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MANDIRA GHOSH

From the Vidya Sagar Setu, Kolkata

I have seen All

I have seen all
standing on the river bank
far way
in Delhi
I cried with you.
When you starved
I cried
When you were assaulted and partitioned
I was in tears
When you took a foreign ideology
I alerted you
timid then I was,
with shattered nerves
I felt your pain
Shared it with all
Now that I am here
near not so known banks
I think of your past
Every modern values you accepted
without discarding the old ones
reviving the old faiths
The rituals on the ghats
goes same as before
People scream on death
just as before.

Married women
encounter time
with faded vermilion
red dots on their foreheads fading, but still
talk of modernity
theories
of Mao and Marx
Gushing water like the borrowed ideology
through the conch shells

chokes my throat and vibrates my pharynx.

Mysterious cloud on the river
weighed heavily by the weight of water drops
heavily weighed with sufferings and pain
burst into
silver drops
in river and then mingles in ocean.

Come just come to this river bank
to purchase dreams
to meet the Sun God
with his priceless radiation
water circling clockwise
splashes that hit the bank
take away remaining dreams
flowers and bangles
broken shells
and turmeric
create a mosaic
of red, yellow and orange
in deep dark approaching night.
In the morn
I could watch the broken bangles
are scattered on the river
green as vessel glass.

Untitled

Waterways get disconnected
It is war
Enemies from Japan should not enter through river water
In ghats, corpses rot.
Rotate anticlockwise in electric current
Die an undignified death
Famine, war, and partition
arrive in rotation,
To the most prosperous land
Proud of her beauty and wealth
I stand near the ghats
pass through the Vidyasagar setu
anguished to look back
To watch a river on fire.

II

Hope is resurrected
As I watch in wonder
the structure of the bridge
Connecting to the ancient to ultra modern
The setu connects the past into advanced future

Then as I stand on the Outram ghat
Then Swim towards Belur
Return from Dakshineswar
Move towards Babughat
again
of a determined city
And watch the fiery river pass by.

Accelerated old age riped with time
accepting new faiths and values
Everflowing water
churns in the cosmic ocean
Before it passes through the ghats of an old river
Dressed in new costumes
Soon, its shabbiness will disappear
At a distance, we watch for some reason
A mustard sun sets on the horizon.

BIO-NOTE

Mandira Ghosh is a poet and author of eminence. She has published and edited thirteen books titled, *Aroma*, *New Sun*, *Song in a City*, *The Cosmic Dance of Shiva*, *Folk Music of the Himalayas*, *Impact of Famine on Bengali Literature*, *Benares the Sacred City in Verses and Hymns*, *Indian Poetry through the Passage of Time: A Journey of thirty Indian Poets*, *Shiva and Shakti in Indian Mythology*, *Lost Compass on the River Bank* and others. She is the Guest Editor of the Poets of India, Special Issue of The Seventh Quarry, The Swansea Magazine from Wales and is awarded with a Senior Fellowship of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. She has received Editor's Choice Award, twice by the International Society of Poets, and has been elected into International Poetry Hall of Fame. Presently she is the treasurer of the Poetry Society (India) and is a member of India International Centre, India Habitat Centre, International Society of History of Religions, Indian Society of Authors and others.

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