**Nemade, Bhalchanadra (b. 1938)**

Bhalchanadra Vanaji Nemade was born in the village Sangvi, in the northern

part of Maharashtra. After school years he moved to Pune for his

graduation at Fergusson College. Later he acquired the M.A. In Linguistics

at the Deccan College, Pune, and an M.A. in English Literature at the

University of Mumbai. Nemade has taught English at various places: the

Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, Goa University,

Panjim, Goa. He was, until his retirement, the Tagore Chair at University

of Mumbai. He has also taught at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, for a year.

Nemade’s first novel, *Kosla* (1963) modernized the Marathi novel in terms

of style, irreverence and irony. The story of a rural young man who comes

to Pune for graduation (several loose parallels to his own life), the

novel ends with him, disillusioned by almost everything, choosing to

return to the village and presumably live a more or less cynical life. It

has had a tremendous impact on the youth among Marathi readership in the

60’s and 70’s especially. Post-adolescent young people still find in the

novel resonances with their own lives. In its function and style, it is

reminiscent of Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye*, though by all available

accounts, Nemade read this book much after writing *Kosla*. This is borne

out by elements of style: the use of ‘like’ in Salinger’s book is not

similar to the use of ‘udaharnarth’ (for example).

The next two novels (*Bidhar* 1975, and *Jarila* 1977) have the same

protagonist (Changdev), and trace his life  in ironic heterodigetic

narration often puncutated by free indirect discourse as he moves from

town to town, looking for a job. These treat various educational and

intellectual institutions and interpersonal relationships with gentle but

firm irony, always tending towards cynicism. Another novel, *Hool* 1975 is

more or less the same as the next novel, *Zool* 1979 which introduces a new

protagonist, Namdev, though the structures of meaning, plot and style are

similar to earlier novels. It has been said by Marathi critics that he is

a novelist of one novel, it is also said that these are 'existentialist'.

After these novels, Nemade did not publish much fiction for many years,

though he was prolific in the field of criticism. His critical writing

emphasizes ‘nativism’ (he could be said to be an early theorist of it in

India) and mostly suggests that a literary work attains universality only

by being rooted in its own cultural and material ‘soil’.

After twenty-one years of writing and drafting, he published his latest

novel, *Hindu: Jaganyachi Samruddha Adagal* (Hindu: the Copious Junk of

Living) in 2010. The novel locates itself in archealogical time, mainly

through its protagonist, who works for a research degree in archealogy--

traversing, spatially, a whole Asiatic region from north-Maharashtra to

what is now Pakistan and beyond.

Timeline

1963 *Kosla*

1990 Sahitya Akademi Award

2010 *Hindu: Jaganyachi Samruddha Adagal*

2011 Padma Shree

2015 Jnanapeeth Award