

**EPOCH 2020:
A PASSAGE OF TIME**

(2020-2021)

by Shelly Jyoti



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My poetic cruise:

I have been writing poems as a young girl of 14. It was a way of explaining the world to myself. I had no theories about what a poem might mean in a cultural or artistic sense and had no idea of communicating with anyone else other than my family members.

In my 20s-30's, I still wrote to understand the world, but my sense of what 'the world' was changed. I became aware of the experience of others and mine over a period of time and the way other people expressed themselves and became more aware of the life, its challenges that we undergo on every day. In the young days, my poems were recorded by All India Radio in my voice circa late 70's.

Later in early 2000, my poems started to get published by Sahitya Akademi (English literature section) along with my artworks many times. Poetry and art became my artistic endeavor or a cultural artefact to narrate my anguish as time went past.

When I go in deeper inquiry of my subject, I am so overwhelmed with the substance of the topic that gushing words pour and so do the streams of tear as I write my thoughts on the paper.

I understood that is the catharsis of the moment that leads me to visually create and write. My pouring words are like a lighthouse that stands on wounds of my emotions.

Nowadays, I create poetry as multi-media presentations under 'Magic-lantern series' by sharing verses through social-video communication reality of 21st century, reaching out to people touching upon the idea of *Swadharma, Sarvodaya, Swadeshi* and *Swaraj* inspired by *Gandhi's experiments of his Satyagraha*.

His head hung in shame

His land is not what he dreamt of
His people are not who he instilled faith in
His eyes shut --- as if bleeding with tears

His ears shut - with the communal cacophony.
His mouth sealed- an orgy of -silence
Like his three monkeys on my table, I feel
Mahatma doesn't stop spinning

Shelly Jyoti



1.

Re construct

What lies behind,
I don't remember
What lies ahead,
I can't foresee
What is time I know not
You ask, its temporal
Out of rhythm, crazy, unseen
Reconstructing as I breathe
Reconstruction as we move on
Restoration to a new self
Transition is a must

May 19, 2021

2.

What is time

I know not
Flicker a few blinks wide
Flutter a few winks more
I am static
What is time I know not

May 15, 2021

3.

Kites: Dance of divine

The kites that swam in the sky

Colorful and mesmerizing

Twining tails, teasing

Twisting and twirling

Soaring effortlessly

Plunged: Circa 2020 March

Dipped so low

Hard to even drift

Yet holding on to the threads

To not let it go

Fingers bleeding

Microbes floating

Changing the winds

The fearless kites

Kept tagging and easing

Sinking and rising

Like each breath

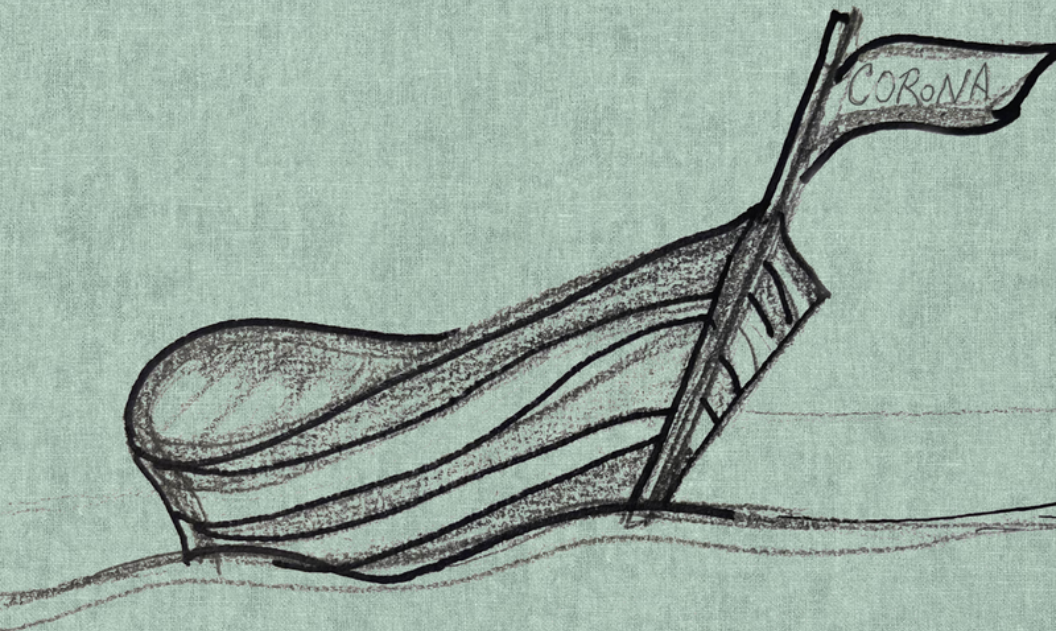
That rises and fall

The currents dissuading

Grasping, clasping and clutching

The lost, distracted kites

We dance with thread held by divine



4.

The golden boat of life

We are all together drifting
In this golden boat of life
What direction it's flowing
One doesn't know
Humanity steers
Collectively to cross
This river of microbes
Infinity invisible

Many falling out
Anxious humanity afloat
In the golden boat of life
Dithering daggering
The boat afloat
The horizon is dusky
Visibility poor

Together we drift on this golden boat of life

5.

Times are challenging

We will rise
Like a monster, its engulfing
The variant corona
Swamping the mankind
In vengeance with humanity

For the sake of others
People are rising
In support of fellow beings
Active love, belongings and feelings
Faith reposes

The wheel continues to spin
The thread of life
Weaving to repair
Continuously, Incessantly
Times are challenging

May 21, 2021

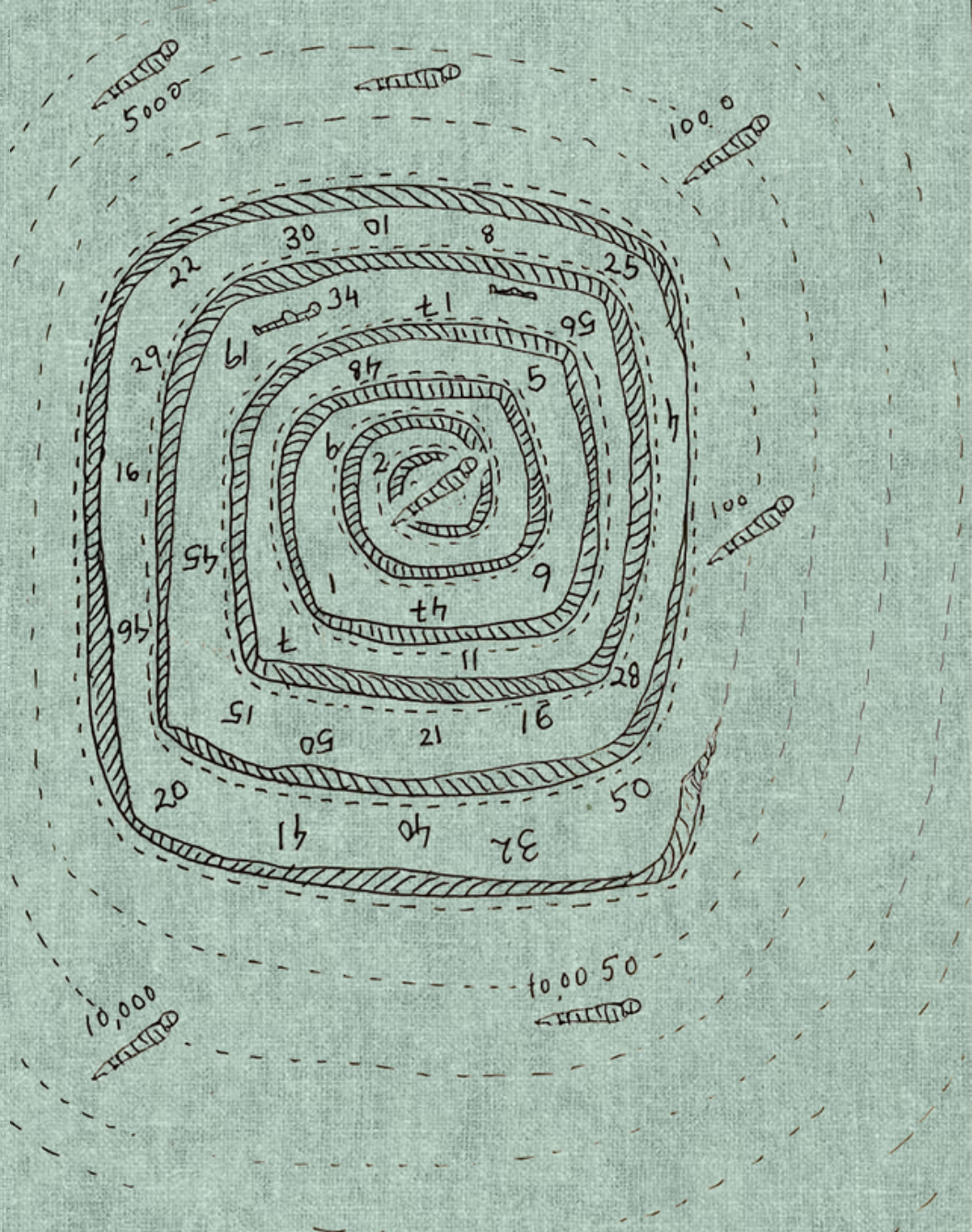


6.

Lock down

My two eyes are staring
Fixed, bewildered
A struggling soul
At unacquainted world
Looking at unknown
Clear blue sky, no noise
Open roads eerie silence
Nature is mending
The withering garment
The virus is shredding it apart
Such is the power
Of a microbe





7.

Graveyard

Blazing sun, seems unreal
Graveyard seems unreal
Bodies piled up seem unreal
Corpses too many seems unreal
Too many people dyeing
Too many people leaving us soon
Breathless agony, nightmare
Virulent virus going viral
Global north to global south
East to west latitudes
Circling around as if revenging
Death bells tolling, can hear them loud
Numbers rising
Can't see the infinity



8.

Transition

Everyday seems an opportunity
To live in a world that seems at renewal mode
Efforts to bring a change in ourselves
To strive better
Goodness and morality
Overcome and patience
For the sake of others
Lets mask ourselves
Create a destiny

9.

The Angels of hope

In the gloom of pandemic times
The intensity of virus felt differently
The medical fraternity
The messengers of faith
Working tirelessly
Making survival's end meet
Against all odds
Dealing the crisis towards humanity
Tirelessly, tenderly, compassionately
Salutes to them !

Living away from families
Exhausted yet determined
Stethos weighed heavy on necks
All the time, day and night
Unimaginable sufferings
Fighting the uncertain virus
Yet saddled with the
Oath to mankind
Fighting those moments of crisis.
Solidarity, hope and salutations





10.

The Virus: A Protagonist

The protagonist virus
Of the twenty first century
In the big bad world of
Information and technology
emerged of Wuhan, china, December 2019

Unprecedented
risks foreseen
For human race and humanity
After one century
The Pandemic revisited

Fear wave amplified
Prejudiced and fake news
stigma and discriminations
The virus of infodemics
loomed large

Majority affected, mild distress, few complicated

And some acute and some deadly

Respiratory syndrome readdressed

Multiorgan failure, septic shocks

The fatal virus hovered

Humans forever

lived and coexisted

With many varied viruses

COVID-19 chartered

Us on uncharted terrains

Fumbling doctors

Shuffling healthcare staff

Undulated waves

First , second and expectant third

Psyched us with fear and panic

Weary and Fatigued

Physical and mental

Loss of patients and colleagues

Life is moving on..

Life will move on

11.

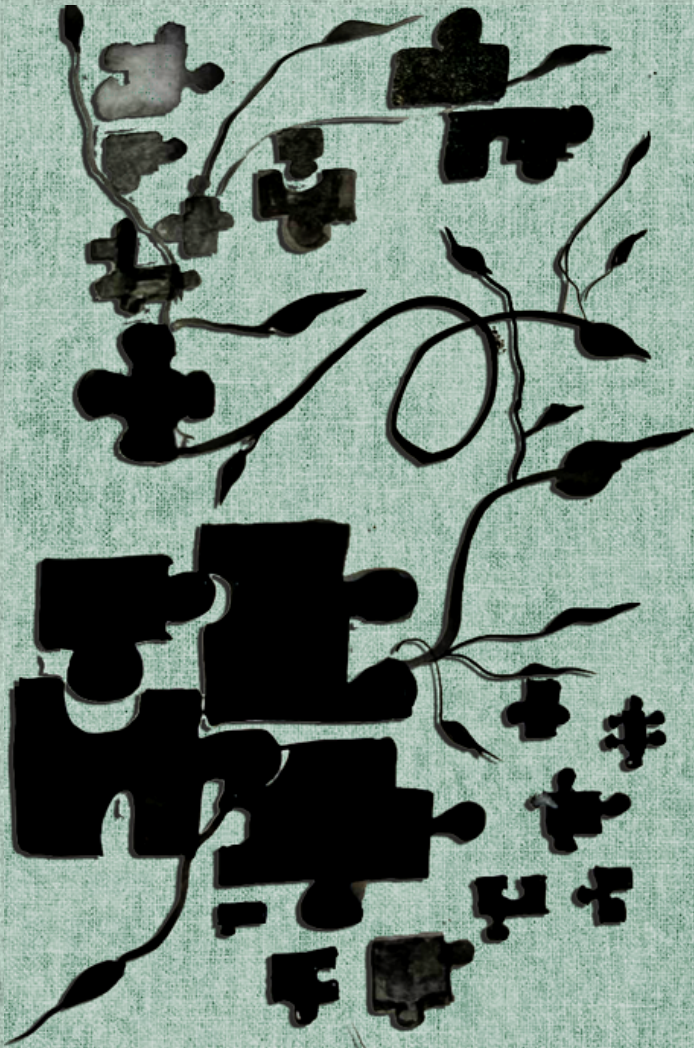
Information & Technology

In today's world of technology
Overabundance of information,
Augmented hate speeches
Threatening democracy
Human rights and social cohesion
Amidst all arrives
the coronavirus disease
Unannounced !

First pandemic
in history of mankind
technology with social media
as a missile to keep us safe,
informed, productive, connected.
Overwhelming sometimes with information
is amplifying the demic - infodemic
Perhaps jeopardizing the situation.

Our journey

I look through the window
 at the huge expanse of lush green trees
 the sound of birds
 chirping very early morning
 As I wake
 The butterflies and bees buzzing
 Noticing them now!
 Or was I Oblivions earlier
 The town is cradled
 With eerie of silence
 No fuel No smoke, Not even a soul
 Freshness of air I breathe
 What a dichotomy, I cannot go out
 Harmony and anxiety
 A strange unease
 Anxiety in my heart
 of staying away
 from the disease looms large .
 Within the four walls of my house
 From afar it looks as if
 nothing can get in or out,
 judging this stillness
 citizens home bound



Work from home
have made peace
into their insular protected haven
A privilege it seems

Out there, people are dying
in the world, death
I imagine, is destiny
But it seems, many died
before they lived their lives
This final destination is resentful
tearful and unlikely
The pieces of puzzles
not fitting in
life is at Apoche
last piece of that puzzle has still to fit in
restless to fit in with the other pieces
In our journey, of mankind
fractured in 2020-2021



13.

Monologue

It felt as if land below us
Stopped moving
There was no movement

The unimaginable suffering
Of human mankind was unseen
The fears were volcanic

Black clouds spinning
Life was threatening
To mend our ways

Violent was the process of virus
Swirling touching and extinguishing
Political and geological ruptures overlapped

Planet beyond repair
Human paradigm
Communities to come together

To heal, design and weave
The new fabric of life
Sediments of humanity
Hung on the fossils of threads



14.

Pandemic

Never did I think
The word pandemic would
Sound like another Renaissance of 21st century
Never did I think
A virus could slip the world under its feet
Never did I think
A virus could spew so much venom on mankind

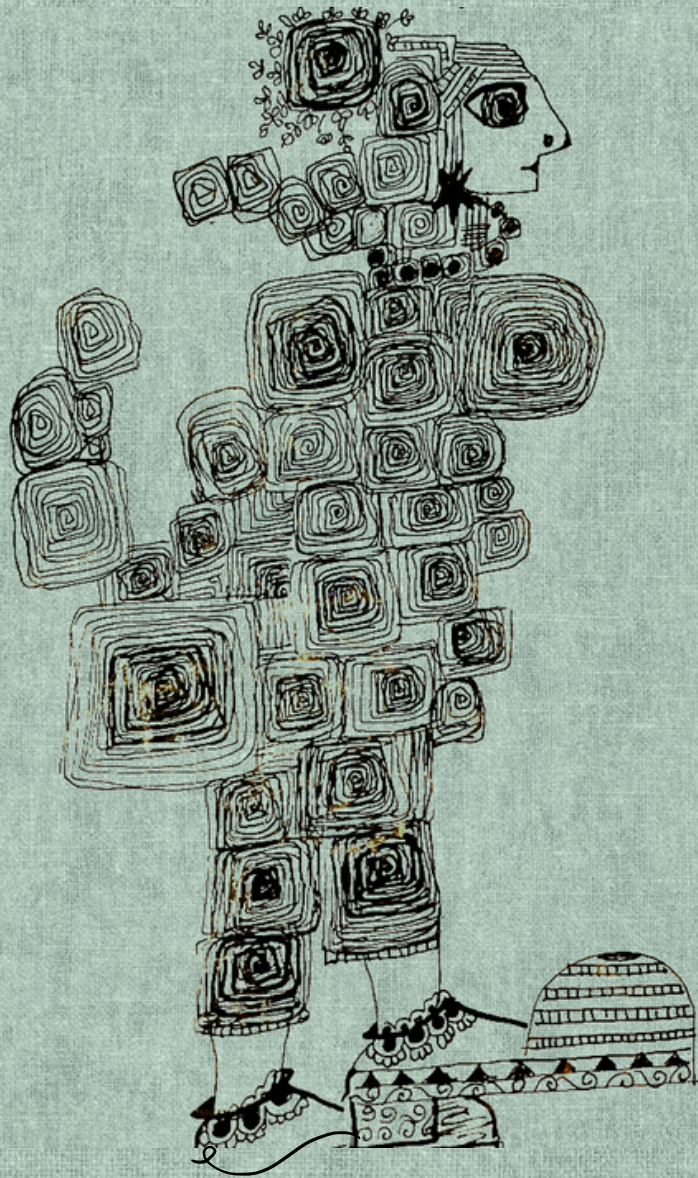
Its grave

Its grave that I cannot go and see my 85-year-old mother living alone
Its grave that many like me are not able to meet their children
Its grave that many lost their jobs
Its grave many more lost their loved ones
Its grave how migrants felt humiliated!

Just like 'The great Transition'
We should individually rise
To the consciousness of self-disciplining
Staying safe for the sake of others.
Be the century's new social commitment

Let's all-
Together
Get the temper
Of Covid-19 muted
That shook the planet to its roots

Never did I think
That pandemic could be another Renaissance of The 21st century!
Etymologically



15.

A dream

Before the days of social distancing
Shopping a chore
Strolling to coffee bar
wearing no masks
No touch face, no mail bombs
I want to hug and get hugged
Walk in the crowd
Spend time with my friends
Before the days of social distancing
Perhaps that was a dream!



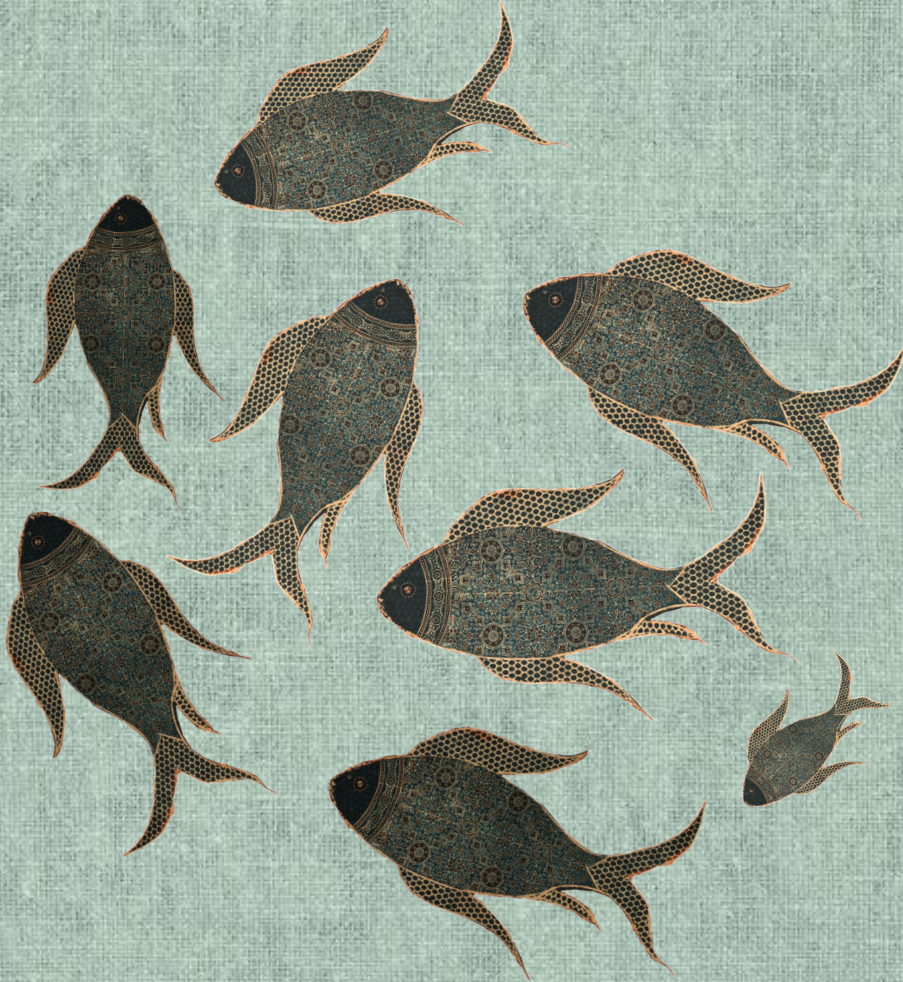
16.

Images are timeless

Sediment of time
Scales and diagrams
The serpent, the dates
Roman emperor's face
Coins and currency

Reminisce of the time
Life lived a while
Images are alive

Images are like virus
Like parasites
They invade human bodies
To Imagine future
Like a demic
Creating endemic



Reflections

Tumultuous times, unfathomable,
 Invisible, microscopic
 Eccentric active virus
 Enormous dimensions
 War on images
 Cloning terror, uncanny
 My fabric scrolls voiced
 Began to speak
 Revisited, my fishes swam
 Collectiveness resonated
 ‘*Sarvodaya*’ and ‘*Swadharma*’
 Refreshed my story board

The essence of moment that the planet
 Was breathing in were stormy troubled times
 Unfamiliar, unacquainted
 To express visually and verbally
 Was a Desire so fervently felt
 Turbulent minds, wounded
 Explorations, the lighthouse guided
 Rebirth, Rediscovering, Re-construction
 Ideas surged
 Consciousness felt and recognized
 The form changed...Epoch 2021 on paper,
 Reincarnation, as life moves on...



18.

My words

I pause and ask myself,
Can i dare or dare i?
To balance
One's own heart

As if a glass of water
Is held tight
Instructing the spilling heart
Must not spill.

And yet the heart desires
To spill and spill and spill
Look at the disintegrating values
Crumbling the foundational strength

Of living and believing each other
In the societies!
See how I bleed.
I write and bleed ..



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INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

Hosted by:- Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi
A Virtual Event - Lectures & Solo Art Exhibition
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Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav