable minds and a maddening complex web of relationships. A critique by Kumar Ketkar compares the family to the Ashvattha tree described in the Bhagvat Gita. Its permanence is illusory and yet it is there and thriving. *Trishanku* presents a frustrating struggle of a gifted upcoming 'dalit' artist to get assimilated in the 'upper caste' elite. The two novels reveal the author's admiration for the female species whom he considers superior to the male species in all respects. *Ziprya* portrays the life of slum urchins trying to make a living by polishing shoes in Mumbai's suburban trains. Surprisingly, amid the tumultuous world of Mumbai crawling with thieves, gang lords, murderers and crass cheats, this group of young children tries to preserve its dignity and live a life of honesty. *Bahishkrit* again is the story of a young dalit teacher in a remote village who fights for dalits' right to draw water from village well. *Shodhyatra*, is pilgrimage



with A.B. Wardhan & Maruti Chittampalli  
at Sahitya Sammelan, Nagpur in 2007



*with wife Aruna and daughters Suvarna and Shefali*

of a frustrated corporate executive in search of the meaning of life. In his short stories too, the author picks up groups of the underprivileged - housemaids, construction workers, milk carriers and so on - who eke out their living with dignity and keep the wheels of the metropolis moving.

Through his novels, short stories and historical works, Sadhu reveals his worldview in myriad ways. Of course, he is the champion of the underdog and looks rather disapprovingly at the elites who exploit their labour to run their affairs smoothly. For the author, egalitarian ideals go together with radical spirit. The author believes deeply in democratic ideals of liberty and equality, ideals which he feels are never fully attainable and yet the humanity has to strive in that direction. The philosophy of 'Market' which breeds mindless, cruel individualism and makes the individual human being a degenerate

brute greedily seeking everything for him/herself, is the biggest hurdle. Market teaches you to get rich in whichever way. Intelligent people become rich. Those who remain poor are stupid and dull. It is their fault and we the good intelligent people need not bother about them ! Thus the corporate economy will only widen the gap between the rich and the poor.

Sadhu has two novels and several short stories concerning human relationship with science and technology. Modern technology can help mankind attain equality; but it also has an evil side which might spell doom for mankind. Not the nuclear holocaust; but an excessive dependence on digital technology, stem-cell engineering will render the human kind into lazy morons losing its primordial will to procreate and survive as species, fears the author.



*with Jabbar Patel and Jayant Patil*

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| <i>Trishanku</i> , Shubhada Mule, Mumbai,     | 1979 |
| <i>Shapit</i> , Majestic, Mumbai, June        | 1980 |
| <i>Viplava</i> , Majestic, Mumbai, June       | 1985 |
| <i>Tadjod</i> , Shubhada Mule, Mumbai,        | 1990 |
| <i>Shodhyatra</i> , Majestic, Mumbai, Apr.    | 1989 |
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| <i>Mukti</i> , Shubhada Mule, Mumbai,   | 1987 |
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| <i>Glanirbhavati Bharat</i> , Majestic, Mumbai, Feb.  | 2006 |
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| <i>Ziprya</i> (1st episode), short story in English, Short Story International,<br>New York (Tales by the world's greatest contemporary writers),<br>(Several short stories included in collections of stories in Hindi, Urdu,<br>Gujarati and English) | 1987 |

### Plays

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| <i>Padgham</i> , Granthali, Mumbai,                                    | 1985 |
| <i>Prarambh, Bus Stop Ani Itar 3 Ekankika</i> , Majestic, Mumbai, Nov. | 1998 |

### Recent History

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| <i>Fidel Che Aani Kranti</i> , Rajhans, Pune, Nov. | 1972 |
| <i>Aani Dragon Jaga Zala</i> , Rajhans, Pune, Jan. | 1973 |
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| <i>Kakasaheb Gadgil</i> (Makers of India Series)             | 2007 |
| <i>Maharashtra</i> (NBT's States of India series)            | 2007 |
| <i>The Pioneer- Life and Times of Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil</i> | 2012 |

## Film Scripts

*Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar* (English), in collaboration,  
*Yashwantrao Chavan* (Marathi)

(The vintage political film *Simhasan*, scripted by Vijay Tendulkar from novels *Mumbai Dinank* and *Simhasan*)

**Honours:** Three Maharashtra State awards for best literary works-

Novels- *Mumbai Dinank* and *Shodhyatra*,

Play Script: *Padgham*

## Several other awards include

- Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad (Kolkata) Rachana Award for outstanding contribution to Indian literature (2009)
- Fie Foundation (Kolhapur) for lifetime contribution to literature and journalism
- N.C.Kelkar Award (Kesari & Mahratta Trust) for the best analytical book on contemporary affairs for *Teesri Kranti*
- Acharya Atre Award (Ichalkaranji) for literature
- Kaumi Ekta Foundation (Delhi) award for selfless journalism
- Padmashri Vikhe Patil Honour for Lifetime Achievements in Literature

## A CHRONOLOGY

- 1941 Birth, Paratwada, Dist. Amravati (then Central Province & Berar), Maharashtra
- 1958 Higher Secondary Exam: Science Core High School, Amravati
- 1961 B.Sc. (Physics, Mathematics) Vidarbha Mahavidyalaya, Amravati, Nagpur University
- 1961-62 Science Teacher, District Board High School, Mana, Dist. Akola
- 1962-63 Registered for M.Sc. (Maths) University of Pune (not pursued)
- Journalism career**
- 1962-64 Reporter, *Daily Kesari* (Marathi), Pune
- 1964-66 Correspondent, *The Indian Express*, Pune Bureau
- 1966-67 Special Representative-Asst. Editor, weekly *Manoos* (Marathi) Pune
- 1967-72 Staff Reporter, *The Indian Express*, Mumbai
- 1973-78 Staff Reporter, *The Times of India*, Mumbai
- 1978-87 Special Representative for Western India, *The Statesman* (Kolkata & New Delhi)
- 1985 Represented India at International Workshop for Writers, Iowa City, Ia; USA
- 1987-89 Editor, *The Free Press Journal* (Mumbai & Indore) and *Free Press Bulletin*
- 1988 Visited Afghanistan under war clouds in a delegation of artistes and writers
- 1989 Quit active journalism to pursue writing in Marathi. Continued to write columns on socio-political and cultural issues in English and Marathi periodicals
- 1993 Participated in Indian-French Writers' Interaction, Paris, France
- 1995-2001 Prof. and Head, Dept. of Communication & Journalism, University of Pune
- 1995 President, 2nd Parivartan Sahitya Sammelan, Kolhapur
- 1996 President, 5th Kamgar Sahitya Sammelan, Aurangabad
- 2007 Elected President, 80th Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan held at Nagpur