

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Yuyutsu Sharma**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2012

**Publisher:**

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Yuyutsu Sharma(5 January 1960 -)

Yuyutsu Ram Dass Sharma (also known as Yuyutsu RD Sharma or Yuyutsu Sharma) is a widely traveled Nepali/Indian writer who has read his works at several prestigious places in the world. He moved to Nepal at an early age and now writes in English and Nepali. Half the year, he travels and reads all over the world to read from his works and conducts creative writing workshop at various universities in the United States and Europe but goes trekking in the Himalayas when back home.

## <b>Early Life and Education</b>

Yuyutsu RD Sharma was born (5 January 1960) at Nakodar, Punjab and grew up in Nakodar and later at Nangal Township of Shivalik ranges of Mahabharata Hills where his father worked. Sharma was educated at Nakodar under the supervision of his maternal grandfather, Dheru Ram and grew up in a very religious atmosphere with his mother, Shanti Devi and at the age of nine became a shaman as he was thought to be possessed by a serpent spirit, his family deity.

He came under the impression of Naga ascetics whom his father, Madan Lal revered, but later followed the course of western education and received his early education first DAV college, Nakodar, Punjab, and then Baring Union Christian College, Batala, where he received his Master's Degree in English Literature. Later he received his M. Phil. at the University of Rajasthan where he met American poet <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/david-ray/">David Ray</a> who encouraged him to write and publish poetry. Yuyutsu remained active in the literary circles of Rajasthan and acted in plays by <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/william-shakespeare/">Shakespeare</a>, <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/bertolt-brecht/">Bertolt Brecht</a>, <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/harold-pinter/">Harold Pinter</a>, and <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/edward-albee/">Edward Albee</a>. Later he taught at various campuses of Punjab University, Chandigarh and Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

## <b>Literary Life and Acknowledgement</b>

Recipient of fellowships and grants from The Rockefeller Foundation, Ireland Literature Exchange, Trubar Foundation, Slovenia, The Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature and The Foundation for the Production and Translation of Dutch Literature, Yuyutsu RD Sharma is a distinguished poet and translator.

A widely traveled author, he has read his works at several prestigious places including Poetry Café, London, Seamus Heaney Center for Poetry, Belfast, New York University, New York, Western Writers' Center, Galway, Bowery Poetry Place, New York, The Kring, Amsterdam, P.E.N. Paris, Knox College, Illinois, Whittier College, California, Baruch College, New York, WB Yeats' Center, Sligo, Gustav Stresseman Institute, Bonn, Rubin Museum, New York, Irish Writers' Centre, Dublin, The Guardian Newsroom, London, Trois Rivieres Poetry Festival, Quebec, Arnofini, Bristol, Borders, London, Slovenian Book Days, Ljubljana, Royal Society of Dramatic Arts, London, Gunter Grass House, Bremen, GTZ, Kathmandu, Ruigoord, Amsterdam, Nehru Center, London, Frankfurt Book Fair, Frankfurt, Indian International Center, New Delhi, and Villa Serbelloni, Italy.

### **<b>Publications</b>**

He has published eight poetry collections including, *Space Cake, Amsterdam, & Other Poems from Europe and America*, (Howling Dog Press, Colorado, 2009), *Annapurna Poems*, (Nirala, New Delhi 2008), *Everest Failures* (White Lotus Book Shop, Kathmandu, 2008), : *A photographic and Poetic Journey to the Foot of Everest*, (Epsilonmedia, Germany, 2006) with German photographer Andreas Stimm and a translation of Irish poet Cathal O' Searcaigh poetry in Nepali in a bilingual collection entitled, *Kathmandu: Poems, Selected and New*, 2006.

He has translated and edited several anthologies of contemporary Nepali poetry in English and along with Shailendra Sakar launched a literary movement, *Kathyakayakalp* ("content metamorphosis"), in Nepali poetry.

A collection of his poems in Slovenian translation, entitled, *Jezero Fewa in Konj* come out from the *Sodobnost International Press*, Ljubljana. A collection of his poems in French, entitled *Poemes de l' Himalayas* appeared from *Harmattan*, Paris in 2009. Quite recently, *Cosmopoetica*, Cordoba, published *Yuyutsu's Poemas De Los Himalayas: Bilingual Spanish/English Poetry Collection*, translated into Spanish with an Introduction by Spanish poet, *Veronica Aranda*.

Yuyutsu's own work has been translated into German, French, Italian, Slovenian, Hebrew, Spanish and Dutch. Currently, he edits *Pratik*, A Magazine of Contemporary Writing and contributes literary columns to Nepal's leading daily, *The Himalayan Times*.

# Best Poems

The kisses you  
refused were the best

like the poems  
on the lake I didn't write.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# Glacier

A hope  
that someday I shall sprout

like a tree  
on the edge of a remote hillside.

A hope  
someday a Queen-of-the-Night

shall bloom in my chest  
and suck all the smoke

I have inhaled  
in these malignant cities.

A hope that someday  
a just born brook shall clean

and wash  
bacteria of greed in me.

A hope that someday  
a Buddha meditating in the niche of a cairn

by the heap of the city  
garbage shall shake his limbs

and walk away towards a village of eternity  
to take another birth

to save me  
from the shame of becoming a glacier.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# Mules

On the great Tibetan  
salt route they meet me again

old forsaken friends...

On their faces  
fatigue of a drunken sleep

their lives worn out,  
their legs twisted, shaking

from carrying  
illustrious flags of bleeding ascents.

Age long bells clinging  
to them like festering wounds

beating notes  
of a slavery modernism brings:

cartons of Iceberg, mineral water bottles,  
solar heaters, Chinese tiles, tin cans, carom boards

sacks of rice  
and iodized salt from the plains of Nepal Terai.

Butterflies of  
the terraced fields know their names.

Singing brooks tempests  
of their breathless climbs.

Traffic alert  
and time-tested, they climb

carrying  
dreams of posh peacocks

pamphlets

of a secret religious war

filth

of an ecologist's sterile semen

entire kitchen

for a cocktail party at the base camp

defunct development

agenda of guilty donors

the West's weird visions

lusting for an instant purge.

Stone steps

of the mountains embossed

on their drugged brains,

like lines of aborted love

scratched

on the historic rocks of waterspouts.

Starry skies

of the dozing valleys know

the ache

of their secret sweat.

Sunny days

along the crystal rivers

taste

of their bleeding eyes.

Greatest fiction

of the struggling lives lost,

like real mules

clattering their hooves on the flagstones,

in circling

the cruel grandeur

of blood thirsty

mule paths around the glacial of Annapurnas.

Yuyutsu Sharma



# River

Between your marble  
shoulders and my hairy chest

the river roaring,  
tears, tears, tears...

Between your mellowing  
mouth and my scented tongue

a night of flames  
and flesh, flesh, flesh ...

Between your hefty thighs  
and my throbbing hands

clouds drunk  
from the forests of rhododendrons.

Between your almond eyes  
and my warm mouth

rain dropping like pearls  
on the plump leaves of the jungle.

Between your shimmering skin  
and my dark hair grass greener

than the greenest parakeet  
growing yellowish from incessant rain.

Between your nights by  
the impotent pillow of your husband

and my crazed headpiece  
a poem of spring that shall fill my deep wounds,

sprouting flowers, flowers, flowers ...

Between your tulips

and my fragrant pen

a brain-fever bird's  
crazed cry, mad, mad, mad...

Between the sparkle  
of your teeth and my sleep

a rain coming  
like roar of a starving steam

in the starless  
summer gloom of the night.

Between your melon breasts  
and thirst of my soft lips

the rage of the river  
battering its head against the magic mountains.

Between your decisions  
and my flickering lamps

the river mad  
you, you poet, you bastard, go away!

Yuyutsu Sharma

# River At Night

Dark night  
I cannot see the river.  
I can only  
hear it thundering rumble.  
A water well explodes  
enamored in the fleshy  
clutch of fluffy  
clouds, making a cave of this gorge.  
Only fingers of the fireflies  
illuminate its shape, the wild limbs,  
as the river fumbles  
curled around the hefty thighs of the night  
to find a wink of sleep.

Yuyutsu Sharma

## River: Morning

Cruel river  
knows each time  
I come to brood  
over her roaring waters  
each time I come  
to her deafening banks  
to gleam my dreams  
over the plump flanks of her warm body  
each time I come  
to pour last of my life's salt  
in the ringing gorges  
of her sonorous frame,  
a bone breaks  
in my smoldering chest  
and a wrinkle appears  
across the shriveled leaf of my life.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# Sagarmatha

The turquoise lake

that longs to belong to the ocean

trapped to see

dazzling face of the Everest.

The climbers from the world over

come to see their haggard faces

in the clear light of her crystal eyes

before facing the forehead of the Sky

Glacial

A hope

that someday I shall sprout

like a tree

on the edge of a remote hillside.

A hope

someday a Queen-of-the-Night

shall bloom in my chest

and suck all the smoke

I have inhaled

in these malignant cities.

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garbage shall shake his limbs

and walk away towards a village of eternity

to take another birth

to save me

from the shame of becoming a glacier.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# Space Cake, Amsterdam

"Don't panic," they said,  
remain cool like your Krishna,  
meditate maybe like Buddha,  
uttering 'Om Mani Padme,' jewel in the lotus,  
or lie down and relax  
like Vishnu on the python-bed  
to float on the ocean's currents,  
buoyant on the invisible thread  
of your breath in slow motion...

Millions of cats prowled around me.  
Smoke from shared sex  
and hashish joints stung my eyes.  
Unsettling tongue  
of an awkward fire fed my stomach.  
I skidded queasily towards  
towards the formidable edge,  
unknown ominous frontiers of human life...

They laughed a secret laugh  
behind my back - "Isn't it crazy that  
this man from Kathmandu should get stoned  
from a piece of space cake in Amsterdam?"

"Don't be serious, laugh,  
celebrate the flame of life!" a woman's voice said.  
"Hold my hand; I can imagine  
you are alone on this trail.  
I've been there once," she whispered.  
Her tongue curled like a dry leaf in my ear  
and crackled "How much did you take,  
just a piece? I took thirty-eight grams once,  
It can be crazy if you don't know it's coming.  
Just don't worry too much.  
Don't lose your control over things.  
You can kiss me if you like,  
You can pat my back,  
tickle my belly or stroke my breasts  
for a while, if it comforts you.

Sometimes it can be heavenly,  
this licking the rim of the forbidden frontiers of human life.

"That's what he wants, that's exactly  
what he's looking for," a voice leered far off.  
"But I have to go ultimately,  
I've a man waiting at home for me."

"Maybe read a poem of yours,"  
someone said. My heart raced wild  
and I heard some-girls gossip in the next room—  
What if he gets sick in Europe?  
Don't we get sick in Asia?  
"Just take it easy," another voice echoed  
"You won't go psychotic. Remember one thing,  
whatever happens, you can always make a comeback."  
Faces of my dear ones veered past my face.  
I felt delicate thread of my life  
slipping through my fingers  
"Hey man, it's fine. Don't worry too much."  
My host shouted. "Drink lots of water."  
Drink black tea or coffee," a guest suggested.  
"Or take lots of orange juice."  
"Maybe sing your favorite song," a woman said.  
"Or recite one of your Hindu mantras."  
"Maybe stick your finger into your throat"  
another voice came sheepishly, "And throw up.  
You probably haven't digested everything yet."

Questions came like wind slaps.  
"Can you tell me what they call boredom  
in your mother tongue? Do you remember  
your email account and password?  
Discuss your children, if you have any.  
Shall I bring my little daughter before you?  
Maybe you'd feel better then,  
seeing her brilliant eyes."

I imagined a child's face and clung to it,  
like a penitent would hold onto  
a sacred cow's tail in his afterlife,  
and slept on it, all through the river of blood...



Hours passed by  
and then I heard someone say—  
What if he had freaked out?  
What if Death had stalked our house tonight?

Hearing these words, I woke up  
knowing I'd come back, stepped on  
the familiar shores of life  
where Death's feared, a distant distrustful thing.  
My drowse burst like a glacial that cracks  
from rumble of a seed of fire  
that explodes somewhere in earth's deep sleep.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# Temple, London (For Maggie Hindley)

Wind howled  
like the trumpet of a fierce Kali  
rushed in through  
the Temple Tube Station  
to slap my face  
to smother the flame  
of my breath  
and blind my vision  
as I soared  
floating up the steely slope  
of the escalators  
in spirit of reaching  
a hillside shrine  
that our goddesses  
always prefer to live on.

Once up  
out of the Station  
in the freezing cold  
as I exerted to push  
my overcoat up  
my shaking frame  
I saw her there  
on the wet pavement  
out alone in the open  
with a swollen black eye  
and an issue of The Big Issue  
held like a trophy,  
a sacrificial rooster  
against her sagging breast.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# The Lake Fewa, An Unfinished Poem

From the shoulder of a hill  
from a garden restaurant where  
exhausted tourists lie, massaging  
hysteric limbs of a nightmare,  
from dingy tea-shop  
of a grandma, crying from  
the smoke of her charred dreams,  
from the balcony  
of a hut where a blonde Buddhist nun  
sleeps with a local drug addict,  
from Naudada,  
from Lumle, from the luminous sheets  
of the windows of a racing car  
or like a despot  
of once a famished principality, Sarangkot,  
from an airplane  
with nose of snobbery ticking  
the gleaming summits of fishtail  
from the colorful pages  
of a coffee table book,

from the fury of the goddess  
who created the lake to avenge  
the unkind inhabitants of the valley,  
from the sunken sockets  
of a porter's eyes where  
magnificent draggers of Himal have grown,  
from the obscene columns  
of a magazine on frozen peaks of Himal,  
printed from the evil ink donated  
by some treacherous NGO,  
from the bedroom of trekking couple,  
about to reach an orgasm in unison,  
from the bleeding eye of a folksinger  
in love with local Sahu's daughter,  
from the prow of a ferry  
scurrying over surface to measure its secrets,  
from the tip of the fishtail  
where lamblike sun bounces defunct,  
from the unfinished draft  
of this poem that I tear off  
to look at the blue

of the Eye-lake, Fewa.

Yuyutsu Sharma

# Way To Helambu

On the way to Helambu  
tall columns  
of the killing kilns  
of Bhaktapur  
against the shimmering snows  
of Mukut  
of Ganesh Himal  
grey plumes  
of poisonous smoke  
a rattle snake  
in green terraces  
of light  
stadiums of delight.

Yuyutsu Sharma