

T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Guruprasad Mohanty's "Kalapurusha"

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The role of translation and adaptation of western writing cannot be underestimated. The European poetry of the post-World War I & II were the ideal of almost all the poetry of the rest of the world. Critic Santosh Kumar Nayak in his study of post-independence political context and literature says, "the main source of modern poetry is Europe. Due to several struggle, revolution, war, industrial revolution, scientific inventions, analysis of different philosophical thoughts the seed of modern European thoughts have been germinated; a kind of revolution has started in the field of art, sculpture, and architecture as well as in the field of literature. In modern Indian literature we encounter this." After fifties, many poets realized this truth in their own soil and air. An interesting and unique example from Odia is Guru Prasad Mohanty's Sahitya Akademi award winning poetry collection *Samudra snana*, which opens with a long poem "Kalapurusha". In this paper I have tried to make close reading of Mohanty's Kalapurusha in relation to T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Guru Prasad Mohanty's long poem "Kalapurusha" has justly been praised by critics and fellow-writers. It has exceedingly charming lyrical passages. More than that, it marked the beginning of a new development—the flowering of long poems in modern Odia poetry, which delineate the anguished destiny of modern man through a central symbol, myth, or archetype.

Mohanty was born in Nagabali, Cuttack district, Odisha, was a prominent Odia poet of the post-independence period. He was a member of the Orissa Education Service and retired from service as Principal, B J B College, Bhubaneswar. As a teacher of

English Literature, he was deeply influenced by the major trends in English poetry. Unlike most Odia writers the village does not form an important aspect of his poetry. He authored *Nutan Kavita* (1955), *Samudra Snana* (1970), *Ascharya Abhisara* (1988) and *Kavita Samagra* (1995). He received the Sahitya Akademi award (1973) for his *Samudra Snana*. He is regarded as the founder of modernism in Odia poetry, unconcerned with the Radhanath-Madhusudan tradition and the pseudo revolutionary zeal of the thirties which had its echo in so much of the early Sachi Rautray. He has written only sixty-eight poems during his life time. One also encounters numerous Eliotic images in his poems like "Gobar Ganesh", with a Prufrockian figure saying, 'No, I am not the hero of Dhupa' and intertextualities like those in "Alaka Sanyal," 'May be Sachibabu had seen you sometime; I do not know, Alaka Sanyal'.

Guruprasad Mohanty has completed writing "Kalapurusha" since 1957 and it took two years to complete the poem. Dr. Nityananda Satapathy quotes the editorial lines from the quarterly *Pragyan*, where "Kalapurusha" was first published, "In this edition we are publishing a long poem of the modern poet Sri Guruprasad Mohanty. Readers can find similarities of the poem from Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Such similarities are intended and at the same time unpremeditated. He has experimented to express similar sentiments, with certain emotional situations akin to those of *Waste Land* within the limits and power of Odia language" (*Sabujaru Sampratika*). In an interview, Mohanty has stated that he kept T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* open on his table and wrote "Kalapurusha". But despite the similarities Odia scholars and critics have not called "Kalapurusha" a translation of *The Waste Land*, but a reflection of poetic consciousness.

Prof. Rowena Fowler in "Η Έρμη Χώρα: Seferis' Translation of "The Waste Land"" affirms a successful translation of *The Waste Land* by the Greek poet George Seferis'. Like Mohanty's work Seferis has expressed his emotional reaction to the poem and the influence it had on his work; as he says, "there is no virgin birth in art" and has tried "to test the resistance of his own language". Thus, to an extent, the similarity with *The Wasteland* is deliberate. "Kalapurusha" has also far too many local associations and deep

linkages with Odia culture, tradition, and values to be called a Cuttack edition of *The Wasteland*. Pure modernism is rare in Odia literature and of course in Guruprasad Mohanty's poetry.

And we must remember that Guru Prasad Mohanty received the Akademi award in 1973 for his original work in the Odia language. Aloka Patel in "Interrogating Fidelity in Translation: T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* in Odia" is of the opinion that, "Kalapurusha exemplifies an alternate model of translation that some might refer to as a "transcreation" but this idea of "transcreation" particularly for an Odia translation of *The Waste Land* does not sound convincing". Dr. Patel points out one of the many tasks of the translator, that is to bridge the cultural divide between two dissimilar cultures.

An important point in the case of Eliot is of naturalizing quotations and allusions, names and places, colloquialisms, and archaisms in another language. Considering the difficulties of cultural translation, Priyadarshi Patnaik argues in his essay "Kalapurusha of Guruprasad Mohanty and Eliot's *The Waste Land*", "translate *The Waste Land* into Odiya, and the effect is lost". Pattnaik is of the view that "a literary parallel has to be created born of its own culture, rooted in it, like a seed which is taken from its parent climate and which sprouts and grows in its new way in its new environment" like Kalapurusha.

Every poetic creation is influenced by other sensibilities, sometimes by other cultures. The same is perhaps true of Odia literature. Odisha –especially the sensibility of places like Cuttack and Puri that strongholds Odia literary sensibilities – was deeply affected by the loss of group-centric values, the emergence of individualistic values, the touch of modernism with all its sadness and agony, the realization that the world is changing, the hint of pop and hippy culture. Perhaps a poem like "Kalapurusha" was necessary to suggest the disjunction, the displacement and loss of a set of values, and the inability of giving birth to new ones.

"Kalapurusha", in relation to *The Waste Land*, is interestingly located and it creates the same spirit in a regional language. The texts come from radically different cultures, at different points of time. The former is inspired by the latter. Both

are creative works. But without Eliot's work Mohanty's work would not exist. There is an act of translation. But this is also an act of transformation. It was also heralded as a radically original poem in Odisha in the 1960s-1970s which brought in a new style, a new experimentation and sensibility into the Odia language. Nihilism, existential angst, loss of hope, innocence and culture were all epitomized, for its audience, in this poem. If we read "Kalapurusha" within its ambience of Cuttack with its mud, its canals, its smoke and fog, its incessant rains and its Kathajodi river it evokes a mood which perhaps *The Waste Land* evokes when we read it in its own context. The poem opens in a tone of lament conveyed through the painful imagery of the rains:

ବର୍ଷା ରତ୍ନ ନିଷ୍ପୁର ନିର୍ମମା,ଫୁଟାଇ ରଙ୍ଗୀ ଫଞ୍ଜ ଖତକୁଡ଼ି
ମୁରଛରେ ଆହତ ଯେବେ ଥିଲା ସବୁ, ସବୁ ଥିଲା ଉତ୍ତେଜନା

Barsa ritu nisthura nirmama, phutae rangani phula
khatakudhi ...murcha re ahata jebe thila sabu, sabu
thila utejana hina ("Kalapurusha", 54)

This echoes Eliot's line "April is the cruellest month, breeding Lilacs out of the dead land". From the infertile dead land, lilac is coming out. It is regeneration not in the spiritual sense, rather from dead land out of dead tumorous existence, which makes it quite sinister in quality. Western civilization as the protagonist pictures is a world vacillating between the comfortable narcosis of deadness and the frightening challenge of coming back to life. It is about the collapse of European civilization; it is the Waste Land.

In its uncontrollable form, in "Kalapurusha" rain is characterised as introducing indiscipline, bishrunkhala into a society that is already in disorder. In a place like Odisha, it is summer that is heartless, arid, and cruel. July brings early showers and cools us down. If in England Summer regenerates, then in most of India it is the season of rain that regenerates the earth. Our first impression is of the exhausted modern individual, who lacks the blithe energy to partake in the glorious rains. The feeling of elation

and rejuvenation normally associated with the rains are deliberately avoided and instead it cruelly brings back memories of the beautiful past, which is lost.

The anguish of the modern individual's degenerate living is suggested in his indifference to nature: a resistance and irritation to the spontaneity of rains that arrive without warning. Cuttack, one of the first urban settlements was also the first to acquire symptoms of cultural chaos associated with modernity. Perceived to be a version of 'hell' it is characteristic of the deep ambiguities of city life. In the movement of the individual, we perceive a deep sense of loss of something familiar and essential and its replacement with an alien culture.

In the poet's excessive stress on the city of Cuttack, the readership is expected to perceive the breakdown of the togetherness of the rural social structure and the price that a modern individual pays in extreme loneliness. It describes the 'weird' flock of English people, 'pastless' and 'futureless' who came as 'locusts' in search of fresh pastures to destroy and left behind a pathetic modern society, bankrupt of moral values and sense of tradition.

Kalapurusha expresses how physical attraction is higher than feelings of love. Everywhere the speaker is diseased with a deadly mental agony. So, night and moon are all pale and lifeless to him. The woman speaker is also lifeless and man is more in a zombie state. Everywhere there is a strange feeling of lifelessness:

ଭୟ ଆଉ ପାପ ମିଶି ଏ ସମୟ ଅନ୍ତଃସତ୍ତ୍ୱ... ଜୀବନର ଭଗ୍ନାଂଶ କେବଳ
ତେଣୁ ଏହି ସହରର ଗଳିରେ ଛିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରାଣହୀନ ଦେହ ଓ କାମନା
ତେଣୁ ଏହି ସହରର ବିବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଦେହରେ ଶୀତ ଖଦଡ଼ ଓ ଭଲର ପୋଷାକ
ଢିତରେ ହଠାତ୍ ଆସି ଛିଡ଼ା ହୁଏ ସାମ୍ରାଜ୍ୟ ଅଭୀଷ୍ଟ ମଣିଷର ପାପ ଭୟର
ପ୍ରେତାତ୍ମା

Bhaya aau papa misi a samaya antasatwa... jibana ra
bhagnansa kebala tenu ehi saharara galire chinna
pranahina deha o kamana tenu ehi saharara bibarna

dehare seeta khadaada o ul ra posaka ... abhisapta
manisa ra papa aaau bhaya ra pretatma
("Harekrushna Das" *Kabita Samagra*,31)

Mohanty has expressed man's sin consciousness and war frailty in the above lines. He has written "Alaka Sanyal" to show the infected life of a woman, who is also a victim of the diseased, disordered world:

ତା ଭିତରେ ତୁମେ ପୁଣି ପ୍ରେମ କର ଗର୍ଭବତୀ ହୁଅ
ସିନେମାର ହାଣ୍ଡବିଲ୍ ବି ଦେଖୁଛି ମୁଁ ତୁମରି ହାତରେ
ପବନ ତୁମକୁ ଯେବେ ଆସେ ନିଏ ବାଲିରୁ ସାଉଁଟି
ମୁଁ ତୁମର ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ଦେଖେ ମୋର ଜିଲା ଅମରାବତି ପାଇଜାମାରେ ...
ତୁମେ ବା ଆସିଛ ଫେରି ତାମ୍ବୁଲିପି ସ୍ବପ୍ନ ତଳୁ
ଅନ୍ୟ କେଉଁ ପୃଥ୍ବୀରୁ ଆଜିର ଏ ବ୍ୟର୍ଥ ଦିଗନ୍ତକୁ

Ta bhitare tume puni prema kara garbhabati hua
cinema ra handbill b dkhichi mu tumari hathare
pabana tumaku jebe aaste niea baliru sauti
mu tumara Swapna dekhe mora dhila amarabati
paejama re... tume ba aasicha pheri tamralipi stupa
tal u anya keu pruthibi ru aajira a byartha diganta
ku (*Kabita Samagra*,19)

The poetic elements of "Kalapurusha" is very identical to his other poems like, "Nihata Godhuli", "Drusti ra Diganta" and "HareKrushna Das". In "Kalapurusha" only the sphere of life is bigger, so poet's experience, vision and quest will obviously be bigger. Mohanty has assimilated many themes and ideologies of Eliot still it does not demean Mohanty's uniqueness. His poem poignantly describes all that the Odia people had 'lost' in terms of its cultural values and social relations. Soon after the independence, we have started to live in a pseudo-social earth. Prasanna Kumar Swain in *Saahityara Deepti o Byaapti*, puts the facts that the village people of Odisha have started moving towards the tea-garden of Assam, cloth mills of Gujarat, Kolkata to be in city and to live. But

they have been turned into daily wagers, labourers, dadans and bethi even for the entire lifetime under the cruel clutches of situation. The sense of alienation has started from the third and fourth decade of twentieth century in the life of Indian society. The precarious scene could be noticed in lines:

ଏ ସହର ମୁଁହ ପରେ ଗୋଳି ଗୋଳି ପାଉଁଶ ଅଜ୍ଞାନ
ରାତିର କୁହୁଡ଼ି ତାଲେ ବାଟବାରି ଗଳି ଗଳି ସଡ଼କେ ସଡ଼କେ
ରାତିର ଅଫିମ ନିଶା ଜାକି ଜୁକି ଯେବେ ଘୋଟି ଆସେ
ସଙ୍କୁଚିତ ଦେଶା କରି ଯେବେ ଆସେ ଓହ୍ଲାଇ ଆକାଶ
ମୁଁ ଭାବିଲି ଏତେ ଲୋକ ଏତେ ମାଂସ ଏତେ ସ୍ବାଦୁ କଳା ଧଳା ସାନ ବଡ଼
ଏତେ ହାତ ଗୋଡ଼ର ସମଷ୍ଟି
ଜତିହାସ କାଗଜରୁ ଅବା କାର ଖୁଆଲ୍ ଭିତରୁ
ଏମାନେ ଆସିଲେ କାହୁଁ ଝରଣାର ପାଣି ଖୋଜି
ଏତେ ଭୂତ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ଗୋତ୍ରହୀନ, ଏ ଅଦଭୂତ ସଙ୍ଗପାଳ ଗୋଷ୍ଠୀ
ଆତ୍ମା ଯେତେ ଏ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାରେ ଯାଏ ଯାଏ ନଇକୁଳ ବୁଲି
ଏ ସବୁ ସତ ନା ମିଛ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଆଜି ଅବା କାଲି ? (୫୯)

A sahara muha pare goli goli paunsha angara
rati ra kuhudi chale batabari gali gali sadake sadake
ratira afim nisa jaki juki jebe ghoti aase
sankuchita dena kari jebe aase olhae aakash
mu bhabili ete loka ete mansha ete swadu kala dhal
asana bada ete hatha goda ra samasti
etihasa kagajaru aba kar khiala bhitaru
emane aasile kahu jharana ra pani khoji
ete bhuta bhabisyata gotrahina, gatrahina a adbhuta
sangapala gosthi ... aatma jete a sandhya re jae jae
naekula buli a sabu sata na micha bartaman aaji aba
kali? ("Kalapurusha", 56)

In the fourth part of "Kalapurusha", again the trials filled life of the speaker bounds her to sell her body to the business man Bose Babu,

which shows the naked picture of society. Her father is an employee with low income, her brother is bedridden in hospital and her mother with a bundle of wants begs door to door. In such circumstances it is not unusual that Bose Babu's money attracts her body. The economic collapse in post-independence Odisha burnt all our age-old values, moral principles to ash. The drastic economic condition of that girl has made her obliged to be engaged in unhealthy practices. She was engaged in sex-work which is unethical and unsocial at the same time. She is the slave of the hard time. In such numerous instances of degradation and disaster of world values the speaker tries to look for a way to escape, but in vain. Guruprasad has given the naked sketch of the event which is really heart touching. The lines could be felt with intense care:

ଅରଣ୍ୟର ଅଜଗର ମୁଁ ରହେ ଅଥର୍ବ ସ୍ଥିର
 ମୁଁ ଶହେ କଷଣ ଲକ୍ଷ ଦେହ ଆଉ ମନ ଓ ଆତ୍ମାର
 ମୋ ଦେହର ଗନ୍ଧ ପୃଥ୍ବୀ ପୁଷ୍ପବତୀ ଗଣିକାର
 ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭାଗୁ ହୁଙ୍କାର ଓ ଇସିକର ଲାବଣ୍ୟବତୀର
 ଗୋ ମାଂସର ଗନ୍ଧ ପୁଣି ମଦ ମସ୍ତ ନାରୀ ଗନ୍ଧ
 ମୋ ଦେହରେ ପୃଥ୍ବୀର ଯାଯାବର ଆଲୋକ ଅନ୍ଧାର
 ଜେଲଖାନା ପାଚେରୀରେ ଆଉଜାଏ ପିଠି ମୋର ଚାପିରଖୁ
 ଭୁମାଲ ଆଖିରେ ମୁଁ କାନ୍ଦିଲି ଯେତେବେଳେ ପିତୃ ମାତୃ
 ବନ୍ଧୁହାନି ଆୟୁ କ୍ଷୟ ବଂଶ କ୍ଷୟ ଦେଶବାସୀ
 କ୍ଷୟ ପୁଣି ଧନଜନ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ କ୍ଷୟ ଧର୍ମ ପୁଣି
 ଗୋବ୍ରାହ୍ମଣ କ୍ଷୟ ମୁଁ କାନ୍ଦିଲି ଯେତେବେଳେ ସମୟର ଶବ୍ଦ ବାରି
 ଜରା ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ବ୍ୟାଧି ପୁଣି ଆଉ ଘାତକର ଭୟ ("Kalapurusha" ୬୨)

Aranya ra ajagara mu rahe atharba sthira.
 Mu sahe kasana lakhya deha aau mana o atmara
 mo dehara gandha pruthbi puspabati ganikara
 chandrabhanu hunkara o isikara labanyabatira
 go mansha ra gandha puni mada masya nari gandha
 mo dehare pruthibira jjabara aloka andhara.

Jail khana pacherire aaujae pithi mora chapirakhi
rumal aankhi re mu kandili jetebele pitru matru
bandhuhani aayu khaya bansha khaya desabasi
khaya puni dhanajana laxmi khaya dharma puni
gobrahmana khaya mu kandili jetebele
samayara sabda bari
jara mrutyu byadhi aau ghatakara bhaya.
("Kalapurusha"62)

In translation by Santosh Kumar Nayak:

Like a snake in the forest/ I remain motionless and
still/ I endure a million tortures/ of body, mind and
the soul./on, my body/ the stench of Puspabati, the
harlot/ the love cries of/ Chandrabhanu and
Labanyabati,/ The smell of beef, of wine and
women/ on my body,/ all the world's / nomadic light
and darkness/ leaning my back and darkness.
Leaning my back against the wall of the prison,
pressing the kerchief to the eyes I cried ... I cried,
sensing the sound of time passing, old age, death,
and disease and the fear of the assassin.

In the materialistic world, where spiritual values are endangered, man is searching for liberation. In such circumstance man is bound to believe on fate. Like Eliot's "horoscope", kalapurusa mentions seven generations old astrological book "Khadiratna". In Mohanty's earlier poems the speaker comes in first person or third person, but in this long poem "Kalapurusha" the speaker has multiple voices, figures, and forms. Likewise, woman speaker is not one but many; that may be Pratima Nayak, Minati or Meera. In poisonous modern civilization their bodies as well as hearts are sick, weak. In their back we can see the shadows of Engineer Das, Ghosh Babu, representing the greater fallen mass. The speaker then self-lightens in the voice of Rmu, who is comparable to Eliot's Prufrock. Rmu is disloyal to his wife. Rmu's wife is aware about this, still, she submits to him in a regular way. Her friend then reminds her of her

illegitimate son as Rmu is not the genetic father. In the other hand Rmu has deep faith in his wife's purity, chastity. The speaker then gets aware about life's miserable end through the image of Rmu's death and cremation rituals. Eliot's *Waste Land* is influenced from Dante's diseased, enslaved souls, which are neither willing nor unwilling, they do not have any opinion, very much in a living dead condition. Similarly, death of Rmu and the experience of death becomes the main tone in the third part of "Kalapurusa". In every line we find the tone of lonesomeness, desolation, forlornness, friendlessness, alienation, insatiate life.

Attached to it is the thirst of liberation throughout the poem. Akrura and Uddhaba have many times been mentioned as symbol of "moksha", liberation, emancipation. In the hollowness of modern metropolis, in guilt ridden pitiable life, people's helplessness, private lonesomeness and above all amidst war time soundless suffering Kalapurusha can't find any remarkable solution. Agreeing to Eliot and with faith to age old belief system Kalapurusha surrenders to spiritual consciousness. Here the speaker in Gurubabu's voice repeats, "ହେ ଅକୃର, ହେ ଉଦ୍ଧବ ସଖା ମୋର, ପ୍ରାଣର ଦୋଷରା" (he akrura he udhaba sakha mora, prana ra dosa ra).

Eliot's old man cries in the fire of suffering, "Burning burning burning burning/ O Lord Thou pluckest me out/ O Lord Thou pluckest/ burning". In the speaker's feelings the dark, death consciousness is always present. Even in Mohanty's poem "Gobara Ganesha" there is no image of extreme love rising, rather only despair filled deteriorated pale image, where the speaker engulfed in the poisonous time and circumstances has lost all hope and has become incompetent, ill before time.

Eliot's "A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, I had not thought death had undone so many" reminds of Dantesque crowd of dead people, gathered to get into heaven or hell. Eliot's crowd is not fully dead but waiting to be dead, Londoners are survivors' mourners, they are not dead physically but dead existentially. "Steson that corpse you planted in last year in your garden, has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?" here

corpse becomes a vegetation, not just that, it is beginning to sprout, to grow. The growth over here of deadness, the bloom here is a bloom of deadness. It is not really a regenerative bloom, it's a bloom of the continuation of deadness the continuation of despair, the continuation of annihilation. Every growth, every production over here is a production of waste, and the production in waste and hence is the Waste Land. After "Marie Marie hold on tight" the downward fall is something seen as the sexual fall, moral fall. Alaka Sanyal in Guru Prasad is only the sex-object, a part of the routine to which modern love has degraded.

Like Eliot's usage of local images of London Bridge, here Mohanty has tried to make a reference to "Ranihata Pola", though the later can never equalize the heat of the crowded and visionless motion of the later. Perhaps Howrah Bridge to an extent can equalize the heat of London Bridge. So, unlike the original, this one could not impact on the learned readers. That is why the publication of "Kalapurusha" has welcome many negative reviews against its ecological perspective. It is true that without Waste Land, Kalapurusha was impossible. Just like all great poets are indebted to their earlier poets e.g., Eliot to Dante, Radhanath to Ovid, here Guru Prasad Mohanty is indebted to Eliot. This is perhaps "tradition" as termed by Eliot, which crosses all geographical boundaries and enlarges human consciousness. So as a creative writing *The Waste Land* and "Kalapurusha" are two different but related points whose common theme makes them contemporary.

Eliot himself tells us in his own notes to *The Waste Land* that Tiresias, the seer in Greek mythology who undergoes several sex changes and is both man and woman on consecutive occasions, unites in himself all the other personages in the poem. Eliot tells us that Tiresias while "not indeed a 'character,' is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest" and that "all the women are one woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias." Or to put it differently, Tiresias is historical man, unchanged since the beginning of time. It is, therefore, appropriate that the voice that speaks in the poem be in some recognizable sense the same unchanging voice that speaks for all unchanging Western

civilization, decayed past and decayed present. In the original the speaker is sometimes Marie, sometimes the hyacinth girl, sometimes Madame Sosostris, sometimes the neurotic woman, sometimes Stetson's friend and so on. They are all identified in course of their speeches. But what is apparent is that the persona of the poem, the unidentified "I", of "I will show you fear in a handful of dust" and of "Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song," does not speak in any way that bears the hallmark of a unique identity or particular tone. Again, there is the image of the myth of Philomel, who was brutally and whose body was brutally violated by the king Tereus and then her tongue was chopped off. The ancient myth becomes signifier of a violence on a female body and about the muted agency of the human being. Eliot had mentioned that Tiresias is a seeing eye in the poem. He is the one, he is the presence through which the entire activities of *Waste Land* are focalized. Whatever happens to *Waste Land* takes place through the focus of Tiresias. Tiresias in Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, and Ovid are notably unsympathetic toward the heroic protagonists to whom they bring invariably bad news. Unlike any of his pagan avatars, Eliot's Tiresias participates in the suffering he sees, and he has "foresuffered all" like Christ; but unlike Christ, Tiresias does not weep, he laughs or grins. "He who was living is now dead" could be a reference to the death of Christianity, death of Christ as a spiritual figure. The waterlessness is faithlessness. There is a direct reference to Christ, the spectral figure, the spiritual figure who is invisible, but at the same time who makes his presence felt "Who is the third who walks always beside you? When I count, there are only you and I together, but there is always another one walking beside you." Mohanty's speakers are not heroes in the traditional sense. Nor do they lay any claim to be anti-heroes. They can only be described as non-heroes, ordinary humans like us who have no complaint against either an absent God, unjust social order or other human beings. They share a common destiny. They bear the burden of life with amazing fortitude. They accept without complaint their very ordinariness and the awesome burden of living. Living without hope is indeed an act of courage. The symbolic meaning of Kalapurusha could be 'transcendental man', he who transcends the

dictates of time or kala. In conversational Odia, kala also means death. Often people would say, his kala has come and the 'man' who brings this end is Kalapurusha. His poetic hero expresses that, “ଏଠାରେ ଅନ୍ଧାର ଉଠେ ଗିଳି ରେଖା ଆକାର ପ୍ରକାର/ସୀମିତ ମୋ ପୃଥିବୀର ଦିଗହଜେ , ହଜିଯାଏ ଉପର ଓ ତଳ/କ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ମୋର ଦେହ ଚାପି ମାଡ଼ିଆସେ ବାଲି ଓ ଅନ୍ଧାର” (“କାଳପୁରୁଷ” ୫୫) Ethare Andhaara Uthe gili rekhaa aakaara prakaara/simita mo pruthibira diga haje, hajijaae upara o tala/klanta mora deha chapi maadiaase baalichara maadiaase baali o andhaara” (“Kalapurusha” 55) i.e. Here the darkness rises and swells/ Limited is the direction of my earth, disappearing up and down/ I'm tired, my body is covered in sand and darkness. The post-world war eco-sphere and cultural ethos are more boredom, unfertile and full of darkness. There is a use of the 'mythical method'-- a wide use of religious myths and legends to appeal to a higher set of values which would give direction to the disoriented modern individual. This poem reinvestigates the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual traditions that an average individual had inherited. There is an attempt to locate the modern present in relation to the traditional past.

ଆଜି ତେଣୁ ଗତିହୀନ ଛୋଟ ଏକ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଧରି
ଗିଳି ପରେ ଗିଳି ଦେଉଁ କୁଡ଼ କୁଡ଼ ବାଲି ତେଲ୍ ତେଲ୍
ମୁଁ ଆଜି ଚାଲିଛି ଖୋଜି ତାରା ଆଉ ଜହରାତି ଚୁପଚୁପ୍ ପବନର କଥା
କୁଡ଼ କୁଡ଼ ଅଂଗାର ଓ ଅନ୍ଧାରର ସୁଡ଼ଙ୍ଗ ସେ ପାଖେ
ଆଇସକ୍ରିମ ଲେମନେଡ୍ ଝରଣାର ନିରୁକ୍ତ ମମତା (“କାଳପୁରୁଷ” ୫୫)

Aji tenu gatihina chota eka bartman dhari
gali pare gali deun kudha kudha bali daen daen
mu aaji chalichi khoji tara aau janharati chup chup
pabana ra katha kudha kudha angara o andharara
sudanga se pakhe ice-cream lemonade jharana ra
nirukta mamata
 (“Kalapurusha” 55)

(Today, therefore holding on to a stagnant present, I am looking for stars and a moonlit night heaps and piles of coal and at the end of the dark tunnel the wicked affection of ice-cream and lemonade beckons.) The individual is represented as living a stagnant and partial, khandita life within the claustrophobic confines of a tunnel, looking for fulfilment. The loose sand on the sea beach does not retain marks of footsteps. It accentuates a feeling of losing sight of one's past. The individual is doomed to this life, losing the path that his ancestors had made for him.

The rootless modern people are described as a parasitic creeper, *nirmuli*, a plant with no interaction with the soil. The individual referred to in the first part of the poem is Srikrishna who resides in every modern helpless individual. Even powerful Krishna is bereft of his divinity, reduced to a mere human rendered helpless in front of time. The worthwhile warrior helplessly appeals to Akrura and Uddhava who abandon him on realising that ultimate destruction would now come to him, "he Akrura he udhaba, sakha mora prana ra dosara". The world in the dark-age, Kaliyug, has reached a point of destruction where even the difference between humanity and divinity has collapsed.

Modernity simultaneously creates a situation of 'freedom' not spiritual but the mundane absence of surveillance attracts people to the vicious world of immorality. While more people have access to this modern immoral space, the integrity of the family is threatened, the sacred institution of marriage becomes an instrument of convenience based on compromise and mutual manipulation of unfaithful partners. The poem makes a satirical comparison with Upendra Bhanja's "Labanyabati". Upendra Bhanja was an acclaimed Odia poet and "Labanyabati" is his most celebrated poem. In "Kalapurusha" the socialite ladies are frivolous, brashly vulgar, and offensively sexual unlike the sober traditional woman with her restrained sexuality. There is a changing imagery of the woman. A random mention of names of women with no individual significance, suggests that one can be substituted for another. It shows a homogeneous immorality and the futile attempt of all modern women to cover their ugly faces with powder, rouge, and lipstick. We encounter those women like Alakaa, Minati,

Ramu's wife and Pratimaa and Meeraa and some other doing prostitution for the sake of their existence and pleasure. While we encounter the struggle of the middle class for survival, we are also introduced to the heartlessness of the city,

ସେତେବେଳେ ବୋଷ ବାବୁ ସହରର ବ୍ୟବସାୟୀ
କାର ଚଢ଼ି ଚାଲିଗଲେ ପଛଆଡ଼େ ରଖି ଦେଇ ଓ ଏକତାଳା ଘର
ସେତେବେଳେ ଝରକାରେ ମୁଁ ରହିଲି ଖାଲି ଚାହିଁ
ବାପା ଥିଲେ କଚେରୀରେ, ବୋଉ ଗଲା ଧାର ମାଗ
ଡିନିଫିନ ପରେ ରଜ ଭାଇ ଥିଲେ ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନାରେ
ଅରଣ୍ୟ ଅଜଗର ମୁଁ ରହେ ଅଥର୍ବ ଛିର,
ମୁଁ ଶହେ କନ୍ଧା ଲକ୍ଷ ଦେହ ଆଉ ମନ ଓ ଆତ୍ମା (୬୨)

It was Bose babu, the city's industrialist
who rode his car and left our single storied building
far behind... my father was in the court, my mother
went to ask for a loan 'raja' was a few days away, my
brother lay in the hospital as the forest python, I
stood still, I withstood all, all that my body and soul
inflicted on me. (Trans. S. K. Nayak)

While modernisation endangers cultural norms, distorts individual relationships, frustrates, and disorients the youth, creates pressures on middle class and its women, causes the breakdown of the traditional family system, the poet still nurses a hope to revive the lost values of the society. Though urbanisation was not widespread in Odisha and industrial development was seen in pockets, poverty was rampant and illiteracy high. What gave legitimacy to this discourse on a society that was only partially modernised after all, was the increasing belief among the readership that this representation of society was going to be realised. The readership primarily consisting of the educated middle class, who had come into the new cities in search of work, and found it difficult to cope with the demands of their new occupations and changed life styles, identified with the poem.

The city is pranahina, lifeless, murmusu, on the verge of death, mamatahina, affectionless and swapnahina, devoid of dreams. The lifeless sun rises on concrete buildings, the radio plays bizarre film songs that disrupts the religious serenity of the morning and overwhelms the sweet music of the birds. How can individuals attain salvation in a life, which is a continuous horse race, a tumultuous competition? Life is not in the selection of modern man. Rather death is very amusing and beautiful for them. But the Indian culture has that much of power to resist the suicidal tendency to come into our social thought.

Filled in incomprehensible pain Kalapurusha desires for liberation, with repeated reference to our sacred writings, mythology, Bhagbat and at the end submission to the values of Upanishad to get free from all sufferings. This we find even in Eliot's concluding lines, i.e., Datta, giving generosity, charity; Dayadhvam, kindness, compassion and Damyata the whole idea of compassion in a more existential sense. The whole idea of giving, charity, kindness, and compassion is put together that can only take towards peace which is mentioned in the end "shanti shanti shanti", as if in modern circumstances it is the only way of solution for the lost, wounded soul of human beings. Even while the poet laments the degenerate condition of modern life, there is a possibility to restart this journey - from darkness, from death. This can happen through the human will to 'act', to create life again. The poem "Kalapurusha" ends with the same note "mrutyumam/ asato ma/ tamaso ma/ mrutyumam ...mrutyumam...mrutyumam/ amrutam gamaya...".

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