**Bharati, Dharamvir (1926 - 1997)**

Rakesh Pandey

Dharamvir Bharati was one of the most versatile literary figures of modern Hindi Literature in independent India. Born on 25 December 1926 in a Kayastha family in Allahabad in North India, Bharati grew up witnessing one of the most creative phases in the field of politics, education and literature during late colonial era of which the city was a central node. Bharati majored in Hindi literature at the University of Allahabad and devoted himself to researching medieval literary traditions of the Siddhas, a Buddhist Vajrayan sect. He later joined the same university as a lecturer before moving to Bombay in 1960 as the editor of the Hindi weekly *Dharmayug*.

His wider literary reputation rings the name of the play *Andha Yug* (1954) based on the episodes of the Mahabharata and two novels, *Gunahon Ka Devata* (1949) and *Suraj Ka Satwan Ghoda* (1952), capturing the themes of his city’s social life. Later Bharati earned a unique reputation as a writer-editor who nurtured a new style of journalistic writing in Hindi.

Bharati’s presence was noted as a promising young poet of a series edited by S. H. Vatsyayan Agyeya in *Doosara Saptak* (1951), which nurtured the modernist and experimental poetry. His creative sensibilities were shaped in a highly innovative literary group which was inspired by Rammanohar Lohia’s ideas of social transformation drawing upon Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi. Bharati who had inherited a natural charm for the Hindu epics and medieval bhakti literature was particularly drawn to this new social vision. His uses of motifs from the Mahabharata and Bhagavat Purana and other texts of Krishna lore in contemporary dramatic and poetic idioms have received much appreciation. Following *Andha Yug*, the landmark play lamenting the devastations of war and human moral failure, he wrote *Kanupriya* (1959), a haunting lyric poem reinventing the themes of love and separation of classical Sanskrit and medieval devotional poetry in North India.

A lot of fictional motifs in Bharati’s short stories and novels revolve around the rustle of everyday life of a north Indian town. ‘Gull Kid Bann' (1955) and ‘Band Gail Ka Achier Makin’ (1969), two of Barite’s well known short stories capture the darkness and courage of the lives owned by this world. His two novels, on the other hand, bring out the romantic and the comic feel of the same.

Two of his critical works were part of the contemporary literary journalism showing his disenchantment with the bland imitation of Marx’s ideas in progressive criticism (*Pragativad: Ek Samiksha*, 1949) and the importance of human values in literature (*Manav Mulya Aur Sahitya*, 1960). Bharati also produced a series of translations of Western poetry (*Deshantar*, 1965) and Oscar Wilde’s short stories (*Oskar Wild Ki Kahaniyan*, 1960).

**TIME LINE:**

Date of Birth: 25 December 1926, Allahabad, India

Died: 4 September 1997

M. A. In Hindi: University of Allahabad, 1946

Ph.D.: 1954, University of Allahabad

Editor: Dharmayug (Weekly), 1960-1987

Awards: Padmashree, 1972

**COLLECTED WORKS**

*Dharamvir Bharati Granthawali*, in 9 vols., edited by Chandrakant Bandiwadekar (New Delhi: Vani Prakashan, 1998).

**IMPORTANT WORKS**

RESEARCH

Dharamvir Bharati, *Siddha-Sahitya (Vajrayani Siddha Sahitya Ka Vistrit Adhyayan* (1955).

LITEARY CRITICISM

*Pragativad: Ek Samiksha* (1949).

*Manav Mulya Aur Sahitya* 1960).

POETRY

Poems in Doosarsa *Saptak*, edited by S. H. Vatsyayan Agyeya (1951).

*Kanupriya* (1959).

*Thanda Loha Tatha Anya Kavitayen* (1952).

*Sapna Abhi Bhi* (1993).

NOVELS

*Gunahon Ka Devata* (1949).

*Suraj Ka Satwan Ghoda* (1952).

SHORT STORIES

*Gul Ki Banno* (1955)

*Band Gali Ka Akhiri Makan* (1969)

PLAYS

*Andha Yug* (1954).

TRANSLATIONS BY DHARAMVIR BHARATI

*Oskar Wild Ki Kahaniyan* (1960).

*Deshantar* (1965).

TRANSLATIONS OF BHARATI’S WORKS

Dharamvir Bharati, *Andha Yug*, translated, with a critical introduction by Alok Bhalla (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Dharamvir Bharati, *The Sun’s Seventh Horse*, translated by S. H. Vatsyayan Agyeya (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1999).

JOURNALISM, REPORTS AND TRAVEL WRITINGS

Editor of *Dharmyug* (1960-1987), published weekly.

THEATRE PRODUCTIONS OF PLAYS

*Andhya Yug*, directed by various people, notably by Satyadev Dubey, Ebrahim Elkazi, Ratan Thiyam and Bhanu Bharati.

FILMS BASED ON NOVELS

*Suraj Ka Satvan Ghoda*, A film directed by Shyam Benegal (1992).

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