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Donkeyism – On Comic Incongruity in the Language of Hindi Satire **(Parsāi and Śukla)**

Abstract

Hindi is the skilled vehicle of the comic in the works of two prominent satire writers (Hariśaṅkar Parsāi and Śrīlāl Śukla). This paper attempts to trace language techniques both typical and unique to modern Hindi comic writing. The employment of idioms for comic purposes is of special importance, since the colloquial phrases based on dead metaphors are comically retold either by changing the components or by appealing to both their metaphorical and literal meanings, in that case incongruous elements or their presentation creates laughter. The comic contamination both in word and phrase-formation produces comic incongruity. Combining different styles, jargons and slangs, but also loanwords is a distinguishing feature of the stylistic syncretism of satire. The presence of scatology and obscenity in Śukla's novel is a rare example of a restricted use of these themes in satirical writings, where comic incongruity happens because of the attempt to break social and individual taboos.

In the monsoon of 2006 in India, a movie, which related to Mahatma Gandhi – the icon of the freedom movement, surprisingly became a big hit at the box office, bringing back the discussion on the importance of *satyāgraha* in modern Indian society. *Lage raho Munnā bhāi* (*Go on Munnā bhāi*) is a sequel of *Munnā bhāi M.B.B.S.* and it is the continuation of the story of a *bhāi* – a member of the Mumbai mafia, who experiences an internal change because of imaginary contact with Mahatma's ghost. The comedy reintroduced the figure of the father of the Nation in a way which was described as appealing to the youth, the so-called Generation Next. The hero – Munnā, while inviting people to join his own non-violent protest against any kind of injustice in society, addresses the ideas of Mahatma or gandhism as *gāndhī-girī*. It is an innovative word formation, based on two unsuitable elements, the surname of Mahatma and the formant *-girī*, which appears in expressions borrowed from urban slang, e.g. *gunḍā-girī*, *dādā-girī* or *bhāi-girī* (terms in colloquial Hindi used for the loutish behaviour of

gangsters¹) with an obviously strong negative connotation. This comic neologism initiated protests among Mahatma Gandhi followers, which, somehow contrary to the precepts laid down by Mahatma himself, in some places took almost a violent form. However, the word is a genuine example of the employment of comic incongruity² in modern language as reflected in Indian pop culture.

Moreover, it brings to our mind the word *gadadhā-vād* – ‘donkeyism’ or ‘idiotism’, which is also a comic word formation based on the incongruity of two inappropriate elements: the noun *gadadhā*, or donkey (a common synonym for a stupid person), and the formant *-vād*, which creates words defining a viewpoint or theory. It is a quotation from one of Śrīlāl Śukla’s stories and also a good example of the employment of incongruity as a comic technique. In this paper the word “comic” is used in the sense of an expression of a common human attitude, i.e. humour in literature. On the other hand, “humour” is also one of the two aesthetic sub-categories of the comic, the other sub-category being satire. The aim of this paper is to show how two prominent satire writers in Hindi – Hariśaṅkar Parsāi and Śrīlāl Śukla³ use language as a vehicle of the comic in their short stories, essays and novels. It has been questioned whether modern Hindi authors generate humour through language, as compared to the multiplicity of comic language techniques in Sanskrit literature. Therefore we will try to find an answer to this argument.

At the very beginning, however, we have to underline that any text separating language as a form from its context as a narrative might be a risky undertaking, as the two, to a great extent, become an inseparable entity. Buttler (2001: 58) argues that the language means of humour are tightly connected with text as a whole, and that in the text they harmonise with the humour of situation and characters. Therefore, any attempt to isolate them from within a literary work constitutes a challenge, requiring us to define their stylistic function appropriately, and to examine them in greater parts of the text leading us into the meanders of stylistics. To escape this trap, we will consider language as a tool of humour in the broader context of the respective narratives in which they appear. We will also discuss style and parody as constituent parts of introducing the comic through language.

In the satirical writings of Parsāi and Śukla, there are numerous examples of similes and epithets, which with their two-part structure become a likely technique for introducing the comic incongruity of both parts. In Parsāi’s short story *One Middle-class Dog* (*Ek*

¹ It is an interesting thing that both terms, which are supposed to be used as address forms to mafia members or gangsters, are based on family relations, i.e. *dādā* means parental grandfather, elder brother or a respected older person, and *bhāī* – brother. Thus their usage in common speech is ironical.

² Incongruity is one of the common theories of humour. This is how it is defined by Keith-Spiegel: *Humour arising from disjointed, ill-suited pairings of ideas or situations or the presentation of ideas and situations that are divergent from habitual customs form the bases of incongruity theories* (Keith-Spiegel 1972: 7). In the comic literary text Ziomek underlines the importance of both similarity and difference between the model and its comic counter-model (Ziomek 1980: 325).

³ Hariśaṅkar Parsāi (1924-2004) in 1982 received the award of the Sahitya Akademi for his satirical short stories and essays. Śrīlāl Śukla (b. 1925) was honoured with the same award in 1970 for his satirical novel *Rag darbārī*.

madhya-vargīy kuttā; Parsāi 1985: 25-27), the author uses epithets of social and political discourse (*madhya-vargīy* or middle-class, *ucca-vargīy* or upper class, and *sarva-hārā* or proletarian) to portray dogs, and in these contaminations he introduces the incongruity of unsuitable elements. In Śukla's story *Mother's Donkey* (*Mammījī kā gadhā*; Śukla 2000a: 58-79), the main hero is addressed as in the title "mother's donkey" – a synonym for a fool in colloquial language. In *Rāg darbārī*, the author describes the corruption of the government aid programs under the label of "philosophy of the government plans" (*sarkārī skīmō kī filāsafī*; Śukla 2001: 146). The epithet "medieval" (*madhya-kālīn*; Śukla 2001: 11) appears in the description of the police station equipment in the same novel, which is also incongruent. *The Protest of Rotten Potatoes* (*Sāre ālū kā vidroh*; Parsāi 1985: 303-304) is a story based on a simile between the intelligentsia and rotten potatoes, and it is used as an allegory of the decayed condition of the former. In the above mentioned novel of Śukla, the laughter of a woman at a poster advertising an anti-malaria campaign is described as follows: *she was laughing in the same way as the officers of the Agriculture Department* (*kṛṣi vibhāg ke afsarō valī hāsī hās rahī thī*; Śukla 2001: 58). One of the characters of Parsāi's short story explains: *A good soul should be like a folding chair. If you need it you unfold it and sit on it, if you don't – you fold it and put it in the corner* (*Acchī ātmā fōldīng kursī kī tarah honī cāhiye. Zarūrat pare tab phailākar us par baith gaye, nahī to morkar kone mē ṭikā diyā*; Parsāi 1997: 77). The comparison between things from the two contradictory worlds of spirit and matter inevitably results in laughter. In another story, *From Rice to Diamond* (*Cāval se hīre tak*; Parsāi 1997: 63-67), Parsāi compares the breakdown of a bus to the struggle for independence (Parsāi 1997: 66). The epithets and similes based on the comic incongruity of their unsuitable parts represent general examples of humour building techniques, universal because of their employment in most languages. They constitute the basic characteristics of the comic writing style, i.e. the introduction of different levels of language or various jargons (e.g. the medium of political and philosophical discourse and informal speech).

However, for the purpose of our study, which is to trace language techniques typical of and unique to modern Hindi comic writing, it is more interesting to examine the neologisms and the usage of phraseology in Śukla's and Parsāi's texts, because they exemplify the means characteristic of the employment of Hindi language as a comic tool. Hindi is rich in synonyms and phraseology (idiomatic expressions, proverbs); as a result the authors introduce neologisms in both word formation and phraseology. The above mentioned "donkeyism" is a good example of such comic contamination. In the essay entitled *My Great Devastation!* (*Merā gārat mahān!*; Śukla 2000: 134), Śukla brings in a series of neologisms for the name of India – Bhārat, the similar form of these new word formations conceal their absurd meaning and the negative connotations. He proposes new names for the country as follows: *mārat* or 'beating/killing' (which is created from the verb *mārnā*); *hārat* or 'loss' (from *hārnā* – 'to lose') and *ṭarat* or 'negligence' (from *ṭarnā* (more common *ṭālnā*) – 'to neglect'). Inevitably, in their satiric interpretation the new names of the country denote its present decayed condition and even

more than that of its leaders and government. To intensify the comic effect, Śukla employs these derogative word formations in the popular patriotic slogan “My Great India!” (*Merā Bhārat mahān!*), where he exchanges them with the country’s name and creates the absurd meaning (*My great beating!*; *My great loss!*; *My great negligence!*). These examples of comic pseudo-patriotic phrases lead us to the employment of phraseology in comic texts.

As to phraseology – there are two ways of exposing the comic element in it, both based on the incongruity of its metaphorical content. The first technique is to reintroduce the metaphors existing in the colloquial language by interpreting them in a new way, which can be described as neologism of meaning. Creating new idiomatic expressions is the second method. Let us look at examples of both.

Pursuing promotion in his career, a character from Parsāi’s *The Twenty-sixth Tale of a Vampire* (*Baitāl kī chabbīsivī kathā*; Parsāi 1980: 337-341) is eager to offer his own tooth to his boss and explains his motivation to his wife:

*You fool, there is no harm in giving away the tooth. People give away their nose and ears to get promotion. There is only one nose and two ears but there are thirty-two teeth. If one is gone, so what?*⁴

In Hindi *nāk* or ‘nose’ functions in figurative expressions as a symbol of honour and prestige, and *kān* as a symbol of shame, e.g. there is an idiom *nāk[-kān] kāṭnā* – literally ‘to cut off nose [and ears]’, which functions as a dead metaphor and means ‘to disgrace’, ‘to dishonour’, whereas *kān kāṭnā* means ‘to humiliate’. However, to create a comic effect, the author introduces the phraseology neologisms *nāk denā* and *kān denā*, respectively ‘to give away your nose’, ‘to give away your ears’, i.e. to be ready for disgrace and dishonour to get a desired promotion.

In Śukla’s writings, there is an interesting comic reintroduction of a metaphor borrowed from the Vedic texts. Candidates running for elections for village headman represent two different groups, which are in the highest and the lowest stratum of the social hierarchy in India. The Brahmin candidate in his campaign appeals to the *Puruṣa-sūkta* of the *R̥g-veda* (X.90). According to this hymn, after the sacrifice of the Cosmic Man, Brahmins were created from his mouth and Śūdras – from his feet. This symbolic metaphor is reused in the comic text as an element in the political campaign of the Brahmin, who explains that being a headman requires the use of head, not feet. Exposing the incongruity between the existing symbolic understanding of the metaphor and its literal meaning creates laughter. The comic reinterpretation of the Vedic metaphor continues, when the author describes the violent reaction of the other contestant using a pun based on the parallel between metonymies and their literal meaning, i.e.:

⁴ *Mūrkh dāṭ dene mē koī harz nahī. Log to nāk aur kān dekar taraqqī pā rahe hāī. Nāk ek hoī hai aur kān do par dāṭ to battis hote hāī. Ek calā gayā to kyā huā?*

The Brahmin candidate came to know that the mouth of the Cosmic Man is not that far from his feet and to put it shortly, if the mouth opens and gets a kick in response, the mouth cannot remain open for long.

(Śukla 2001: 325)⁵

There are multiple examples of the employment of parody in the comic writings of Parsāi and Śukla, which are also very closely related to the use of language as a vehicle of the comic. In parody, comic incongruity appears between the original text and its satirical retelling, that is why style, convention, themes, situations or characters of a prototype work are ridiculed. The novel *The Story of Princess Nagphani* (*Rānī Nagphanī kī kahānī*) by Parsāi is both a parody and travesty of Inśāllāh Xān's *Rānī Ketakī kī kahānī* from around 1803, which was an important step in the development of modern literary Hindi. The satirist uses this literary prototype to shape his comic reinterpretation, incongruous comically because of being both similar to and different from the original version. The language of the novel is juxtaposed to that of Xān's work, the latter is of a high literary medium, but the former combines the contradictory elements of colloquial language, political and journalistic jargon, as well as urban slang. The composition of Parsāi's work reflects the story of Ketakī by division of the text into chapters and giving them long descriptive titles, which caricature the style of the genre of Xān's love story. The names of the characters in Parsāi's novel carry meaning, which is contradictory to their original counterparts. For instance, the heroine of Xān is named after a plant with fragrant flowers (*ketakī* or *Pandanus odoratissimus*), her satirical counterpart carries the name of a plant of unpleasant odour (*nagphanī*, from the family of *Euphorbia*); the hero of Xān's love story is *Udaybhān*, or 'the light of the East', but the hero of the satire is named *Astabhān* or 'the light of the West'. It is obvious that the names of satirical characters reflect their qualities, which are opposite to those of the ideal heroes of Xān's work. Introducing "funny" names, which carry the characteristic of the person, is a common technique in comical writings. However, in parody, these comical "labels" carry another level of incongruity through the mechanism of being somehow similar and to some extent opposite to those in the original text.

Another example of parody is a short story by Parsāi *After the Victory on Lanka* (*Lankā vijay ke bād*; Parsāi 1985: 354-357), which is a satirical continuation of the tale of Rāma's kingdom, after his victory over the demon king Rāvaṇa. In the narrative, monkeys or *vānars*, which were the main strength of Rāma's army, claim power over his realm and create havoc and misery for all its inhabitants. Being an example of political satire, the story is a bitter commentary on the extreme right-wing parties' ideals of *hindutva* (i.e. the vision of India for Hindus only), which refer to Rāma's kingdom as an ideal model. The short story of Parsāi is a parody of *Rām-carit-mānas* by Tulsīdās, the most venerated and popular version of Rāma's deeds in the Hindi speaking belt. This composition as a part of the original work is based on the dialogue of Bharadvāja and Yājñavalkya. This

⁵ *Brāhmaṇ ummīdvār ko mālām ho gayā ki puruṣ-brahm kā mukh puruṣ-brahm ke pair se zyādā dūr nahī hai aur saṅkṣep mẽ jahā mūh caltā ho aur javāb mẽ lāt caltī ho, vahā mūh der tak nahī cal pātā.*

is how the author ridicules the style of the original by rewriting a *phala-śruti* (which are descriptions common in Tulsīdās' work of auspicious, spiritual and religious merits attainable by listening to or reading the account of Rāma's life):

*Oh Bharadvāj, this episode is not worth being heard by pious devotees.
(...) both the one who tells it and the one who listens to it commit sin.
(Parsāi 1985: 354)⁶*

There are many other examples of introducing parody in Parsāi's short stories, e.g. the above mentioned *The Twenty-sixth Tale of a Vampire* is a parody of a famous Sanskrit narrative *Twenty-five Tales of a Vampire*. However, there are also parodies which do not refer to a particular literary work but to a certain form of speech or style of writing, e.g. *The Phone* (*Ṭelifon*; Parsāi 1997: 48-51) ridicules a school assignment, *They Didn't Live Happily [Ever After]* (*Ve sukh se nahī rahe*; Parsāi 1985: 319-325) mocks a diary.

In Śukla's writings, there are not many instances of ridiculing literary works. However, he often introduces many contradictory styles, slogans or jargons in one text. In *Rāg darbārī*, there are repeated cases of the employment of political jargon and colloquial language for comic purposes, as in the example given below:

He told the boys that they were the future of the country and the teachers that they were the builders of its future. (...) He declared that our education system was bad and those who received bad education wanted to become only clerks. He explained to the pupils that there was a need to introduce change in the education system from the root. (...) Later he told them that they should cultivate their fields, drink milk (...), so he shared with them what the students could have told him. At the end he delivered obligatory slogans on harmony, unity and love for the national language, (...) and went further. The teachers and pupils went home, imitating [his] "Brothers and sisters!". The gardener, peon and some workers were left [at school] to implement the suggestion of introducing basic changes in the education system. (Śukla 2001: 157)⁷

In the same work by Śukla, there is an interesting example of the scientific stylisation of a text, when the author introduces a series of pseudo-definitions, startling for their

⁶ *He Bharadvāj, vah prasaṅg śraddhālu bhaktō ke śravaṇ yogya nahī hai. (...) us prasaṅg ke vaktā aur śrotā donō hī pāp ke bhāgī hāi.*

⁷ *Unhōne laṛkō ko batāyā ki ve deś ke bhaviṣya hāi aur māstarō ko batāyā ki ve deś ke bhaviṣya-nirmātā hāi. (...) Unhōne kahā ki hamārī śikṣā-paddhati xarāb hai aur is śikṣa ko pākār log klark hī bannā cāhte hāi. Unhōne laṛkō ko sujhāv diyā ki is śikṣā-paddhati mē āmūl parivartan kī zarūrat hai. (...) Phir unhōne, laṛkō ko khetī karnī cāhie, dūdh pīnā cāhie (...) – ye sab bātē batāyī jo laṛke un ko bhī batā sakte the. Iske bād samanvay, ektā, rāṣṭrbhāṣā kā prem – is sab par ek-ek anivārya jumlā bolkar (...) āge baṛh gaye. Māstar aur laṛke 'bhāiyo aur bahano' kī naqal utārte hue ghar cale gaye. Śikṣā-paddhati mē āmūl parivartan ke sujhāv par amal karne ke lie kālij mē māli, caprāsī aur mazdūr rah gaye.*

unexpected content. The repetitiveness, i.e. the parallelism common to the scientific texts, in combination with an oversimplified and surprising explanation creates comic incongruity:

“Tanner’s Corner” is the name of this part of the village, where tanners lived. “Tanner” is the name of a caste, which used to be considered untouchable. “Untouchable” is the name of a two-legged [creature], which was not touched by people before the Constitution was implemented. “Constitution” is the title of a poem; in its 17th paragraph untouchability is abolished. (Śukla 2001: 100)⁸

The last but not the least interesting example of introducing comic incongruity through the language of satire is scatology and obscenity, which appear in *Rāg darbārī*. The very limited use of these themes in the examined satirical writings proves a tendency common to Indian modern literature. As it has been justly argued by Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi (1992: 65-66), the most common recipients of literary works are the middle-classes, and the authors have to take their taste into consideration. By middle-class representatives both scatology and obscenity are considered vulgar, as they constitute a strong cultural taboo for them. Nevertheless there are many instances of employing scatology and obscenity in humour in folk culture and popular culture. Apte (1985: 92-6), describing the results of anthropological researches in India and other countries, underlines that building humour on such themes is characteristic for societies where great pressure is put on the early self-control of physiological functions and strict restrictions on sexual experiences are introduced.

To avoid the disapproval of his readers, Śukla legitimises the employment of scatological or obscene themes in language expressions in three ways, i.e. they are mostly used by particular characters, they are introduced as quotations from the local dialect (*avadhī*) or they are presented as euphemisms. The comic incongruity appears through scatology and obscenity in texts, precisely because it is perceived as breaking social taboos, but on the other hand the writer has to take into consideration the individual sensibility of the reader. We have to keep in mind that humour in general is often created by challenging social and individual limitations. Moreover, it gives special enforcement to humour in the case of both scatology and obscenity, because it is very easy to cross the thin line between acceptance and total disapproval, which in this case would ruin the comic effect. This failed attempt at creating laughter is addressed by Ziomek (1980: 325, 351) as “disarming the comic”.

In India all the secretions of the human body, apart from tears and mother’s milk, are considered impure. In *Rāg darbārī* there are many descriptions of defecation and urinating (e.g. Śukla 2001: 108-109), which aim at creating comic effect through exposing

⁸ *Camrahī gāv ke ek muhalle kā nām thā jis mẽ camār rahte the. Camār ek jāti kā nām hai jise achūt mānā jātā hai. Achūt ek prakār ke dupāye kā nām hai jise log saivīdhān lāgū hone se pahle chūte nahī the. Saivīdhān ek kavītā kā nām hai jis ke anucched 17 mẽ chūāchūt xatm kar dī gayī hai (...).*

the hidden act of fulfilling physiological needs. The employment of scatology is greater than obscenity. Scatological elements are also used in an unexpected context, for instance to define a real Indian: *this is a definition of a real Indian – a person who can organise the chewing of betel leaves anywhere and who can find a place to pee anywhere* (Sacce hindustānī kī yahī paribhāṣā ki vah insān jo kahī bhī pān khāne kā intazām kar le aur kahī bhī peṣāb karne kī jagah dhūḍh le; Śukla 2001: 245). The same themes are employed in the judgment of a friend of one character: *you speak like someone who has come from abroad, and all the others are defecating-on-the-ground-black-people* (Tum is tarah bolte ho, jaise tum vilāyat se āye ho aur bāqī sab kalā-ādmī-zamīn-par-hagnevālā hai; Śukla 2001: 279).

Scatology is also employed in elaborate abuse, some of which may be seen as quotations from colloquial language. For instance, *Son of a ... if he will eat fire, he will defecate sparks* (Sālā āg khāegā to āngār hagegā; Śukla 2001: 71) is a common proverb, intensified in the novel by the introduction of the insult (sālā literally ‘wife’s brother’). One of the characters in the novel is described as *pig’s shit – not suitable for plastering [walls], not suitable for burning* (suar kā-sā lēr – na līpne ke kām āy, na jalāne ke; Śukla 2001: 282). A pig is one of the animals which in India are considered the most impure, therefore it is also a common term of abuse; it is comically intensified here by going a step further and comparing a person to the dirt left by this animal, which again is described as being worthless, contrary to cow dung which is considered purifying and used as fuel and for plastering walls. To express his disappointment with the lack of eagerness to help others, one of the characters comments on villagers: *nobody will even piss on [your] cut finger* (koī kaṭī ūglī par bhī mūtnevalā nahī hai; Śukla 2001: 144). References to physiological needs are also used in a positive context, when one of the inhabitants articulates his pride in the co-villagers: *our urine is not thinner than anybody else’s* (hamārā peṣāb kisī ke muqāble patlā nahī hotā; Śukla 2001: 149).

Scatological metaphors also appear in the form of proverbs, which are described as quotations from the local dialect. For example: *if u eat shit, let it be elephant’s shit* (gū khāy to hāthī kā khāy; Śukla 2001: 191). There is another proverb, a warning for those, who are unable to see the consequences of their deeds: *a tree has grown from the ass of the naked, so he started dancing [with joy], saying that he would have mobile shade* (naṅgā ke cūtar mā birvā jā mā, to nācai lagā. kahisi ke calau chāh hot; Śukla 2001: 193). A careless person is described as follows: *he goes around and invites sixteen hundred pigs, though [he is in] such a situation that in his toilet there are not even faeces [to feed them]* (solah sau suarō ko nīmantraṇ dete ghūm rahe hāī par hālat yah hai ki sthān-viśeṣ mē pāxānā tak nahī hai; Śukla 2001: 173).

There is an example of a play on words based on scatology, in which an inscription on a village shop: *No trespassing here*, or *Andar mat ānā* (lit. ‘no entry’), is rewritten by a pupil from the school: *Come for pissing here!* (*Andar mūt ānā*; Śukla 2001: 263). The pun is based on the graphical form of the negative particle *mat* and the root of the verb *mūt[nā]* (‘to piss’).

In comparison with scatological elements the frequency of obscene themes in the novel is rather low, moreover their variety is relatively limited. They appear as terms of abuse or descriptions of sexual activities. This is how a villager describes the inhabitants of his native place: *no matter whose tail you lift, you see a female (jis kiś kī dum uṭhākar dekho, māḍā hī naẓar ātā hai; Śukla 2001: 71, 310)*, the implied lack of manhood is the obvious derogative commentary. Euphemism replacing a common term of strong abuse in Hindi, i.e. the name of female organs, appears in the following quotation: *telling him from which part of a woman's body he has come out (yah batāte hue ki vah ādmī nārī-śarīr ke kis hisse se bāhar niklā thā; Śukla 2001: 183)*.

In the novel, we can find a description of masturbation (Śukla 2001: 161-162), sexual harassment (Śukla 2001: 180, 118), as well as references to heterosexual and homosexual intercourse (Śukla 2001: 107, Śukla 2001: 241). The comic incongruity is introduced when intimate behaviour is mentioned openly, on the edge of breaking the social and individual taboos. However, for this reason they are often referred to in a subtle way, like for instance in this description of a teacher:

[Mr.] Mālvīy loves students and with some students his love reaches a physical level. (...) Mālvīy took one boy with him to the town, showed him a movie, and spent the night with him, he discussed with him the coming math test and came back to Śivpālgañj. (Śukla 2001: 241)⁹

There are numerous ways in which comic incongruity appears in the language of Parsāi and Śukla's satirical writings. The above-mentioned examples of the employment of language in their works have proved that modern Hindi writers do not refrain from using language as a vehicle of the comic. Obviously, they concentrate on the elements characteristic for Hindi, i.e. its synonymy, phraseology and word-formation. The employment of idioms for comic purposes is of special importance, the colloquial phrases based on dead metaphors are comically re-expressed either by changing the components or by appealing to both their metaphorical and literal meanings, in which case incongruous elements or their presentation creates laughter. The comic contamination both in word and phrase-formation produces comic incongruity.

Combining different styles, jargons and slangs, but also loanwords is a distinguishing feature of the stylistic syncretism of satire, which is often employed in the writings of Parsāi and Śukla. The comic arises from the incongruity between the model and the countermodel, which is comprised of both similarity and difference. In the parodies, not only the style and literary conventions of the past or of particular works are ridiculed, but also those of non-literary texts.

The presence of scatology and obscenity in Śukla's novel is a rare example of the restricted use of these themes in satirical writings, where comic incongruity happens

⁹ *Mālvīy ko vidyārthiyō se prem hai aur kuch vidyārthiyō se unka prem bilkul śaririk star kā. (...) Mālvīy kiś larke ko apne sāth śāhar le gaye the aur use sinemā dikhākar, uske sāth rāt bitākar aur use āgāmī parīkṣā ke bare mẽ ānevālā hisāb kā parā batākar Śivpālgañj vāpas laūṭ āye the.*

because of the attempt to break social and individual taboos. The limitation comes from self-censorship, which the authors, conscious of the literary tastes of their middle-class audience, impose on themselves.

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