



Born- 22 october1928- cuttack- Orissa

Close the sky ten by ten(1971)

A Rain of Rites(1976)

Relationship(1980)

Life Signs(1983)

Dispossessed Nests(1986)

A Whiteness of Bone(1992)

The Lie of Dawns(2009)

Land(2013)

Sahitya Academy Award-1981

Padma Shree- 2009

- Can be regarded as the father of modern english poetry
- A physicist turned teacher
- Personal poet
- Deals with the intricacies of human relationship
- Explores the darker realm of being
- Speaks about the deteriorating and declining moral conduct of people
- Provides a tragic vision of life
- Poet belonged to the lost generation
- A poet of human conditions

Criticism - Lack of humour in his poetry

“May be I was made that way. It is difficult for me to be humorous in the poems I write. There is so much despair in the world around me- so much hate, so much injustice, so much poverty and religious fanaticism for no reason. I wish I could write a humorous poem”.

“My themes in my poems have changed, some of them I am keenly aware of the world I live in today; the mournful bleating of goats as they are led to the municipal slaughter house in my town every morning awakens me. There seems to be debris everywhere; over the deep blue sea, across the broken grain in the fields of India, in the answers to questions our children do not need anymore .”

Significant poet of Oriyan sensibility...

M.K Naik- “Mahapatra’s poetry is redolent of the orissa scene”.

About Orissa- “to Orissa, to this land in which my roots lie and lies my past, and in which lies my beginning and my end, I acknowledge my debt and my relationship”

Concern for society

“as a poet he should be aware of what’s going on around him: the poverty, the greed, the unnecessary violence, the cruelty, injustice, sexuality”

that peace has gone, never to return....

Concept of myth and rituals..

Concept of time..

Concern for the society..

Man's cruelty to man..

“....that peace has gone, never to return”

Speaks about the position of youth in this country

“...a strange map drawn by life

.....

His lost face, white enamel,

Looks down at his feet”

-Speaks about hunger stricken people

Its rain again going on and on all day

Like hunger you would think this country

has nothing but seven hundred million bellies

(a letter to Kazuko Shiraishi in Tokyo)

“Things are going their way
The dawn appears headless again”

Speaks against multinational companies

Sympathises with Bhopal victims

“...a living hell of the crying, dying people gasping for
breath”

The twenty fifth anniversary of the republic- about the immorality of
youth

Man of the nights- laments his friend’s immoral act

The whorehouse in a culcutta street- prostitution

Portrayal of woman

Wives, beloveds, whores, seductress, village women, city women, adolescent girls...

Criticism- viewed from the point of view of a male

Never referred in the first person, only in the impersonal third person

Rarely they are given names

Realistic portrayal of woman

Important poems: Absence, The Twenty Fifth Anniversary of a Republic, The Whorehouse in a Culcutta Street, Dusk, Slum, The Lost Children of America, The Bride, After the Rain, Summer's End, The Vase, Hunger...

- ❖ Tries to give voice to the silenced and concealed emotions of women.
- ❖ Gives voice to the deprived prostitutes in the poem The Whorehouse in a Culcutta Street.
- ❖ He deals with their problems while confronting a 'cultured society'.

You fall back against her in the dumb light,
trying to learn something more about women-
while she does that she thinks proper to please you,
the sweet, the little things, the imagined;
until the statue of the man within
you've believed in throughout the years.

(The Whorehouse in a Calcutta Street)

I heard him say: My daughter, she's just turned fifteen...
Feel her. I'll be back soon, your bus leaves at nine.
The sky fell on me, and a father's exhausted wile.
Long and lean, her years were cold as rubber.
She opened her wormy legs wide. I felt the hunger there,
the other one, the fish slithering, turning inside (hunger)

Last year on the bend of Debi river
the rape of a young girl
shocked us as ripe mangoes
dropping from the bare trees in winter.
Last year her murder and dismemberment
made us understand somewhat
the trembling in the eyes of the cows we see
being led meekly to the town's slaughter house.
(A Whiteness of Bone)

He is a keen observer of contemporary reality.

“The point is: I wanted to make sense of the life which lay in fragments before me, I was urged to seek answers for myself, testing my feelings by striking them against the fabric of the poem I knew I must write.”

Concerned about widows, wife, daughter, mother- living in the male dominated world of Orissa

“It stands simply, framed in the door, white in the air;
An Indian woman, piled up to her silences
Waiting for what the world will only let her do”

On most nights there's a woman
who just lies in her bed, open
like any old thing in the house she lives in.
Like time, that pours over her.
The walls keep their close watch
over her loneliness; and not even that
can go wrong here...