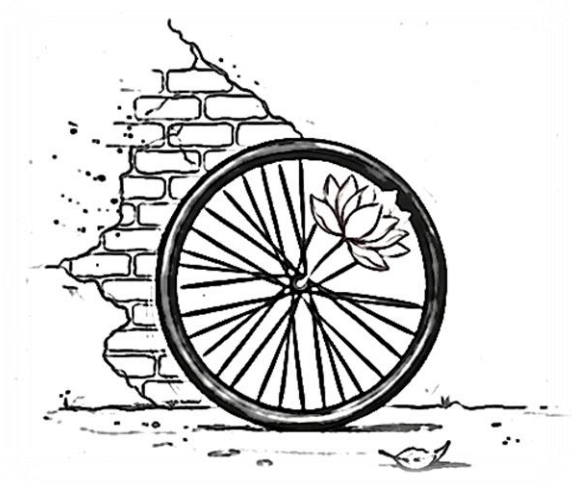

Thoughts that September Afternoon & Does That Tale Resonate

R P Singh Professor of English, Department of English and Modern European Languages Director, International Cell and ISA, Coordinator, Mukhyamantri Abhyuday Yojna University of Lucknow Lucknow - 226007, U P, India. *
Email: rpsingh.lu@gmail.com

Places seldom change
the people do.
The streets encroached,
names labelled
after a cycle different.
Roaring echoes come muffled
and the shiny countenance dull.
The large paddy fields
in hues different.
Innumerable voices
twinkle that little space,
where memory carved
that September afternoon.
Those stretched hundred miles
pave many shades, lived
of mundane charms,
and tender dreams,
and yet a yearning self
to a corporate recluse.
Entered that little place
of five clans
stuck to that place
for centuries long;
their ordinary joys
and frivolous woes.



An old mud house

now replaces with open bricks
and sheets -the weaver chief no more;
neither his eldest born.
Not that Gaanja team
under the thatched kachahri
of Thakur Chhattarpal,
where spirituality blew
in the aroma of the weed
and the dying evenings
readied for the Alha thaap.

It was a fleeting day;
managing the moments for means,
a young piercer moved on bicycle
to find the ear -piercing, nose -piercing
to get some patron suave.

An old wench I saw,
who made a panopticon
for the youthful joys
several in past.

The bazar enters the fields;
yellow mustard field shows spillers now,
And the green paddy fields make the rice mills.
Tried yet failed to confirm,
that old contestant for postman's job
now clad in white ritual cloth
with a beard small.
I heard the 'selected' postman died last year
of some lever disease,
and now his son makes reels.

The time flew for means

the village, the bazars,
the trees, the wells
the old -new temples and mazaars
all those calling from far afar.

What a cooling shade!
My driver gasped
and I recalled fondly
this shade of tender days
when bicycles smiled
and winked for a stop.

Galloped the moments
through those fancied names,
that so often stalled
the thought for an Aiyish
of Bundiya -Puri and the rest.

Moments gallop, and
the days get worn
for a cohort.
The contemporaries get torn,
and the lineage seldom heed.

No audience to narrate
no ear to bear.
No place to open
those old dog -eared bonds.
No space for the dried-up moments
for a spreading shade,
and no moment to wink
For that past old tale.

Does That Tale Resonate

Does that tale resonate
still under the thatch
in the early winter
with raw paddy's fragrance
and that grows with
the wafting aroma
from *Alaav*-potatoes¹.

The tale that narrates
the chivalrous kids
who killed the wolves
and hyenas with their sticks
while moving across
the forest dense.

Is that old goat-tale still there?
The goat who defeated the wolf
to protect her kids,
And the tale of the aliens
and fairies, who come to
Ghaghara's bank and to Pasai Taal².
What about the Poornima Mela
And the Mela- *Kariya Bhol*³
where the singers -Bhagats, Nirguniyas
Dhagabandis, Sufis-all performed
Sitting together in the Mela Bagh.
Many rituals ,and then the Krishna Leela.



¹ During winters ,the villagers used to roast in bonfires

² A village pond (proper noun)

³ name of a fair

Is *Kaitha*⁴ and *Kamrakh*⁵

still there in Karthik Mela,

still there at stalls.

The youngsters

thrashing the black gram pods

shelling for the fair allowances.

‘The fairing’ is also perhaps

a tale of the past.

Heard it of late ,

the old folk-dancer died

who performed ‘*Launda Naach*’⁶.

Years back his disciples died .

The kids like screen

and visit the fair for reels.

Several losses

and several replacements

in this trade fair of the world .

The customers get chance

and traders too.

We trade and shop

The scene different,

and the articles too differ.

⁴ Wood apples

⁵ Star fruit

⁶ A dance form where a male acted as female in the dance performance