

Indian Poetry in English
Prof. Binod Mishra
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

Lecture - 15
Adil Jussawalla

Good morning and welcome back to NPTEL online certification course on Indian poetry in English. You are listening to the lectures by Binod Mishra and in the previous lecture we talked about one very significant assertive voice that was on Kamala Das. In this lecture we are going to talk about another major voice that is Adil Jussawalla.


Now my dear friends, you might have realized that till now we have been talking about Indian poets who many of them being imitators and then we also found that there were some who were rebels or can be considered to be rebellious voices. Now, here is one voice Adil Jussawalla who is actually a man of the third world and if we have a look at Jussawalla as a poet you will come to know that even though many people consider Jussawalla to be a diasporic voice, but Jussawalla was out and out an Indian English poet.


And the discussion that follows will tell you through some of his poems, some of his interviews, some of the views of the critics and while learning through the lines of Jussawalla, we will find what sort of poet Jussawalla was. You might have remembered well while we were discussing Nissim Ezekiel. Nissim Ezekiel an Indian English poet in the true sense also belong to a different religion and here we find Jussawalla is also from a different religion and then he suffered the tedium not only of being an outcast in his own community.

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Introduction

- ❑ Born in Bombay, 1940 in Parsi Zoroastrian Community
- ❑ Early education in Bombay, moved to England in 1957 to study Architecture but took a degree in English at Oxford.
- ❑ Experienced violent culture shock during 1957-1970, his stay in England.
- ❑ In the 1970s, along with poets Adil Jussawalla, Gieve Patel and Arun Kolatkar, Mehrotra founded the Bombay poetry publishing collective **Clearing House**. He was a founder-editor also to **Praxis**.
- ❑ Poetry readings sessions: "Dangerous Animals" and "Loquations."



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But when he went to England, there also he felt another sort of tedium, boredom, envy and he faced the cruelties of the modern world the postmodern world-- a postcolonial society and all these actually became a part of Jussawalla's poetry, but before we go into the depth of Jussawalla's poetic corpus, let us have a look at Jussawallas early life.

Adil Jussawalla--- who was actually Adil Jahangir Jussawalla, was born in Mumbai-- the present day Mumbai and the olden days' Bombay in 1940 in a Parsi Zoroastrian Community. Jussawalla was born and brought up in a multi- lingual background. So, he knew Gujarati, he also knew Marathi and English he had to learn by profession. Jussawalla actually wanted to pursue architecture that is why after his early education in Mumbai, he moved to England in 1957 and there he continued for so many years, I mean till 1970.

He had actually gone there to learn or have a degree in architecture, but actually took a degree in English from the Oxford University, but during his stay in England he faced a violent cultural shock from which he has not been able to come out of and that actually pave the way to his poetry.

So, this cultural shock during 1957 to 70 during his stay in England that actually time and again prompted him to have a sort of yearning to come back to his own roots which was Mumbai and when he returned in 1970s to Mumbai. There actually in the company of Gieve Patel, Arun Kolatkar and Mehrotra he was also very instrumental in forming a

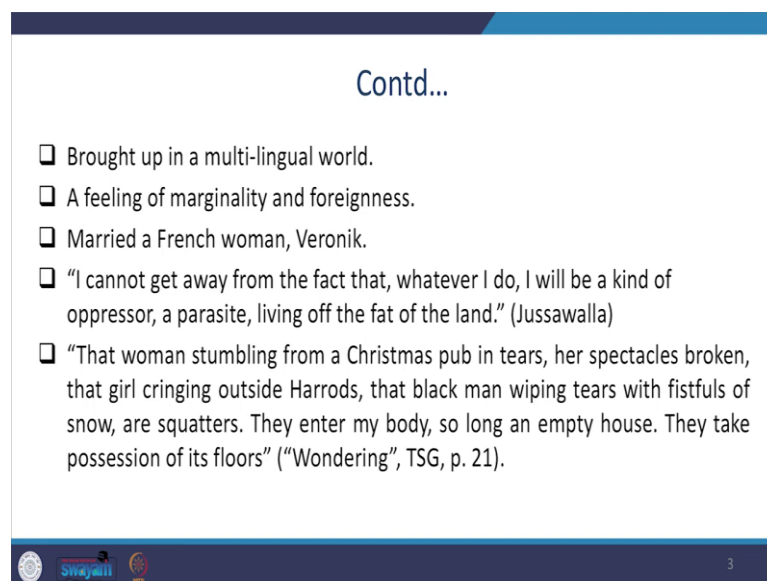
collective initiative which finally, came to be known as **Clearing House** and through this Clearing House many poetic volumes came out.

He was in a way involved in various journalistic activities because he was basically an observer who looked at life, you know, in all its manifestations, in all its stingers in all its colour and that is why one can find different sorts of reactions in his poetry. As a man Jussawalla is one such that his Mumbai apartment is considered to be a Noah's archives where people of different sorts, different professions come and they also read, recite their poetry and share their poetry.

Jussawalla is a very cordial person and he once upon a time had started a poetry recitation and he actually named it a dangerous animal. Why dangerous animals? Because there were readings by Rimbaud, Ginsberg and also Baldwin and that is why he named the dangerous animals and then he also had another, he finally renewed it and then he also called it locations.

So, he kept himself very busy even after his return from England and he was not only a poet, but he was also a prose writer and a critic, a reviewer, fine? So, since he was born in a multi-lingual family, multilingual world where people of different languages were there, so, language actually became a sort of obsession for him.

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- Brought up in a multi-lingual world.
- A feeling of marginality and foreignness.
- Married a French woman, Veronik.
- "I cannot get away from the fact that, whatever I do, I will be a kind of oppressor, a parasite, living off the fat of the land." (Jussawalla)
- "That woman stumbling from a Christmas pub in tears, her spectacles broken, that girl cringing outside Harrods, that black man wiping tears with fistfuls of snow, are squatters. They enter my body, so long an empty house. They take possession of its floors" ("Wondering", TSG, p. 21).

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And when he went to England, he actually suffered a sort of marginality and a sort of foreignness. It was also that he married a French woman named Veronik and he also felt at times a sort of disillusionment with life, with surroundings and all. In one of the interviews he has himself admitted: “I cannot get away from the fact that, whatever I do, I will be a kind of oppressor, a parasite. Look at the words--- choice of his words, a parasite, living off the fat of the land.”

So, even in religion also since he was actually a Zoroastrianism and he was a Parsi. So, he was considered a sort of outsider and the same sort of feeling actually haunted him when he was in England and this coloured his imagination and his poetry actually became a sort of vestiges of all these emotions.

Earlier when he started writing poetry he started writing metrical compositions which are actually very famous, for you know, childish images and all, but then there are several collections and you know in the beginning, he had only two collections. Later, also he had some more collections and then he also wrote some plays some of the plays could not be published, he was also writing a novel and then he also wrote the narrative for a play named *Chakravyuh* which is quite longer, but very interesting.

Then, there is another collection entitled to say goodbye where we you can have a look at the sort of temperament that Jussawalla had when he says: “That woman stumbling from a Christmas pub in tears, this is actually from “Wondering” a poem from a one of his collections entitled to say goodbye the title is the title of the poem is Wondering where he says, it is written in the form of a prose.

“That woman is stumbling from a Christmas pub in tears, her spectacles broken, the girl cringing outside Harrods, that black man wiping tears with fistfuls of snow, are squatters are squatters they enter my body, so long an empty house. They take possession of its floors.”


So, identity was a big issue for Jussawalla. He also looked at these people-- those who he calls squatters he actually kept himself in their position and looked at the way of the world the way of the world actually unnerved him and there are many poems which actually represent Jussawalla’s views.

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Works

- *Land's End* (1962)
- *Missing Person* (1974)
- *Trying to Say Goodbye* (2011)
- *The Right Kind of Dog* (2013)

- *Chyakravuya*
- *New Writing in India, ed.* (1974)
- *Maps for a Mortal Moon* (2014)



Now, having a look at Jussawalla's works as I told you the very first work that he wrote was entitled *Land's End* which came out in 1962 *Lands End*; then *Missing Person* it is said that *Missing Person* is very significant a voice by Jussawalla and in *Missing Person* we will come to know when we read the poems.

He actually talks about his own, you know, his own life how he has been a missing person why he is not being given that much of space which actually he deserves and desires, fine? And then *Trying To Say Goodbye*; *Trying To Say Goodbye* came out in 2011 and *The Right Kind of Dog* 2013.

He also as I told you he also wrote a narrative for the play named *Chakravuya* and then one of his books which was edited *New Writing in India* here he talks about the miserable condition of Indian poets in English Indians Indian writers in English and then there is another collection which is entitled *Maps for a Mortal Moon*. Now, we will also look at how Jussawallas Uber talks about his own ideologies.

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Land's End (1962)

- Influenced by Christian imagery, Rimbaud, and T. S. Eliot.
- Contrasts geographical place in England with Christian belief in God.
- "Seventeen",
- "November Day"
- "31st December 58"
- "The Moon and Cloud at Easter"
- "The Suburb"
- "The Dolls"
- Banalities of modern life juxtaposed with Christian symbols.
- Sense of exile and alienation.

Here in the cramped, pig's-footed county at last
Where seas grip, the airs kick and squall,
Atlantic breakers boom, the sea-gulls fall
Downwind to sheets of spray, the fast
Seas race, roil, slump and shower
Across the thrusted coastland; where brine-
wings beat
The rooted perch of weeds and brine-wings bite
Raw rock or nerve exposed to their brute power,
Land's End or Faith's – what must I call
This faulted coast Atlantic breakers pound?
Wave after wave explodes, hour by hour
To undermine my numbed and bulwarked
ground.

So, beginning with *Lands End* which came out in the year 1962, so, we can find that though this was actually this is actually a description of his experiences in London, but then it is actually influenced by Christian imagery Rimbaud and T. S. Eliot.

In many interviews Jussawalla has himself admitted that these were the major influences on his poetry. This poem this *Land's End* actually contrasts geographical place in England with Christian belief in God with Christian beliefs in God that whatever you have got you have to live in the circumstances you have to live a life of contentment and all.

So, there are some poems which are very important in this collection the poems are entitled "Seventeen" and then "November Day," "31st December 58", then "The Moon and the Cloud at Easter", "The Suburb" and "The Dolls", we can take some of the lines to see how in the beginning Jussawalla's had a sort of yearning for musicality here we take some lines from *Land's End*.

And then later on, we can also find that throughout his experience in England and even when he came because his mind was completely you know not bereft of the bitter experiences of a new world a post colonial world, it is said that a colonialism had affected him too much and he found that every now and then and everywhere people were still colonized they could not come out of that.

So, the yearn and the urge for freedom was actually a consistent theme. Now, here he says:

Here in the cramped, pig pigs footed county at last,
where seas grip, the airs kick and squall,
Atlantic breakers boom, the sea gulls fall
downwind to sheets of spray, the fast
seas race, roil, slump and shower
across the thrusted coastline; where brine-wings beat
the rooted perk of wits and brine wings bite,
raw rock or nerve exposed to the brute power,
land's end on faith.

So, he questions it is the end of the land or the faith's end.

What must I call?
This faulted coast Atlantic breakers pound?
Wave after wave explodes hour by hour
to undermine my numbed and bulwarked ground.

So, he actually questions the banalities of modern life which is juxtaposed with Christian symbols, fine.

So, he is in a conflict and then throughout his poem whether it is *Land's End* or it is the missing person, one can note a sort of despair. Many people have also called Jussawalla's craft as a craft of despair because there is a prevailing sense of exile alienation disenchantment with the modern life.

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Characteristics of His Poems

- Intellectual longing for roots.
- The tensions of belonging, and the temptation of silence.
- In 'The New Poetry,' Jussawalla describes his poetry trying 'to show the effects of living in lands I can never leave nor love properly to belong to.'
- Uses Modernist techniques like collage, montage, fragmentation, piling of images.
- Past filled with vitality belief and wonder but modern life as sterile.
- Radical social awareness.

"The horror of bad things happening all the time, of living in a cruel present, often leaves me speechless."

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So, what are the characteristics of his poems? You would like to know before we go to have some of the poems in order to formulate our opinion of Adil Jahangir Jussawalla. There is actually an intellectual longing for roots because Jasawallah, unlike Kamala was actually a qualified person, he had read literature and that is why he could also feel the problems of the third world.

It was not only just to interrogate, but also to find out the solutions and as a postcolonial person as a postcolonial poet he had to answer certain challenges are the challenges the anxiety for home and that is why homecoming is a consistent theme of majority of his poems detentions of belonging and the temptation of silence.

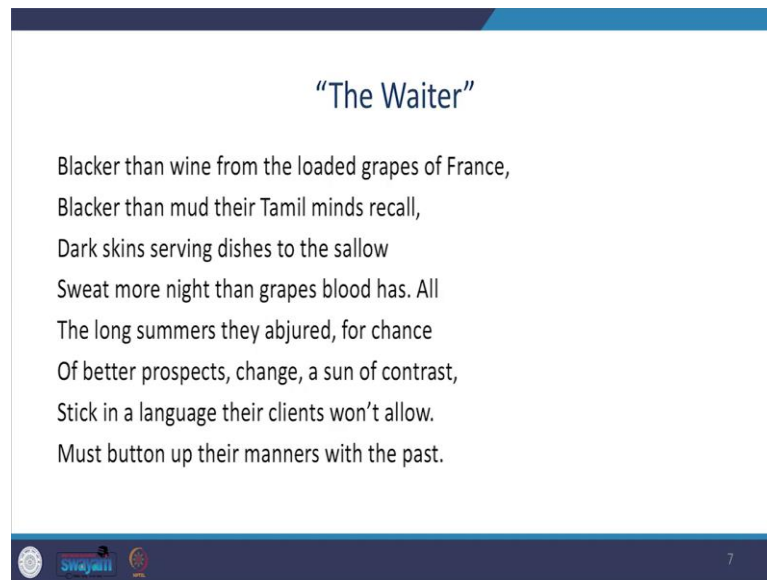
So, it is said that he had been silent, but then his silence was very meaningful. In majority of the poems you can find how his silence flashes, you know, there is actually a beauty which is imbued with a silence, but then the subtlety of the modern man's predicament can also be viewed in the poetic world of Jussawalla.

In *The New Poetry* Jussawalla describes his poetry as trying 'to show the effects of living in lands I can never live nor love properly to belong to. So, there is a sort of metaphysical anguish you live in a land or you live in a world which you cannot live, but you have actually to face the perennial problems of the land because everything in the post-colonial and post-modern world is changing and a man feels himself exiled, banished and there is a sense of rootlessness.

He actually uses modernist techniques like collage because he was an observer and then montage fragmentation. And fragmentation is also, you know, throughout his poems and there is a piling of images you will find in his poems when you read the poems. He is actually yearning for the past is filled with a vitality or a vital belief and wonder, but modern man's life he considers as full of sterility and that is why many people say that not only the *Lands' End*, but also the *Missing Person* has got many vestiges of TS Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

So, we can also find, we can also be reminded of here--- the images of the protagonist of *The Waste Land* in Jussawalla's poem. There is of course, but then, when we compare *Land's End* and then *Missing Person*, we can find that there is a progression from the Lands and to the missing person and there is a radical social awareness.

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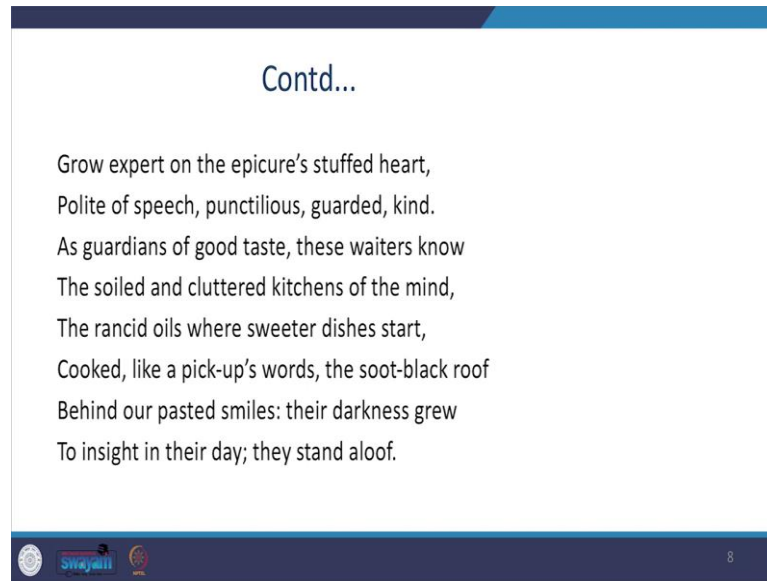


Jussawalla actually had his sympathies even for the common and the sundry and the people who are taking actually menial jobs like the waiter. In the poem “The Waiter” he talks about their predicament if we look at the lines you can find:

Blacker than wine from the loaded grapes of France
blacker than mud their Tamil minds recall.
Dark skins serving dishes to the sallow
sweat more night than grapes blood has. All
the long summers they absorbed for chance
of better prospects change a son of contrasts.
Stick in a language their clients will not allow
must button up their manners with the past.

Here is the struggle of a man who is trying for an authentic living, but then his language is not understood, he is actually struggling for a language-- the language which others would not understand, the language the people of the other land will not understand.

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Grow expert on the epicure's stuffed heart,
Polite of speech, punctilious, guarded, kind.
As guardians of good taste, these waiters know
The soiled and cluttered kitchens of the mind,
The rancid oils where sweeter dishes start,
Cooked, like a pick-up's words, the soot-black roof
Behind our pasted smiles: their darkness grew
To insight in their day; they stand aloof.

But then he would “grow expert on the epicure’s stuffed heart, polite of speech punctilious guarded kind as guardians of good taste”, fine?

These waiters know the “soiled and cluttered kitchens of the mind”/ the rancid oils where sweeter dishes start/ cooked like a pick–up’s words the soot black roof/ behind our pasted smiles their darkness grew/ to insight in their day they stand aloof.

So, a modern man everywhere is uprooted even when he goes for a modest living, he tries to make his life better, but then everywhere-- he is in struggle everywhere he is in problem.

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But slacken in their service after eleven.
Guarding the day's unending appetites,
Grow shifty-eyed, avoid our munching faces,
The spit and polish of our eating rites.
Then closing time: they dream of a foodless heaven,
Shrug off their coats like priestly cloaks of pity,
Day's ministry complete. Slip to their sleeping places
In the throat of the feasted, pink-faced city.

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And then the last lines, have a look at them:

Then closing time, they dream of foodless heaven,
shrug off their coats like priestly cloaks of pity,
day's ministry complete. Slip to their sleeping places
in the throat of the feasted, pink-faced city.

Is there a hope, is there a hope for all these people?

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Analysis of the Poem "The Waiter"

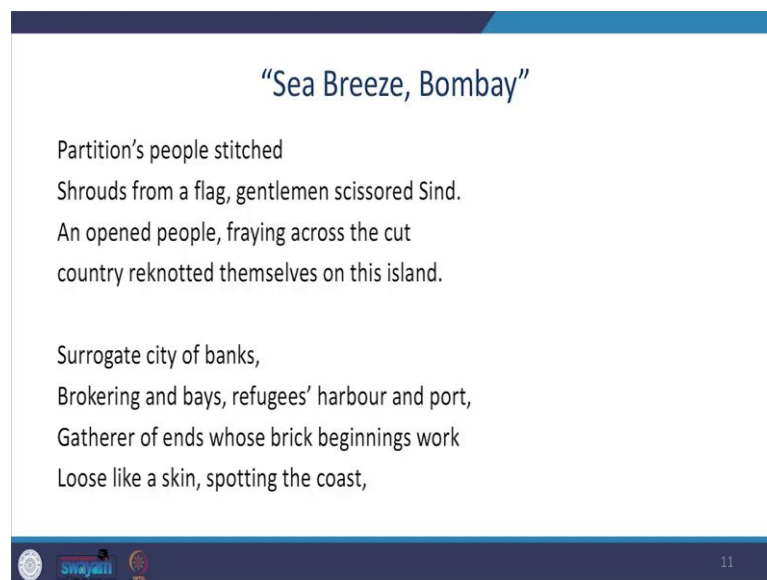
- ❖ Racism and political content.
- ❖ Colonial chaos
- ❖ Alienation and disappointment.
- ❖ Extensive use of colour images.
- ❖ The waiters stand separate from the ones they serve.
- ❖ Contemporary cross-cultural consciousness.
- ❖ Feeling of marginality and foreignness.

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And then you can find that how this racism and this colonialism had affected even the common man's mind fine. So, there is a sort of alienation and disappointment and the waiters even though they serve food, but they actually appear completely distance from the ones to whom they serve there is actually a feeling of marginality as I have been saying.

But then can this really exist forever? Can there be not a sort of solution? We can find in another poem which is entitled "Sea Breeze, Bombay" and here you can find that how the poet's own desire, is reflected in the way-- are the people who after partition have witnessed and then the poem begins with no here actually is a Sea Breeze of Bombay and then the poet says partition's people stitched shrouds from a flag look at the lines.

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"Sea Breeze, Bombay"

Partition's people stitched
Shrouds from a flag, gentlemen scissored Sind.
An opened people, fraying across the cut
country reknotted themselves on this island.

Surrogate city of banks,
Brokering and bays, refugees' harbour and port,
Gatherer of ends whose brick beginnings work
Loose like a skin, spotting the coast,

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Partitions people stitched/ shrouds from a flag gentlemen scissored Sind./

So, there is attack also though gentlemen who 'scissored Sind/ an opened people fraying across the cut/ country reknotted themselves on this island.'

So, talking about this Mumbai Island which is actually a land, but is it a land which belongs to anyone?

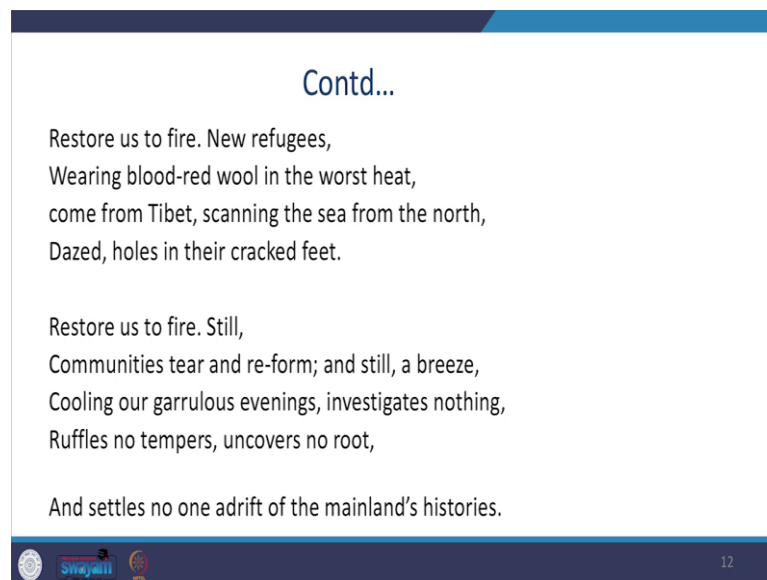
It is actually a land that is fractured, it is a land which shelters people from different, you know different parts, people who have actually been divided, people who have actually

been distanced from their roots and then the poet makes his views very clear when in the second stanza he says surrogate city.

Look at the phrase, look at actually the metaphor ‘surrogate city’ as if we are reminded of this surrogate mother, fine. So, even though it is a land, but this land does not belong to us: “surrogate city of banks,/ brokering and bays, refugees harbour and port./

So, one that you call Mumbai is a city that is actually a of a city which has been peopled by people from different corners, ‘gatherer of ends whose brick beginnings work/ loose like a skin spotting the coast. /

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Restore us to fire. New refugees,
Wearing blood-red wool in the worst heat,
come from Tibet, scanning the sea from the north,
Dazed, holes in their cracked feet.

Restore us to fire. Still,
Communities tear and re-form; and still, a breeze,
Cooling our garrulous evenings, investigates nothing,
Ruffles no tempers, uncovers no root,

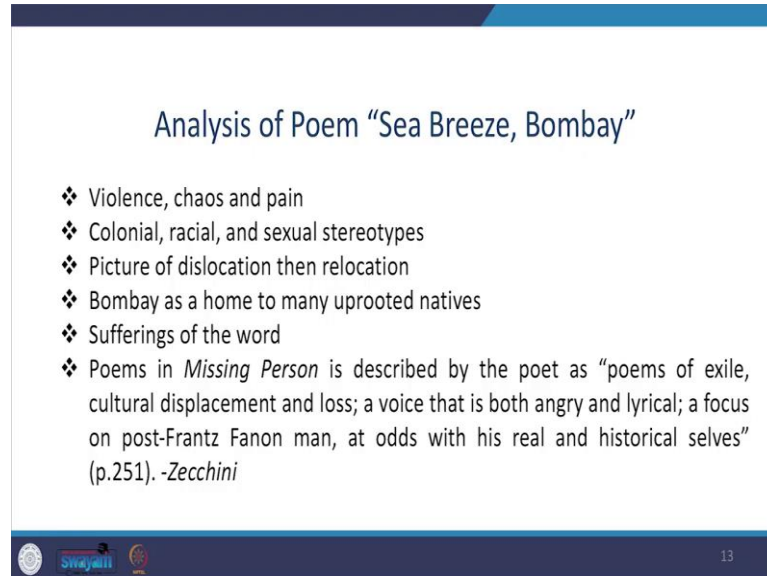
And settles no one adrift of the mainland's histories.

And then he says—‘restore us to fire new refuges’ what a sort of life we have got? So, let us restore us to fire, ‘wearing blood red wool fine in the worst heat/, come from Tibet, scanning the sea from the north/ dazed holes in the cracked feet.’ So, here there is also a mention of people from the Tibet and then again the poet says--- “restore us to fire, still,/ communities tear and re-form; and still a breeze,/ cooling our garrulous evening. “

Even though we do not have a sense of belonging, but this Bombay bridge is cooling us, “investigates nothing”. It does not talk of who you are from, it is lost like a third world, fine: “ruffles no tempers uncovers no root”. It does not talk of any root my dear friend and ‘settles no one adrift of the mainland’s histories.’ So, now there is a perennial

question a metaphysical question--- a metaphysical anguish, of belonging, my dear friend.

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Analysis of Poem "Sea Breeze, Bombay"

- ❖ Violence, chaos and pain
- ❖ Colonial, racial, and sexual stereotypes
- ❖ Picture of dislocation then relocation
- ❖ Bombay as a home to many uprooted natives
- ❖ Sufferings of the word
- ❖ Poems in *Missing Person* is described by the poet as "poems of exile, cultural displacement and loss; a voice that is both angry and lyrical; a focus on post-Frantz Fanon man, at odds with his real and historical selves" (p.251). -Zecchini

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So, when we analyze this poem as you will find that the poem is actually suffused with a picture of dislocation and relocation you can read it at your own leisure and pleasure. Bombay appears to be this island. Bombay belongs to no one and it belongs to everyone.

So, this actually symbolizes the third world where no sense of belonging is there, yet you belong and the nature, nature is actually not biased. The Bombay bridge is not biased, it actually cools all those who come either from one locality, from one loyalty from one faith, from one religion from whatever and then there is actually a lot of suffering in it fine.

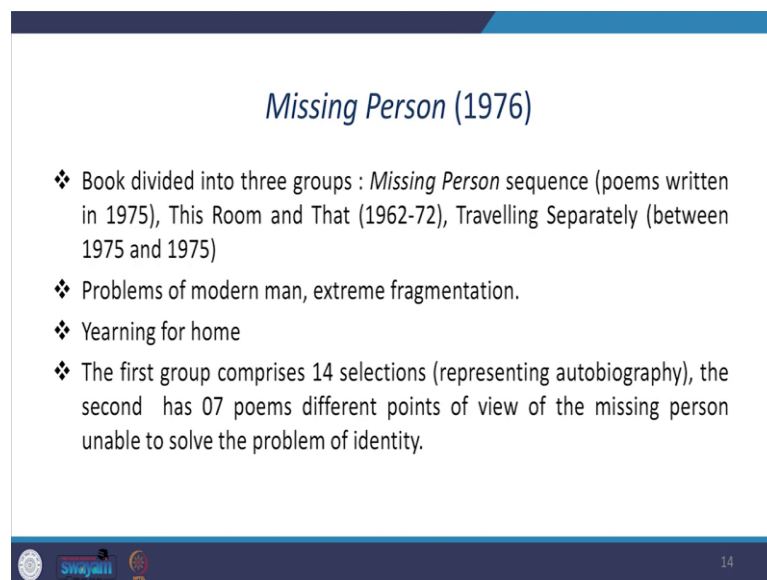
Violence, pain, chaos---- all have been reflected in the poem through the poet's way--- the way poet says, you know, in the first line--- 'partitions people stitched', he uses stitched shrouds from a flag shrouds from a flag. You know look at this sort of penury, look at the sort of poverty and then look at also the sort of belonging that they have. Even they do not belong, nature does not discriminate, does not distinguish, my dear friend.

We can and from *Land's End* we can move to *Missing Person* which is very significant and a talk on Jussawalla cannot be complete without making a mention of the missing

person, which is very important the missing person symbolizes the man of the third world who does not belong to any place, to any loyalty, to any faith he is actually an anxious man, he is trying to escape, he is trying to find a home even in ecstasy. He is trying to find his roots, he is actually trying to have a sort of retreat and rightly has one critic said about *Missing Person* that poems in the *Missing Person* is described by the poet as poems of exile.

It is actually a poem of exile-- when you are exiled when you feel like a banished person, a cultural displacement because Jussawalla himself had felt this cultural shock and loss; a voice that is both angry and lyrical; a focus on the post-Frantz Fanon man, where it says there is nothing, know at odds with his real and historical selves.

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Missing Person (1976)

- ❖ Book divided into three groups : *Missing Person* sequence (poems written in 1975), *This Room and That* (1962-72), *Travelling Separately* (between 1975 and 1975)
- ❖ Problems of modern man, extreme fragmentation.
- ❖ Yearning for home
- ❖ The first group comprises 14 selections (representing autobiography), the second has 07 poems different points of view of the missing person unable to solve the problem of identity.

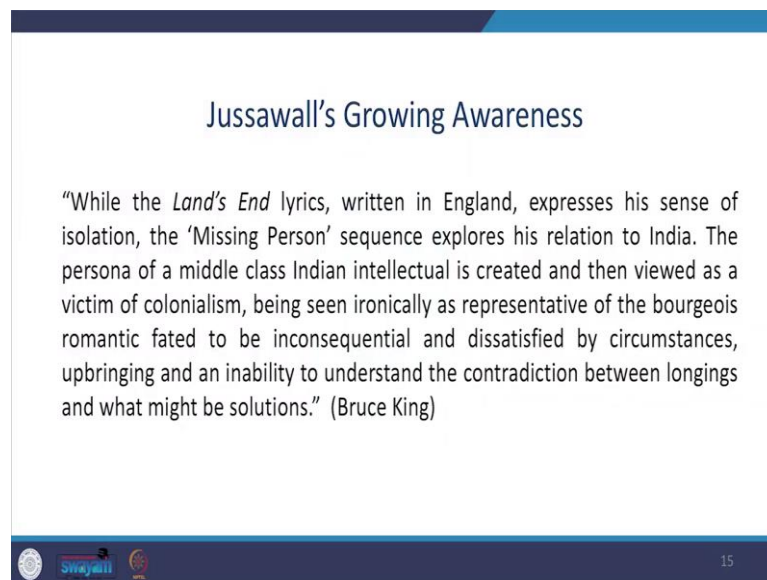
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So, we can find *Missing Person* which he actually composed in 1976. *Missing Person* is a long poem and it has got three parts-- the first part actually talks about the missing person sequence, the points of view and then 'This Room and That' which is the second one and the third part is 'Travelling Separately'--- these actually include songs between 1965 and 75. And this talks about the problems of modern man, modern man has to face extreme fragmentation you are not a whole my dear friend, you are not the whole rather you are actually in different fragments that is actually the reality. And hence in this atmosphere there is bound to be a yearning a craving a desire for going back home.

The first part actually comprises 14 selections and in this the poet actually tries to show it through a cinematic vision, and it is it has got autobiographical touches my dear friend, the second has got 7 poems which has got different points of view about the missing person sometimes has a wife, sometimes has a professor, sometimes as a slave, sometimes has something where all of them talk about the problems of identity.

Now, is there a change in Jussawalla from 1962 to 1976? Yes, of course, and rightly has been said by Bruce king that “Jussawallas awareness has grown over the years”. When in 1970 he came back you know he was haunted by the feelings of alienation and dislocation and all, but in India also what sort of experience did he have.

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The slide features a title 'Jussawall's Growing Awareness' in blue text. Below the title is a quote in black text: "While the *Land's End* lyrics, written in England, expresses his sense of isolation, the 'Missing Person' sequence explores his relation to India. The persona of a middle class Indian intellectual is created and then viewed as a victim of colonialism, being seen ironically as representative of the bourgeois romantic fated to be inconsequential and dissatisfied by circumstances, upbringing and an inability to understand the contradiction between longings and what might be solutions." (Bruce King). At the bottom left of the slide, there are three small circular logos, and at the bottom right, the number '15' is displayed.

And Bruce king rightly says, “While the *Land's End* lyrics, written in England expresses his sense of isolation.”

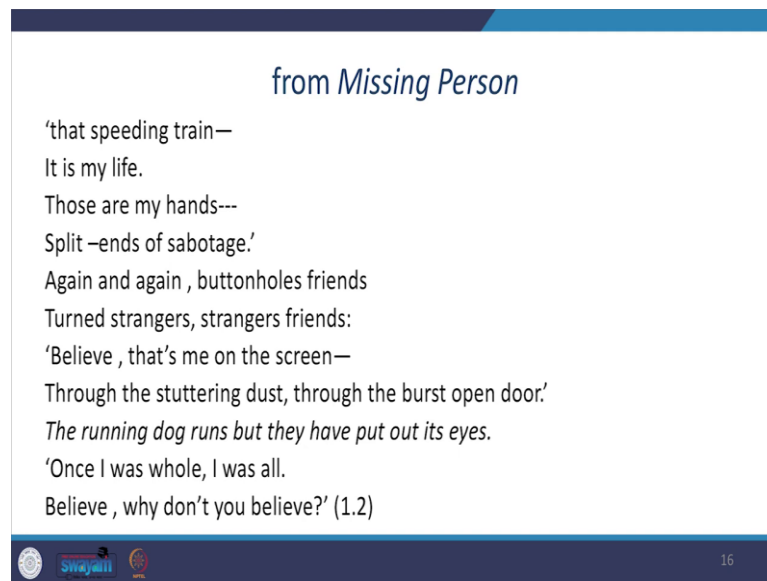
So, there is a sense of isolation, but this poem this ‘Missing Person’ it actually a missing person explores his relation to India how he belongs to India that is why you know we have been saying that even though people may consider him to be a diasporic poet, but he is out and out an Indian English poet.

“The persona of a middle class Indian intellectual has been created and then viewed as a victim of colonialism” and who feels inconsequential and dissatisfied by circumstances

“upbringing and an inability to understand the contradiction between longings and what might be his solutions”.

So, we can take the very first poem of the second section from *Missing Person* and if I read the poem you will understand the poet’s trials, tribulations, trepidations, hesitations and his conflict the way he says it has been provided in a very cinematic reason.

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And he says:

that speeding train-/ it is my life,/ those are my hands/, split ends of sabotage/ again and again buttonholes friends,/ turned strangers, strangers friends.”

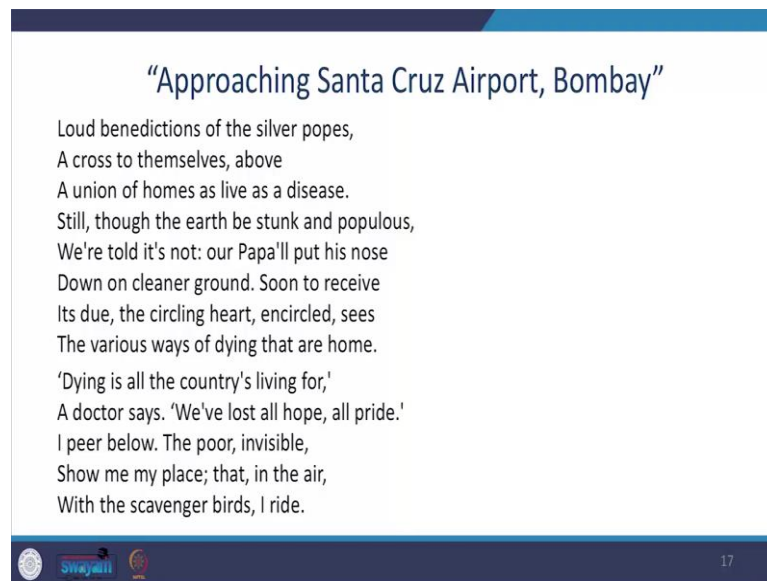
Look at the internal rhyming you know the poet may write in a very free manner-- not musicality now but there is a sort of internal rhyming.

“Turned strangers, strangers friends/ believe that is me on the screen-“

Because he is providing it in a cinematic vision ‘through the stuttering dust through the burst open door’ and then the one line that comes is very significant which actually tells a lot about him ‘ the running dog runs, but they have put out his eyes.’ So, how you have been made inconsequential you have been hankering after, running after, moving for a vocation. But then what your eyes have been put out once and you see the conclusive line.

“Once I was whole, I was all believe, why do not you believe?” So, this is actually a fragmented world and as a person in this world I have actually been broken, I have been fragmented, but if a man has been fragmented if a man had been disillusioned, should a man; should a man not long for his own home and then he actually longs for his own home and one of the more significant poems entitled approaching “Santa Cruz airport Mumbai”, where he says this is actually yearning back, it is actually a trip on which he is returning and while he is returning let us look at the lines.

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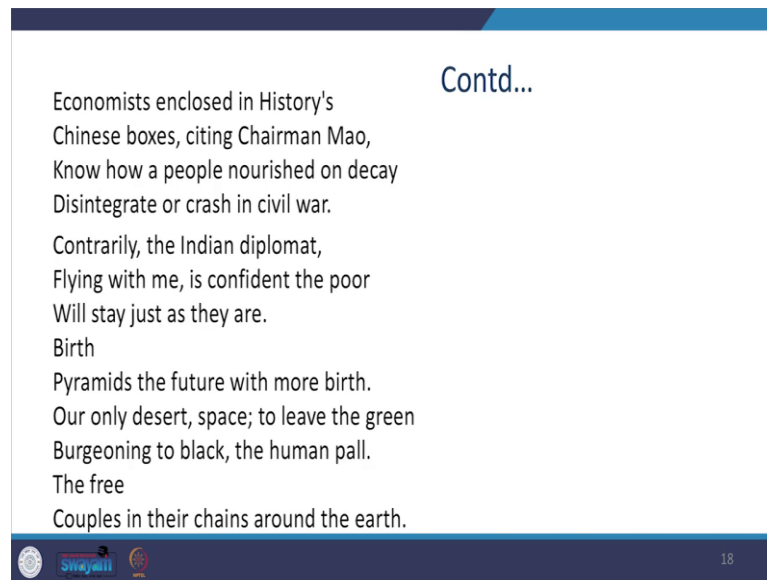


“Loud benedictions of the silver popes/, across to themselves, above/ a union of homes as live as a disease;/

So, the poem actually has a Christian belief that whatever conditions be there, you have to live a contented life--- ‘still though the earth be stunk and populous/ we are told it is not our Papa’ll put his nose/ down on cleaner ground. Soon to receive/ its due, the circling heart encircled sees/ the various ways of dying that are home.”

So, even if it is actually a land where there are lots of discontentment, but as the Christian belief says that you have to live a contented life, but then the poet says---“Dying is all the country is living for.” So, if you have to die it is better to die in your own country even though in a sort of inconvenience and “a doctor says. We have lost all hope all pride,/ I peer below the poor, invisible,/ show me my place that in the air,/ with the scavenger birds, I ride.”

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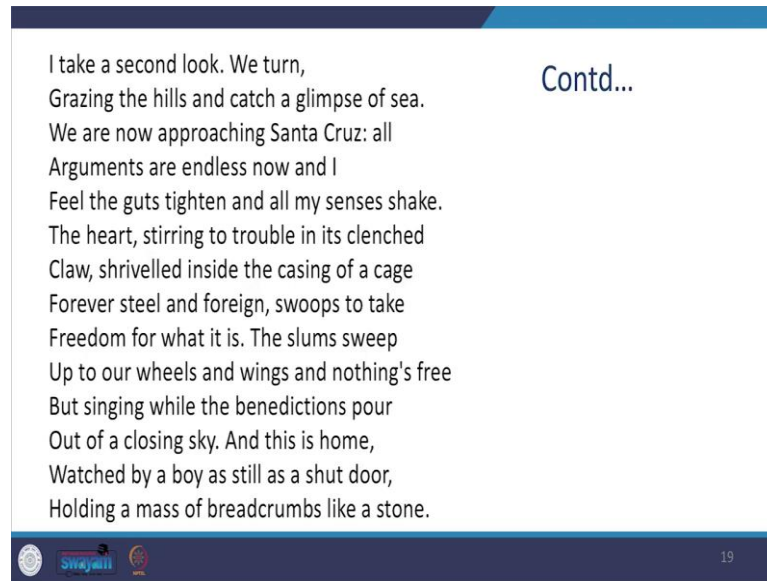
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Economists enclosed in History's
Chinese boxes, citing Chairman Mao,
Know how a people nourished on decay
Disintegrate or crash in civil war.
Contrarily, the Indian diplomat,
Flying with me, is confident the poor
Will stay just as they are.
Birth
Pyramids the future with more birth.
Our only desert, space; to leave the green
Burgeoning to black, the human pall.
The free
Couples in their chains around the earth.

And then the poet actually takes a dig where it proceeds even though he is talking about the problem even though he is talking about a sort of predicament. But then he says what are these thinkers and historians and the politicians and the social thinkers doing and he takes a dig and says--- “Economists enclosed in History’s/ Chinese boxes, citing Chairman Mao/ know how a people nourished on decay/ disintegrate or crash in civil war. /Contrarily the Indian diplomat/ flying with me is confident the poor/ will stay just as they are/ birth/ pyramids of the future with more birth/ our only desert space to leave the green/ burgeoning to black the human pall/ the free/ couples in their chains around the earth.”

The poet is having an air- trip and from there he looks at the earth and even though people may look small, people may look diseased, decayed whatsoever, but then listen to the views of the other co-passenger who says-- the confident,the poor will stay just as they are, and then the poet says and here we find the pinnacle of what he wants to say.

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I take a second look. We turn,
Grazing the hills and catch a glimpse of sea.
We are now approaching Santa Cruz: all
Arguments are endless now and I
Feel the guts tighten and all my senses shake.
The heart, stirring to trouble in its clenched
Claw, shrivelled inside the casing of a cage
Forever steel and foreign, swoops to take
Freedom for what it is. The slums sweep
Up to our wheels and wings and nothing's free
But singing while the benedictions pour
Out of a closing sky. And this is home,
Watched by a boy as still as a shut door,
Holding a mass of breadcrumbs like a stone.

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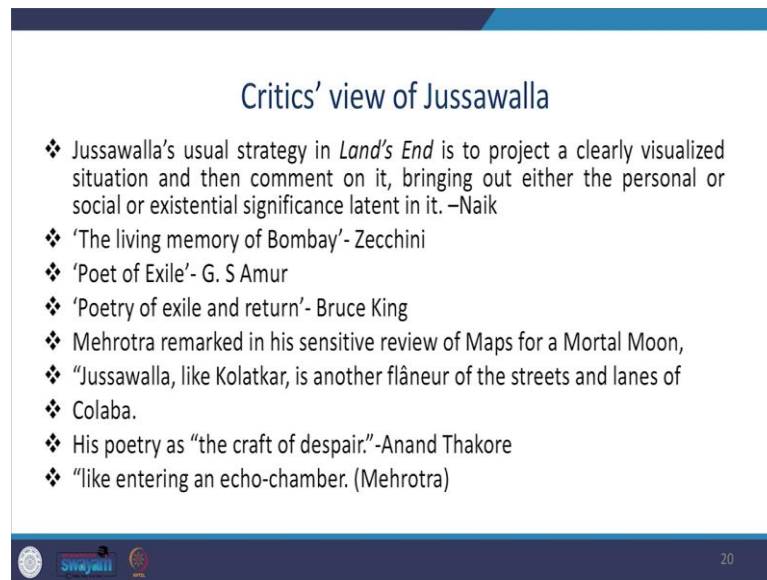
“I take a second look we turn/ grazing the hills and catch a glimpse of the sea/ we are now approaching Santa Cruz.”

A sense of belonging, the mere coming down to the earth from the air trip will actually provide him a sort of satisfaction and satiation that he is home.

“Feel the guts tight and all my senses shake/ the heart is telling to travel in its clenched/ Claws shrivelled inside the casing of a cage,/ the slums weep up to our wheels and wings and nothing is free,/ but singing while the benedictions pour/ out of a closing sky and this is home/ watched by a boy as still as a shut door,/ holding a mass of breadcrumbs like a stone.”

So, here the poet talks about a postcolonial third world problem, but then he gets a sort of hope, he gets a ray of satisfaction that he is nearing home and by the time the wheels of the plane will touch the poet will have the same sort of satisfaction like a small boy who is still as a shut door, holding a mass of breadcrumbs like a stone.

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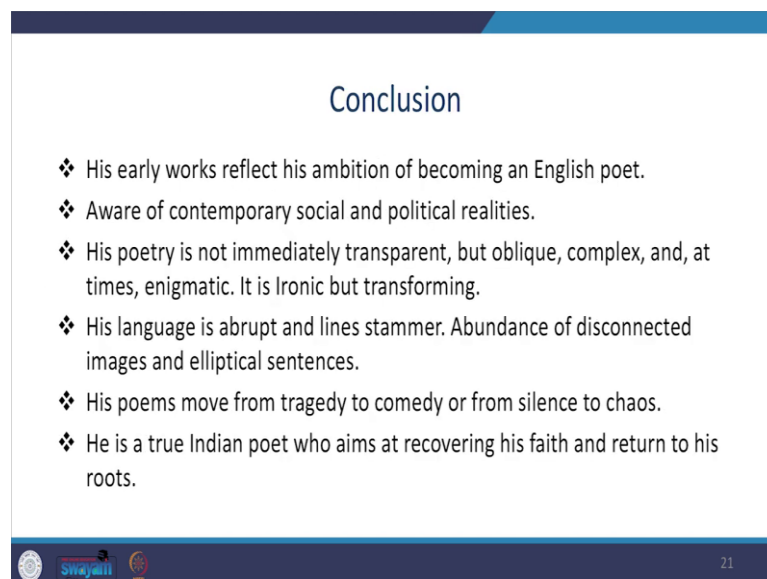
Critics' view of Jussawalla

- ❖ Jussawalla's usual strategy in *Land's End* is to project a clearly visualized situation and then comment on it, bringing out either the personal or social or existential significance latent in it. –Naik
- ❖ 'The living memory of Bombay'- Zecchini
- ❖ 'Poet of Exile'- G. S Amur
- ❖ 'Poetry of exile and return'- Bruce King
- ❖ Mehrotra remarked in his sensitive review of *Maps for a Mortal Moon*,
- ❖ "Jussawalla, like Kolatkar, is another flâneur of the streets and lanes of Colaba.
- ❖ His poetry as "the craft of despair."-Anand Thakore
- ❖ "like entering an echo-chamber. (Mehrotra)

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Now, my dear friends we find that even though Jussawalla's usual strategy in *Land's End* is to predict and clearly visualize situation and then comment on it the personal social or existential significance which are latent in it.

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Conclusion

- ❖ His early works reflect his ambition of becoming an English poet.
- ❖ Aware of contemporary social and political realities.
- ❖ His poetry is not immediately transparent, but oblique, complex, and, at times, enigmatic. It is Ironic but transforming.
- ❖ His language is abrupt and lines stammer. Abundance of disconnected images and elliptical sentences.
- ❖ His poems move from tragedy to comedy or from silence to chaos.
- ❖ He is a true Indian poet who aims at recovering his faith and return to his roots.

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But then Jussawalla's poetry even if it is a poetry of exile and return. But then we can also find his poetry even though crafted on despair-- we can find that even his earlier works which can reflect a sort of ambition for becoming an English poet, but then he is

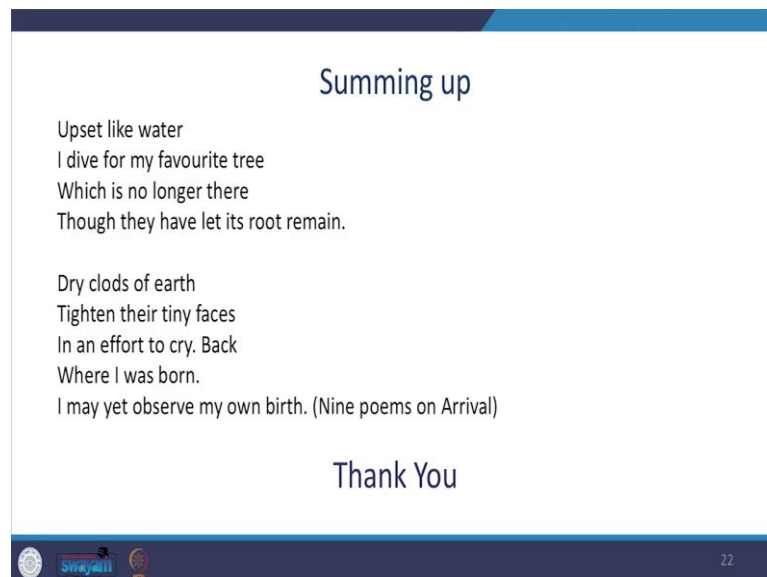
also aware of the contemporary social and political realities and that is why he talks about in a way at times, you know, speaks something that we have to come out of it.

But even if my country is in problems or whatsoever, my country is my country, the land to which I belong. His poetry is not immediately transparent because his poetry is opaque and that is why his poetry has been at times called to be complex. It is oblique, complex and at times enigmatic there is a sort of romantic irony, my dear friend, but then it is for a sort of transformation.

The language used by Jussawalla may be abrupt and at times stammering, but there is an abundance of disconnectedness and that is why the language has been so. His poems, to quote the words of an eminent critic--- “His poems actually move from tragedy to comedy and from silence to chaos.”

And in this regard because he becomes aware of, he cannot remain himself distant, but he has to connect to his roots and that is why this yearning and this yearning and this thinking of belonging for his own country actually makes him a true Indian English poet who aims at recovering his faith and returns to his own roots.

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Summing up

Upset like water
I dive for my favourite tree
Which is no longer there
Though they have let its root remain.

Dry clods of earth
Tighten their tiny faces
In an effort to cry. Back
Where I was born.
I may yet observe my own birth. (Nine poems on Arrival)

Thank You

Swajal 22

To sum up my dear friends, let me take some lines from one of his poems “Nine Poems on Arrival”, where he says:

“Upset like water/ I dive for my favourite tree.”

Tree actually means sheltering which is ‘no longer there/ though they have let its root remain.’ Even though the tree is not there even though my people may not be there, but its roots are there—“Dry clods of earth tighten their tiny faces/ in an effort to cry. Back/ where I was born/ I may yet observe my own birth.”

So, this yearning for his return to the homeland is, finally fulfilled, through the last poem we discussed and we can find that all of us despite all sorts of odds the idea to return home is not devoid of pleasures and satisfaction. Homecoming has always been a pet theme for many poets and especially Jussawalla’s world also recovers from the sort of what he says he had lost and he wants to reclaim it and it seems that he has been able to reclaim it. With this we come to the end of this lecture. Thank you very much. I wish you all good luck and I wish you all to trace back your own roots, your own belonging.

Thank you very much.