

MYSTICISM OR MILITANCY FOR TRUTH-EVENT:
REFLECTIONS ON MUKTIBODHIAN FANTASY

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Abstract. This research paper endeavours to illuminate the relationship of literary text with truth-procedure in the context of renowned Hindi poet and literary thinker Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh's mythical fantasies. In this direction, the present work intends to discern the role of fantasy in literary texts. The dialectics of detachment and attachment can be discerned in Muktibodh's *Three Moments of Art*, which gives us insight into the redemption of myth or mythical history to generalise truth-procedure of art. With this critical insight embedded, this paper attempts to reflect upon the demystified mythical fantasy as poetic praxis, specifically in the context of Muktibodh's epic poem *Bramhrakshas*, the myth of Bramhrakshas, and the philosophical and mythical connotations of Brahma in Indian civilisation. As a revolutionary poet, Muktibodh redeems these myths from their mythical mist and liberates fantasy as a literary device from its identitarian mystic manifestation.

Keywords: truth-procedure, Muktibodh, fantasy, Bramhrakshas, psychosis, withdrawal, subtraction, exchange-principal, return of the repressed, return of the real

INTRODUCTION

Literary text as truth-procedure¹ has its dynamics. It procreates from empirical reality but has its own specificity; hence, it is free from empiric. To symbolise experience, a literary attempt endeavours to transverse its very place of origin². Literary procedure, in its processual unfolding, has the potential to redeem the myth from its quasi-historical or mystical mist.

Furthermore, it is precisely the functionality and the passage of this functionality of detachment which becomes the ground of attachment; attachment as oneness. This simultaneous detachment and attachment to myth ensures the dialectical analysis of myth and history as living tradition. Here, we envision *detachment-as-attachment* as an uninterrupted process. Through this research paper, I want to contend about this process of detachment-as-attachment and attachment-as-detachment and its relationship with truth-procedure in the context of renowned Hindi poet and literary thinker³ Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh's poetic fantasies. In this direction, this paper discerns this problem specifically around the role of fantasy in literary text. In this way, this paper investigates what is beneath the apparent mysticism of fantasy. For an adequate analysis of this question, this paper is divided into two parts. The first part reflects upon the peculiarities of Muktibodhian fantasy and its relationship with mythical projection. The second one will try to explicate the militant poetic praxis of Muktibodh, specifically in the context of his epic poem, *Brambrakshas*. The said poem dealt with the ancient myth of Bramhrakshas of Indian civilisation. With this paper, I would like to argue how Muktibodh unpacked or demystified these myths while reinterpreting philosophical and mythical connotations of Brahma/Brahmin. I will argue how Muktibodh, as a revolutionary poet, redeemed these myths from their mythical mist and emancipated fantasy as a literary device from its *identitarianised* mystic manifestation.

PECULIARITIES OF FANTASY AND MUKTIBODH

In his critical work on Hindi *Cbhayawadi* poet Jaishankar Prasad's *Kamayani*, Muktibodh explicitly stresses the peculiarities of fantasy as a literary device. He discerns carefully those aspects of fantasy, which makes it significant to project the most repressed and hidden aspects of life and world that remain unnoticed

because of ruling class epistemological hegemony. This literary device has the capacity to illuminate those implications that remain imperceptible and hidden because of the ideological hegemony of capital. Muktibodh writes while rendering these peculiarities of fantasy:

Under the fantasy, the poet's imagination illuminates the essential peculiarities of life while presenting the panorama within which that factual life, whose self-empirical peculiarity has been projected by fantasy, becomes more and more subsidiary, underground, and disguised. In short, under the fantasy, the affective-subjective aspect is fundamentally predominant, and the objective aspect is subsidiary and disguised, as well as the affective-subjective aspect, while galvanising imagination during the constitution of imagery, presents a concrete figuration. This figuration has its own laws. In this concrete figuration objective aspect is merely informed and implied. But, without this underground foundation—the objective aspect—the significance of the concrete figuration cannot be projected. (Muktibodh 2011, 195) [My translation]

Fantasy is an inevitable part of Muktibodhian singular creative process (*Three Moments of Art*). Within the ground of his politico-aesthetic, poetry manifests itself in fantasy supported by reality: the singularities of *Three Moments* and the uninterrupted processuality amount to what we can call a universe of singularities or singular-multiples. This emphasis on universal singular ensures the negation of any order of dichotomy or relationality and, hence, disavows the exchange principle of capital⁴. Hence, Muktibodhian experimentation with fantasy as a literary device ensures the artistic inquiry *qua* militant inquiry for the Truth-Event. Fantasy reveals the Truth of the situation that the ruling class epistemological hegemony tries to hide and repress. Muktibodh recommences the subtractive endeavouring of militant inquiry for the emancipation of fantasy, which is subsumed within *identitarianised* appearances of mysticism under the canonisation of fantasy as a literary device. In this attempt, Muktibodh delineates the disadvantages and limits of fantasy, too. With this inquiry, Muktibodh critiques the canonisation and

hence emancipates the traditional understanding and usage of fantasy as a literary device. He writes:

It is not just that an unreal viewpoint is brought to bear on reality, but the way of presenting reality can be imaginary and driven by fantasy. The result is that reality mostly presents itself in a distorted state – so much so that it is often difficult to recognise it. Upon it are foisted the garbs of vain philosophy, ultra psychologising, unclear symbol systems and meaningless emotionalism. (As quoted in Sharma R.V. 2011, 127)

With this critical insight, he splendidly understands how to analyse fantasy adequately. He writes while making his point:

In short, fantasy is a gauzy curtain from where the facts of life blink. The structure of fantasy is constituted of diverse action-reactions incarnated in visualising imagery. In other words, the projection of facts is deeply subsidiary and affected; rather, the action-reactions to these facts are predominant.

In this situation, the analysis of fantasy should be followed as this—primarily, we need to know the action-reactions intertwined in fantasy, and through its clues, we need to reach the disguised or semi-disguised facts of life. These facts of life are treasures of sensible motives—in other words, they are peculiar ingredients of life that the poet reacts to and reflects. (Muktibodh 2011, 198) [My translation]

The prolonged and complex poems of Muktibodh represent the functionality of fantasy. Muktibodh's poetry offers the charisma of fantasy, where many unbelievable and incredible things happen, and these elements are deeply rooted in material reality. The peculiarity of Muktibodh's prolonged fantastic poems is that they are autonomous. It means they develop autonomously without any mythological edifice. Muktibodh himself developed demystified fantastic narratives for his poetry, which, according to renowned Hindi critic Dudhnath Singh, are neo-myths (Singh 2013, 26). But this fantastic mythical projection as demystified mythical fantasy is completely free from the pre-historical grounding of myths. In this precise sense, Muktibodh's so-called neo-myth as fantastic projection emancipates myths from their quasi-historical and mythical mist. He questions the well-

celebrated mythical projection of Indian civilisation, Brahma, and renders its modernist interpretation in his long poem *Ooh Nagaatman Fanidhar* (Muktibodh 2011C, 176-184). Here, he represents the sophisticated form of non-duality (*Advait*) of Aatma and Brahma as labour and capital with the spiral movement of his poem, which he compares to a cobra. In a similar vein, Muktibodh does the materialist analysis of the metaphysical aspects of Brahma. Similarly, in another fantasy *Ek Arup Shynya Ke Prati* (*Ibid.*, 187-191), he further develops this. Hence, it is the inherent power of Muktibodhian fantasy that, in its materialist analysis, redeems the myths from their traditional and metaphysical bounds. Furthermore, Muktibodh uses pre-modern cultural imagery precisely to demonstrate the grave contradictions of modern life. Hindi poet Chandrakant Devtale seems right when he says that “for opening up the ironies of modern human and his mind, Muktibodh frequently makes the visual, instructional and mystical orchestration of myths and mythical imageries” (Devtale 2003, 219) [My translation]. In this sense, it is precisely the weakness of Dudhnath Singh’s reading that he reduces the innovative literary discoveries of Muktibodh as neo-myths. Muktibodh does not look for neo-myths after redeeming myths from their mystical mist. Rather, he uninterruptedly excavates the repressed real under the apparent fluctuations of myths, which preserves the reality as the *status quo*. He foregrounds the real in contrast to reality.

Muktibodhian fantasy is an embodiment of the emergence of real against the background of reality. It is a moment of short-circuit between the *now time* (reality) and *what has been* (repressed real) in a strict Benjaminian sense for the constitution of dialectical image (Benjamin 199, 462). Hence, Muktibodhian fantasy is a ghostly world that is neither entirely real nor fully unreal. Rosemary Jackson recognises this spectral region of fantasy, which is neither entirely real nor fully unreal (Jackson 2009, 12). This real is just a glimpse that dishevels the symbolic order of literary fantasy. It is precisely because of this reason that

the language of fantasy seems rough and spectral. Fantasy travels to the world of pre-historical myths, folklore, and mysteries in this process of excavation of the real. One can often find this kind of roaming instinct or nomadism in Muktibodhian fantasy. The nomad of this poet⁵ takes us to deserted landscapes, ponds, dried wells, rocks, valleys, *etc.* while narrating stories of ghosts, snakes, magicians, and occultism. Devtale alludes that in the purview of Muktibodhian fantasy there are images of subjective memories but, at the same time, there are images of communitarian memories also, which are part of his collective unconscious. (Devtale 2006, 216). Jackson recognises the explicit relationship between modern fantasy and myths. Moreover, she ponders upon the changes in the forms of fantasy with the ascendance of capitalism. She writes:

As a literature of ‘unreality’, fantasy has altered in character over the years in accordance with changing notions of what exactly constitutes ‘reality’. Modern fantasy is rooted in ancient myth, mysticism, folklore, fairy tales and romance (...). From 1800 onwards, those fantasies produced within a capitalist economy express some of the debilitating psychological effects of inhabiting a materialistic culture. They are peculiarly violent and horrific. (Jackson 2009, 2)

Certainly, Muktibodhian fantasy does not only demarcate the psychological effects that delimit and destitute an individual, but it also sketches the unleashing of human creativity against the ubiquitous Brahma of capital. In this process, Muktibodh shatters myths. He makes them free from their pre-historical clench. In this process of destruction of myths, he also redeems the collective unconscious. Similarly, in another poem, *Lakdi Ka Ravana* (Muktibodh, 2011C, 368-372), the explosion of human creativity while destructing the myth of contemplative Brahma—the symbolic embodiment of capital as impersonal ruling power—proceeds towards the redemption of the collective unconscious. I have suggested elsewhere that the redemption of the collective unconscious at the same moment is the emergence of the collective self in the said poem (Bali 2020B, 94-103).

Through fantasy, Muktibodh ensures the *return of the repressed* and *the return of the real* (spectre) within the apparent fluctuations of mysticism while destroying the spirit of capitalist hegemony. In this direction, the form of fantasy gives enormous options to the writer/poet for developing the content in more pictorial, illustrative, and superfine forms. In this way, fantasy endeavours to flare up deeply hidden and repressed aspects of modern human civilisation by the dictatorship of capital. Many of these aspects are imperceptible within the dichotomy of normal/abnormal, ordinary/extraordinary, and rational/irrational bifurcation of modernity. Renowned Hindi critic Namwar Singh, in his analysis of Muktibodh's epic poem *Andhere Mein*, explains this aspect while reflecting upon the process of dream work used in the poem.

It need hardly be pointed out that dream-tale style of narration has given the poem compactness and economy of words, and a viable reason for omitting extended descriptions. If, on the one hand, the dream style has inevitably made the poem pictorial, on the other a flowing grace has been added to the sequenced assemblage of more than one story, because the dream process is by nature beyond logic and object-oriented. (Singh, 2011, 112-113)

Undoubtedly, this critical explication of Muktibodhian fantasy by Singh has a broader relevance beyond the said poem. The kernel of this insight lies in elucidating the significance of those aspects that are beyond the binary of rational/irrational or, in other words, while criticising the instrumental rationality it brings the aporia of rational/irrational in question, which is real as a force of negativity.

MYSTICISM OR MILITANCY FOR TRUTH-EVENT: THE CASE OF UKTIBODH'S *BRAMHRAKSHAS*

Brambrakshas is an extremely important poem from the viewpoint of the formalisation of negativity of instrumental rationality. Here, Muktibodh, while positing the stark modern interpretation

of the ancient myth of Bramhrakshas—which prevails in Hindu folk belief—emancipates it from its pre-historical grip. In Hindu folk belief, a Brahmin who in his life does not make suitable use of his knowledge or does not bestow his knowledge to an adequate disciple becomes a ghost after death. Bramhrakshas is an incarnation of a Brahmin ghost. It would be significant to look at how Muktibodh renders the modern manifestation of the mythical image of Bramhrakshas. It is worth noticing that *Bramhrakshas* resides near the ruin, in a deserted and mysterious pond (*Bawdi*) on the edge of the city.

On that side of the city near the ruins
an abandoned, empty well
and within, in cold darkness
in waters deep within
amid deep-sunken stairs
in the old stale puddle....

I cannot follow these seeming-foundations
these depths (Muktibodh 2017, 51)

The apparent mysterious setting and the mysticism of the narrative structure of fantasy in a deserted *Bawdi* are very much explicit from the above poetic imagery. The last three lines in Hindi, (समझ में आ न सकता हो/कि जैसे बात का आधार/लेकिन बात गहरी हो) explicitly reveal the incomprehensibility about the mystery and secret related to this mystery of the act of *Bramhrakshas*. This secret is related to the self-activity of *Bramhrakshas*, which Muktibodh wants to unfold through this poetic fantasy. The mysterious silence of the incomprehensible act of *Bramhrakshas* makes the fantasy of this poem apparently mystic. The silently stood fig trees and the abandoned owl-nests hanging in them are witnesses of this mysterious silence. Hence, the setting and background of *Bawdi* in the poem accelerate the mysticism while emphasising the very first incomprehensible mystery or secret.

The smells of a hundred past pieties
green, jungly, raw
swim in the air and become the weighted doubt

of some unknown eminence
 that unsettles the heart (*Ibidem*) [translation modified]

In this poetic fantasy, Muktibodh puts the layers of mysticism while weaving the dramaturgy of narrative with autonomous dynamic images. These, while sketching the imagery of deep-sunken stairs, fig trees, and entangled branches, on the one hand, give suggestive connotations to poetic fantasy. In contrast, on the other hand, the description of a hundred past pieties produces a frightening doubt in the narrative structure. The description of a past eminence, which rattles the heart in connotative figuration, constitutes the ghostly setting in *Bandi*. While the intensity of this mysterious eminence and depth begin to grow, Muktibodh unfolds the figure of *Bramhrakshas*, who is sitting silently in that old stale puddle and repeatedly following some bodily acts.

In the emptiness of the well's thick darkness
 sits the Bramhrakshas
 and from within rises echo after echo
 like the mutterings of the insane
 speculations,
 defilement.
 to wash away, at every moment
 the shadow of impurity –
 day and night, to make clean –
 Bramhrakshas, scorning his body
 with the claws of his hand, again
 and again hands chest mouth
 Still it remains...
 Still it remains (*Ibidem*, 52) [translation modified]

The echo after echo that rises from within and the mutterings of the insane are signs of a particular internal turmoil. There is something that profoundly settles down in *Bramhrakshas*' being. A ghostly apparition which has entrapped deep in *Bramhrakshas*' interiority. Isn't it a sinful shadow of capital as a giant centripetal force that Muktibodh has encountered in anxiety dreams almost at every phase of his lifetime since childhood? Muktibodh mentioned these frightening dreams in his personal diary

(Muktibodh, 2011B, 179). If it is so, does Muktibodh unfold his own unconscious in this poem? In that case, is Muktibodh himself a *Brambrakshas*, or as a militant poet, he negates *Brambrakshasian* moment of his unconscious? Is the negation of *Brambrakshasian* moment of unconscious also a negation of foreclosure of human creativity?

Brambrakshas is uninterruptedly scorning his body to remove the dirt of the sinful shadow of a ghostly apparition of capital as an exploitative system precisely to wash and make his being clean. However, the dirt of capital has clung to his being like a blood-sucking vampire who is continually sucking his creativity. He withdraws himself from the city and forecloses himself in *Bawdi* for his cure. The ghostly apparition has deeply settled down in his interiority, and precisely for the remedy of his cure, he is uttering wondrous stotras and Sanskrit curses:

and ... from his lips
strange stotras, mantras
fevered curses in chaste Sanskrit,
lines on the forehead weave
glistening strands of thought
in a continuous stream's maddening flow
– life's sympathy blots (ibid, 52)

Without destroying the exploitative system, *Brambrakshas* intends to emancipate his being from the dirt of the ghostly grip of capital while engrossing himself in self-meditation at *Bawdi*. Is not *Brambrakshas* a symbolic manifestation of a modern human subject who desires to seek self-prosperity without destroying the exploitative system of which he is part? If this is the case, then we all have *Brambrakshas* in our unconscious. Muktibodh was recognising *Brambrakshas* of his inner psyche; perhaps this is why he was writing in his personal diary, “I am a Bramhrakshas. Bramhrakshas, who from eternal time endeavoured to be right always but had made mistakes all the time” (Muktibodh, 2011B, 177). Literary scholar Nikhil Govind adequately recognises the

turmoil of the unconscious in Muktibodh's poetic language. He writes:

Muktibodh might well be regarded as (...) a poet of the bizarre (of the *bibhatsa*), for he makes no effort to 'contain' his images and feelings in a 'Self' (or the correlate of that Self in language—the metre). For the metre is the ultimate sign of the 'control' of language, and Muktibodh seemingly gives up control, to invent new rhythms. (Govind 2016, 81)

Muktibodh himself recognises *Brambrakshas* of the unconscious and his abode in *Teesra Kshan* essay of *Ek Sabityik Kee Diary*. Here, we find some clues related to the figure of *Brambrakshas*.

I think mind is a mysterious world. There is darkness here. There are stairs in that darkness. They are wet. The lower stair submerged in water. There is dark abyssal water. The self is scared of this abyssal water. There is someone sitting here. Perhaps, this is me. (Muktibodh 2011B, 76)

It is worth noticing that Muktibodh wrote this essay in 1958, whereas *Brambrakshas* was written from 1956 to 1962. Hence, it is explicit that with the figure of *Brambrakshas* and his mysterious Bawdi, Muktibodh was envisaging the *Brambrakshasian* tendency of the modern human subject who is trapped in the self-delusion while not reflecting upon the societal reasons for foreclosure of his creativity. In this direction, on the one hand, this poetic fantasy alludes to Heideggerian withdrawal. In contrast, on the other hand, the insanity of *Brambrakshas* gives us the possibility of reading him as a psychotic subject. Here, the question arises whether this insanity is individuated or is it collective insanity? The collective ubiquity of madness is the materiality of capitalist society, which invents newer techniques for controlling the inherent 'insanity' in human subjects. *Brambrakshas* is also under the disciplinary control of capital's imperceptible but ubiquitous power.

There is a fundamental difference between psychotic and neurotic in psychoanalysis. In psychotic, the law of the father is foreclosed, whereas in neurotic, it is repressed. Hence, in the case of psychotic, there is no successful dissolution of the Oedipus

complex or desire of the mother. Due to the foreclosure of the law of the father and, hence, because of the absence or the least development of language, the psychotic subject primarily depends on the order of reality. Since direct access to reality is impossible hence, in this case, the disjunction between the psychotic universe and reality manifests in delusions and hallucinations (Mandal 2018, 90). In the history of psychoanalysis Wolf Men's hallucinations and Schreber's delusions bring forth such cases. In hallucination, the Real, which was expelled by reality, returns as a return to the Real, which does not exist in reality (*Ibidem*, 105). Hence, hallucination and delusion enter from the outside of the symbolic order and dissolve the psychotic's relationship with reality. In this way, hallucination and delusion belong to the imaginary register (*Ibidem* 121). Isn't *Brambraksbas* also cut off from reality since, as the sun rays fall and the atoms of the sun arrive, he has a hallucination that the sun has bowed and salutes him?

but when, in the well's deep inner wall
oblique sun-rays fall and
motes rise,
light surfaces
he thinks the sun has bowed and saluted him.
when a moonbeam forgets its way
and its rays stagger off the wall
he thinks it worships him as the
venerable knower. (Muktibodh 2017, 52-53)

In his pertinent book *The Capitalist Unconscious*, Samo Tomšič suggests that the dissolution of reality in psychosis should not be fetishised. While emphasising the case of Schreber, he underlines that his case is much more than delirium, which places the subject outside the social link (Tomšič 2015, 155). Similarly, Heidegger's withdrawal entails the unconcealment of Being (Heidegger 2008, 161) as poetic mediation within the contemplative horizon of language (*Ibidem*, 198), while withdrawing from the structure of the world. Tomšič recognises that from his journey from idealist

humanism to historical materialism. Marx had abandoned the thought of originary being of human and recognised the potential inherent in alienation (2015, 161).

The endeavour of cleaning his dirt to seek the pure being in the confines of Bawdi: *Brambrakshas* strengthens the same exploitative system which makes him psychotic. In this way, through *Brambrakshas*, Muktibodh analyses Heideggerian mysticism and generalised psychosis in capitalist society. In a widely discussed discourse in Hindi literature, the figure of *Brambrakshas* as a representative of the middle-class intellectual is widely accepted (Nawal 1983, 105)—who is detached from the working classes and their struggle and hence in isolation from himself. Here, the question arises whether *Brambrakshas* cannot see the labour process of his intellectuality and how he drifts amidst pandits and thinkers to seek redemption (Muktibodh 2017, 55). Isn't the wound-marked chest and twisted feet due to the calamity between the good and greater good manifestation of *Brambrakshas*' psychotic labour process wherein the small success is profound and the failure is sublime (*Ibidem*, 54)? Muktibodh calls this alienating doing of *Brambrakshas*' psychosis "tragedy of mad allegory" (*Ibidem*, 53). For *Brambrakshas* himself, this is a romantic tragedy of revolt by denying the system or, in other words, withdrawing from the system. In this process, he does not destroy the system. Instead, he confines himself 'outside' of this exploitative system in isolation. This isolation takes him to a state of alienation. However, even in this alienation, he is still within the ideological interpellation of his apparent eminence as a "venerable knower". His intellectual endeavouring reflects upon his obsession with eminence in these lines of the poem:

and with a twofold, frightening potency
 his understanding mind ranges
 through the folk tales of Sumer-Babylonia, mellifluent Vedic hymns
 today's chands, mantras, theorems, theories
 Of Marx Engels Russel Toynbee Heidegger Spengler Sartre even Gandhi
 everyone's proof afresh commented on afresh –
 all this as he bathes in the well's dense greenness. (*Ibidem*, 53)

The question is, why this ideological interpellation of apparent eminence? Does *Brambrakshas* believe that he is outside of this exploitative and oppressive system since he resides in this deserted Bawdi which is situated on the edge of the city? But is this outside actually an outside? What does Muktibodh want to allude through this symbolic figuration of *Brambrakshas*' inhabitation? Moreover, what does he imply when he calls this *Brambrakshasian* phenomenon tragedy? What this tragedy is all about? While critiquing the *Brambrakshasian* notion of the outside, Pothik Ghosh points towards the tragedy of *Brambrakshas*. If we follow Ghosh's interpretation, *Brambrakshas*' tragedy is that he gets trapped within his act of withdrawal from the structure of exchange, which is fundamentally different from subtraction. Ghosh writes while making his point, "Little does he realise that subtraction is not withdrawal from the structure of exchange and relationality but its disavowal and destruction through the generalisation of subtractiveness as and into subtractive ontology" (Ghosh 2016, 99). In *Brambrakshas*' act, we find how obsessively he wants to remain outside of this structure. Ghosh brings up crucial questions when he says:

Does not Bramharakshas' purity, which he seeks to attain by obsessively washing himself of the shadow of sin and all the dirt and the grime of the world around by seeking to keep himself separate from that world, render him complicit in its perpetuation as the dump of sin, grime and dirt it is?
(*Ibidem*)

This is precisely the act that detaches *Brambrakshas* from his societal process. Hence, this *Brambrakshasian* phenomenon becomes the absolute dichotomisation of self and society, interiority and exteriority. Meanwhile, Muktibodh rejects this dichotomy, as reflected in his critical writings. For Muktibodh, the unanswered societal question recommences in self-inquiry, and this self-inquiry broadens political inquiry for complete social transformation. The said inquiry differentiates Muktibodh's fantasy from mystic fantasy.

Hindi poet Malyaj splendidly recognises the mysticism of Muktibodhian fantasy. For him, Muktibodh's imagery "while residing in the lacuna of diverse images, premised upon the relentless stone of an average meaning" (Malyaj 2019, 268) [My translation]. According to him, Muktibodh's mysticism does not allude to irrationalism or irrational empiric. Rather, it is an appeal to create the milieu. "There is a mystery because there is a curiosity. Only the curiosity produces mystery. There is a vocation of seeking in mystery and not of concealing" (*Ibidem*, 269) [My translation]. This vocation of seeking the Event is Muktibodhian inquiry, which uninterruptedly traces the Truth of the Event. With the Truth of the Event, Muktibodh transcends the limits of knowledge and brings the unknown within the periphery of the known. It is worth pondering that for Malyaj, Muktibodh's mysticism is a kind of epistemology (*Ibidem*, 269). In addition to this, according to contemporary Hindi critic Sudhir Ranjan Singh, Muktibodh transformed the myth of *Brambrakshas* into the epistemic impulse of exalted fantasy (Singh 2018, 215-216). Hence, Malyaj rightly recognises that Muktibodhian fantasy is a creative leap (Malyaj 2019, 270) which, with the process of uninterrupted inquiry, desires to encounter the Truth of the Event. Isn't it a revolutionary leap that Benjamin discusses in his *Thesis on The Philosophy of History?* (Benjamin 1985, 261) It is a poetic moment of revolution. Hence, Muktibodhian fantasy is militancy, and Muktibodh is a militant of Truth⁶. Muktibodhian fantasy is a militant inquiry that explores the reasons for failures. Along similar lines, Muktibodh makes an intense inquiry into *Brambrakshas'* romantic tragedy of individuated revolt. He disagrees with Govind's Nietzschean reading of *Brambrakshas* as "ephemera of sorrow", a Nietzschean untimeliness in the world, a flawed and fallen superhero, someone who has immense power, but no freedom, and who must wander the earth and heavens, unfulfilled, stared at as a strange beast" (*Ibidem*, 84). With his extensive excavation of *Brambrakshasian* moment of unconsciousness, he renders the limits of the mystic act of

Brambrakshas within apparently mystic indexing of fantasy. At this precise moment, Muktibodh subtracts the mystic dimension of fantasy while rendering the militant inquiry regarding *Brambrakshasian* failure. This subtractive negation is, at the same moment, the destruction of the romantic tragedy of *Brambrakshas*. Muktibodh, in this way, makes the synchronisation between destruction and subtraction, which, according to Badiou, are two moments or aspects of negation (Badiou 2014, 83-84).

If the first section of this poetic fantasy projects the romantic tragedy of *Brambrakshas*, the second section deals with the excavation and materialist analysis of this tragedy:

but the age turned and he came trading fame
... his only wealth from work now,
from that wealth a heart and mind,
and, subject to wealth, from within
trust's glint
ever smoulders.

self-consciousness and yet in this
love's discord...
a world consciousness unmade!!
at greatness' feet
an agitated dejected mind!
if only I had met him those days
then living his anguish myself
I would have told him his worth
his greatness!
of his, and his greatness's,
use to people like us
I would have spoken of that inward greatness!!

powdered within
and outside between two stone slabs
this is a farcical tragedy!! (*Ibidem*, 55-56)

In the specific context of psychosis, Muktibodh, with his militant inquiry into interiority and exteriority, transforms this romantic tragedy into a materialist one. In this process, he revolutionises fantasy as a literary device while subtracting the mystic element

of this very device. In this precise sense, Muktibodhian fantasy is not a mystical praxis but militancy for Truth-Event.

CONCLUSION

While referring to the unpublished work of Badiou, Slavoz Žižek explicitly differentiates between the subjective stances of the mystic and master towards the Truth Event. On one hand, the master pretends to name the Event, whereas on the other hand, the mystic insists on the ineffability of the Event. Consequently, he disregards its symbolic consequences (Žižek 2005, 165). It would be significant to underline that, according to Lacan, psychotic is a mystic engrossed in his *jouissance*, who has been cut off from his social link (as quoted in Žižek). In another essay centred around Heidegger, Žižek says that, as the psychotic subject is cut off from social processes, hence he lacks the level of “forced choice”. In this way, he acts “as if he has a truly free choice ‘all the way along’” (*Ibidem*, 19). Is not the intense meditation of *Bramhrakshas* in abandoned and desolate Bawdi that alludes to his so-called free choice, where he is entrapped in his hallucination after his successful withdrawal from the exploitative system?

Muktibodhian fantasy of *Bramhrakshas* adequately and explicitly reveals how Event subsumed to *identitarianised* determination of withdrawal and not subtraction from the structure of exchange. This *identitarianised* determination of Event’s non-identity by exchange-principle is the lapse of Truth. It is worth mentioning that, according to renowned Hindi poet Dinesh Kumar Shukla, *Bramhrakshas* is an aberrant truth seeker, as Shukla writes:

The image of Bramhrakshas is an image of eternal struggle. Bramhrakshas is an aberrant truth seeker. He is a lost warrior on the grounds of emancipation. He is Prometheus. He is Oedipus. He is Hamlet. He is Dharmraj Yudhishthira who is melting in ice. He is also Bhishma Pitamah who is holding the bridle of his death chariot while lying on the bed of

arrows. He is also Krishna who became prey to the arrow of Vadrik in Dwarika. Adam, from Jewish myth, is also a Bramhrakshas who was expelled from heaven. In fact, he is Nirala⁷ also, and at the end, Muktibodh. (2017, 102) [My translation]

The above quote by Shukla presents a marvellous description of the negative assertion of myths. Muktibodh is doing the same with his militant inquiry in this poetic fantasy. The work of militant inquiry is to inquire about the uninterrupted processuality of subtraction while recommencing the subsumed subtraction. This is what the uninterrupted tracing of Truth means. In this way, it is explicit that Muktibodh is not a *Bramhrakshas* only. Instead, he is against being a *Bramhrakshas*. In that sense, Muktibodh is not interested in mythologising human creativity while withdrawing from history. Rather, he desires to shatter history to access the real movement as a dynamic communist utopia⁸. The very last lines of this fantasy of *Bramhrakshas* echo the desire to negate *Bramhrakshas*. This is the negative assertion of the *Bramhrakshasian* myth. Here, Muktibodh wishes to recommence the unfinished task of *Bramhrakshas* as his truest disciple and take it to its logical conclusions.

the flame unknown slept forever
this happened: why?
why did this happen?!
Bramhrakshas' truest disciple
I so wished to be
whose incomplete works
whose pain's source
collected, extracted, risen
I could bring. (*Ibidem*, 56)

NOTES

1. Here, the idea of Truth-Procedure has been taken from French philosopher Alain Badiou's conception of art as the embodiment of truth-procedure. According to Badiou, this truth-procedure of art is irreducible to other truths, and art as a "singular regime of thought is irreducible to philosophy" (Badiou 2005, 9).

2. German philosopher Theodor W. Adorno develops this idea in his book *Aesthetic Theory* (Adorno 2002, 1-2).
3. Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh (1917-1964) was a prominent poet of *Nayi Kavita* (New Poetry) and Hindi modernism.
4. Read the following paper titled “The ‘Three Moments of Art’ and Truth-Event: Reflections on Muktibodhian Creative Process” (Bali 2019, 58-84).
5. One can read the following research paper in Hindi, titled “Aatm-Nirwasan aur Khanabadosh Icchaen: Muktibodh ke Kavi-Karm Ke Sandarbh mein” (Bali 2020) to understand the relationship of nomadic desire with self-alienation in the poet of Muktibodh.
6. For Badiou, “Subject of a Truth” is a finite moment within the infinite process of Truth. In this precise sense, for him, artistic procedure as an infinite rendition of Truth is Truth-Procedure whereas individual artworks and artists are subject to a particular Truth. In this way, the Subject does not have any kind of mastery *vis-à-vis* Event(s). In this process, he avoids the ideological interpellation of the subject. “At the very most”, he writes, “we can say, in an absolutely general fashion, that subject is the militant of truth” (Badiou 2005, 55).
7. Suryakant Tripathi “Nirala” was a renowned and representative poet of *Chhayawadi* movement of Hindi literature.
8. “Communism is, for us, not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the now existing premise” (Marx and Engles 2010, 57).

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