

Apostasy

by Dilip Mohapatra (December 2016)



I don't toe your lines any more
and you get offended
and you bind my hands and feet
lock me behind bars
drag me in public to the cross section where
crowds gather to see my limp body
lying in a heap on the altar
and as your lashes carve
their livid furrows on my cracked skin
you read out my death warrant
while accusing me of blasphemy.

In your fury you think of

putting me on the cross
spread eagled
but as you would hammer each nail
each drop of my blood
oozing out of each point of impact
would gravitate to the soil below
to germinate the seeds buried under
and millions of shoots would spring up
each with their own faith
ultimately seeking the same destination.

You may think of putting
the noose around my neck
and as the hangman would pull the lever
to remove the trapdoor beneath my feet
and my body would drop through it with a jerk
the noose tightening over my Adam's apple
my last breath will escape and mingle
with the vagrant wind
and break it into millions of shreds
each with their own faith
ultimately seeking the same destination.

You may like to roast me in an oven
or burn me in a raging fire
like you did to the witches in medieval days
and as the fire would gnaw its way through
my flesh and bones
and turn me into cinders
I will rise again from the ashes
and leap to become a towering flame and then
break into millions of sparks
each with their own faith
ultimately seeking the same destination.

Your faith
my faith and perhaps theirs
would never converge but in their perspectives
there will always be the same vanishing point
your God
my God and perhaps theirs.

Note: a tribute to the Palestinian poet, Ashraf Fayadh on death row.

Dilip Mohapatra (b.1950), a decorated Navy Veteran started writing poems since the seventies . His poems have appeared in many literary journals of repute worldwide. Some of his poems are included in the World Poetry Yearbook, 2013 and 2014 Editions. He has four poetry collections to his credit published by Authorspress India, and one non-fiction, a book of wisdom titled Points to Ponder. He holds two masters degrees, in Physics and in Management Studies. He lives with his wife in Pune. His website may be accessed at dilipmohapatra.com.

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