

# 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.

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**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](http://dilipmohapatra.com).

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