

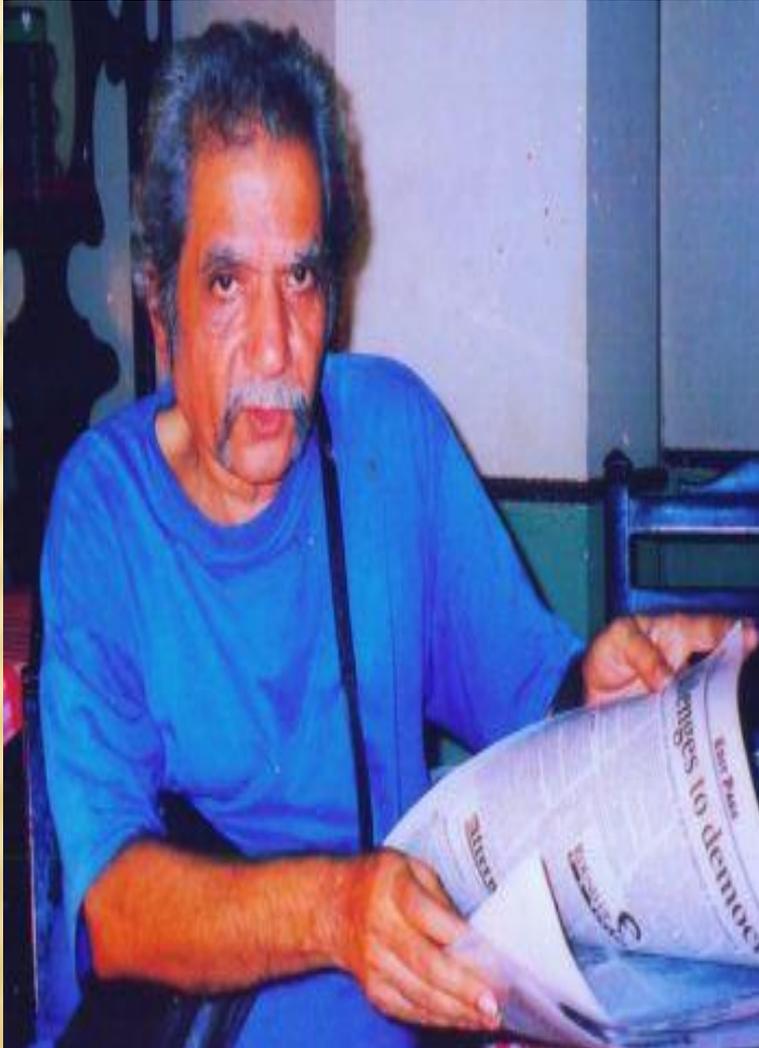


*Class Notes on*  
**JEJURI**  
BY  
**ARUN KOLATKAR**

FOR  
B A ENGLISH  
SEM - VI  
ENGL3016

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# ARUN KOLATKAR (1932 – 2004)



- ❖ Arun Kolatkar was born on 1 November 1932 in Kolhapur, Maharashtra
- ❖ He was educated in Kolhapur, Pune and Mumbai
- ❖ Had Diploma in Painting from J. J. School Mumbai in 1957
- ❖ A graphic designer by profession
- ❖ He was a bilingual poet – wrote in Marathi and English
- ❖ He is one of the pioneers of modern poetry in India
- ❖ A winner of Commonwealth Poetry Prize 1977
- ❖ He translated the Marathi poets, especially Tukaram, into English
- ❖ He won a Sahitya Akademi Award for his poetry collection *Bhijki Vahi* (Wet Notebook) in 2005

# JEJURI

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- ❖ *Jejuri*, is a collection 31 poems which appeared originally in English in 1976
- ❖ Jejuri is a temple town in Western Maharashtra known for Lord Khandoba
- ❖ Through this collection Kolatkar presents an encounter between modern consciousness and ancient religious tradition.
- ❖ Things that he observed in his journey to this religious place are penned down in the form of short poems

# TEMPLE OF LORD KHANDOBA



# BACKGROUND OF JEJURI POEMS



**Lord Khandoba**

- ❖ Jejuri is a village situated about 48 km from Pune in Maharashtra
- ❖ Jejuri has a holy shrine of **Lord Khandoba**, a form of Shiva, worshipped by Shepherd Community in Maharashtra
- ❖ Lord Khandoba is the God of sword fighting.
- ❖ He is a warrior, riding a horse with a sword as his weapon.
- ❖ Thousands of pilgrims visit Jejuri throughout the year.
- ❖ Khandoba is believed to bestow wealth, health and children on his devotees.
- ❖ Suitable offerings are made at the shrine at Khandoba

# MAIN THEMES IN *JEJURI*

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- ❖ Faith and scepticism
- ❖ Alienation and perception
- ❖ Time – from sun rise to sun set
- ❖ The existence of life and various other forms of it.
- ❖ Commercialization of religion.
- ❖ Man's quest for his identity in this vast universe.

# 'A SCRATCH'

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What is god  
and what is stone  
the dividing line  
if it exists  
is very thin  
at Jejuri  
and every other stone  
is god or his cousin

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there is no crop  
other than god  
and god is harvested here  
around the year  
and round the clock  
out of the bad earth  
and the hard rock

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that giant hunk of rock  
the size of a bedroom  
is Khandoba's wife turned to stone  
the crack that runs right across  
is the scar from his broadsword  
he struck her down with  
once in a fit of rage

scratch a rock  
and a legend springs

# IMPORTANT POINTS

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- ❖ The sanctity of temple of god Khandoba is such that a legend can be discovered merely by scratching a stone at Jejuri
- ❖ Every stone is sacred at Jejuri
- ❖ Difficult to distinguish God from stone
- ❖ Myth creation – The stone with a scar has a myth behind that Khandoba turning his wife to stone

# 'THE DOOR'

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A prophet half brought down.  
from the cross  
a dangling martyr.

since one hinge broke  
the heavy medieval door  
flanges on one hinge alone.

one corner drags in dust on the road.  
the other knocks  
against the high threshold.

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like a memory that only gets sharper.  
with the passage of time,  
the grain stands out on the wood.

as graphic in detail  
as a flayed man of muscles who could not find  
his way back into the anatomy book.

as is leaning against  
any old doorway to sober up  
like the local drunk

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hell with the hinge and damn the jab  
the door would have walked out  
long long ago

if it weren't for  
that pairs of shorts  
left to dry upon its shoulders.

# IMPORTANT POINTS

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- ❖ The poem is written in three line stanzas
- ❖ It is a descriptive poem of detailing every object that the narrator of the poem sets his eyes upon.
- ❖ The object is seen on two levels: mundane and the sacred
- ❖ Thus the dilapidated condition of the door suggests the decay of religion and religious practices.
- ❖ It is significant that the door should make the narrator think of Christ and crucifixion.

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- ❖ Something that was at the centre of belief in the medieval age is now just a broken down, decaying pathetic object.
  - ❖ The door has been a witness to various traditions.
  - ❖ The poem evokes unalterable decay, decadence of the place.
  - ❖ With the passage of time objects become meaningless and the value of their existence also deteriorate

# FURTHER READING

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- ❖ 'Between Jejuri and the Railway Station'
- ❖ 'The Butterfly'

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THANK YOU