

15 October 2010

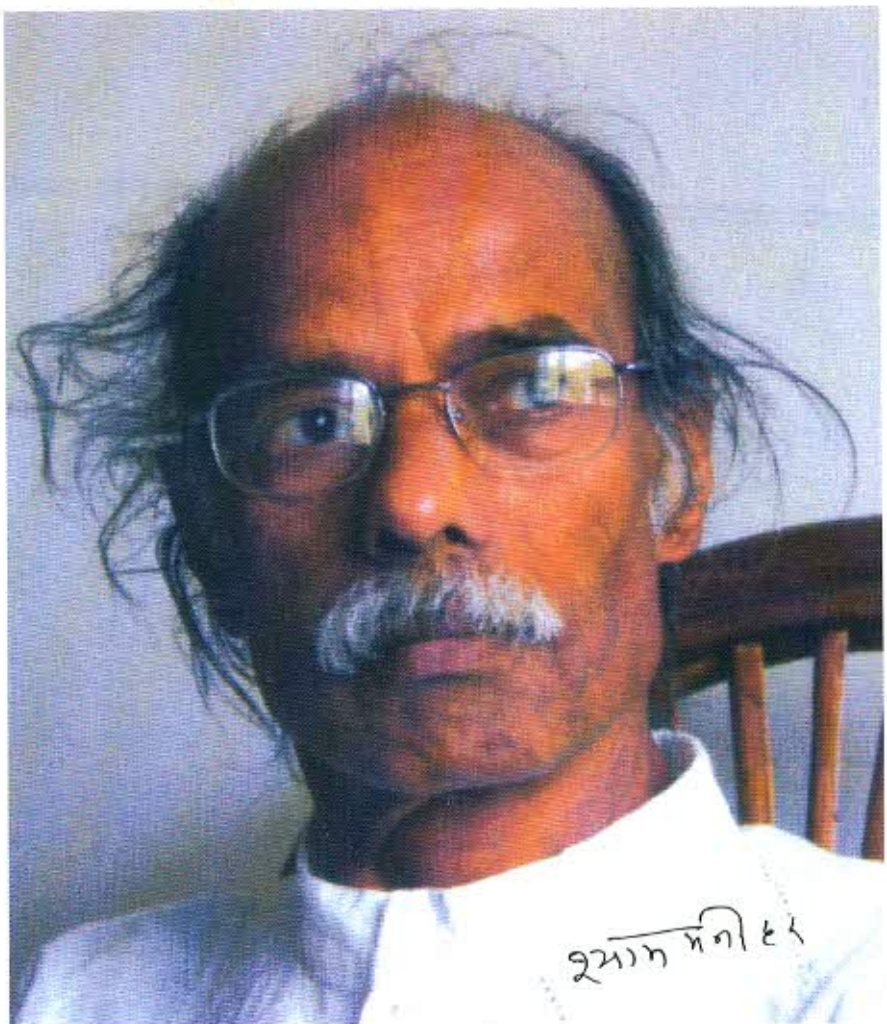


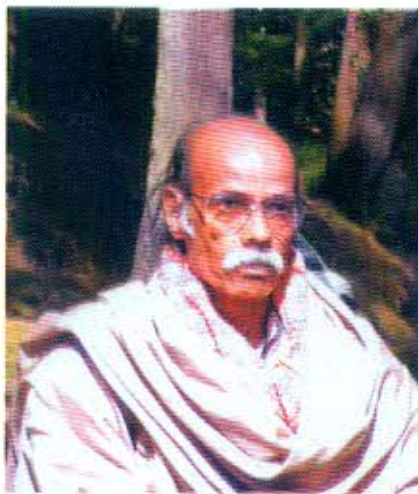
Sahitya Akademi

invites you to

meet the author

Shyam Manohar





In order to understand the world, one has to turn away from it on occasion.

Albert Camus

Ultimately, literature is nothing but carpentry. With both you are working with reality, a material just as hard as wood.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Shyam Manohar began with short stories that were exceptionally marked by his utterly unorthodox style and absolutely uninfluenced, deceptively simple language.

Hardly bothered about the reception of his short stories Shyam Manohar continued to represent reality in highly imaginative ways. His stories contained a deeply philosophical thought, a rare creative ability that would later excel him in writing his phenomenal plays and novels that shattered the tradition of Marathi fiction writing, for his every literary work came up with the form and definition of its own. Sheering away from traditional techniques that followed linear sequence - beginning, middle, and end, he achieved a genuinely new form.

Shyam Manohar was born on 27 February 1941 at Mouje Tasgaon in the Satara district of Maharashtra. Completing an M. Sc. in Physics in 1967 from Pune University, he started teachings and after teaching at several colleges he joined Sir S P College in Pune as lecturer. He retired from the college as Head of the Department of Physics in 2001.



Speaking at the national conference held in Kerala on 28th December 1996



Delivering the acceptance speech at the Vibhavari Patil Puraskar Function

Having taken to writing only in his adulthood, he had his first short story – “Scholar” – published in 1967 in *Satyakatha*, a leading Marathi literary journal at that time. However, writing seems to have been his metier. His short stories, sensitively and with a philosophical overtone, dealt with the ordinariness of existence, loneliness, yearning for the liberty of creative thinking, the deep emotional bonds that develop between the self and the other, ambitions that one is bound to suppress, inevitable responsibilities that threaten to render one's creative instinct go sterile, oppressed sexual instincts, the emotion of love that has always evaded a clear understanding, and boundless devotion to life. These themes could have sounded too prosaic to engross even an avid reader, but Shyam Manohar's dexterous use of his electrifying and enviable sense of humour made his short stories not only entertainingly experimental but

they also accomplish the ability to illuminate the inner being of the reader. Apparently, in the years after 1970 his short stories were considered highly experimental and his contemporary critics received them with awe. He is indeed in his element at writing short stories.

In his works, the expressed self is as all-embracing as it is in an excellent poem and the central characters have razor sharp minds, fluent sensitivity, satirical sense of humour, and a very clear understanding of the helplessness of an individual in society. Involved in workaday existence these characters, with great talent, never cease inquiring into and criticizing social institutions firmly keeping their alternative, that they intend to replace with the actual one, at the back of their minds. In a way, his works are a moral lesson that teaches how to face reality creatively. Ravindra Kimbahune, distinguished Marathi critic, says that no other Marathi writer could

hold so firmly that an ordinary man can lead his life decently with such strong moral convictions.

Shyam Manohar skillfully encapsulates these elements with the metaphysics that he seems to acquire intuitively during the process of writing itself and consequently it enables him to transcend the complex problems of time and space and achieve universality. The short stories like "Parajay," "Ek Wada Ek Jodpe Aani Bakiche Sagale," "Takun De To Garib Chehara," "Krourya," "Bhokta", novels like *Khup Lok Aahet*, and *Utstukatene Mee Zopalo* and plays like *Hruday* and *Yakrut* are the instances of this observation.

Kal, his meta-fictional novel, shows his overwhelmingly brilliant insights into the ever complex relationship between an individual and society and its deteriorating human values and concerns. He seems to establish in the novel that society may destroy



Receiving the Sahitya Akademi Award from Sunil Gangopadhyay, President, Sahitya Akademi

the creative instincts in an individual. *Kal*, again, has been proved to be one of the trendsetting literary works of art.

The novel *Khup Lok Aahet* has an aura of a literary reformer, as it were. The novel interestingly introduces the concept of "Fiction Yug" (The Fiction Age), and philosophically investigates and meditates upon religion and spirituality, the theme that has never been dealt with so creatively by any other writer in the history of Marathi fiction.

Utstukatene Mee Zopalo is an investigation into the institution of family. The novel is divided into the three sections - "Kutumbavyavastha aani Chandane," "Kutumbavyavastha aani Phulpakharu," and "Kutumbavyavastha aani Paaus" that reveal and criticize the appalling condition of the



institution in the absence of knowledge, art, creative abilities, and spiritual yearning.

His readers gradually grasp that the writer is speaking seriously of the culture and civilization of the entire human race in the disguise of any mundane issue and developing a strong insight into the style of living creatively.

A recipient of many prestigious

awards including the Sahitya Akademi Award, Maharashtra Foundation Award, and Natyadarpan Puraskar, Shyam Manohar is working on his new novel at present.



Being interviewed at the 83rd Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan 2010, Pune

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

SHORT STORY

Aani Bakeeche Sagale,
Mumbai, Mouj Prakashan, 1980
Bin Moujehya Goshtee,
Aurangabad, Saket Prakashan,
1980

NOVEL

He Ishwarrao... He Purushottamrao,
Mumbai, Popular Prashan, 1983
Sheetyudhha Sadananda,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 1987
Kal,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 1996
Khoop Lok Aahet,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 2002

Utstukatene Mee Zopalo,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 2006
Khekasat Mhanane I Love You,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 2010

PLAY

Yakrut, Nilkanth Prakashan, 1987
Hruday, Nilkanth Prakashan, 1985
Yalkot, unpublished
Darshan,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 2004
Premachi Goshta?,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 1998
Sanmaan Hous,
Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 2010

A CHRONOLOGY

- 1941 Was born at Mouje Tasgaon, Dist. Satara, Maharashtra
- 1967 Completed an M. Sc. in Physics
Married to Chitra
First short story published
- 1973 Joined as lecturer in Physics at Sir S P College, Pune
- 1980 Two collections of short stories published
- 1983 First novel published
Karhad Puraskar for *Binmoujchya Goshti*
Natyadarpan Puraskar for *Yakrut*
- 1984 Natyadarpan Puraskar for *Hruday* and *Yalkot*
- 1994 Gangadhar Gadgil Puraskar for experimental writing
- 1995 A special issue of *Anushtubh* on his literary works published
- 1998-99 Ram Ganesh Gadkari Puraskar of the Government of Maharashtra for *Pemachi Goshta?*
- 2001 Retired as Head of the Department of Physics from Sir S P College, Pune
- 2002 A special issue of *Sakshaat* on his literary works published
- 2005 Maharashtra Foundation Puraskar
Apte Vachan Mandir Puraskar
- 2006 Diwan Puraskar
- 2007 Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad Puraskar
Vibhawari Patil Puraskar
- 2008 The Sahitya Akademi Puraskar for
Utstukatene Mee Zopalo



With Chitra, his Wife