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**Sahitya Akademi**

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**meet the author**

**Yashwant Manohar**





Rose to eminence with his first collection of poems entitled *Utthangumpha* in 1977, Yashwant Manohar is acknowledged as a major poet in Marathi literary world today. He courageously expressed his sentiment against fanaticism, the caste hierarchy, superstitions, social oppression and also voiced for equality, liberty, fraternity through his literary works.

Born in a remote village, weltering in poverty and penury, called Yerala in 1943, Yashwant started writing poems and songs of

social reformation in 1956. His writings are fiery charged with revolutionary spirit. Bhalachandra Phadke, an eminent critic called Manohar's poetry 'a volcano of uprising'. He spoke for the upliftment of the down-trodden.

Yashwant suffered many hardships during his childhood days. He did his schooling up to fourth class at Yerala and, later, a nearby town five miles away from his village. He developed love for reading books and inclination to voice his views while he was in sixth class. After completing his matriculation, he did his graduation in Milind College, Aurangabad, the college founded by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. It was there his literary talents found expression in the company of the distinguished litterateurs such as M. N. Wankhede, R. G. Jadhav and Bhalachandra Phadke. He intensely read Charvak, Buddha, Socrates, Marx, Sartre, Richards, Babasaheb Ambedkar, histories of Indian and the Western philosophy during this period. He began to understand the foundations of the



L to R : Kusumagraj, Yashwant Manohar & Baburao Bagul





*With P. L. Deshpande*

struggle risen on account of economic and social inequality. Yashwant's deep faith in the ideologies and views of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Phule kept alive his optimism and creativity even in the days of penury. His passion for reading and love for literature relieved him of the frustration came out of poverty and hunger.

After completing his graduation with a first class, he did his M.A. in Marathi language and literature from the Marathwada University, Aurangabad under the tutorship of veteran Marathi critics Sudhir Rasal, V.L. Kulkarni and Y.M. Pathan. His poetic genius found a fresh breath in the lively literary and cultural environment in Aurangabad. His views on untouchability, the caste system, social oppression and the humiliation meted out by the social underdogs found verbal expression. His poetic sensibility is of two edged sword, one of tears of agony and the other, fiery revolt.

Manohar began his career as a lecturer teaching Marathi literature

at Pratishthan College, Paithan and later, joined Nagpur College, Nagpur where Sharadchandra Muktibodh, veteran Marathi poet, fiction writer and critic, was head of the Marathi department. Besides teaching Marathi literature to the students, he had instilled in them a deep sense of social reformation.

Sri Manohar has been prolific, ceaselessly writing ever since he started as writer. He has seven collections of poems, 32 books of literary thoughts, three novels, 23 books of criticism, three non-fictional works, four collections of letters and a travelogue to his credit. He is known for his judicious worldview and deep sense of social commitment. According to Purushottam Patil, an eminent Marathi poet, who said "Yashwant Manohar is to Marathi what Dostoyevsky is to Russian." Celebrated Marathi writers such as P.L. Deshpande, Baburao Bagul, M.S. Patil, Narhar Kurundkar, Vasant Abaji Dahake, Janardan Waghmare, Sambhaji Kadam praised Sri Manohar's multi-dimensional personality





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## A CHRONOLOGY

- 1943 Birth
- 1967 M.A. in Marathi in Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar  
Marathwada University, Aurangabad
- 1969 Lecturer in Marathi at Pratishthan Mahavidyalaya,  
Paithan
- 1969 Lecturer, Nagpur Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur
- 1977 *Utthangumpha*, first collection of poems published
- 1979 Joined the Post-graduation Teaching Department,  
Nagpur University
- 1980 Maharashtra State Government Award for the Best  
Literary Work
- 1983-87 Member, Marathi Advisory Board, Sahitya Akademi
- 1984 Awarded Ph.D. by Nagpur University
- 1989 Maharashtra State Government Award for the Best  
literary work (twice)
- 1989-90 President, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Sanskriti Mandal
- 1993 Represented Marathi at the National Poets' Meet held in  
Lucknow
- 1995 Maharashtra State Government Award for the Best  
literary work
- 2000 Phule-Ambedkar Sahitya Panchayat Award, Satara
- 2001 Bhalachandra Phadake Award, Maharashtra Sahitya  
Parishad, Pune
- 2002 Padmashree Vikhe Patil Award  
Indira Sant Award
- 2003 Maharashtra Foundation Award
- 2003 Parivartanwaadi Sahityik Award, Kurundawadi,  
Kolhapur
- 2009 Indira Sant Award



*Receiving Maharashtra Foundation Award from R. G. Jadhav,  
eminent Marathi writer*