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Misc. Paper.

~~TEERING COMMITTEE~~

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87, South Avenue,
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My dear Comrade Dange,

As desired by you I am giving herebelow a plan in regard to the publication of my plays:

My intention is to get at least six books published within the next six months, at the rate of one book a month. The purpose is to flood the drama field in Malayalam for a period with my plays so that every literary weekly and monthly should carry at least one review in a month of my play, which will help me get good publicity. To enable this done in an effective way, I am intending to select four full-length plays and two collections of one-act plays (two in each volume) which have a distinct characteristic of my own writings. You might feel it as rather ambitious. Yes, it is. You should understand my disadvantages to correctly appraise the necessity of this scheme. First of all, I have not been able to gate-crash into the literary fortress so far. I am a new writer as far as the readership is concerned, much more so for the critics. I do not expect any critic to be sympathetic towards me, and I do not intend to earn it by any means except through my contributions to the literature. So, being an unknown writer, you can well imagine my plight in case of adverse criticisms being showered upon my very first publication and unable to bring out the second one. In that event, I myself may be disappointed and disillusioned, then, what to speak of the financiers!

With this aspect in view, my desire is to bring out at least six volumes in the coming six months, and for this purpose I am selecting the following plays:

I. The Clarion Call

This is woven around an obedient step-daughter (of a rich Catholic landlord of Kerala) who has been forced to enter a nunnery (simply to avoid payment of a huge dowry) and the subsequent conflicts within her as well as with the outside world. Finally, she runs away from the convent. No hero, no heroine, no villain (of the type we usually see). Neither there is any attack on the religion or faith.

II. School Master

The story of an old grand school teacher of Kerala. A worshiper of the old values and their vulgarisation by the well-to-do, but from his own experience in life gradually changes and finally becomes the beloved 'school master' of the whole students, teachers and the villagers alike. No abstract Marxism - no slogans, but inspired by his own experience in life and feelings of brotherhood. Hero is the old man himself.

III. Knock and Knock! The door Will Open!

A Biblical story woven around the famous prostitute Mary Magdaline and Christ. Except these two Biblical characters, all others are imaginary ones. In this play, unlike all others of the same theme known to me (at least those in Malayalam), what I have attempted is to project Christ immensely, but bringing him to the earth as a man - a man of love! Here too I am very careful not to hurt the devotees! - fanatics may bark, but then I do not bother much about them.

IV. Joint Family

A symbolic play, in which mythological as well as earthly characters are brought in. My attempt in this play is to satirically expose all the disintegrating tendencies in our Society, either communal or political. I am approaching the problem in a negative way with a positive conclusion in favour of unity. Main characters are: Mother Kerala, Daughter, Narada-cum Democratic Press, a man who walks backward, another who walks "two steps forward and one step backward", and so on.

V. Collections: (a) Standing Order.

You know what is a "Standing Order" and its mischiefs. I have tried in this play, woven around a factory owner, a worker and the private secretary of the owner, to bring forth the nefarious character of the "Standing Order" and to ridicule the deceptive aspects of equality between owner and the workers in the eyes of law.

(b) Night and Day.

A short play - absolutely symbolic - on War and Peace. The characters are Night, Eve, and the Moon - a philosophical treatment through symbolic characters.

VI. Collections: (a) Budget.

A satirical-symbolic attack on Democracy in the hands of the Bourgeoisie and black market and its taxation policies, and the revelation as to how a conscious toiling class with the support and sympathy of the people wrenches the institution of democracy from the hands of the anti-social elements and establish a real democracy of the peoples.

(b) The Intelligent and the Fools

A small humorous exposition as to how the dishonest intellectual giants fool the uneducated poor masses, with three-four characters.

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All of the above plays were presented on the stage (except the Budget and the Joint Family) by myself and were acclaimed by ordinary audience as well as critics. After every presentation I have rewritten all of them in the light of few criticisms made by some critics as well as from my own stage experience. They are all essentially plays for the stage.

Cost of Publication

I have made certain enquiries and found that (according to Current Book House, Trichur(- one of the three-four leading publishers in Kerala -), a book of 100 pages will cost Rs.350/- for 1,000 copies. A full-length play will come to about 150-170 pages and its production will cost about Rs.450-500. The collections ~~ampro~~ - the ones I have selected - will come to this size, too.

Distribution

Plays are the one branch of the Malayalam literature which sell better than any other. Current Book House is ready to take the sole distribution rights, but at 50% discount! In my view it is a bit too much. If we (PPH) approach, this rate will come down to 40, I hope. Also there is a possibility to persuade the National Book Stall, Kottayam (the leading publishers of Kerala) to undertake distribution and at 40%. They are a writers' cooperative and as such certain privileges are given to new writers.

In conclusion, I would like to inform you that I am proceeding on my leave by the third-fourth week of this month and If you could give me your idea and opinion - affirmative or negative - it would be of immense help to me in my planning.

With best regards and respects,

Yours sincerely,

Jose Muricken

(JOSE MURICKEN)

POSTER - ART - POETRY - AGITATION

Work Shop

Pahal In summers of this year MP IPTA had done a unique workshop on Poster making. This workshop was jointly organised by IPTA, PWA "Bhai" & Vasudha, Hindi Sakitya Sammelana and Janavadi Lekhaka Sangha. 30 participant from different part of state participated in this workshop. Ashok Bhounik from Allahabad, Amitabha from Baroda and Savindrer Savarkar from Delhi had conducted it.

From long time cultural activist of state had been using poster for attracting peoples in movement for peoples art and poetry. Poster based on progressive poetry and revolutionary slogan were made in towns, cities and were posted at stratigical points or arranged in exhibition. But every where one thing was felt strongly, about quality of poster was needed to improve, that revolutionary content need a revolutionary form. Secondly we are surrounded by cheap, glamourous and "sensual" posters. In this situation we have to learn art of communication and aesthetics of posters to promote peoples literature, plays. Posters should be attractive and powerful so they should stand out among the crowd of commerical ones and should be able to communicate in few seconds with its full depth. This workshop was a real chalange, because all the participants were amature and had no formal education of art but results were amazing.

That - In inaugural speech Ashok Bhounik stressed the basic of peoples poster art that poster should be made from cheap raw material which can be available anywhere. "We know the strength of Poster and we use it. We will learn in this worke^{shop} what is poster? Poster is art apart from fine arts and advertisement. We don't have to learn drawing to make posters. Anybody who is sensitive can do it. We will discuss the problems and new direction of it". Over poster should be identified with over "trade mark" on it, "trade mark" of over charecter, character of our non-professional hand mark. Same time we should learn communicability and art of suggestion from commerical posters.

Amitabh from Baroda though agreed on this departure point but said "we should note that today poster is not some thing out cast but has full status of fine arts. In days of decay of bourgeois culture and under aggression of imperialist culture poster camp become powerful spokesman of people's cultural struggle. We have to challenge bourgeois media and this is big challenge. We have to out smart them to reach peoples. On other hand we have learn a lot from visual arts and as a painter I feel visual arts also have to learn a lot from posters. We have to use everything in every way.

Chief Guest Shri Maya Ram Surjan said, "it is not my field but I feel importance of this workshop it is important that "Organisations with differences" have joined here. In today age of speed and tension no body have time read long story or poetry. TV is reaching 70% of the masses but "Rajani" can not bring revolution thus reliability of TV is doubted here. I don't say that poster can make any revolution alone but it can reach masses and influence them.

After formal inauguration workshops started with discussion to decide shape of workshop. Ashok Bhoomik gave a talk on communication he explained young activist that what is true communication that true communication is that in which spectator not only what/is shown but understand its meaning and reacts. Poster have tradition long before arrival of advertisement but purpose full poster making is not yet fully developed. Power of poster lies in collective work, poster can be used for instant agitation, and its powerful political weapon". Participating discussion Gyan hanjan PWA General Secretary of M.P. said that ~~it~~ "tendency of poster is cool and calculated then it can be more effective" in adds dreams are sold and ~~we~~ we also should provoke dreams but dreams of love, hope and better ~~future~~ future. Ashok commented "yes poster can created dilectic tension, we should make human values over posters. Dr. Kamala Prasad demands dipiction of life in it.

Second day in first session Ashok gave lecture on techniques of composition. He demonstrated on use of colour in composition to balance and how colours can provoke feelings. After this session participant were taught the art of calligraphy. It was stressed that calligraphy should not be copy of printed typography, but beautiful handwriting is more expressive because it carries personalities of communicator and evoke wareness to the spectator. In concluding

session space as artistic category was discussed.

On third and fourth day poster were made from technique learned last days whole day posters were made for plays. In evening thirty posters were selected. It has been found that participant had inclination towards making drawings, but a bad drawing can spoil poster. To avoid this weakness it was suggested that it not always necessary to make drawing. Abstract forms texture can also make attractive poster. Drawing and specially a bad drawing should not over power over content of poster. Participant were taught indigenous method to develop poster space without need to make drawing. Material used for this was black ink, poster colour, printing inks, rubber solution and were print or muse paper, this material can compete with colourful poster printed by offset if used artistically. For this techniques of monoprint were introduced by using guni sack, matrass pieces, wrinkled paper, patterns on the sole of shoe and slipper, type mark, leaves etc. Blowing wet colour and ink and colage also used.

On 5th and 6th poetry poster were made. From Tulsidas Kabir, Kedarnath, Muktibodha, Nagazun, Nirala, Shamsheer Trilochan and other modern poets were selected for ~~making~~ designing. By this time most of the poster artist were consciously applying their creative ability and it was difficult to say that these poster are made by amature artists. Approximately 200 poster were made finally.

last day remaining work was finished and all participant enthusiastically participated in review in concluding session. Everybody promised to arrange such workshop at more places to carry forward movement by putting posters. Everybody was stressed that poster should become a day life phenomenon of our cities and towns. Amitabh asked participant to continue experiments consciously. All should go back to there places with new energy. In night Somadatta renouned Hindi poet recited his poetries.

This seven days workshops was successful in the way that enthusiasm of participant was very high. These poster will be exhibited in Bhopal and other places of state.

Rajendra/Amitabh.

New Delhi,
October 24, 1986.