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A Coup D'œil At the Life and Literature of Guruprasad Mohanty

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Abstract

Guruprasad Mohanty is the literary genius of Odia literature to whom we can never forget while dealing with its modern age or Post-independence literature. He has his serious deals in his poetry with the real aspects and the naked truths of the so called age. He has studied both man and woman of the age very closely and has depicted that concept on the societal problems and declines of the ethics and values etcetera. He was a college teacher by profession. Here, attempts have been made to discover the three vertices of his personality: first, his personality as a man with family, society and other human qualities, second, his personality as a teacher and thirdly as a poet or a man of literature. However, the paper tries to unveil his literary contributions and to identify them in short.

Key-words: Post-Independence, Modernism, Post Modernism, Third World.

1. Introduction

Only a few people have earned that much of prestige in national level what Guruprasad has earned in his little time and attempts. One can find his noble literary contributions well with little investment of time and labour. But one cannot easily find his noble attitudes and offerings in terms of building a healthy society under the umbrella of humanity. Some people are there who are born to help people and build the society in every respect at the cost of their own lives. Guruprasad is not at all other than those people. His greatest quality ever is not that he is an A Grade poet or an outstanding poet but he is a poet-maker. Many examples are there with us. We can see or take the conspicuous examples of Ramakant Rath and Harihar Mishra who have been moved deeply and directly. But we need to count the number, not the names (for convenience), of those who have been moved indirectly by his poetry from those days till today. His kind and generous heart and mind uniting with his pure spirit had prepared a triangle with irreplaceable resonance. This has established his personality in golden letters. Therefore, both of his literary and individual lives are worth learning and knowing.

2. Life of Mohanty: An Introduction

Guruprasad Mohanty is a revolution in Odia literature. The real modernity in its complete pack of colours and complexity came forward with the poetry of Mohanty. Routray- Rout and Mohanty was the trio who brought this complexity and real colour of modern life into the domain of post-fifties Odia poetry. Like the calyx of a flower these three talents hold the basal petals of post-independence Odia poetry tight. Thereafter, with some serious and deep-rooted commitments a few poets twinkled in the sky of the post-sixties firmament of Odia poetry. We can take the names of Binod Chandra Nayak, Ramakant Rath, Sitakant Mohapatra, Saubhagya Kumar Mishra, Rajendra Kishore Panda, Deepak Mishra, Gopal Chandra Mishra, Harihar Mishra, Prativa Satapathy, Gopal Krushna Rath, Binod Rouray and Jagannath Prasad Das particularly in this faction of the flashing and fluorescing personalities. Therefore, we can stoutly say that Guruprasad is a trend setter. Some of the critic remark that he is also a trend breaker. It is equally true. Very interestingly, he has broken the trends of his company in this expedition, and he is none other than Sachhidananda Routray, the so called great poet. In fact, Routray was not at all in this experimental trend from his very first

Spell. After the Sabuja groups though he has countered that trend and established the Pragati (progressive) one in Odia literature with Ananta Patnaik, Raghunath Das, Rajanikanta Das etcetera, still serious experiments had not been seen in the sky of Odia poetry as Guruprasad has done. Some might advocate about the 'Dhoosara' (Grey) sect of Paandulipi, i.e., the poetry of this sect of the volume. But it must be answered here to those types of questions that except Pratima Nayak and a few other poems in that volume we never see him experimenting anyway either with language, or with style or with theme and other modern poetic devices. After Routray's commitment if we see somebody committed with that much of intensity, vigour and potency. The form and mood of this experimental poetry was really new. "The Bhagiratha (pioneer) of Experimental Odia Poetry, Sachhi Routray has successfully applied myth in his own poetry for the first time."^[1] But in the poetry of Guruprasad we encounter a much better and powerful postures of those experimentations with much better and higher range of commitment and intensity. Thus, he is a true trend setter. He has influenced much more to the germinating as well as new-comers of that time into the experimental realm and the province of Odia poetry. Thus, he is entitled to be called as a revolution in the modern Odia poetry both in spirit and spectacle, form and philosophy and of course, in appeal and attitude. Surendra Mohanty, the eminent critic of Odia literature says in this regard that "Guruprasad Mohanty (1924) is a new retina cell and possibility in the expression of new/ contemporary poetry in the age of dominance by Sachhidananda Routray."^[2] This age of new poetry has been captured and dominated by Routray. Guruprasad came and broke the chains of Routray and established his one.

Guruprasad is a man of honesty, jurisprudence, principle and practice. He has produced many students of this idea, belief and criterion. But he is a clean-hearted man. He is simply generous and handsome looking person. He had a great-kind heart. In poetry, what he has done is really remarkable and has been ideal of many for several decades after him. Even today, many of the poets are following his style and attitude. Guruprasad is basically famous and placed in the hot discussion of modern poetry for his post-fifties contribution. In between 1939-40 we discern him as a romantic poet but just after that we perceive a new Guruprasad. That is an anti-romantic Guruprasad. This anti-romantic philosophy has not only enriched the Mohanty's stock but also has made him famous. In *The Sahakaara* and *The Utkal Saahitya*, Guruprasad's early poetry twinkled. The romantic interest, intensity and attitude were the main symptoms of his early poetry which were published in the mentioned magazines. This could be told that *The Sahakaara* and *The Utkal Saahitya* has given birth Guruprasad as a poet. "Though less in number a number of poets of the sixties who born after 1930 have been deeply affected by Guruprasad's poetry. It is quite conspicuous in the poetry of Ramakant Rath and Jagannath Prasad Das. Basically, in modernism and ultra-modernism, the intentions which had been reflected in Sachhidananda's poetry, became more conspicuous and sui generic in Guruprasad's poetry. None is there in Odia literature to be famous like Guruprasad who has written very few number of poetry."^[3] Guruprasad, under the moral pressure, challenge and inspiration as well wrote serious poems. We see two motivating persons in this regard. They are

Professor Bidhu Bhushan Das and Poet Radha Mohan Gadanaiik. It is also true that some other inspiring people were there to elevate the desire in Mohanty to write the experimental and some serious poems. Hence, only then, Guruprasad started following T.S. Eliot, the best poet of the twentieth century. He started writing some experimental poems with the use of the modern poetic devices like symbols, images, myth, archetype and some other modern 'isms'.

3. Life of Guruprasad: A Bird's Eye-View

Life of Guruprasad is very much akin to his literary works. We can easily encounter the sequences of his life-events and the consequences thereby. Guruprasad was a doting child of his parents. Guruprasad's family was definitely well educated at that time and coincidentally this family has significant contribution to Odia literature. "Guruprasad, the creative poet of the long poem 'Kaalapurusha' is the nephew of Gopinath."^[4] Guruprasad was born in a small village of Cuttack district named Naagabaali. The name of his father was Mr. Ramachandra Mohanty and his mother was Krushnakumari Mohanty. He was born on the day of Gurupurnima, (Wednesday) the auspicious day from the view of Hinduism in the year 1924. It is the 16th day of July of 1924. The Gurupurnimaa time (Tithi) was from 11:08 on 15th July, 1924 and ends at 07:48 on 16th July, 1924.

"Full moon day during Ashadha month is known as Guru Purnima day. Traditionally this day is reserved for Guru Puja or Guru Worship. On this day disciples offer Puja or pay respect to their Gurus. Guru refers to spiritual guide who enlighten disciples by his knowledge and teachings. Guru Purnima is also known as Vyasa Purnima and this day is commemorated as birth anniversary of Veda Vyasa. Veda Vyasa was the author as well as a character in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. [...] Guru Purnima is also celebrated by Buddhists in the honour of Gautama Buddha to commemorate the day when Buddha gave his first sermon at Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh, India."^[5]

It was also Aashaadha Purnimaa. His pet name was 'Gunaa'. It was the time of Monsoon of that year. In Indian seasons' cycle we say it is the time of Varshaa rutu or Rainy season. Interestingly his famous poem *Kaalapurusha* has its beginning with this Varshaa rutu (Rainy season). "Barshaa rutu nishthura nirmama [...]"^[6] or we can read its translation "The monsoon, cruel and merciless [...]"^[7] instead. It is the time for the zodiac signs Karkata (Cancer) and Simha (Leo). The people born in this time belong to these zodiac signs. The personality of a man depends upon the sign. Often it has been that people are affected by their zodiac signs and their natures could be calculated and assessed out of it. Guruprasad's nature is also like the people of these zodiac signs. Most probably he was from the zodiac sign of Karkata (Cancer). It was under the influence of Pushya Nashyatra and his zodiac sign is Cancer. The position was 12 degree Cancer 09' 26.11". Padam: 3. Nakshtra Lord: Saturn. Full degrees: 102. 16 Since, he was the doting child of his parents, his childhood memories went interesting and joyful. In those days, his father Shree Ramachandra Mohanty was an overseer. He was a government servant. It is true that the childhood time of Guruprasad (Gunaa) was under the umbrella of a kind of feudalistic, aristocrat and nobiliary environment. It has decided his nature and attitude of course in many ways. Guruprasad's mother Krushnakumari Patnaik's father was

the landlord (Jamindar) of Chanaahaata. She was the youngest daughter of his father. It is believed that a mother is the fountain of any culture to be inherited at first into a child's mind and heart. From 1924 to 1950 under the umbrella of blessings of his father Guruprasad enjoyed his early days. Famous Odia novelist Kanhu Charan Mohanty and Gopinath Mohanty are the relatives of Guruprasad. By the by Sitakant Mohapatra, the internationally acclaimed poet is also related to Guruprasad by blood. Guruprasad was the grandson of Shree Surjyamani Mohanty. The other side of Kaathajodi river of Cuttack district is the village of Guruprasad. Actually, from the other side of Kaathajodi approximately twelve kilometers away the east a river is there named Sidhuua. On the bank of Sidhuua his village Naagabaali falls. Interestingly, his poems are associated with these practical rivers and bridges. The Kaathajodi, the Sidhuua are the unleashing memories of Mohanty which are also sketched in his poetry. His famous poem Kaalapurusha includes the Cuttack district itself, the Kaathajodi River and bridge etcetera with great importance. In July, 1926 his grandfather Surjyamani died.

"[...] One has to go seven miles away crossing the Kaathajodi river bridge, left to the river embankment, means to the East to catch the village, first passes Uraali, then comes Jaripadaa, then falls Khandaaetaa, then comes Naagabaali. The name of that Kaathajodi river is Sidhuua there, and down to that its name is Devi River. The geography of this region has been changed after the Khandaaetaa Embankment broke in the flood of 1935, the Khandaaetaa village has been displaced far back away, the embankment has been too high, then one can see the river bank easily by gazing at from the side-by place of the home. The main land of his home was too high, even from the houses of the nearby villages."^[8]

Guruprasad's real and direct grandfather was Dibyasingha Mohanty. His home is in this land but now all his family lives in the cities. From the years ago they were not living there in the village. In that village Naagabaali various kinds of people are seen from the sociological point of view. Bramhins, Khandayats, Karanas, the carpenters, the blacksmiths, mud-pot-makers, milkman, fisherman, sweet-maker etcetera many people live together in that village. "Only by pet name it is Naagabaali, but the major part of it goes legally under the cultivation centric Khndaaetaa Mouza, that falls west to Naagabaali, and the lesser part goes to the Dhaanagharapadaa Mouza of the east where maximum number of Muslims live."^[9] When looking into the poetry of Guruprasad and especially to the long poem Kaalapurusha we get some strong evidences in favour of the motion of the hour. While exercising with the life of Guruprasad, it is very important to note his birth-place and its surroundings. Its culture, socio-economic practices and other things have put deep impact on his mind and heart. This impact has further been reflected in the canvas of his poetry. Hence, these sequences of his life could be traced as the consequences made in his poetry. His village Naagabaali preserves many folk-myths and mysteries and assumptions and presumptions. "It is not very clear from the name 'Naagabaali' – what does it actually mean. Some say that there was no greenery but sand and heap of sand, and people often see the cobra snakes (Naja naja) on the way nearer to the embankment. Some other say that that was a very good and fertile place for Paan plant as it was close to the river bank. Then there set a village."^[10] What is

true, what is false, which is fake, which is not- it is too hard to know. Naagabaali's temple, old banyan trees, old tanks, old manuscripts or any old heritage-centric document is not available here today. In the trend of time everything has been changed. Guruprasad's direct great grandfather was Nabin Mohanty and his great-grand mother was Saadhabee Debee. Nabin Mohanty's son was Dibyasingha Mohanty whose son was Guruprasad's father Mr. Shriram Mohanty. Shriram worked as an overseer or as a sub-overseer in the districts like Mayurbhanj, Malkangiri and Raygada just after the death of his father. Dibyasingha died when he was an engineer at Bhaagalpur. Guruprasad's mother Krishna Kumari has lived there in the village for a while. Guruprasad's great-grand father's first son Bhagabat was a good and meritorious student. Unfortunately he died at Cuttack in an accident falling from the horse-top during his study of entrance. He fell from a horse while riding it and one of the feet of the horse came on the chest of the child. There after we see his other sons namely, Surjyamani, Dibyasingha, Dayanidhi etcetera. Guruprasad's grandfather Dibyasingha's two brothers Surjyamani and Neelamani had been from the Cuttack Vernacular School. This was the qualification at that time to be an engineer. Dibyasingha first read High School and then the 'Survey'. He was trend by his brothers about engineering and became an overseer. This is clear from the above facts that there was a clean economical basis for Guruprasad. It is quite common to see that all of the ancestors of Guruprasad were overseer or engineer by profession. All these people were highly learnt at that time. Hence, to be an English lecturer or a major or behind his disciplined life surely there was a latent inspiration of the family back-ground. At that time the M.P.C. High School was one of the best and most aristocrat schools of Odisha. And for the posting of his father at different places he had to read/ study at that school. At that time his father was posted in Mayurbhanj district. His age was within 16-17 during his metric pass. Enrolled in I.A Class and successfully passed the examination from the Patna University. The very next year, that means in 1944 he married to Aashaa Manjari Mohanty, the elder daughter of Kulamani Mohanty. His marriage ceremony observed at the Residence of his father-in-law near Mahatab Road. After one year of his marriage, a son was born in the year 1945 by Mrs. Mohanty. The name of this son was Sarbadaman. His pet name was Lulu. That year he passed B.A. from Ravenshaw College, Odisha with English honours. He was quite brilliant and a meritorious student at those days. He enrolled himself in M.A. (English) course in Ravenshaw College once again in 1945. This was his second spell at Ravenshaw. But this time he was a P.G. student. This times much responsibility, much seriousness and influence, and much more pressure on his shoulder. He digested many English and American writers during his post-graduation. Specially, he assimilated Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Dryden, and Eliot of course. Out of these writers probably Shakespeare, Dryden and Eliot have influenced him deeply which has been reflected in his poetry. It was quite difficult to get a degree (award) of Honours with Distinction at that time. But Guruprasad passed B.A. with distinction. In 1947, he passed M.A. successfully as the highest mark holder of the college. This proved that Guruprasad was really a man/ student of potency and immense possibility. This year he became the father of his second child whose name was Shatru Daman. His pet name was Julu. That

year, he joined as a lecturer in English at Gangadhar Meher College, Sambalpur. He had many dreams with this profession there but he could not be there for a long time. Soon he joined the S.C.S. College, Puri as a lecturer in English. He was man of strict discipline and manners. India got its freedom in 1947 and Guruprasad joined S.C.S. College, Puri in 1948. He was living in the 'Haatee Kothi' there. He became the father of his third child, this time it was a girl-child, whose name was Priyadarshini (Pusi). It was a happy family indeed. Guruprasad was going towards the dense academics and administrative spheres of higher education department and the college as well. Guruprasad was man of fondness and humour from beginning. He was always in happy mood. He had a dense love towards his sons and daughters. The noble and greater nature of Mohanty was that – he loved all his students no less than his own children. This is, in fact the true quality of a teacher that Guruprasad had. He was trying to bloom the buds of intellect and latent talents within them. This is in fact the cause which made him a true teacher, philosopher, guide and prophet for his students. All his qualities were so impressive that not only in his personal life's attitude but also in his poetic life he was the ideal of many in number. Ramakant Rath, Harihar Mishra, Srinibas Tripathy, Laxman Kumar Panda, Laxmimohan Das etcetera are the proofs of the same. Various other poets are the blind followers of Mohanty till today. Again, many of the poets adopted the style, theme, approach and many other parts of his poetry in their own literary excellence and attempts. He was quite akin to the Odia culture and the folk-traditions. Various folk-sayings, folk-tales and legends were in his mind and heart. These have significant role in the making of his poetry. His own daughter Priyadarshini Mohanty says in this regard-

"My father has it all. He was the spirit of happiness, humorous, who knew other mind, the great story teller thought me to think to dream beyond me. He told us his kinds-the stories about the great Himalayan tigers, he made me shiver with the tale of the famous English ghost and he introduced me to books, the treasures of civilization, romance and life. I remember, I used to wait for the rainy dark night, cuddled in the chair to listen to tales of the whole world around. That was my father I loved when I was a child."^[11]

From the above statement of his daughter Priyadarshini Mohanty it is clear and conspicuous that Guruprasad was a caring and a seriously committed person both for his family as well as the socio-cultural matrix of the society. Guruprasad was a young fellow at that time-only a 26 years old person. Only 3-4 years of service as a lecturer had been past. He had joined as an N.C.C. officer in the college. It was 1950. Guruprasad had gone to organize an N.C.C. camp at Rangeilundaa. The cruel time took away the shade of his father. Therefore he could not attend the funeral ceremony of his father and hence his elder son Sarba Daman, who was only at the age of six, set the fire to the face of his grandfather Dibyasingha Mohanty. The very next year Guruprasad again became the father of his fourth child. This was his second girl child. Her name was Dooradarshini (Lucy). In 1952 his third girl child born whose name was Debadarshini (Tiki). This is the significant turn of his life. He received the mantras, consecrated with commencement of rites taking vow engaging in the accomplishment of ceremonies from the

Guru Sri Sri Viswa Pranab Atyaashram with his wife Aashaamanjari Devi. This was a kind of spiritual shelter of Mohanty. This action led him into the peaceful life for a while. But he was a man of his kind only. His apparently spiritual life started from right here. The bondage between Guruprasad and his children was really very strong and remarkable. The selfless love, affection, caring could not be altered or exchanged by anybody or by any means that he has given to all his children. Guruprasad's first marriage lasted for some years. Somehow it was very much close to T.S. Eliot's life. It was 1964. With several up and down in life Guruprasad put a colon mark on the marital relationship and restarted it with his beloved life partner Mrs. Arunaa Mohanty. After divorce, legally he married to Arunaa in the court in 1964. Arunaa was the third girl child of Alekh Chandra Mohanty of Bhagatpur, Cuttack. She was a lecturer in Zoology retired as a Reader in Zoology. In 1965 he became the father of his sixth child Shakti Prasad Mohanty (Pintu). Shakti Prasad's wife is Shilaa Patnaik. She is the daughter of Sri Samarendra Patnaik, the senior officer of the government of Odisha. Shilaa and shakti Prasad's only child is Varsha. She is the doting one like her grandfather Guruprasad. Guruprasad's seventh child took his birth from the second womb of Arunaa Devi. His name was Maanikeswari Prasad. He took birth in 1970 as the second child of Arunaa Mohanty and the seventh child of Guruprasad. He is working as a sales officer at Hindustan Petroleum at Jatani. His wife is Sanghamitra Patnaik. She was the elder daughter of Dr. Sharat Chandra Patnaik of Dunguri, Bargarh district. Maanikeswari and Sanghamitra's only son means the grandson of Guruprasad is Aaditya. Guruprasad has given tireless effort in order to provide caring, love and affection to all his children. The unceasing and unconditional affection and love of the offspring to his/her parents and vice versa is really second to nothing. Therefore, his daughter Priyadarshini has written these few words with her tearful ink which may be taken here into our account. She says-

"Before I could realize, my life had totally changed. I did not understand, how could everything change so suddenly. Even today I wonder how our lives changed course before we even had taken notice. We were washed away with the flow of circumstances, separated from our father, trying to survive, clutching to our existence. I wanted so much to hold my father's hands, but I could not reach them. He had assured me, one day he would reach out to me and would hold my hand. I wanted to make him happy with my scores in the school, with my success. But it did not matter, he eluded me. I was disappointed, disheartened. I sulked, I cried and rebelled; all in vain."^[12]

Similarly, Guruprasad's eldest son Sarbadaman is also a good lecturer in English as his father. Now, he is a retired Reader in English. His wife was Mrs. Bhubanamohini Mohanty, the third daughter of Shri Baikuntha Nath Mohanty of Basudebpur, a retired undersecretary of government of Odisha. They have two sons: Biswa Barenya (Sonu) and Sanat Kumar (Sanu). Biswa Barenya is the Senior Project Manager at Infosys. Similarly, Sanat Kumar, the grand child of Guruprasad is an engineer at Micropack. Sarbadaman's daughter is Alakaananda (Lisaa) and his daughter-in-law is Rashmita Mohanty. Guruprasad's great-grand-son is Aniket Mohanty.

Guruprasad's second son is Shatru Daman Mohanty. She is the Director of G.S.I., Kolkata. His wife (Guruprasad's

another daughter-in-law) was Nibedita Mohanty, the elder daughter of Sri Pradipta Kishore Das, the Education and Health Minister of that time. They have three children; two sons and a daughter. His sons are Sndeeep (Lunaa) and Sidhharth (Laalaa). His daughter was Lipi. She has completed her M.B.A. degree. The very common thing to be seen is that Guruprasad's ancestors, his family as well as his fore-comers – all are highly educated and developed.

Priyadarshini Mohanty, the daughter of Guruprasad was a doctor. She was by profession a medical officer. She is good scholar and researcher. She has been got international award and has been internationally acclaimed for her research on Diabetes. She got this award in 2001. Her husband is Mr. Anugraha Narayan Patnaik. Anugraha Narayan is the third child of Shri Mahesh Chandra Patnaik of Chanaahaat. Her son is Piyush and daughter-in-law is Bandanaa. They work in America together. Priyanka, the daughter of Priyadarshini works as doctor at Kalinga Hospital, Bhubaneswar. Her son-in-law is Rajkumar Dhupar and a grandson (great-grandson of Guruprasad) of four years named Aayush. Guruprasad's second daughter Dooradarshini was a very good house-wife. She had all those qualities to maintain a home. Her husband was Mr. Ashok Mohanty, by profession a lawyer. He is the fourth child of a retired O.F.S. officer, Mr. Kshetrabasi Mohanty. Her first child was a daughter. Her name was Kalyani Priyadarshini. She is a soft-ware engineer at Infosys. Son-in-law was a high ranked officer at Tata Telecom department. Second daughter was an M. Phil. scholar of Economics. She was Saumya Shubhadarshini. Third daughter was Aparna Aparajita, who was an engineer by profession Guruprasad's third daughter Debadarshini was also good house-wife. Her husband was Mr. Kshirod Kumar Padhi. He was the Principal-in-Charge of the Vikaram Dev College of Jeypore, Koraput. He is the third son of the best lawyer Hayagriha Panda. Debadarshini's son Debiprasad was retail Outlet Manager of the Reliance Petroleum Company. Daughter-in-law was also doctor. Her name was Pallabee. Grand-daughter was Anuskaa. Second son Sandipani was a lieutenant of INS, Kalinga. Guruprasad was also working as an N.C.C. Officer. In this way the life of Guruprasad could briefly be sketched with different colours and other things of life. Guruprasad was very popular and affectionate teacher among his students. He was very popular for his class-room teaching as well as for his student-teacher interactions and relationship. As a lecturer he has served for many years in many places right from Sambalpur to Puri, Angul, Keonjhar, Bhawanipatna, Berhampur, Jajpur, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack etcetera different places of Odisha. His first posting was in the Gangadhar Meher College, Sambalpur. After a few months he was transferred to S.C.S College, Puri. Then he served for years in different colleges of Odisha like Government College, Bhawanipatna, Khallikote College, Berhampur, N.C. College, Jajpur, J.K.B.K College, Cuttack etcetera. For some time he has worked as a principal teacher of the college. He has worked as a Deputy Director too at Bhubaneswar. During the Indo-China war he had been appointed as a Full-time officer in command at Cuttack and Dhenkanal. Finally, he took his retirement from the prestigious Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar College, Bhubaneswar as a Principal.

He just took retirement from the so called service life but he has never taken retirement from the mind and heart of

his students. His priceless love and unconditional affection worked as a strong and resilient string to tie his students with him forever even years after his retirement. Time passed. Situations rolled on. But he became the man of time, each time, and each age. Time could not fade away his personality, attitude, affections, love and ceaseless feelings. In 1948-49 when Guruprasad was a lecturer in English at Puri College, N.C.C. programme started in Odisha and in Puri as well for the first time. Guruprasad was all in all of the wing. He was the Second Lieutenant of N.C.C.. Many students knew him out of this N.C.C. practice as a lieutenant. The popularity increased because of his friendliness and strictness with the students. Laxmi Mohan Das, one of his students says that-

"[...] Our personal relationship increased slowly. He was so talented and a man of knowledge as an English Lecturer. He was so stiff and rigid for students- both in studies and N.C.C. he always wanted a symbiotic relationship between the students and teachers. He wanted a good interaction between the students and teachers and believed it a healthy one. One will simply be afraid of his uncommon and outstanding personality but a dense affection for his students remains therein. Usually he scolds with a common word 'bloody'. But there is a kind and generous mind, an affectionate heart beneath it."^[13]

He was quite conservative. He was not in favour of preaching self. Many of his students knew during their study that Guruprasad sir was writing Odia poetry. It was very hard to believe this. Guruprasad was very fluent in English. He never speaks Odia in class as well as outside the class. His students were well acquainted with an all-time English speaking teacher. Hence, some students asked Guruprasad with strangeness and doubt that whether he is that Guruprasad or not after reading the poem 'Nihita Godhooli' from the reputed pages of The Jhankaar. But it was really a heart touching poem for the readers though the author was completely anonymous and drowned in doubt. Chintamani Behera made clear that the poem published in the Jhankaar page has been written by that English speaking and English teaching Guruprasad. One day when Laxmi Mohan Das, one of his students asked him after reading the poem Nihita Godhooli from the pages of The Jhankaar after confirming about the author from their teacher Chintamani Behera, the versatile critic, speaker and lecturer in Odia, he flatly denied that he is not the author of that poem, some other may be. This is the height of honesty and commitment. He wanted a pure comment, not a biased one. Therefore he told like this. Many of his students were simply fond of his poetry. Similarly, his poetry became the first choice of many serious and committed readers of that time. This, in fact popularized him very soon. Chintamani Behera was very close to Guruprasad. He, one day told to his student Laxmi Mohan that Guruprasad has written a long poem with title 'Nirmooli'. Guruprasad had shown the manuscript to Professor Behera. It was highly appreciated by him too at that time before its publication. The title was not final. He told that day that the title may be changed. After this meeting that particular poem published in the Prajnaa, a quarterly magazine of that time with a modified title 'Kaalapurusha'. In fact, this poem has kept him alive for years and years even till today. After some days Guruprasad's best collection 'Samudra Snaan'a published and got the Sahitya Akademi award for it. A formal meeting was organized to greet him for the success at the

Raghunandan Library. The meeting was chaired and presided by Rajkishore Ray. Guruprasad had given his consent to join the meeting but could not join due to some problem may be. Much later, one day, when he was asked about the absence in that meeting he surprisingly asked- 'Do really people love my poem?' But he had already left his pen almost. When the reason was asked about his silence in writing again he remained silent. It was very painful for his dear students and friends and followers to see him silent and inactive, as he was the pivotal character in the past. Guruprasad was looking very strict and rigid type, harsh, authoritarian, illiberal, inflexible and unyielding type of person from his appearance or from outside. But his inner heart was too soft, kind and generous. His mind was so simple and sheds tear for the poor and drastic people for their destitute. In their every single tear, his heart feels crucified. The modern-man's misery is the biggest misery ever. Hence, the poet wanted to humour this in order to remove these scars from the lot of the modern man. That's why he is a true modern poet with perfect commitment and tone. A seasoned person can only feel this. He had no pride, no frailty, no selfish thought, no arrogance, or vanity, not even any kind of self-conceit, egotism, nor any kind of haughtiness, narcissism or hubris in him. He was a man of duty, responsibility, loyalty, deference and allegiance. His straight-forward and uncomplicated attitude, unadorned unpretentious nature, honesty and plain-sailing life had impressed many people of his time. He was very helping by nature. He helps people at his best which is beyond the nature of an ordinary man. He is a man of value and ethics. He was a good and salubrious human being, an outstanding teacher, a magnanimous friend, an appropriate and upright administrator, and an exemplary and promising poet at the same time. He was not at all a miserly person to help other. He has helped many people and his pupils. Therefore most of the people loved him and love him till date. Really, his work-patterns are ideal and worth imitating and following. One of his students, Dr. Laxman Kumar Panda says- "[...] for this kind hearted and great man I am a man today [...]. His love and affections, love and helping hands are never forgettable." [14] Guruprasad was not at all in favour of going to attend any literary meeting but his class. He never wanted to highlight himself or to preach anywhere. Many of the literary acclaimed friends used to come to his home 'Hatikothe', near the Golden Gouranga of Puri during his lectureship service at Samanta Chandra Sekhar College. His literary friends were coming to his home and this was the occasion where we find Guruprasad engaged in literary discussion other than his classes. Whenever he is asked to attend any meeting outside, he humbly answered- "You know I don't have that much of reading. I am not getting any time to read much. Hence, I will be exposed before one and all. Do you really want me to be exposed and demoralized before all?" Look at the height of humbleness. What an humble person! In spite of being so learnt, so intelligent and literally a great literary genius he has expressed his humbleness. This is the altitude of his noble attitude. There is hardly a simile or a metaphor for such a nice, affectionate, humble, kind-hearted and generous teacher. Many students have been moulded there in his home and have been successful in their lives. One of his students, Dr. Laxman Kumar Panda, who had stayed there in his home for four years and studied under his umbrella

of guidance, economical help and attitude and became the topper of the entire university and made his own life colourful with the colours of success, says-

"There no comparison of a man or a teacher like Sir (Guruprasad) who is sympathetic, supportive, condoling, commiserative, affectionate, mushy and crazy over his students. Before my stay one young man was staying there and had been studied and was successful with bright result and career. I have heard that many poor students have been established by the efforts of Mohanty. They have been established by their own efforts. Generally other teachers are usually not ready to keep students in their home and help them in every respect but Guruprasad has helped many poor students of drastic and destitute situation. He has heard these types of many instances in number before his own stay and study at his (Guruprasad's home) home and even after his one too. The big thing is that all those students have been successful in their lives and have been able to stand on their own legs after this." [15]

This quality is the biggest thing of Mohanty that he could inject the vaccine of self-empowerment and the spirit of establishing self. His literary works are master pieces each. He moves always tirelessly with the zeal of work. The finest thing in him is he never breaks down or turns down by anybody or any event. He is always straight and stout. The great poet of Odia language and literature, Sarasvati Award winner Shree Ramakant Rath has written a few lines for his favorite teacher Guruprasad in his death. The lines are as below:

"Guruprasad has taught me a couple of years, then, after some years, he started teaching me the art of writing poetry beyond the reach of my conscious knowledge." [16] Further he says- "It was quite unbelievable from the youthful and dynamic attitude and a soldier like personality of those days that he will write poems and those will be the heart-touching explanation of sheer alienation." [17]

Really, he is an industry which has produced many poets and personalities with certain specialties. He was a straight forward person who believed in perspiration instead of inspiration through his entire life.

"Guruprasad has neither any wish nor any regret over his entire life. On the death bed he was appearing as if a soldier has finished his duties properly and has left the field in silence." [18]

He was a very good and committed teacher in class room and outside the classroom too. He was at the same time a prompt NCC teacher at college level. In various colleges he served there has been the footprint of his duty and sincerity in these fields.

"Guruprasad Mohanty was my teacher. He was really an exceptional piece of master in English language and literature, one of the best teachers of Odisha, and of course a master piece and guide of Modern Odia poetry." [19] However, it is clear that the personality of Mohanty is inspiring and nobler. He was a good teacher, an excellent administrator and of course an exceptional poet and powerful poet-maker.

4. Exploring the Literary Life of Guruprasad: A Glimpse

He is the literary milestone for whom the literature of the sixties got a new direction; a new dimension. "After Sachhi Routray, he is the only powerful poet who has developed and strengthened the trend not only from the angle of form

but also from the angle of theme and spirit using symbols and myths.”^[20] He is unique in application of his rhyme scheme. The rhythm of his poetry is unique. ‘Harekrushna Das’ is the perfect poem of the hour. The specialty of his poetry is the use of variety of image. Guruprasad is very close to the general readers as he is far away from the uses of personal symbols. He has not gone to the individual stage in poetry to that of others of his time. All the poems of his joint compilation ‘Nutan Kabita’ (1955) had got wide appreciation at that time. Dr. Debi Prasanna Pattnaik had made an English review at that time. In this review he has stated there “New poems have broken new grounds in Oriya literature.”^[21] Really it makes a sense and it is hundred percent true. The hero of Guruprasad has taken his birth from the great churning of the sea of sufferings, pains and problems. The readers get the opportunity to drink a kind of unconventional ambrosia and experience the wild enjoyment. The literary life of Guruprasad Mohanty is not intentional or serious from the beginning. He was very serious about his teaching career, family and discipline in other areas of life. Guruprasad Mohanty was not at all serious for a literary career as he was for his students’ career. But he had started his writing from poetry. But those poetry were so romantic, nostalgic and very close to the Sabujities or the Green Odia literature. These poems were published in various reputed magazines like Utkala Saahitya and Sahakaara. Of course these are not the poems for which Mohanty is famous today but it is true that these are the original serum of the poet. These show that the poem wants a sane and serene society like his dream. The kind of society he wanted has been sketched here in these poems. A sane sober, clean and green mind, heart and soul are the quest of the poet from the beginning. Later from the second innings of Mohanty we see him very sarcastic and ironic to the society. It is due to the radical changes in the society after independence. He has written just a few poems and not in a so very fast and rigorous way. But very strangely he got success in his literary career for his second innings especially. It is worth to say here that the literary fate or the career of Mohanty is too similar to that of the career of Eliot. Not only this, his personal life is somehow similar to that of the life of Eliot. It is as interesting as astonishing. Eliot is more versatile and has put his hand in various forms of literature like drama and criticism and essay besides poetry. But Guruprasad is single-centric. He has his deals only with poetry.

“The poetic/literary life of Guruprasad is as slower as effective. He has come frequently to the lime-light of criticism and has been discussed the most by writing a few poems only- and this is not at all a less glorious business for a poet ever.”^[22]

If we talk about the forms of his first innings, we can see the meters and traditional musical rhythm in those. But later on we catch a new genre in him. We found his expertise in free verse in his second innings. Still he has a weakness towards the rule based poetry. He always wanted a life with rules, regulations, discipline and order. He always liked the classic style of life. This could be traced as his sub-conscious will or the inner thoughts. For this, may be, he has written some eleven sonnets. Though the sonnets’ themes are about the modern life but the form is traditional. Hence, from this we can infer that the modern values and cataclysm has been filled in the bucket of conventionalism. However, the way he has spoken the

decline of the holy spirit of life is really remarkable in the modern Odia literature. The way he began his literary career anew in this second innings is really incredible and unco. Babaji Charan Pattnayak has rightly remarked in this regard-

“In bringing newness in the post-independence trend of Odia poetry and in taking the readers aback as well Guruprasad’s efforts and excellence in terms of his poetry are always been accredited, approved and approbated by the readers.”^[23]

Guruprasad’s poetry, his poetic style, his voice and forms are of course new to Odia literature and are the assets and wealth of it. Post-independence Odia literature, especially in the post-independence and the post-sixties Odia poetry we have gained a lot of things due to the rigorous experimentations and applications of different techniques and objects and poetic devices. Therefore he will always be accepted as fine experimenter in poetry. Not only this, of course, it must be said that he is a successful and true and serious experimenter in Post-independence Odia poetry and in the entire Odia literature domain as well. Odia literature could have seen something more if would have penned more than what he has done. By the way, Guruprasad has been proved that he was a perfect experimental poet throughout his entire literary career.

Guruprasad has written a very few number of poems in his life. Out of them many have been placed in his poetry collections, many have been collected twice in his poetry collections, some have not been placed anywhere and some other are rarer now to get. He has only two individual poetry collections, namely:

1. Samudra Snaana (Bay Bath) published in January, 1970 from the Lark Books publishing house, Stony Road, Cuttack-2 and Luis Road, BBSR-14. The book has seen it second and third reprint in every four years’ interval, i.e., in 1974 and 1978 respectively under the umbrella of the same publisher.

2. Aasharjya Abhisaara published in 1988 from the publishing house Agraduta, Banka Bazar, Cuttack-2. He and his poet-friend Bhanuji Rao had published a book jointly in August, 1955 named ‘Nutana Kabita’ (New Poetry). It was published by N.L. Gupta (Janashakti Pustakaalaya), Banka Bazar, Cuttack, 2. And the book was printed at Krushaka Press, Cuttack-1. Now, we can divide his poems into different types according to its publications and placements. They are as below:

- I. Placed in Samudra Snaana [PSS]
- II. Placed in Aasharjya Abhisaara [PAA]
- III. Placed in Nutana Kabitaa [PNK]
- IV. Placed in both Nutana Kabita and Samudra Snaana [PBNKASS]
- V. Placed in both Samudra Snaana and Aasharjya Abhisaara [PBSSAAA]
- VI. Unplaced and written before Nutana Kabitaa [UWBNK]
- VII. Unplaced and written After Aasharjya Abhisaara [UWAAA]

He was not at all serious for being a poet or a poet of quantity. He had no belief in number but in quality. So, he always wanted a small but strong and quality based beautiful cottage of poetry. Therefore he has written only these poems which are mentioned below:

1. Lataa (Creeper), [UWBNK],

2. Sedina (That Day), [UWBNK],
3. Aparajitaa (Clitoria tornatia), [UWBNK],
4. Sapanatari (The Dream-Boat), [UWBNK],
5. Astaraaga (The Tune of Sunset), [UWBNK],
6. Alaajukee (Shameless), [UWBNK],
7. Sajala Aakhineere (With the Tears of Eyes); [UWBNK],
8. Janaheena Pruthibeera Dehapore (Upon the Body of Lonely Earth), [UWBNK]
9. Champaaphula, (The Champak Flower) ; [PNK/PSS]
10. Kapota Kapotee (The Dove Couple); [PSS],
11. Gobara Ganesha (The Impotent Man); [PNK/PSS]
12. Priya Baandhabee (The loveliest Friend/O Darling); [PNK/PSS],
13. Sharata Rutura Janha (The Autumn-Moon); [PNK/PSS],
14. Sunaara Jharana (The Golden Brook); (PNK/PSS)
15. Alakaa Saanyaal, (Alaka Sanyal); [PNK/PSS],
16. Chithi, (The Letter); [PNK/PSS],
17. Aakhira Kapota Mora, (The Doves of My Eyes); [PNK/PSS],
18. Nihita Godhooli, (Involved Afternoon/ The Slain Dusk); [PNK/PSS],
19. Harekrushna Das-Eka (Harekrushna Das-I); [PSS & PAA],
20. Harekrushna Das-Dui (Harekrushna Das-II); [PSS & PAA],
21. Harekrushna Das-Tini (Harekrushna Das-III); [PAA],
22. Harekrushna Das-Chaari (Harekrushna-IV); [PAA],
23. Picnic (The Picnic); [PSS],
24. Chhutira Kharaa (The Sunlight of Holiday); [PSS],
25. Drustira Diganta (The Horizon of Sight); [PSS],
26. Sonnet-Eka, (Sonnet-I); [PSS],
27. Sonnet-Dui (Sonnet-II); [PSS],
28. Sonnet-Tini (Sonnet-III); [PSS],
29. Sonnet-Chaari (Sonnet-IV); [PSS],
30. Sonnet-Paancha (Sonnet-V); [PSS],
31. Sonnet- Chha (Sonnet-VI); [PSS],
32. Sonnet-Sata (Sonnet-VII); [PSS],
33. Sonnet-Aatha (Sonnet-VIII); [PSS],
34. Sonnet-Na (Sonnet-IX); [PSS],
35. Sonnet-Dasha (Sonnet-X); [PSS],
36. Kaalapurusha (The Time-Man/ Kaalapurusha); [PSS],
37. Akroora Ubaacha (Thus Spoke Akrura); [PSS],
38. Sidhuua (The Sidhua); [PSS],
39. Keun Ghaasa? Keun Baalichara? (Which Grass? What Swath of sand?); [PSS]
40. Baaba Paain Duiti Kabitaa-Eka (A Couple of Poems for Baba-I); [PAA],
41. Baabaa Paain Duiti Kabitaa-Dui (A Couple of Poems for Baba-II); [PAA],
42. Mrutyu (The Death); [PAA]
43. Bishan Mohanty (Bishan Mohanty); [PAA],
44. Sanjaya O Dhrutaraashtra Sambaada (The Dialogue of Sanjay and Dhritarashtra); [PAA],
45. Landscape-I, [PAA],
46. Landscape-II, [PAA],
47. Landscape-III, [PAA],
48. Nida, (The Sleep); [PAA],
49. Christmas, [PAA],
50. Janmadina, (Birth Day); [PAA],
51. Imergency-Eka (Emergency-I); [PAA],
52. Imergency-Dui (Emergency-I); [PAA],
53. Gotie Mrutyu Pare Pare-Eka (Just After a Death-I); [PAA],
54. Gotie Mrutyu Pare Pare-Dui (Just After a Death-II); [PAA],
55. Pherantaa Baarara Pakshee (The Home-bound Bird); [PAA],
56. Nishchintakoili (Nishchintakoili); [PAA],
57. Nishchintakoili-Tirish Barsha Pare (Nishchintakoili-After Thirty Years); [PAA],
58. Maarshaaghaai (Marshaghai); [PAA],
59. Marsh Saaheba ra Christmas (Mr. Marsh's Christmas) ; [PAA],
60. Kamred Mamu (Comred Uncle); [PAA],
61. Saamnaare Sheeta Raati (The Winter Night Before); [PAA],
62. Basanta Sahita Aase (Comes with the Spring); [PAA],
63. Esraaj [PAA],
64. Sonnet ra se Stree-loka ra (Of the Woman of the Sonnet); [PAA],
65. Phaalguna ra Phula shukhe (Dries the Flowers of Spring); [PAA],
66. Ethii Bhor Pabanare (Here, in the Morning Wind); [PAA],
67. Aahata Ashaanta Drushti (The Wounded and Restless Sight); [PAA],
68. Taa Aakhira Tulanaa Ta (Comparison of Your Eyes); [PAA],
69. Deha ra Nirlaja Bhoka (The Shameless Hunger of Body); [PAA],
70. E Naali Maatira Raastaa (This Road of Red Soil); [PAA],
71. Nibhruata Ekaanta Mora (The Dense Loneliness of Mine); [PAA],
72. Se Rahe Raktare Mora (He Lives in My Blood); [PAA],
73. Campus Bluz (The Campus Blues), [PAA],
74. Haata (The Hands); [UWAAA],
75. Aara Shataabdee ku (The Other Century); [UWAAA],
76. Maanikeshwaree (Manikeswari); [UWAAA],
77. Pintu Paain Gotie Kabitaa (A Poem for Pintu); [UWAAA],
78. Kete Swapna Pare (After Some Dreams); [UWAAA],
79. Mor Thik Mane Naahin (I don't Remember Clear); [UWAAA],
80. Kholaa Kabaata (The Open Doors); [UWAAA],
81. Aapana Asantu Pheri (You Please Come Back); [UWAAA],
82. Rakta Paakhudaa (The Blood-Petals); [UWAAA],
83. Apekshyaa (The Waiting), [UWAAA],
84. Se Aakhi ta (Those Eyes); [UWAAA],
85. Mo Budhimaa ra Raati (The Night of My Grandmother); [UWAAA],
86. Jagannaatha Swamee (Lord Jagannath, the Master); [UWAAA],
87. Baripadaa School (The School of Baripada); [UWAAA],
88. Sakaala Kuhudi (The Morning Fog); [UWAAA],
89. Jaatraa (Expedition); [UWAAA],
90. Mor Sabu Sneha (All My Love/Caring); [UWAAA].

The above poems could be categorized according to their serial number and with respect to the above discussed types or classes. They are as follows:

- Sl.-1 to Sl.-8 (UWBNK)
- Sl.-9, Sl.-11 to Sl.-18, (PNK & PSS)

- Sl.-9 to Sl.-39 (PSS)
- Sl.-40 to Sl.-73 (PAA)
- Sl.-19 to Sl.-20 (PSS & PAA)
- Sl.-74 to Sl.-90 (UWAAA)

His poems have been published in the reputed, choosy and well established Odia magazines like Sahakaara, Utkala Saahitya, Naba Bhaara, Jhankaar, Kabitaa and Prajnaa. However, a complete collection of his poetry has been made and published in 2005, after half a decade of his jointly published book 'Nutana Kabitaa', by Subarnarekha publisher, Cuttack Road, Laxmi Sagar Road, Bhubaneswar-751006. It was made and published after his physical death and retirement from this mundane earth. His beloved wife Mrs. Aruna Mohanty has made this compilation 'Guruprasad Kabitaa' (2005) by the help of his friend and the editor of Prajnaa, the reputed quarterly journal of Odia Professor Jatindra Mohan Mohanty. In fact, in this book J.M. Mohanty has written the Praak Kathana (forward). This has been enriched with only 82 numbers of poems, i.e., from 'Champaaphoola' to 'Mor Sabu Sneha' (Sl.9 to Sl.90).^[24] Brajanath Rath, the acclaimed Odia poet says that- "Guruprasad has started his journey in the field of poetry from the fourth decade of nineteenth century. 2/3 of Guruprasad's poetry(sonnets) had been published in the popular hand written magazine 'Kunkuma' published from Bombay which was being edited by Dev Mohapatra during 1949-50. One of them is 'Smruti Rahe Chhaainida Pari' which has not been added anywhere in any compilation of his poetry."^[25] That means he has not got any poem from Sl.-1 to Sl.-8, i.e., the UWBNK category. The poems written by Mohanty before his joint compilation Nutana Kabita (1955) are not included here in this compilation due to unavailability. But these poems have been published in different reputed magazines like The Sahakaara, The Utkala Saahitya and The Kabita.

"In the application of mythic stories and events Guruprasad's experimentation has been proved to be the best till date."^[26]

This brilliant and committed poet and of course the serious and affectionate teacher left this mundane earth and his physical body in on the 26th August of 2004 at 9:45 am. It was the month of Shraabana, Shukla Ekaadashee, and a Thursday that day. His birthday was a Wednesday. It was a kind of a fairy-tale and it came to its end. He died just at the age of eighty. Hence, from Wednesday to Thursday it is only a span of nine-days. He wrote some ninety poems with remarkable beauty and specialties. Thus Guruprasad Mohanty is the brightest star ever in the sky of Odia literature.

Conclusion

Here, in the conclusion, it could be said with ample evidence and courage that Guruprasad is a poet of first class. His poems could be tested from various angles as those bear some tastes ranging from Modernism to Post-Modernism. As a man he is perfect and more than an average good human being. As a teacher he was excellent of course. As a friend, philosopher and an administrator he was outstanding with his smart and noble attitude and personality. And as a poet he was simply exceptional. He is not only the trend setter but also the maker of the trend makers and care-takers. He was daring, challenging and very watchful. He had a great love towards his mother

tongue Odia. Therefore he accepted the challenge of Gadanaik, the legendary poet and started experimenting with Odia language with regard to the language experiments in The Waste Land of T.S. Eliot. And it is a matter of happiness that he came successful in that particular experiment in a higher altitude. His post-independence poems have some deals with the Third World too. Many connotations and denotations are there in his poetry with respect to different conceptions and various socio-political theories and literary doctrines. However, Guruprasad Mohanty is the star who will surely coruscate and scintillate in the firmament of Odia literature.

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