

22 November 1994

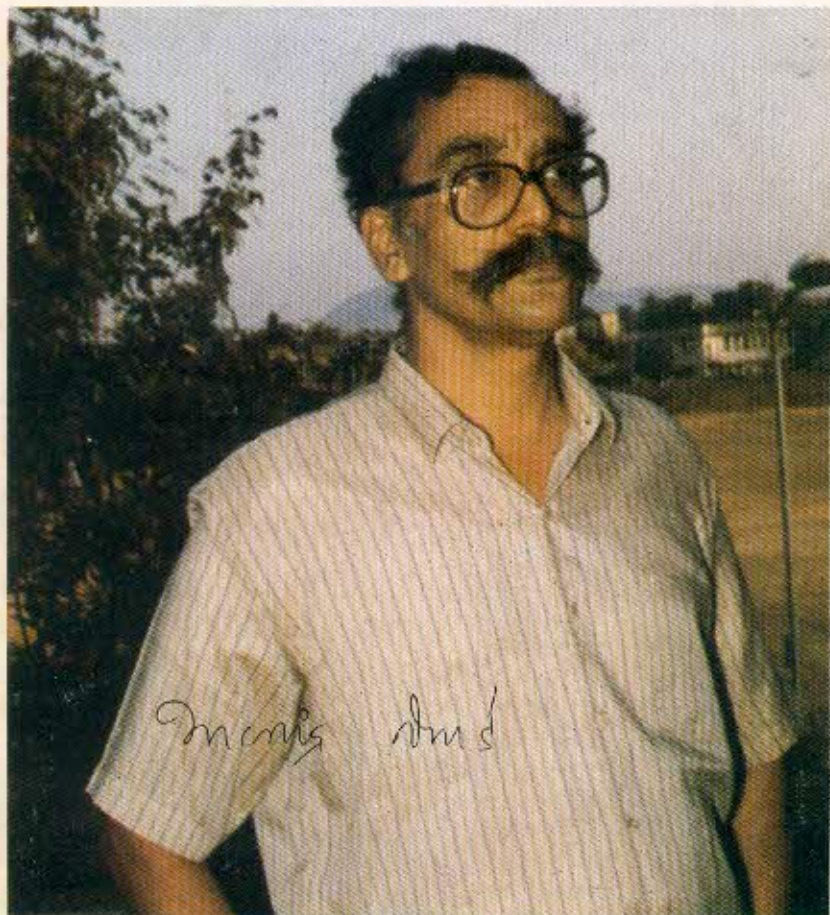


Sahitya Akademi · India International Centre

Invite you to

meet the author

Bhalchandra Nemade

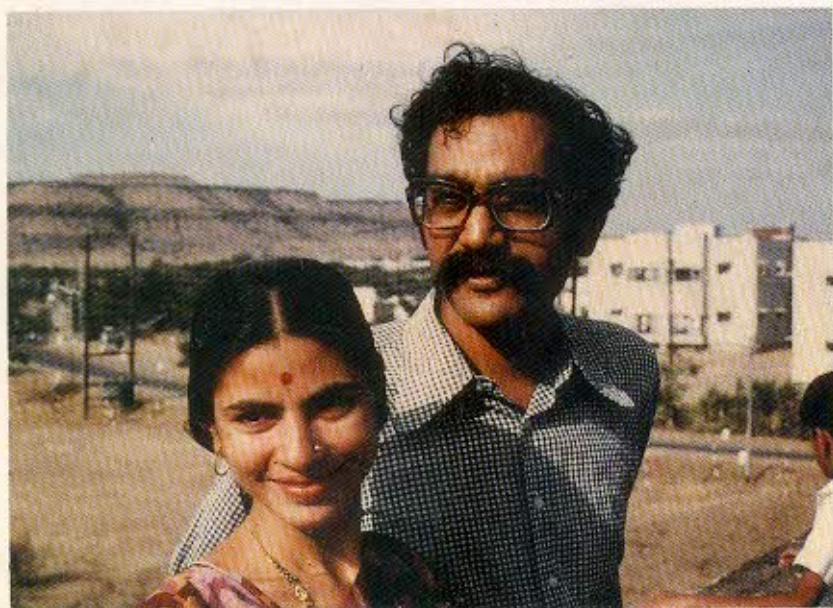


Born in 1938 in Sangvi, a tiny village in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, Bhalchandra Nemade in his formative years grew up in the grass-root culture of two distinct traditions of Maharashtra that his parents had inherited, the Mahanabhav and the Varkari. After doing his matriculation, Nemade moved to Pune for higher education. In a sense, this transition from a remote village to metropolitan space was decisive because it gave him an opportunity to explore the problems of the shift from tradition to modernity—characteristic of the post-Independence situation.

Nemade's early attention to this complex dilemma is evident in his involvement with the literary culture of Maharashtra. In the early sixties Nemade plunged into the little magazine movement. He edited a number of little magazines such as *Aso*, *Vacha* and established,

with the help of a group of like-minded contemporaries, a small amateur publishing house called *Vacha Prakashan*. The focus of all these activities was on the introduction of new original talent so far ignored by the literary establishment of the period.

Nemade's *Kosla*, which came out in 1963, may be seen as the summation of a long period of anti-establishment literary career. In dealing with the theme of alienation affecting the grassroot level of a transitional society, *Kosla* came to represent the mood and experience of a whole new generation which emerged after 1960. In its use of wit, irony and form *Kosla* dismantled the existing notions and conventions of novel-writing mostly derived from Western aesthetics. *Kosla's* use of colloquial speech and creative modulations of everyday language opened up new possibilities in Marathi fiction.



With his wife



With Prof. U.R. Anantha Murthy

The dialectic between the spiritual angst and the social problematique, so characteristic of *Kosla*, is explored with renewed energy in Nemade's proposed quartet of novels, of which three have come out so far. They are *Bidhar* (1975), *Jareela* (1977) and *Zool* (1979). Using the journey archetype, Nemade has made in these novels a bold attempt to provide a cross-section of contemporary Marathi culture in terms of a moral exploration of caste, religion, sectarianism, education, marriage and a host of other related themes. These three novels thus constitute a critique of contemporary Marathi society caught in the trammels of social change. A remarkable feature of the trilogy is the way in which it has revitalised the conventions of realistic narrative with meticulous craftsmanship.

No less a poet than a novelist, Nemade published his first collection of poems *Melody* in 1970. Casting off the legacy of romantic idiom and re-

ceived modernism of the West, poems in this collection experimented with prose rhythm steeped in folk-culture and images. His second collection of poems *Dekhni* (1991) seeks a variation on the impersonal tone of *Melody* by using the autobiographical mode reminiscent of medieval Marathi saint-poetry. *Dekhni* also includes rich experiments with Konkani speech and Goan culture. Equally interesting here is Nemade's use of the surrealist mode whenever thematic compulsions demand it. Thus, though limited in number, Nemade's poems have made a distinctive impact of their own.

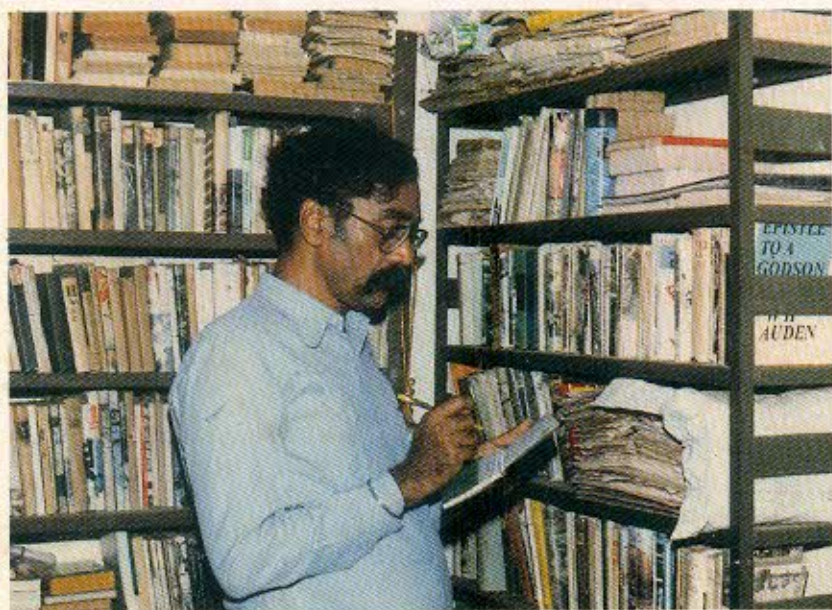
Nemade's contribution as a scholar-critic has been immensely substantial in Marathi literature. Writing for over a period of thirty-five years, Nemade's critical articles, collected in the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning title *Teekaswayamvara*, testify to a bold non-conformist attempt to bring about a re-evaluation of Marathi liter-

ary history and criticism. At the centre of *Teekaswayamvara* is a radical postulation of the concept of nativism. Nemade defines nativism not only as an academic concept but as a cultural experience required to counter the debilitating Westernism inherited through our colonial past. From this point of view, *Teekaswayamvara* becomes a major intellectual statement in the post-colonial literary-cultural scene in India. Nemade has evolved a whole nativist poetic in terms of an interdisciplinary approach comprising sociology, anthropology, linguistics and comparative literature.

Nemade's doctoral research work on the influence of English on Marathi is a sociolinguistic and stylistic study of an exemplary nature, with implications reaching out into cultural studies. Nemade's concerns as a critic are further articulated in his

monograph on Tukaram in which we see a modern Marathi writer trying to come to terms with one of our greatest saint poets by examining his tradition of native liberal humanism.

As a poet, novelist, critic and teacher, Nemade has essentially been a non-conformist artist, generating controversies, participating in debates and initiating polemical discussion on significant cultural issues. In playing all these roles, however, Nemade has scrupulously avoided the formidable temptations of journalism and newspapers. Nemade's reputation today is the product of the literary taste he himself has shaped to a great extent. Although aggressive, uncompromising and polemical, Nemade has always held up the image of the artist as citizen, thereby recovering the ethical role of the writer in modern society.



A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Poetry

- MELODY. Aurangabad :
Vacha Prakashan,
1970. 42p. 18.5 cm.
- DEKHNI. Bombay: Popular
Prakashan, 1991.
65p. 21.5 cm.

Novels

- KOSLA. Pune : Deshmukh
Prakashan, 1963.
335p. 18.5 cm.
- BIDHAR. Nagpur : Ameya
Prakashan, 1975.
358 p. 21.5 cm.
- JARILA. Bombay : Popular
Prakashan, 1977.
261 p. 21.5 cm.
- ZOOL. Bombay : Popular
Prakashan, 1979.
206p. 21.5 cm.

Criticism, Research, etc.

IN MARATHI

- SAHITYACHI BHASHA.
Aurangabad : Saket
Prakashan, 1987.
97p. 21.5 cm.
- TEEKASWAYAMVARA.
Aurangabad : Saket
Prakashan, 1990.
338p. 21.5 cm.

IN ENGLISH

- TUKARAM. New Delhi :
Sahitya Akademi,
1980. 76p. 21.5 cm.
- THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH
ON MARATHI : A
SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND
STYLISTIC STUDY.
Panaji: Rajahauns

Prakashan, 1990
261p. 21.5 cm.

MARATHI READING COURSE
(with I.M.P. Raeside)
London : School of
Oriental and African
Studies, University
of London, 1991.
297p. 25.5 cm.

MARATHI READING COURSE
(with I.M.P. Raeside)
New Delhi : Heritage
Publication, 1991.
297p. 25.5 cm.

INDO-ANGLIAN WRITINGS.
Dharwad :
Prasarang, Karnatak
University, 1991.
35p. 18.5 cm.

MARATHI FOR BEGINNERS.
Aurangabad : Saket
Prakashan, 1994.
103p. 21.5 cm.

Translation into other languages

KOSLA. New Delhi : Hindi
translation by
Bhagwandas Varma,
National Book Trust,
1992. 318p. 21.5 cm.

TUKARAM. Aurangabad :
Marathi translation
by Chandrakant
Patil, Saket
Prakashan, 1994.
100p. 21.5 cm.

Translation of
Tukaram also pub-
lished by Sahitya
Akademi in Hindi,
(1983), Kannada
(1986), Malayalam
(1986), Oriya (1993),
Tamil (1985) and
Telugu (1985).

A CHRONOLOGY

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|
| 1938 | Birth | 1984 | Karad-Yashwantrao Chavan Award for Zool. |
| 1959 | B.A., Fergusson College, Pune. First poem published in <i>Chhanda</i> . | 1987 | Appointed as Professor and Head, Deptt. of English. |
| 1961 | M.A. (Linguistics), Deccan College, Pune. | | Marathi Abhyas Parishad-Mahabank Award and Kurundkar Award for <i>Sahityachi Bhasha</i> . |
| 1963 | First novel <i>Kosla</i> published. | 1990 | R.S. Joag Award and H.S. Shenolikar Award for <i>Teekaswayamvara</i> . |
| 1964 | M.A. (English). Started teaching English at Ahmednagar College. | 1991 | Invited to University of Bombay as Professor of Gurudev Tagore Chair of Comparative Literature. Kusumagraj Award for <i>Dekhni</i> . Sahitya Akademi Award for <i>Teekaswayamvara</i> . |
| 1966 | Edited and published <i>Vacha</i> . First collection of poems <i>Melody</i> published. | 1992 | Bahinabai Pratishtan—Mahanor Award for <i>Dekhni</i> . |
| 1971 | Teaching Marathi at School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Visited Europe. | 1993 | Honorary D. Litt. from North Maharashtra University. Visited China. |
| 1972 | Return to his native village. Wrote the trilogy <i>Bidhar</i> , <i>Jarila</i> and <i>Zool</i> . | | |
| 1973 | Joined Marathwada University. | | |
| 1976 | H.N. Apte Award for <i>Bidhar</i> . | | |
| 1981 | Ph.D. of Marathwada University. | | |



Indian writers' delegation in China, 1993.