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TRIPLE STREAM

INDIA TODAY

I. V. Chalapati Rao

Nearly 61 years ago India won freedom chiefly as a result of the non-violent struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, and Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the national flag on the Red Fort. Earlier, Balgangadar Tilak, Lala Lajpatrai, Gopala Krishna Gokhale, Annie Besant and a host of great patriots made their own contribution to the freedom movement. It is equally true that the British government was willing to grant independence to India when Clement Attlee, a great statesman was the Prime Minister of England as Head of the Labour Party which declared through its election manifesto that it would grant independence to India if it came to power. It kept its promise. Attlee said "I have always felt that political India will be the Light of Asia."

For six decades India paid lip sympathy to Gandhiji, all the time violating his teachings and turning a blind eye to his values. Today we are proud that India is world's largest democracy while many of our neighbouring countries are under military rule and that ours is one of the fastest developing countries and second in the world in scientific and technological manpower. No doubt we have many plus points. But there is no cause for jubilation and euphoria when we look at our minus points, especially after the recent world economic crisis and 26/11 in Mumbai. I deliver myself to the evaluation of the working of our famed largest democracy!

The Indian Constitution is the most beautiful in the world, but what we have made of it? As Minoos Masani once said "When we made the constitution of India, we made a sad

mistake and thought that we were drafting a constitution for Englishmen. Unfortunately we had not bargained for the kind of politicians India has been suffering from for the last 40 years. The constitution is good but we Indians have let it down." Its framers Dr. Ambedkar, B. N. Rao, Alladi Krishnaswami and others never suspected the shape of things to come.

Jawaharlal Nehru himself gave a warning: "There is a duty cast on us and that is to remember always that we are here not to function for our party, or one group but always to those of India as a whole, and always to think of the welfare of the 400 millions that comprise India" (December 13, 1946). What a great statesman-like advice!

While addressing the Consembly, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the philosopher statesman said: "Our opportunities are great but let me warn you. When power outsteps ability, we will fall on evil days. We should develop competence and ability which will help us to utilise the opportunities. From tomorrow morning, from midnight today we cannot throw the blame on the Britisher. We have to assume the responsibility for what we do." In spite of his wake-up call, we are still blaming the British for our failures, particularly Macaulay for our educational mess. The age of statesmen has passed and the time of politicians has come. We have men of short visions and limited thinking. As Michelangelo said, "The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it."

There appears to be very little

democratic content in our democracy barring periodical elections. When we look at the changing combinations and electoral alliances of the political parties with conflicting aims and objects, we wonder whether manifestoes have any meaning, 'Aya Rams and gaya Rams' are the order of the day. Assuming leadership of what remained of the old Party, each party desperately seeks power with opportunist alliances on a temporary basis. They are marriages of convenience. We have forgotten the famous debates which used to take place between the stalwarts of the Treasury benches and the Opposition parties. The cut-and-thrust of democratic debate of Jawaharlal's time is replaced by a knock-down and drag-out fight metaphorically speaking. The Speaker's rulings command no respect. Not unoften they invade the podium and reach out for the papers. Walk-outs are so frequent that bills are passed in the absence of the opposition. The public has the opportunity of witnessing these uninspiring scenes thanks to the electronic media. We cannot blame the members of any particular political party. They are all pieces cut from the same cloth.

We should learn lessons from the American democracy where members of the party in power and the party in opposition forget their differences and present a united front on issues that benefit their country. It has lessons for India. Eisenhower, the former President of America, said "Indeed, I think people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out and let them have it!"

India is the 4th in rank among the dollar millionaire countries. Yet it ranks 134 in human development terms. We have splendour on one side and squalor on the other. Some 830

million people exist on less than Rs. 20 a day. Only 5% coverage is there in our media (news and electronic) for such things. 75% and above coverage is there for film stars, fashions, food, cricket, crime, pop music, Disco and astrology, diverting the attention of the people from real issues like price rise, corruption, unemployment and other social evils. Hundreds of accredited journalists, it seems, attended the Lakme India Fashion week. There were only a few journalists to cover the suicides in Vidharbha and Sircilla. None cares to cover meetings of social and educational importance.

A nation is not the geographical entity of a country. People should be emotionally integrated by common philosophy, heritage and aspirations. Politicians should not try to divide the people by encouraging casteism, communalism, regionalism and even sub-regionalism.

A well-known jurist of the U.S. said in 'The Commentaries on the U.S. Constitution' "Republics may perish in an hour by the folly or corruption or negligence of its only keepers – the people. They fall when the wise are banished from public councils, because they dare to be honest, and the profligate are rewarded because they flatter the people in order to betray them."

To set the record straight, one thing is sure, unbridled capitalism produces a crisis. The market is not a self-correcting mechanism. It needs an effective regulatory oversight with safety nets to save the people whose livelihoods collapsed and life styles slumped. We have to roll back the state from neo-liberalism or moderate it. Otherwise there will be universal manifestation of discontent and distress. *

DWINDLING COHESIVENESS IN SOCIETY

V. V. B. Rama Rao

“Sleepwalking into segregation” is the phrase Dominic Casciani of BBC New home affairs used, while analyzing the question ‘A Cohesive Britain?’ The most important, and the not so well recognized danger for our country is the dwindling cohesion of our society. Cohesion is the most important parameter for a society to exist. When this cohesion is challenged, society stands in imminent danger of fractionalization, secession, segregation and finally disintegration. Society is a conglomerate of a people with a unique identity. Body Politic and Social Fabric are phrases, which suggest binding, and togetherness to make the group viable to stand on its own, preserving its identity and homogeneity. Minor external differences, call them variations pleasantly, exist but they should not be accentuated for ill-conceived short-term gains.

Reverence for authority besides near similarity of mindsets and perceptions, make for cohesion. Fellow feeling, mutual respect and reverence for age-old institutions and implicit obedience to authority make good ‘followership’. Respect comes from trust and faith - faith in the honesty and uprightness of governance. We, in the past, had strong unifying and cementing force in Sanskrit, the epics, the classics, inclusiveness called heritage and most importantly, reverence for authority and loyalty.

Without cohesion of society, nationhood becomes a shadow without substance. In the

past, Bharat, in spite of the presence of many kingdoms and many rulers down the ages, retained cohesion of society. It is the successive foreign rules that began showing signs of weakening of the once robust national ethos. But, the awakening of the people and the struggle for Independence under the leadership of illustrious life-giving patriots turned to be a factor for growing solidarity.

During the last decade, dangerous phenomena like ‘criminalization’ of politics, infighting among political parties and thirst for power of Adventists with no idea of governance or basic sense of decency have crept in, making elections expensive as well as divisive. Whipping up of passions, casteism and narrow-minded thinking and mindless pampering gave rise to demands that threaten harmony and unity. Diversity and plurality, the inherent qualities of the nation are relegated to insignificance for each group getting the lion’s share of power, money-power as well as power of governance. No one person or factor is responsible for the malaise.

Politicians, intellectuals, all need to own up responsibility for the erosion of values. The nation is going up the corruption calibrations of the world nations. Thanks to the emergence of Globalization and Liberalization, the gulf between the poor and rich is widening, contributing to the rise of discontent, ill-will and mindless rivalries making the lives of the have-nots more and more miserable by the day. The terms Equality, Equitability and Social

Justice are bandied about in an ugly manner with hideous narrow-mindedness inspired by skewed thinking and abnormal self-love.

This rot needs to be stemmed first. The mechanism of elections needs to be thoroughly overhauled. Cohesiveness and Plurality have been co-existent but now the two appear to be mutually exclusive in actuality. Intellectuals and selfless idealists need to assert themselves, more than ever. More idea-based organizations like the Center for Civil Society

are the need of the day. There is no dearth of intellectuals and self-less social workers. Voluntary agencies that work tirelessly for promoting social harmony and cohesion need to be brought into being, besides sprucing up the existing organizations working in the field. Individual reformation, mainly in the aspirants to political power, efficacious screening of contestants in elections and strong deterrents for the defiant need to be put in place to ward off the impending chaos and anarchy. *

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF?

The suffering that followed the crash of 1929 was appalling. From 1929 to 1933, farm income halved, industrial production stood at 40 per cent of capacity and unemployment rose to one in four Americans. Hungry men and women lined the streets for their next meal from the local soup kitchen, homeless people huddled in hastily erected shantytowns on the outskirts of many cities, and thousands hitched rides on railroad cars in search of a job.

The collapse of the agricultural economy drove farmers from the land. Dust storms and evictions displaced more than a million rural labourers, whose plight John Steinbeck portrayed in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Industrial and manufacturing workers fared no better. The coal and textile industries were first to suffer, but were soon followed by other sectors of the economy. Homeless families in Arkansas huddled in caves; others in California found refuge in sewers. "We saw want and despair walking the streets," observed a

Chicago social worker, "and our friends, sensible, thrifty families, reduced to poverty." The American birth rate fell to its lowest level while the suicide rate reached its highest.

The anguish of the American people is captured in the thousands of letters they wrote to the White House in search of help. One woman from New York State sent a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt in which she asked for a loan to buy clothes for her new baby. "Please, Mrs. Roosevelt," she begged, "I do not want charity, only a chance from someone who will trust me until we can get enough money to repay the amount spent for the things we need." As proof of her sincerity, she enclosed in the envelope two of her dearest possessions, a ring worn by her mother and another given to her as a gift by her husband.

The Hindu 4th Oct. 2008, Clive Webb, University of Sussex, England.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

Prof. D. Ramakrishna

In ancient India, the Guru was revered as one who would lead the disciples from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. The teacher, well-versed in the multiple aspects of the Vedic lore, would be selfless, with an exalted moral stature and dedicated to imparting of knowledge to the disciples. Since those times, however, there have been tremendous changes at all levels. The teacher in modern times will be revered if he keeps up personal convictions, having a firm grasp to his own discipline, conversant with the changing trends in scholarship. He should avoid mechanical repetition of the same lesson every year without preparation and lack of freshness of approach and new insights. On a study of the latest books and research journals, he should be abreast of the new trends in order to impart new knowledge to the students. The new generation students need new knowledge. There should be motivation on the part of the teacher himself to learn while teaching, in order to motivate the students.

Teaching should be a two-way process, a constant interaction between the teacher and his students. The teacher should be a facilitator, a communicator of ideas to be developed by the students. In the process, the teacher should be guided by the highest professional ethics and personal values. This is essential particularly in the present times of dehumanization and fragmentation resulting in absence of values at both the professional and

personal levels. Professionalism devoid of the human element may often have negative effects.

With the spread of supertechnology embracing all disciplines, we are living today in what is called "Global Village." The world is looked at as a single community that is connected by electronic communication systems. Globalization is the fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and similar to each other because of the influence of large multi-national companies and at improved communication.

The internet has been the gateway to the world outside. The English language teachers and students are now able to communicate with their peers outside their own places of work and countries via the internet. The nuances of the English language in the changing situation have an inevitable impact on day-to-day life. On account of Business Process Outsourcing by the multinational companies across the continents, there is increasing need for competence in English language to communicate with others on the globe.

In the era of globalization, the English language is the most important vehicle of communication. And communication in English is the key to successful career today. Nowadays, a variety of lucrative careers are available from translation to online journalism (1) General, technical and literary translation; general and technical interpretation for

embassies and diplomatic missions, cultural organizations, MNCs, the travel industry and international development organizations (2) English language teaching for students and corporate clients (3) Designing educational materials such as books and educational CDs for language teaching.

Lecturing to classes consisting of a large number of students may result in missing the target. Communication skills can be improved by interaction among smaller groups. In the Western educational system, better interaction between the teacher and students is possible on account of the smaller groups. Nowadays we hear of terms like, “Knowledge Society” and “Knowledge Explosion.” Knowledge is ever expanding, crossing boundaries, and new trends are coming up fast. The teacher should constantly update his own skills, keeping in touch with the changing trends in order to lead the students properly. Otherwise, he will recede into the backwater within no time. In the Refresher courses being organized by the universities, the participating teachers should really refresh their knowledge instead of taking only the certificates of participation for promotions in their jobs.

In imparting knowledge to the students, the teacher’s objective should be “Knowledge for Knowledge sake, not merely for money’s sake”. Absence of the real intellectual attitude will dilute the standards. Of course, Globalization began in the commercial sector. Globalization and liberalization have financial implications, leading to commercialization and privatisation. As in liberalization, resulting in removal of trade restrictions in imports and exports, external influences on the learning

process are inevitable. But there is need for safeguards. Internet and globalization are closely connected. Technology in the form of these facilitates involvement of people leading to happier and more satisfying type of human interaction.

English language is the gateway to the Internet and Globalization. As a medium of communication, it plays an important role in cultural globalism and prosperity of the humans on the planet earth. On account of the increasing technological competence, India is crossing the threshold of information society to become a knowledge society.

Since the English language is an effective means of communication, it can be popularised among the rural children slowly and steadily but not by sudden imposition without adequate groundwork. India can be transformed if it launches a target-oriented mission for empowering the vast rural population and giving them benefits that are available in cities and towns. There should be proper education from the grassroots level. Mere lip service by politicians may not help. The younger generation teachers and their students from urban areas should volunteer to affect the gradual changes at the village level. English language and the computer should become familiar to the rural folks.

Students in the present times have realized the importance of learning the English language skills since it is a matter of survival for them. Most Indian graduates lack employability skills. There is need for teaching soft skills to undergraduate students and even at the lower levels. For this, they should be good at the English language. A majority of

the students in the professional colleges are not able to take part in group discussions and presentations in English, written or extempore. They are generally hesitant to face the audience.

As for the English language teacher in the era of globalization, he should reorient himself in order to train students to face the competitive world outside. He should closely monitor the learning process of the students, assessing their present and future language needs. Instead of remaining only a teacher of grammar, the English teacher should impart communication skills to the students with an emphasis on the soft skills.

Culture is a way of life, an attitude to life. Culture and communication are inseparably connected. Colin Cherry, an expert in communication research, says in his book *On Human Communication*: “The full effect of a word upon its hearer may depend not only upon the context but upon the whole

physical and psychological environment and, on many occasions, upon his experience of the culture of which the language forms an integral part.” Every addition to the linguistic heritage changes the frontiers of culture. In the era of globalization, these changes in language, culture and communication are taking place at a fast pace, crossing boundaries. The new generation teachers and students should be receptive to these changes.

The English teacher should expose learners to intercultural communication, providing a platform for them to express their views on issues freely and frankly. The teacher should enable learners to communicate effectively, promoting creative and critical thinking. He should also facilitate interaction of students with one another through group discussions. Only thus there will be effective teaching and learning in English to face the challenges of the present times.

*

BATHROOM ECHOES

I. K. Sharma

No room for others. Only I
I to I in the review chamber
whose door opens inwards.
Stripped off clothes, the stalwart
no more raises his head or voice,
turns on the tap of pride with a flow of tears;
the logician doesn't cut corners to blur the
truth,

falls into line, shivering, under the watchful eye;
the lover on crutches looks back across miles,
flushes out coos and curves stuck in intestines;
the Giant Burner kneels to wash tons of soot
held, seeing a car next door,
under the geyser's stream.
Weightless I stand before the mirror to hello
the world.

*

INDIAN POETRY IN ENGLISH: A FEW RECOLLECTIONS

Atmaram Shamrao Gangane

Besides being anything, Indian Poetry in English is Indian in appeal and vibe. The following observation illustrates the exact nature of Indian experience in Indian Poetry in English. Gauri Deshpande's revelation about the conditioning of the Indian mind and its perception is significant:

'I do not expect readers not born Indians to derive the total meaning from my poems ... their full appreciation ... is reserved for Indians ... the meaning of which is clear to anyone who has witnessed an orthodox Hindu wedding ceremony. Thus we are quite right in asserting that we are Indian poets writing in English. Our landscape is Indian, our thought is moulded by our poetical, social, economic and philosophical scene. To those of us whose tongues are different from English, they are very important, and most of us are interested in the literary scene here.'

The pre-independence Indian Poetry in English has attained sustainable importance in the province of Indian Literature in English. It has also innovated and provided continuity for the existence of Indian Literature in English. K. R. Srinavasa Iyengar considers the contribution of a host of writers to the renaissance in India. He appreciates:

'We cannot list Rammohan Roy and Ranade, Vivekananda and Aurobindo, Tilak and Gokhale, Tagore and Gandhi in the calendar of our prophets and poets, and yet cultivate a blind antipathy towards the language they used as the forceful means of communicating their meaning and message to India and the world. These stalwarts were among the makers of modern India and what

they said and wrote must therefore be cherished as our national literature. English, then, is one of our national languages, and Indo-Anglian Literature too is one of our national literatures.'

Basically, Indian poetry in English marks its genesis with the publication of *The Fakir of Jungheera and other Poems* in 1823 by Henry Derozio. After that Kashiprasad Ghose composed poems on festive panorama in Indian life. Then the Dutt family appeared on the scene highlighting illustrious poets of India. Aru Dutt (1854), a destined victim of the Dutt family has made a scarce contribution to Indian Poetry in English. She reflects pathetic situations and romantic anticipations with profound lucidity and felicity of expression. Comparatively, she is equal to Toru in the matter of projection of intense feelings. 'Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan' (1882) is the only one collection composed by Toru (1856) which decisively records the glimpses of the classical tradition. Her deliberations are rich in religious fervour and philosophical abstractions. However, her work exemplifies her genuine sense of love for the motherland - its myths and epics, folklore and legends as well as its ancient tales of acute moral and spiritual essence. It may be, therefore, a cause that K. R. S. Iyengar appreciates that Toru Dutt 'has left behind her a body of achievement to which it will be difficult to find a parallel in the history of English literature.'

Then Tagore (1861), the author of *Gitanjali*, appeared on the literary scene. He disclosed the layers of humanity and

microscopically perceived man in relation to the ancient tradition and culture of the Hindus – the *Vedas*, the *Upanishadas* and the *Bhagwad Gita*. Ultimately he was intoxicated by the sense of pursuit to reach beauty – i.e. truth. Tagore ‘tirelessly pursued the ideal of Beauty - and to him Beauty was also Love, Truth, Goodness and power. We find confluence of *Satyam*, *Shivam* and *Sundaram* in his poetry. Tagore even employs the ancient myths and legends symbolizing the multiple dimensions of the spirit of humanity pervading the vast universe. The crucial aspect of Tagore’s writing is that whatever he takes for writing raises to the highest level of universal appeal for all humanity. To the core, spirituality is the most fundamental theme of his poetry. And in this line, he depicted the simplest of human situations to peel out the sensitive layers of human psyche. Consequently, Aurobindo (1872) has a classical bent of mind. He penned prose and poetry with equal ease. As a versatile writer, he displayed a pervasive ability in writing reviews, philosophical treatises, epigrams, translations, adaptations, poetic plays, spiritual and mystic deliberations and the monumental epic *Savitri* which he composed under the spell of divine inspiration. Dr. C. R. Reddy appreciates:

‘In all humanity and devotion, I hail Sri Aurobindo as the genius of the age. He is among the Saviors of Humanity, who belong to all ages and all nations, the Sanatans, who leaven our existence with their eternal presence, whether we are aware of it or not. His soul is like a star and dwells apart.’

He had a deep inclination for the epic heroines who were dedicated and adventurous. In such heroic women characters, with a sense of sacrifice, practical wisdom and an ability to discard the comforts of life, Aurobindo witnesses the incarnation

of divine power. Besides, Aurobindo was closely conscious of the world of human concern. Man and society were inevitable concerns of his yogic *Sadhana*. He was a poet, philosopher and a leader with bright aspiration for the future of man.

Similarly, Sarojini Naidu (1879) was a distinguished daughter in the province of Indian Writing in English. She experienced various vicissitudes of Indian life and culture and projected them in poetry. She was deeply influenced by the *Ramayan* and so she reflected the feelings of fear, pain, compassion and death. The artistic weaving of the tender fabrics of dream and reality, placing together of a series of cohesive images and similes drawn from Nature - form a background for the sensitive portraiture of human emotions. Her love poems reflect the lines sprung direct from experience as in the classical and medieval poetry of India. Besides, she composed poems delineating passionate love for motherland. She reveals a sensitive and passionate spirit employing a fascinating series of evocative images and symbols.

On the other hand, the general identity of Vivekanand closely relates his eloquent lectures on Hindu Philosophy. As a matter of fact, he is a philosopher, patriot, man in the pursuit of knowledge and a worshipper of humanity. His poetry is a projection of the spiritual quest. It deciphers the conflicting and amenable feelings and emotions of a man in the severe grip of the material world influenced by the West, moreover, he persistently establishes the harmony of Eastern and Western world which makes the reading of his poetry ostentatious. Nevertheless, he emphasizes that the real roots of India’s greatness are the dominant spirituality, inexhaustible creativeness and conscientious intelligence.

*

AUTUMN SONATA

B. P. Acharya

Twenty five summers and winters,
And a few seasons of Spring too...
As we approach the Autumn,
Looking back with nostalgia,
On the journey that
Began in the balmy climes of
Charle Ville nestled in the
Blue mountains of Mussoorie

Pitchforked into the outlandish
Suburbia of strange spices and tongues,
As we tried to find our moorings amid
Idiosyncratic bosses, cranky
Menopausal women, self-seeking
Masters and jealous peers

Metamorphosed from skinny youngsters,
With eyes fired by idealism,
Into overweight hypertensive,
Pragmatic pen-pushers with dissipating spines

Myriad memories coalesce into
A cubist abstract mosaic,
Which we pretend to interpret,
While steeling the resolve within
To bash on regardless...

*(29th Aug. 2008 – on completing 25 years
in the Indian Administrative service)*

*

CHILDHOOD

Jyothi Keerangi

Where are those golden days of childhood?
Days, devoid of worldly problems abound,
days of innocence and enjoyment,
of mesmerizing and enchanting world
of fairy tales and frilly frocks,
of rainbows and colours all aglow.
A life so happy and carefree,
sans greed, sans jealousy and sans hatred.

Memories of childhood make me ponder
over a wish so deep and dear, cherished
so long, to ride in the time machine and
transcend
into the enthralling world of lullabies,

secure in the warm laps of mother – an epitome
of love.

Deep into a slumber I go,
sailing and floating to the stunning land
of chocolates and icecreams galore.

While I sit in the canoe of my thoughts
and go sailing into the stream of childhood
when I created endless glad games,
that thrilled me to the core,
I wonder aloud, “Hasn’t God, with all
His genuineness blessed me to re-live
my childhood with His most remarkable
creation – My Daughter?”

*

A JOURNEY INTO SELF

Dr. K. Sandhya

Our long cherished desire of acquiring an affordable piece of “own land” for an independent house made us contact a real estate agent who immediately sprang into vigorous action. He suggested tiny bits and pieces in the “heart of the city” at astronomical rates. Being assured that even the “bottom of the city” would do for us, he took us to the suburbs where agricultural land has been transformed into housing plots. During our forty odd minutes of drive, I could see forms and shapes of different concrete structures for about half an hour. Then was I refreshed with the sights adding a natural touch to the concretized world. Coconut, palm, casuarina, tamarind, neem and mango trees dotted the scene; the coconut and the palm vying with each other in their vigorous airy movements while the breeze played the dainty orchestra. The trees swayed gracefully and at once swayed my cerebral cells into reflections.

My cousin Ram and I often agree on a number of things; and disagree on an equal number of things. I was taken up on one such occasion of disagreement session when he likened me to a “non-living thing.” Of course in a euphemistic term he called me “a multi-storeyed building.” I smiled but it pained me where it ought to and though seemed to be unperturbed by his remark, I did take a journey into self!

Having emerged from strikingly different backgrounds, we differ more strikingly regarding “finer feelings”. He considers himself

a natural living being, “a swaying tree”, swaying not to the tunes of others but naturally, gently on its own when it likes too. He hails from a rustic background and is as genuine and fresh as the rustic soil. He also refers to himself as the “son-of-the-soil”, the term which I dislike because of its worn out use by certain politicians. He is a quiet man with more actions than words. When I bargain common things, he gets irritated as he does not see any need in such haggling with a daily wage earner like a seller of fruits. He does help people but without a second person coming to know about it. He does not exhibit his status anywhere though he has a good social standing. A really appreciable feature in him is that he asks whoever comes to him, may be a mason, a carpenter, his attender in the office to first sit and talk. He treats human beings as human beings and not according to their position or bank balance. When I show some special concern to people of eminence, he gets upset and says he cannot understand why my treatment of people is based sometimes on their importance in society.

Human relations is one major area where we have many differences. Being an introvert, he does not much like to relate himself with others. He talks on being talked to; has very limited contacts. The very word “relationship” irks him so much that he launches into a mild but firm verbal encounter. His conclusion is that all relationships are purely materialistic, have an axe to grind and are devoid of a solid

foundation. My contacts are not an exception either. They are made for a purpose, he feels, much to my consternation.

Ram has defined ideas about the role that social status plays in one's life. He is a non believer in the maintenance of a certain status that one has to put up to live with a so called image in this society. He has no hang ups about such vain enclosures. He is highly critical of the numberless relations I maintain with different categories of people for different reasons. I may sound too practical, rather commercialized, but I am. Are most of us not? I make friends easily in life, from both genders: keep them up unless they themselves want to withdraw for causes known only to them! From the upper rung of the social ladder down to the lower ones, I have friends or relationship call what you like. I maintain these relationships (Ram's usage) quite systematically. He can never understand why I do that with a heavy burden on family purse-phone bills, greeting cards, some trinkets as gifts. Yes, I do remember the significant days in the "significant" people's lives and make it a point to wish them, send them a card, gift them.I call them occasionally, reciprocate their calls, call on them if local, return their visits. Ram calls all my actions pure "hypocrisy". True. Some relationships I keep up out of respect, liking, admiration, intellectual resemblance, equal wavelength, professional similarity, social obligation, personal obligation, moral support, sympathy, humanitarian grounds. Oh, the list of reasons continues endlessly. When I call a spade a spade so squarely, Ram gets disturbed because he expects me to be more hypocritical saying that I maintain all these out

of liking. Such needs are not found in his dictionary of life!

After bottling up his feelings for a long time he blurted out one day, "You are a multi-storeyed building; me a swaying tree". I caught the underlying sarcasm. We live in a two plus storeyed apartment, according to him I am in a higher world in its false sense. Above all I am thoroughly urbanized, built of concrete and cement; compartmentalized (apartmentalized also!), grow only vertically into the sky to fall down eventually. I have no roots but only structure which shakes at the slightest provocation and disturbance. Every observation of his is true to the core, I felt, after an introspection. In fact it is a bitter statement opening the hard and bitter truths of life rather late. But better late than never.

Ram is surely a tree, growing into the ground with deep roots emanating nourishment to the entire being, expanding his branches all around. He is like a tree, a natural resource serving multi-purpose without any fanfare. Who can forget the precious and selfless service a tree renders? I have read many poets lamenting over the loss of naturality on the advent of urbanization, a necessary evil. With its own posh and sophisticated aura, it kills the natural and original self. It looms large across the boundaries affecting the unique humanselves. Mechanization, mechanization everywhere. Let man invent machines but let him not become one. I thank Ram for kindling the softer sentiments in me with his epigrammatic expression. A worthy journey into self.

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PICK - POCKETS

Vemaraju Narasimha Rao

That day, I settled down comfortably in the “Office Special” bus, when my attention was drawn to the man at the bus stop loitering listlessly by the question put to me, “Sir, does this bus go to Kothi?”

“Yes”, I replied.

He was perhaps thinking whether or not to board the bus, and continued his loitering. On a casual look at him he appeared normal. A mull dhoti, neatly pressed shirt, a cap on the head, glasses in the face and shoes. Only, his reddish teeth due to constant chewing of *pan* and the crooked face were revealing.

The supervisor duly arrived and cautioned the passengers about their purses (for that was the pay day) gave the driver the signal and said “Right”.

The bus was already full by then. As the bus moved, the man stopped loitering and squeezed himself in the throng of men hanging on the footboard.

There was a vague remembrance of having seen him before. I began racking up my brain. When? Where?

Once before....

I boarded at the same stop the double-decker bus and as there were not many passengers, settled at the rear end of the lower deck. Four men hastily entered the bus, had a quick look around and settled themselves by the side and behind a man, obviously a villager.

The conductor approached me and scribbled on the back of my ticket.

“Look, there are thieves in the bus”, and

prevented me from raising my voice saying “Shhh”, and himself from pointing out. As the bus neared Saifabad, the four of them got down the bus giving the conductor a vicious stare.

The conductor hailed the villager and asked him if he had lost anything. Obviously confused, the villager checked his pockets and shouted, “Yes, my purse is stolen”.

The conductor looked at me triumphantly and gave a look, “Didn’t I tell you?”

“How do you know they are pick-pockets?”, I asked.

“Not only me, every conductor on the buses knows who they are. “Why do you get involved in these matters like a fool? If you do that, it is your headache,” they say.”

Without the support of the passengers or the authorities, why should any one bother about the police? When at the end of the day, while returning home, if someone attacks me who is going to come to my rescue?

He was much excited as he explained.

I was inclined to agree with him fully. Though they were morally bound to hand them over to the police, they were in a helpless situation where they could not do so. Poor fellows! Though they knew the thieves, they were unable to help in the enforcement of law.

Yes, this man was certainly one of those four men. No doubt about that. That crooked face, those stained teeth! These days criminals were better dressed than he was then, and merrily carrying on their work.

“Ticket, please!”, the conductor called.

“Conductor, have you seen that man?” I asked him.

“Which one, Sir?”

“The one with dark glasses.”

“Yes. What’s the matter?”

“Please watch him.”

He whispered, “Why, Sir?”

“I suspect that he is a thief.”

“Oh, is it? It’s alright, Sir.” He continued, after a pause. “But, you see, Sir, we can’t be suspecting each and every one traveling in the bus.”

“True, but this case is different.”

“It’s alright, Sir”, he left, nodding his head respectfully.

The bus reached Kothi. I was all the while observing him. He did not appear to have shown his prowess in the bus. Satisfied, I got down from the bus last smiling at the conductor. Though everyone else got down, he continued in his seat.

The bus moved on. He leisurely opened up his wallet and started counting. The conductor threw all his armory by his side, as he settled down comfortably by his side.

They glanced viciously at me, as the bus moved past me.

(Translated by the author from his original in Telugu. He did this a few days before he died.)

✱

RIVERS

J. C. Squire

Rivers I have seen which were beautiful,
 Slow rivers winding in the flat fens,
 With bands of reeds like thronged green
 swords
 Guarding the mirrored sky;
 And streams down-tumbling from the chalk
 hills
 To valleys of meadows and watercress-beds,
 And bridges whereunder, dark weed-coloured
 shadows,
 Trout flit or lie.

I know those rivers that peacefully glide
 Past old towers and shaven gardens,
 Where mottled walls rise from the water
 And mills all streaked with flour;
 And rivers with wharves and rusty shipping,
 That flow with a stately tidal motion

Towards their destined estuaries
 Full of the pride of power;

Noble great rivers, Thames and Severn,
 Tweed with his gateway of many grey arches,
 Clyde, dying at sunset westward
 In a sea as red as blood;
 Rhine and his hills in close procession,
 Placid Elbe; Seine slaty and swirling,
 And Isar, son of the Alpine snows,
 A furious turquoise flood.

All these I have known, and with slow eyes
 I have walked on their shores and watched
 them
 And softened to their beauty and loved them
 Wherever my feet have been;

✱

THE THEME OF ISOLATION IN THE POETRY OF ROBERT FROST

Aejaz Fathima

Robert Frost uses Eden themes in his love poems. One of the most prominent themes in his poetry, namely isolation, is in fact, a result of love. His opinion is that the modern man, as a result of isolation, is all alone in his empty world.

Life seems to be broken in the whirl of isolation. This isolation is that which is experienced from the inner self of man. Man has become more dependent on technology rather than on human relationships, resulting in isolation. Though he lives with the members of his family, he does not spend enough time with them leading to misunderstandings which later develop into ego, confining a person to loneliness. This type of loneliness is the biggest enemy of man and Frost himself was a prey to such emptiness in life, which later developed in him a suicidal tendency.

This isolation is sometimes due to the defense of love broken and the garden of Eden lost for ever. Man, who is the victim of loneliness remains with a void and sometimes the situation becomes even more worst making a man psychic. Man, is blindly running in the race of life to earn money, name and fame, that he is forgetting himself and the very purpose of his life, leading to immense stress and strain. The consequence is that man is taking refuge in "Death".

Frost, suggests in "Mending wall", that man is compelled to draw boundaries around himself to maintain good relationships between the two individuals as well as between two nations. Frost observes: "Evil come in upon lonely people, people who live too much by themselves and too much to

themselves".

Disintegration of the economic fabric and the advent of a new kind of knowledge in which old values have crumbled leading to isolation.

Industrialization has lead to the migration of man from rural to urban areas in the quest of better living, making life more mechanical leading to the loneliness of man. "The old man" of "An old man's winter night", lives in such type of isolation. The atmospheric isolation is vividly described in "The census-Taker", where the poet paints,

"The black paper covered house on one room and one window and one door. The only dwelling in the waste cutover. A hundred square miles And that not dwelt is now by man or woman."

The sense of isolation in the poetry of Frost may be attributed to the impersonalness of the universe as revealed by science. The sense of aloneness became more growing with the sense of vast impersonal universe caring little for man on this earth. "Acquainted with the Night", symbolizes the basic isolation of man. The poet has "walked out in the rain" and has "out walked the farthest city light". He has come across several people and no one is there to call him back or say good bye and there is quite a history of discovering of both outer and inner night:

I have looked down the saddest city lane. I have passed by the watchman on his beat and dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain. The chill of indifference is so great that it is better to be lost than to be acquainted with such a night.

The walker in the “*Acquainted with such a night*” could not get any human being to redeem him from his “*night*”. Thus in Frost the sense of isolation is the product of the denial of love and understanding. The only anchorage that a human being has in this world is love, and when that anchorage is lost, what remains is isolation.

Love does not mean the love of opposite sex but it means human understanding which redeems one from the fatigue of life. The emptiness in life and there is difference in the result of loss of love from human life. Man lives in the psychic alienation from the world. Even the defense of love proves quite futile when a person learns of the ultimate realities of life. He realizes that “*one is alone*”.

The sense of the psychic alienation even in the midst of one’s friends is bitter but real and, nothing but reality is the choice of Frost, how ever heart breaking it might be. Modern man who is the prey to isolation leads a life in dismay and ends up in insanity and experience the old age after the childhood without enjoying the youth. Modern man experiences the atrocities of life amongst his own acquaintances in the run of industrial world of the day. Modern man believes in living a life of standstill with highest indifference in it but never believes in bending to others for a compromise. Modern man rather dies but never accepts a life of compromise where in forgiving and compromising are the qualities which bind two human beings together with the gum of love. Where there is no forgiveness there is no compromise and where there is no compromise there is no understanding and there is no “*life as life is a compromise*”.

The people of New England developed a sort of perversity of soul, but being sturdy, sensitive and aristocratic, they still continued with the code of self dependence and courage

in the midst of evil days. Persons with such perversity are no persons in the social sense.

The New Englanders are very conservative and maintain a life of alienation among the fellowmen, out of this perversity. Their puritan restraint, tension and shyness assert their individuality sometimes denying what they accept. This tendency is bound to alienate them from others. Frost with comparative sanity recognizes,

“Something that doesn’t love a wall
That send the frozen ground swell under
it;
And spills the upper boundaries in the
sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass
abreast.”

The wife in the “*Home Burial*” cannot come to terms with her husband because of his apparent feeling of indifference towards the death of their child. She “cannot share the grief whirled, more than anything else in their experience, should make them one in feeling”. In “*Blue Berries*” the loners have cut themselves off totally from the world and depend on their own resources. Thus it is their ancestral pride, their courage and perversity” which makes them have this kind of separation among themselves. If “to be social is to be forgiving” then they would not be “social”. The narrator in “the code” is so self respecting that he firmly believes: The hand that knows his business won’t be told to do work better or faster and murdered the person who asked him to do his work better. The surrender of ego is not possible with these persons and therefore they will have their separateness.

This tendency to alienate becomes so deep-rooted in common people that they find it impossible to cross the barrier, they have build around themselves. Even in love where ego must be surrendered, they keep up their

ego and remained confined to their boundaries sometimes with fatal consequences. It is this kind of tendency to willful separateness that makes the speakers in “The Thatch” to go out alone in the winter rain., intent on giving and taking pain. The impulse of love of the woman in “The lovely shall be choosers” is held in check by pride, reticence or external circumstances. These barriers prevent one’s soul from meeting another. The barriers keep up their heads high between the two faculties which must cooperate with each other for a balanced life. The poisoned life seems to be the subject matter of Robert Frost’s poetry. He is aware of the existence of barriers and the chill of isolation. Nothing can be pathetic than a lonely life in a broken state.

The futile Heddas of the world of Robert Frost sometimes deliberately make stubborn choice to live on and bear such tragedy. They seem to have possessed an exceptional capacity for suffering. These are the barriers that must be pulled down to restore a life normally and mitigate the inward sufferings of the stray, unused and overlooked people.

If these are some barriers whose existence is detrimental, there are some others whose existence is necessary for human life. If the former are to be pulled down, the latter should be raised. One of the basic beliefs of Robert Frost is in neighbourliness. There must be a “decent recognition of one’s neighbours.” This recognition is impossible with out a respectable distance of a “wall”. The narrator in “The mending wall” is impatient over the repairing of the wall. But the wise old farmer knows that Good fences make good neighbours.

Montgomery observes that to Frost these barriers serve as frame work for mutual understanding and respect. We understand each other because of the barriers only.

Because the narrator in the “Trespass” had set no prohibiting sign and his land was hardly fenced, he was being trespassed on and against and the result was that he had a restless day. In order to avoid confusion one must remain in his limits, one must draw boundary around one’s own self. Every individual is created by God differently, no two individuals are same neither physically nor mentally that is the reason why every individual has his own capacities and capabilities, there fore one must never indulge into others privacy. Privacy is the right of every individual on the earth. If one is able to maintain his boundaries, then he would be able to understand what others are. The total confusion can be removed by the existence of the boundaries, may it be the international, national or at any level of neighbours.

There is another kind of barrier that we find in the poetry of Frost. It is the barrier existing between man and the immediate natural world whose laws are inexorable. According to Frost, the immediate natural world seems to be moving towards chaos, intending to take man along it if he is not careful. If man tries to leap over, he is lost, if he conforms to the ways of nature which is in the state of flux running downwards causing waste and decay, his individuality will be lost. It is therefore imperative for him to approach only nature to the extent he could remain safe. Any further advance will have him “swept into the inevitable cause of nature”. Man has to deal with nature which is subject to the laws of change and decay. For instance, there are dark woods in nature, and if man does not guard himself against them, he will be overwhelmed by them. The victory of man does not lie in his march forwards into the wilderness but lies in the freedom he feels while patrolling the boundary of consciousness. ✱

WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEACHER?

M. Nagaraju

A mediocre teacher tells,
A good teacher explains,
A superior teacher demonstrates,
A great teacher inspires.

One of the most often asked and most diversely answered questions that I have ever heard in an educational environment is “What makes a good teacher?” Every teacher has faced this question, every academician has tried answering this and every student, parent and commoner has offered a personal opinion on this subject.

When I was first asked this question more than three decades ago when I took to teaching, I tried recollecting some of the good teachers of whom I had the privilege of being a student at some time in my life. Surprisingly, the half a dozen teachers I could recall were all great teachers, but for diverse reasons. Some were profoundly knowledgeable, some were warmly affectionate, some had a subtle sense of humor, and some were splendidly articulate. But, paradoxically, none of them had all these qualities together. Any one or a combination of a few of them is what made them memorable and effective. I also could recollect some teachers who had insightful knowledge but failed to communicate and teachers who were great masters of the technique though not very erudite.

Three decades after I became a teacher, an answer to this question still evades. As a part of my presentations at various forums in

the last four years, I asked this question and received varied answers. The answers included – a good teacher is kind, is compassionate, is generous, listens to students, has faith in students, encourages them, likes teaching the subject, takes time to explain things, gives frank feedback, allows students to have their say, doesn’t give up on weak students, cares for their opinion, treats students equally, is forgiving, has flexibility, is communicative, has imagination, is open minded and so on. Innumerable adjectives are used to describe a good teacher, some of them being affectionate, committed, creative, curious, helpful, healthy, honest, humorous, imaginative, knowledgeable, patient, passionate, positive, reflective, resourceful, smiling, tolerant and so on.

Upon a reflection of the diversity of opinions expressed by students, teacher trainees and practicing teachers, I realize that good teachers are good for various reasons and it is unwise to expect all good teachers to possess the same set of qualities.

However, despite this diversity of opinion, I have found through my informal interactions with college teachers at various forums that good teachers have some inherent commonness of attitude, despite the substantial differences in their personality.

So, let us consider what this common attitude of all good teachers constitutes and what makes a good teacher good. This is not an ultimate exercise to say that only those

teachers who have these qualities are good and others are not. Nor does it mean that each good teacher has an assortment of all these qualities. This might just serve as a benchmark for self-assessment and as a tool for self improvement.

As a certified trainer of the English Language Fellow Program of US State Department and as a part of the Retraining Programmes, Skills Update workshops and other college teacher training workshops all over the state of Andhra Pradesh in the last four years, I have had opportunity to interact with over 1500 college teachers working in government, aided and private degree and other colleges. Most of my presentations related to teaching the Communicative Language Teaching techniques and almost every one of my presentations began with a discussion of the problems of teaching language skills, from the point of view of teachers as well as students. Quite often some teachers turned cynical and pessimistic. The problems cited by them usually included the indifference of the students, the irrelevance of the text books, the inappropriateness of the examinations, the inadequacy of the infrastructure, the intervention of managements and a host of other similar issues. However, the moment further discussion helped them realize that we hardly have any control over these variables and that the one and only variable that could spectacularly modify the situation is changing our own mind-set, there was a sea change in their attitude. This is the variable over which every teacher has an absolute control and is so very easy to alter. I realized in the course of working with all such

teachers that our attitudes make a mighty difference to our achievements. So at the top of my list of qualities of a good teacher, I would put a positive approach to our work. A teacher with a positive approach to his tasks can achieve a hundred times better and brighter results even when the other factors remain the same than the one with that cynical attitude that nothing can be done. In fact, a teacher with a positive attitude transforms every obstacle into a useful resource. The challenge of teaching despite all the hurdles becomes smooth sailing once we reorient ourselves and begin looking at the challenge as an enjoyable adventure.

Good teachers are good teachers and can continue to be good teachers only if they really want to be good teachers. Without a will, there is never a way. Love for the profession, love for the subject and love for the students is the most basic quality that distinguishes good teachers from others. They have faith in the worthiness of teaching as a vocation and a burning desire to earn a reputation for the quality of their work. Passion for teaching and basic desire to elucidate is the first prerequisite for anyone who wants to excel as a teacher. A good teacher's passion contagiously spreads and sweeps the students until they get sucked in. I don't think anyone, anywhere ever succeeded as a teacher without putting his soul into his work. The sweetest tongues and the brightest brains are likely to fail without fervent hearts. In fact, this is a precondition that applies, not only to teaching, but to any vocation.

Good teachers are attuned to the fact that teaching is an ever evolving skill and is

never static, in terms of both content and technique. In other words, a good teacher is a life long student and is ever willing to learn through every retraining and reequipping opportunity. This is truer in the background of ever expanding horizons of knowledge and ever emerging teaching tools. Quicker the pace of change, greater is the need for updating. Teaching skills, like other skills, shine in use and rust in disuse. So good teachers constantly, continuously and unceasingly endeavor to sharpen their methodological tools and perpetually replenish their knowledge reserves.

Good teachers are well structured. They follow the axiom: tell what you want to tell, tell and tell what you have told. Their work is methodical, organized and systematic. They have a clear idea of what they wish to achieve in each class and they set the pace of their class after careful thought. They not only organize their lessons thoroughly, but they help students explore and discover the organization of ideas in their lesson. One of my teachers had the useful habit of converting creative literary works into some kind of line diagrams or flow charts thus helping us visualize the framework that ran through those works and etching it in our minds. He made learning effortless and easy by reducing most complex works to simple pictures of organization. By helping the students see the structure underlying the object of study, good teachers make learning enjoyable and easy and in the process endear themselves to their students.

Good teachers believe that awakening the curiosity of the learners is much more important than stuffing facts into their minds.

They believe that it is better to ignite a spark in the young minds rather than overwhelm them with data. Good teachers arouse curiosity among the students to explore, analyze, compare, contrast and most importantly apply. This is achieved through as simple means as asking and encouraging the right questions - questions that provoke thought and promote thinking. Helping students think afresh, guiding them to define problems, stimulating them to find solutions, motivating them to look around, inspiring them to be adventurous and facilitating a creative learning environment are some tools good teachers use to make their students independent. Good teachers do not believe in giving a fish a day, but in teaching fishing; not feeding a few readily available facts everyday, but the art of exploring and discovering for themselves. Helping learners move away from dependence to absolute independence is the motto of good teachers.

Some of the most memorable teachers that I can recollect are those with a subtle sense of humor. A sense of humor does not mean narrating a joke every now and then. It also does not mean making those satirical comments against someone or something that we do not like. It is an attitude. It is a way of looking at things. It is an ability to lighten the burden of the class and to make education entertainment too. It is an extremely useful tool that helps teachers make learning interesting, pleasurable and fun. Relevant, clean and gentle humor is a classroom lubricant, a classroom stress buster, and it is impossible for students to dislike teachers who make them laugh in the class. Good teachers, some consciously

and others involuntarily, build humor into their lesson and endear themselves to their students. Further, a good sense of humor helps the teacher build valuable rapport with the students and glue their attention to the classroom proceedings. Humor need not be a part of the language classes alone. The most perplexing subjects become crystal clear when teachers use humor to explain them. I can never forget one of my childhood teachers who made mathematics interesting by simply using the blackboard to make dumb numbers speak for themselves. It came from as simple tricks as writing a small number in small letters and a large number in larger letters on the board. As young children, we laughed at his every trick, but more important than that we soon began loving the subject better.

Good teachers are physically energetic and vigorous. They inspire their students with their robust postures, cheering gestures, spirited movement and meaningful histrionics. A sweet, gentle voice and a variety in the tone are substantial assets to any teacher. Someone rightly pointed out that to be a successful teacher one needs a little preparation and a lot theatre. I doubt if there has ever been a successful teacher who failed to make an eye contact with his students and still accomplished his classroom tasks. I cannot recall to my mind even one single teacher in my entire career who inspired students despite being weak and sickly. Physical energy often originates from enthusiasm and enthusiasm as we have already seen is unfailingly consistent among good teachers. It may be out of place here to discuss the effectiveness of each sign

of physical dynamism and how much our whole body speaks even before we open our mouths; but it is perhaps enough to say that great teachers put to great effect every simple movement of their body, however casual and untailored it might look.

“A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops,” said Henry Adams. Great teachers have a larger perspective. Their playfield is not confined to the classroom. They have an ulterior goal. The classroom is only a gateway to them to realize their ultimate goal of making the world a better place for all of us to live in. It is in their innate nature to work for the nobler cause of a better tomorrow. In molding the young minds they find an excellent opportunity to fashion the future of mankind. Sometimes, they might actually be aiming at this without even consciously realizing that they are working towards it. Somewhere in the depths of their hearts, they have this urge to forge a glorious future for the students, for themselves and for the whole world.

This is not an exhaustive list of qualities of good teachers. It may not also be appropriate to say that every good teacher has these qualities or that only those who have these qualities are good teachers. I have dwelt upon a few distinguishing qualities of good teachers that I think are not necessarily inborn. These can be acquired, inculcated, instilled and harnessed. That is where a good trainer and a good teacher training programme have a major role to play.

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KAMALADAS' WRITINGS – THE RING OF A FEMINIST VOICE

Dr. I. Satyasree

Modern Indian women crave for equal status, rights, dignity and treatment. The spirit of a 'free woman' is clearly expressed in the works of women writers. We find this kind of self-assertion in Kamala Das' works. Joya Chakravarty observes, '*Kamala Das is the new feminist voice in Indian literature voicing forth a woman's point of view. She represents the sensibility and sensitivity of the modern Indian woman. Kamala Das has been hailed as the 'new woman' of Indian writing in English.*'

Kamala Das' defiance of the traditional Indian themes challenged the very foundations of the Indian society. She chose anti-traditional and unconventional themes for her short stories and poems and fearlessly exposes the hypocrisy in the society. She has set a new trend by redefining the entire gamut of Indian women's writings. She freed herself from the irrational conventions of the Indian society.

Her novels *A Doll for the Child* *Prostitute* (1977) and *Alphabet* (1980) expose the physical and psychological pressure faced by a married woman. She is rated as a revolutionary writer, who reveals the mind of an Indian woman without any hesitation or inhibition. The feminine psyche is presented very well in her most celebrated and highly confessional poem *An Introduction*. In this poem, Kamala Das expresses her anguish and says that she wore a shirt and her brother's trousers and cut her hair short in order to ignore her womanliness.

In these lines, '*Don't write in English, they said, English is not your mother tongue. Why not leave me alone critics, friends, visiting cousins, everyone of you? Why not let me speak in any language I like? The language I speak becomes mine, its distortions, its queerness, all mine, mine alone...*' she craves for freedom of expression in the language that she chooses to write. She pleads with everyone to leave her alone. These lines show that an Indian woman is not given freedom even to choose the language that is most suitable to express her emotions, feelings, views and opinions. Kamala Das boldly opposes the encroachment on her freedom of expression.

The expression in the poem mirrors the passive and slavish life that most of the Indian women lead. A woman is not given freedom to dress herself the way she likes. A man in the Indian society can do whatever pleases him. He has full freedom to act as per his wishes and choice. However, a woman is not given independence to express herself. The kind of conservative outlook that Indian men have is presented pertinently in these lines by Kamala Das. R. S. Maurya analyzes Kamala Das' feminist perspective thus, '*Woman herself becomes a text and her identity is revealed in the body of her writing. Since the poet cannot change her body, she changes her dress.*'

Kamala Das, in her autobiography, shocks the readers' sensibility by her frank

description of her first night. She recalls the unconsciousness terror of her childhood and her first encounter with masculine violence. She articulates her feelings with the ring of a feminist voice.

She calls it as *'that unhappy night'* because she opines, *'without warning he fell on me, surprising me by the extreme brutality of the attack.'* She feels that this sexual attack is a rape. Perhaps, she feels throttled by this experience and probably wants to abort it, so she continues to say, *'I remained a virgin for nearly a fortnight after my marriage. He grew tired of the physical resistance which had nothing to do with my inclinations.'*

Kamala Das is acclaimed as a feminist writer and the feminine sensibility is clearly visible in her poetry. Yet, she does not curse femininity, she rather feels proud of being born as a woman. This poem is more than a mere *Introduction* to an Indian woman's psyche. It voices the poet's self-identity and a sense of fulfillment. It reveals her passionate longing for freedom from the conventional attitude and conservative outlook of Indians. The poem expresses the frustration of a typical middle class Indian woman, who is confined to the four walls of her house and is constrained by traditions and conventions of the society.

Critics describe Kamala Das to be frank and confessional. There are many labels attached to her because of her radical approach, confessional tone, modernist stance and carnal imagery. Since she has intrepidly written on the unfulfilled desires of Indian women, she came under heavy attack by many critics. Love, sex, loneliness are the

recurring themes in her poetry. Self-introspection can be transparently seen in her poems. However, this self-introspection lays a firm foundation to self-assertion but not self-denial. Suresh Kohli, in a recent article in *The Hindu*, says that she is *'Still a rebel writer!'* He says that the 73-year old poet has not yet lost her zest for life. He quotes Prof. Syd Harrex, who said, *'Kamala Das' poems epitomize the dilemma of the modern Indian woman who attempts to free herself, sexually and domestically, from the role of bondage sanctioned by the past.'*

Though critics label Kamala Das as a feminist, she does not agree to this viewpoint. While expressing her opinion on being labeled as a feminist, she says, *'I have been accused of being feminist. I am not a feminist, as it is understood. I don't hate men. I feel a woman is most attractive when she surrenders to her man. She is incomplete without a man.'* Kamala Das, whether a feminist or not, has certainly brought radical changes in Indian Writing in English with her writings expressing her feminine feelings in a most confessional manner.

It is a known fact that Indian Writing in English has gained worldwide acceptance and recognition. New themes, ideas and forms of writing find a prime place in the writings of new talent that is coming up on the Indian horizon in the recent years. In the writings of the younger generation Indian women writers, we find a complete rejection of conventions and old cultural structures and they are accompanied by a virile assertion of sexual freedom and feminine identity.

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ROAD TO SUCCESS

Prof. G Surender Reddy

*When you **believe** in yourself
ever strive to **excel**
yearn to learn
and **seek** to **have**
fire in the **belly**
bounce in the **step**
twinkle in the **eyes**
hope in the **heart**
steel in the **nerves**
spirit in the **limbs**
aim in the **mind**
tact on the **tongue***

***smile** on the **lips**
grace in the **face**
humour in the **speech**
logic in the **thought**
passion in a **mission** and
a **purpose** in **life**
world is all **yours**
go ahead and **rule it!***

(based on Jack Welch's message to global managers.)

*

ETERNAL NEW YEAR WISHES

Rudranarayan Mishra

May the New Year for every one
And for our world be a rare one!
May it usher an 'Era of Peace',
Prosperity, happiness and bliss!
May end all wars and arms race
And all, The 'Cause of Peace' embrace!
May all great nations free from malice
Be brought together by this 'Call of Peace'!
May the past be buried and amends made
And all on the 'Path of Peace' be led!
May all unite to vanquish Terror
And cure all people of the trauma of Horror
May United Nations give a thundering call
To smash Terrorism once and for all

That nowhere on Earth there ever will be
A trace of Terrorism for anyone to see.
May all in this wide world around
Be by the 'Bond of Friendship' bound!
May calamity plague no part of the earth
And the whole world turn to a heavenly hearth!
May disappear the distinction of 'Rich and
Poor',
Discrimination of caste, creed and colour!
May our world have but one religion
Which is Humanism and Humanism alone!
May our world be blessed by Divine Grace
The 'Path of Peace and Progress' to pace!

*

EPIC POETRY

V. P. C. Parimala Rao

Every now and then in our reading of English literature we come suddenly across a doubt what actually the 'Epic' poetry is. To a common reader who does not have any basic knowledge over the English poetry, it will be certainly a baffling question to differentiate the poetry from the 'Epic' poetry, though these two belong to the same art.

Poetry is thus again divided into two, namely lyrical and epical. Lyric poetry expressed more personal emotion than poetry and was sung, whereas epic poetry was recited. A poem is basically, according to the literary critics, a thought recollected in tranquility. It is different from 'Prose' because it has its own rhyme scheme to follow which is called the 'Prosody'. But an 'Epic' poem, according to the views of Philip Vallingham, Faculty of Education in Lake Head University, is a poem by common consent a narrative of some length and deals with events which have a certain grandeur and importance and which come from a life of action, especially of violent action such as war. It gives a special pleasure because its events and persons enhance the reader's our belief of human beings and in the dignity and nobility of man.

Epic poem is a ceremonial performance narrated in a ceremonial style which is deliberately distanced from ordinary speech. Every epic poem is exactly proportioned to the grandeur and formality of the heroic subject matter and architecture. Epics deal with legendary on historical events of national or

universal significance and most epics deal with the exploits of a single individual, thereby giving unity to the composition. Epic poetry is different from that of the lyrical poetry because it includes several features like the introduction of supernatural forces that shape the action and conflict in the form of battles or other physical combat, and stylistic conventions such as invocation to the muse, formal statements of theme, long lists of protagonists involved, and set speeches couched in elevated language, common place details of every day life may appear, but they serve as background for the story and are described in the same lofty style as the rest of the poem.

Epics are further classified into 'Primary Epics' and 'Literary Epics'. Primary epics are 'Folk Epics' and the secondary Epics are 'Literary Epics'. Folk Epics are believed to have developed from the orally transmitted folk poetry of tribal bards or other authors. They were eventually transcribed by anonymous poets. This art of 'Epic Poetry' has first been established by Homer and Virgil through their Iliad, Odyssey and Aenied. Anglo Saxon Beowulf of eighth century, the German Nibelungenlied of thirteenth century, and the Indian epics the Mahabharata and Ramayana are the best examples of folk epics.

Literary epics are the creation of known poets who consciously employ a long established form. Like folk epics, literary epics deal with the traditions, mythical or historical, of a nation. In Rome, national epic poetry

reached its highest achievement in the first century B.C. in the *Aeneid* by the poet Virgil. In Persia, the poet Ferdowsi composed the Persian National epic *Shah-Namah* (Book of kings), the great literary epics of classical Europe are the *Lusiada*, the national epic of Portugal Luis de Camoes, *Jerusalem Delivered*, the Italian, by Torquato Tasso. In England, Edmund Spenser's "Faerie Queene" and John Milton's 'Paradise Lost' are regarded as the best legendary epics in English literature.

In the nineteenth century, the epic assumed various forms. In the lengthy and

much revised autobiographical poem the *Prelude*, the English poet William Wordsworth used the events of his life to explore the power of the human imagination. Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself" is a brief epic and this poet who is basically American, the first person narrator identifies himself with all of nature and humanity. The Twentieth Century English poet T. S. Eliot is well known for his "Four Quartets". Epic poetry is no doubt a kind of literary art that has to be studied very carefully to enjoy its beauty.

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HORROR AND TERROR

N. Siri Rahel

Everywhere fear hotter horrors,
Shedding tears with the terrors,
No one dares to clear the tears,
No one shares to near the fears.

Wait and wait to see the light,
Await and fight with the fate;
Having no right to fight,
Remained man weighing the weight.

Cry and cry the tears dry,
Try and try the desires die.

*

ABSOLUTE ZERO

Dr. Ram Sharma

I am only a zero,
Neither beginning nor end,
Neither body nor soul,
I am only a zero,
Like the darkness of night,

In which truth is hidden,
Like a walking shadow,
That wants to utter silently,
I am only a zero.

*

NATIONAL INTEGRATION: NEW POLITICAL CULTURE NEEDED

E. V. Rama Subrahmanyam

Swami Vivekananda's visits to west during end 19th century, mean a lot to our motherland, "India that is Bharat" in particular, indirectly teaching patriotism and national integration. Swamiji taught the world and our nation too that our great epics and scriptures - Vedas, Upanishads & Geetha, describing our spiritual culture, heritage that bring out the quintessence of all human nature.

Scholars and Yogis define "Bha" in our country's name, as a divine feeling (Bhavana) of effulgence, endowed with great power (Shakthi) and "Ra" as Raga or tune – sweet, and "Tha" as Thala or Rhythm – all together connoting a land blessed with rhythmic and healthy human activity of love, service to humanity and all beings in mother nature too. Hence we shall be proud of being Bharateeyas or Indians following Sanathana Dharma or popularly known as "Hinduism" – a hospitable mansion where there is a room for people of every faith, as it is a way of life, as rightly defined by Prof. D. S. Sarma, the first principal of Vivekanada College, Mylapore, Chennai and 'Sambandhi' of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. This assertion is amply proved by our ancients voluntarily inviting with open arms all refugees fleeing to our country in the past, due to semetic inter-religious conflicts and involving huge blood shed.

Hence we can dare say that "Sanathana Dharma" with its religious impartiality and comprehensive understanding of all religions, contributes to our national unity and national integration. It is bound to play a great role, in due course, through a happy and healthy

synthesis of our spiritual culture and western material and scientific culture or outlook as predicted by Swamiji.

Gandhi dreamt of such a consummation in our country, again, as perhaps "Ramrajya".

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, our great philosopher and statesman says "The religious impartiality of the Indian State should not be confused with the material secularism of the West or atheism either". What a great warning to the rulers of free India from 15th August, 1947 till this day and perhaps to future leaders too. Unfortunately, this confusion apprehended by this wise soul, holds the field in free India's politics, now to its brim to the utter disadvantage of our nation; as the State Legislature has wrongly or negatively defined 'Secularism' and all the ills of free India, arise clearly from this great fault.

Illustrious Swamy Ranganadhananda Maharajji of R. K. Math, a spiritual giant positively defines 'Secularism' as equal respect to all religious and not irreligion.

Swamy Vivekanada declared to the world, long ago, that there is no better 'Secularism' in the world than 'Hindu Vedantha' and further observed "take off all religion from humanity, what remains is a forest of brutes!"

Swami Ranganadhanandji further teaches our citizens (politicians too), "Our democracy honouring inter-religious tolerance, is a gift of our vedantha". Unfortunately some of the political minded citizens professing other religions (semetic) in our land treat the above said virtue as a

weakness and go on making all sorts of unreasonable and unhealthy demands that threaten our national unity and integration. Added to this, Hindu politicians of various parties support these unreasonable demands due to their desire to obtain their block votes and further encouraging disunity among Hindus on caste-basis to secure block vote again and what a pity.'

Hence, it is time Vivekananda's mandatory message for our nation, "Spiritualise, Spiritualise all walks of life starting with education.including the last but not the least, politics". Again as Swamiji advised "Politics" should be a healthy instrument of selfless service in India and not a profession or business as in the West, to enable especially youth in India, apart from the common citizens to cultivate a healthy social and national minded religious outlook. Spirituality is the child of proper religious preaching, i.e., Vedantha, that blesses humanity with universal outlook and welfare, feeling of oneness, irrespective of the so-called religious practices at home or shrine in various religions. Study of Geetha by all teachers, students, as it is a universal scripture, open to all humanity irrespective of religion practiced will, perhaps, lead to spiritualization of politics too, when the group-wise, caste-wise and religion-wise politics will cease, all working

for immediate welfare, upliftment of all the poor and the uneducated, and thus work for the upliftment of the entire nation.

Perhaps, it is time for the youth who received spiritual education from R. K. Math and such other various Missions and Math schools, colleges, universities (endowed with character, will and tremendous energy coupled with selflessness, tyaga buddhi), to enter politics and cleanse the field, for the good of the nation as a whole. They will educate the voters about the unseen power in their vote, so that they starve to elect a good natured, educated and selfless leader to power, walking in the foot steps of our great freedom fighters, so far as our composite national culture, heritage is concerned. Though the fundamental duties list of our constitution took birth only in 1976, they speak of this aspect, which the ideal youth entering politics, will teach the voters to assist integral democracy.

If the present state of affairs is allowed to continue, well, our nation may slide into slavery again or face further vivi-section at the behest of some other countries, ill disposed to or envious of our nation.

GOD SAVE OUR MOTHER LAND!

*

'Providence', Kipling wrote, 'created the maharajahs to offer mankind a spectacle. Theirs is a world of marble palaces and scented harems, tigers and elephants, fabulous jewels and hoards of gold. In 1947, India's 567 maharajahs, nawabs, princes and rajahs still ruled over a 3rd of India's land surface and 100 million Indians. Sports and sex were the maharajah's preferred past times. They posed a grave problem to Sardar Patel' - *Freedom at Midnight* by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapiere.

TRAGEDY AND THE TRAGIC PLEASURE

C.V.G. Krishnamurthy

In European literature, tragedy begins with the Greeks and the theory of tragedy is framed by Aristotle. Tragedy, according to Aristotle, is an imitation of action that is serious, complete, and of certain magnitude through pity and fear affecting the proper Katharsis, or “purgation of emotions.” The tragic sufferer should not be a man of flawless perfection, nor one of consummate villainy. He is a prince or a famous man who falls from a height of greatness due to some “tragic flaw” in his character. His misfortune is the result not of vice but of some ‘error of judgement.’

The Greek Masters of tragedy were Aechylus, Sophocles and Euripides. The blind goddess, Fortune flatters men with allurements of happiness, reveals her fickleness and casts down those whom she has lifted up. This conception of tragedy laid emphasis on the unforeseen forces of ‘Fate or Destiny.’ The tragedy of a faultless man repels us, says Aristotle. The undeserved sufferings of an innocent person would be too terrible for us to endure. The hero should be, therefore, invulnerable at all other points, but he must be with the heel of Achilles.

Shakespeare’s tragic hero is a man of many noble qualities with one flaw that causes his ruin. Hamlet has “the Courtier’s, soldier’s, scholar’s eye, tongue, sword”, but he suffers from an indecision that in the end is disastrous. Othello is a “noble and valiant general,” but he is a slave to jealousy, Macbeth is “a peerless kinsman,” but he is possessed of “black and deep desires” that lead him to destruction. Lear is “every inch a king”. It is

his violent temper and lack of judgement that prove his undoing.

With the secularization of drama, the old view that hard fate ultimately governs the actions of men came to be discarded. As per the modern concept, man is the master of his own destiny, the architect of his own fate. The common opinion is that the catastrophe must be hinged upon the deeds of the sufferer. According to Hegel, “There could be no such thing as mere fatality.” The German critics explained that the cause of disaster is to be found in the tragic hero himself. The hero made a wrong choice, given free course to his passions, yielded to temptations, or neglected some obvious duty. The calamities that come upon him are a retribution. But this may or may not be correct, as in ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ the element of guilt is not in the hero and heroine, but it rests upon their families. Capulet calls Romeo and Juliet as “poor sacrifices of our enmity.” ‘Character is destiny’ therefore, is not applicable to all kinds of tragedies. The tragic plot is composed of three parts; Exposition, Conflict and Crisis followed by catastrophe. “The ultimate end of Desdemona is due to her lack of respect for her aged father in making a run away match without his consent which oversteps the limits of social custom and draws death as a punishment.” Jessica in ‘The Merchant of Venice’ is guiltier than Desdemona, but the former is left to enjoy life, while Desdemona must die.

According to Aristotle, a total villain cannot be a tragic hero. He cannot rouse in

us a certain tragic sympathy. 'Iago' possesses wickedness on a grand scale but he can never rise to the heights of a tragic hero. The tragic pleasure 'is that of pity and fear'. In that, the thoroughly bad man falls short of the requirements for a tragic hero.

Emily Faguet has advanced the theory that the pleasure which we find in tragedy is malicious. Every man has something of the primitive savage in his blood. Consciously or unconsciously he tries to seek satisfaction in the misfortune of others. Not only from the misfortunes of our enemies, but the sufferings of those who have done us no injury, we extract a sinister satisfaction. This theory seems quite cynical. Experience shows that the ultimate emotion after reading or seeing a tragedy is one of sympathy and fellow feeling for the sufferer. Edmund Burke opines 'that the real pleasure of tragedy is not in the triumph

of malevolence. It is the triumph of the real sympathy.' Suffering commands our attention so that it may invoke our fellow feeling and pity, which is the sacred link between mortals.

How can one find pleasure in seeing the pain of others? The answer is that while reading a tragedy or seeing as it is enacted on the stage, we are not in the actual presence of real men and women. The universal opinion of tragedy is "It is generally acknowledged that it elevates and refines." A tragedy is a work of art designed to please. Aristotle tells that the pleasure springs not from the thing itself but from the imitation and the sorrows of life as reflected from the dramatist's mirror, have never broken, and cannot break the heart.

"What in life doth only grieve us?
That in art we gladly see."

*

A NEGLECTED NEONATE

Kalavathi Tiwari

There lay a Neonate on the ground,
Crying helplessly with lots of sound,
Tears were rolling beyond the bounds,
From its tiny face round and brown,
Came petrified people and stood all around,
Indifferent very much they were found.

Murmuring and muttering the monstrous mob,
Looked at each other, but no throb, no sob,
Rushed the men to summon a sullen cop,
Hurried the women to see lotus in the slob,
Cursed some the lass, and a few the fop,
Old and young left the spot with no tear drop.

None dared to take it in arms,
Illegitimate, unfortunate as it was born,
To enliven it, appeared Teresa a divine charm,
A Missionary of Sishu is the place for thorn,
Heartless mothers cast their heart in the bin,
Thinking it to be a mark of sin.

Momentary ecstasies bring spiritual decay,
Lechery outbursts in disgust and dismay,
Mother is an embodiment of love and grace,
Little lovable is for hug and embrace,
Immorality brings to family dishonor and disgrace,
To nation as well, enormous shame and malaise.

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ALFRED TENNYSON (1809-1892) A BICENTENARY TRIBUTE

P. V. Laxmi Prasad

Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) was born in Lincolnshire and was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was the representative poet of Victorian England and he voiced the dilemmas and conflicts of his age in his poems. He wrote steadily for over sixty years and secured a great popularity for much of his work, especially 'In Memoriam' and 'Idylls of the King'. Some of his best work, however, is contained in short but intensely powerful poems such as "Ulysses and Tithonus". The year 1850 had a special importance in his life; he succeeded Wordsworth as the poet Laureate of England and published his 'In Memoriam', the famous elegy on the death of his friend Arthur Hallam. Tennyson's poetry provides an accurate picture of Victorian Society. The three main aspects of the Victorian Period that influenced men of writing were: 1) The Industrial Revolution 2) The rise of Democracy 3) The theory of Evolution by Charles Darwin and its effects upon religion.

If there is one poem of Tennyson that has consistently held its place among the prominent works of literature, it is undoubtedly 'In Memoriam'. Ever since its publication in 1850, it has been widely read and reviewed by generations of readers and critics and all of them testified to its strong appeal. The poem brought the poet an eternal glory, name and fame in the literary world. Queen Victoria ranked the poem next only to the Bible "Next to the Bible, In Memoriam is my comfort".

One found 'In Memoriam' what T.S. Eliot considered a moving expression of 'Honest Doubt'. Critics hailed the poet's attempt at reconciling the opposing issues of science and religion. Even a seasoned poet like W.H. Auden who called Tennyson 'the stupidest of English poets' went on to concede him 'the finest ear' among them all and praised him for his treatment of melancholistic run of notes. Matthew Arnold, a critic par excellence, remarked, "The real truth is that Tennyson in all his temperament and artistic skill is deficient in intellectual power and no poet can make much of his business unless he is pre-eminently strong in this." Having observed some ups and downs in Tennyson's poetic journey, it is time to think of his characteristic features as a poet. The first and foremost that strikes the readers is evocative and descriptive gift – wonderful painter of natural landscapes, the region where he was born was full of pastoral and agricultural regions largely unaffected by the industrial revolution. One finds in his scintillating poems a wide-spectrum of natural scenery, effects from tropical luxuriance to alpine sublimity but Lincolnshire was his primary source of imagination. Again and again, Tennyson used landscape not only for decorative purposes, but also to evoke the moods of mind. 'In Memoriam' stands a good and shining example of Tennyson's evocative art. Among the chief qualities that run through his poetry: auditory imagination, melancholic sensibility, interest in contemporary scientific

thought, lyrical roots, representative Victorian sensibilities.

Chief works: ‘The Palace of Art’, ‘The Lotus-Eater’, ‘Ulysses’, ‘A Dream of Fair women’, ‘Tithonus’, ‘Locksley Hall’, ‘The Princess’, ‘Maud’, ‘In Memoriam’, ‘Morte D Arthur’, ‘The Lady of Shalott’ are among the large and great bulk of poems written by Tennyson. Any critic who reviewed his works agreed that he was a great ‘lyric poet’ that his genius was essentially lyrical. His lyrics are among the most musical in the English language. He is an adroit user of words with utmost care. A skilled artist that Tennyson was that nobody equalled him in the use of alliteration, a technique that he so easily employed in his poems. He suits every line of poem to the music, the mood and the atmosphere, For example in the ‘Lotus-Eaters’ the music is slow, soft and languorous because the poem expresses the languorous and restful moods of the sailors. In ‘Break, Break, Break’, the music is haunting and soft because it expresses the poet’s deep melancholy at the death of his friend.

‘In Memoriam’ is a classic example in which there is fine blending of thought and music, a superb blending of poetry of ideas with the poetry of emotion. The poem traces his sense of horror, fear and loneliness at the meaninglessness of human life. One of the defects of his writings is that Tennyson used to revise and polish his poems constantly, destroying thereby spontaneous emotions. Even the musical quality suffers because of revisions and re-revisions. But, they are truly artistic pleasures for the readers. Another great quality of Tennyson’s poetry is that he

compressed the maximum possible meaning into the fewest possible words. For example, suitable connotations, similes and metaphors made their way into his poems. Consequently, many of his lines are epigrammatic. Examples of such epigrams are: 1) To Follow Knowledge like a sinking star 2) Old Order changeth yielding place to new 3) Old age hath yet its honour and its toil. Each statement is perfectly chiseled and shaped. They not only convey profound meaning but also sound beautiful and musical to the ears. He framed a few popular quotable quotes in these poems.

- 1) “It’s better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all”
- 2) “An infant crying in the night
An infant crying for the light
And with no language but a cry”
- 3) “For men may come and men may go.
But I go on forever”
- 4) “Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers”
- 5) “A Lie that is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies”
- 6) “Self-reverence, Self-knowledge, Self-control, these three alone lead life to sovereign power”

To sum up, in any final estimate of Tennyson, one must regard him not only as a great poetic artist, but also as an influential sage and spokesman of the Victorian era. A typical feature – form of his poetry is the Idyll and its characteristic thing ‘Faith’. Tennyson’s faith in Christ—“Strong Son of God, Immortal Love” — a faith with whose invocation ‘In Memoriam’ begins and with whose broken-hearted traces, the poet fights back the

spectres of doubt and despair — derives its immediate sanction from the philosophy of Hallam.

While applauding the credentials of Tennyson, Morton Luce writes, “Among the greater poems of Tennyson, ‘In Memoriam’ holds a high position. It is best loved; the wisest, the most spiritual, often the most beautiful, it is one of the greatest poems of the 19th Century.” Rooted in the poetic philosophy of life, death, length, complexity wealth of allusions, science and religion etc.,

The vast canvass of Tennyson’s poetry infiltrates the highest creative form of literature of more than sixty years and may truly be regarded as the common heritage of all English speaking people. As Tennyson wished, ‘In

Memoriam’ continues to be read as kind of “Divinia Commedia” (Dante’s much celebrated Divine Comedy). It is a way of the soul for passing generations. Tennyson did his last journey on 6th October, 1892 leaving behind the poetic world a big void to fill his unique place and position. He stands immortal in the reading hands of his collections of poetry. I conclude my fitting tribute to this great poet by the following lines:

“O, Tennyson you are not here, but far,
far away,
yet, the lilt of your poetry stirs as usual,
the noise of your collections is buzzing
again
into poetic minds”.

*

A LAMENT

P. Padmavathy

Stars of midnight; sing my dirge
In stillness of the lonely sky,
Sad be the strain of life’s farewell
Yet mourn not long, but gently sigh.

Silent stars, through darkest night
With Death’s pale seal, so swift I fly.
The moaning wind my wail doth bear:
Yet weep not, stars, that see me die.

Let not my parting memories float
As sorrows in the vault I roam -

Give one faint smile, lest I, remote
Must think of you in starless gloom.

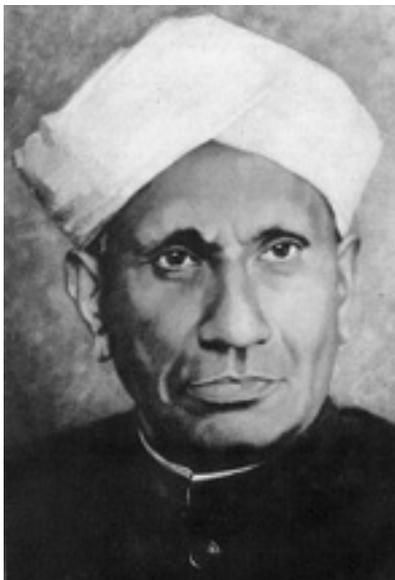
Folded in wings of solemn fate
I flit, a phantom on the breeze,
A flash, a silent thrill of awe -
Yet stars, weep not,
Since from the earth’s cares I pass to ease.

A young girl of 17 wrote this dirge for her College Magazine ‘Shama’ in 1920 edited by Mrinalini Chattopadhyay

*

C. V. RAMAN, NOBEL LAUREATE

G. Sankara Bhanu



Sir C. V. Raman
Scientist par Excellence who made
India Proud

28th February is a great day in the history of Science. It was on this day in 1928 that Prof. C. V. Raman's experiments in Optics led him to discover a new phenomenon, which was aptly named after him. "Raman Effect" was not the result of an accident but was the culmination of seven years of systematic and sustained study. The equipment was cheap but the devotion and experimental skills of Raman and his band of students were highly valuable. Raman Effect opened new routes to the knowledge of structure of matter. Scientists all over the world were tremendously impressed by the experimental demonstrations of this new discovery. Raman was awarded

Nobel Prize for Physics in 1930.

V. Venkata Raman was born on November 17th 1888 at Thiruvanaikkal near Trichinopoly. His father was Sri Chandrasekhara Iyer. By tradition, father's name prefixes the name of the son in certain parts of our country. Hence, his full name is Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman. He was the second among the eight children. The family had artistic inclinations and most of them learnt playing on violin, including Raman.

In 1892, Sri Chandrasekhar Iyer was appointed as lecturer in Mrs. A. V. N. College Visakhapatnam, where Raman studied up to and passed F.A. examination (1902). (Later, in 1956 Sir C. V. Raman visited A.V. N. College, where I was then working as a lecturer. His schoolmate, a retired clerk met him after the lecture and I had the pleasure of observing the Nobel Laureate chitchatting with his old pal in a happy mood.)

After passing F.A exam, Raman won a scholarship and joined Presidency College Madras where he studied B.A and then M.A. (Physics). In every examination, Raman used to secure the First Rank. He won gold medals in English and Physics. Research in modern sciences was quite unknown in India in those days, but young Raman, while doing a routine class experiment in optics discovered unsymmetrical diffraction bands and he lost no time to prepare a paper for publication in Philosophical Magazine, a prestigious scientific journal from London. Raman was then only 16 years old. Professors in Presidency College complimented young Raman for his proficiency in English and for his intellectual

grasp in Physics. It was clear from the beginning that Raman was cut out for independent thinking. Raman was highly intellectual but physically weak. He was averse to go abroad. Indian Civil Service (ICS) and Financial Civil Service (FCS) were the two careers open in those days for bright students and Raman opted for FCS and passed the examination in 1907, securing the first rank.

Lokasundari, daughter of S. Krishnaswami an officer of Customs, was proposed to Raman. He went along with his elders to see the bride. She displayed her skills on Veena and Raman, being a great lover of music, readily accepted her. The marriage was celebrated in 1907.

Raman joined the Finance Department as an Assistant Accountant General in Calcutta. As fate would have it, the Ramans rented a house in an area, which happened to be very near to the Indian Association for Cultivation of Science founded by late Dr. Mahindra Lal Sircar. The Association had considerable space and laboratory facilities for aspirants to pursue Science. It was the fortune of India that Raman knocked at the doors of the Association, full of joy. Amritlal Sircar, son of late Dr. Mahindra Lal Sircar who was waiting for an aspirant like Raman embraced him and exclaimed that the prophetic wish of his father was fulfilled.

From 1907 to 1917, Raman spent all his leisure time, which meant the evenings and very late into the night daily, conducting experiments in Acoustics and Optics in the Association. His devotion and dedication and the high standard of research attracted many a brilliant student. The Association became a centre of beehive activity. Raman and his students started publishing their findings in

Acoustics and Optics in foreign journals and in the bulletins of the Association.

Sir Austosh Mukherjee, the then Vice Chancellor of Calcutta University was highly impressed with Raman's work and his scholarship. He offered him Palit Professorship in the University. Raman readily gave up the lucrative job in FCS and accepted Professorship for far less emoluments. Austosh's vision and Raman's zeal for knowledge paved the way for the development of Science in India. Raman used to work 18 hours a day and published many papers attracting the attention of all leading physicists in the world. In 1921, Raman attended the 'Congress of Universities' held in U.K. His lecture on his latest researches in Optics and Acoustics was highly appreciated by the scientific world. Raman was a good speaker. His speeches were highly captivating.

Raman was a great lover of Nature. While returning from England, Raman became fascinated by the deep blue colour of the Mediterranean Sea. Lord Rayleigh, a great scientist had explained that the blue colour of the sea was due to the reflection of the sky blue by the ocean's surface. Raman was not convinced. During that voyage, he examined the color of the sea from the ship using simple equipment eliminating the sky light reflection. He noticed that the blue of the sea persisted much richer than the blue of the sky. Immediately after returning to Calcutta, Raman made several critical experiments and proved that the blue colour of the sea was due to the scattering of the incident sunlight by the molecules of water. He published a paper on "The Molecular Scattering of Light in Water and the Colour of The Sea" in the Proceedings of the Royal Society of London (1921). Thenceforth 'light scattering' became

the main field of research for Raman's school.

Raman's better half, Smt. Lokasundari stood by him devotedly. With great tact and love, she took care of him and the home affairs. She was aware that science was his first love and she too endeared herself to his way of life.

In 1924, Royal Society of London conferred on Raman F.R.S. in recognition of his outstanding researches. Raman was invited to inaugurate the seminar on 'The Scattering of Light' held in Toronto, Canada. After the seminar, several universities and institutes in Canada and America invited him. Newspapers paid rich compliments for his clarity and eloquence. He won the admiration of all great scientists of the day.

Prof. A. H. Compton was awarded Nobel Prize in Physics in 1927 for his discovery of 'Compton Effect' in X-rays. It acted as a great impetus to Raman to seek an optical analogue. He set his research team to work on it. K. S. Krishnan, S. Bhagavantam, K. R. Ramanathan, L. A. Ramadas, S. Venkateswaran, B. N. Srinivasayya and a few more (later they became scientists of international fame) ably assisted him.

On Tuesday, 28 February 1928, Raman observed the wonderful phenomenon of light scattering. Raman himself later described the experimental observations of that day, "When monochromatic light was passed through a dust-free liquid, the spectrum of the scattered light showed new lines. These lines were not present in the incident light but formed due to the interaction with the molecules of the liquid." Raman's student, Ramadas called the phenomenon the "RAMAN EFFECT".

The Associated Press was immediately informed of the discovery and a note was sent to *Nature*, a leading journal of science. Raman

addressed the 'South Indian Science Association' at Bangalore and the reprints of the address were posted to scientists all over the world. Similar experiments were at the same time conducted in France and Russia but Raman had clearly established his priority. Besides a number of experiments were done in support of Raman Effect. In the words of Rutherford, a stalwart in Modern Physics, "The RAMAN EFFECT ranks among the best in Experimental Physics."

Seven years of systematic and sustained work carried out by Raman and his students led to the great discovery and Raman was awarded Nobel Prize for Physics in 1930. It was in this ceremony that when wine was served to all, Raman (lifting a glass of water) humorously commented, "Raman Effect on alcohol is known, but alcohol effect on Raman is unknown". He was a teetotaler all his life.

Raman possessed an indomitable spirit and an abiding love of Science. Through personal example of the highest dedication and through his success as teacher in training generations of physicists who in turn created great schools of research Raman tremendously influenced the progress of Science in India. The awards and honours that Raman received during his lifetime were numerous.

India honoured C. V. Raman by awarding Bharat Ratna in 1954. However, he could not attend the function to receive the award in person because he was then finalizing the thesis of one of his students working in his institute in Bangalore. His commitment to science was exemplary. 28th February is observed as Science Day as a tribute to Raman and to inspire the youth to emulate his great qualities.

*

TO A CHILD: A FATHER'S PLEDGE

Prof. Hazara Singh

Dear child, my ties with you are a solemn bond
Not of mere flesh and blood, but to groom
you
As an earnest, upright and benign human
being.
In anger or conceit I shall never rebuke you
For that may induce you too to berate others.
I will not let anyone be overbearing with you
As it may repress your sense of co-operation
Which extends to all a deserving
consideration.

I shall cheer you to add to your confidence
May reprove you seldom, for to err is human
A child so jeered gets timid and diffident.
Even when found struck in deeds not wrongful
I will not chide you so that you may learn
To confess without any hesitation or guile.
I'll see that acts of others, petty or vile
Do not prompt you to be relentless likewise.

I shall commend your performance on merit
Correct you at once with words and deeds,
While you go wrong, so that you learn too
To appreciate others when they excel you.
I shall be watchful to make you righteous
Not let my fondness condone what you lack
So that you do not lose sense of fairness
Which we need to refine the modes of life.

I shall arrange security only, if required
To teach you to be steadfast but truthful
May advise, if asked, but not impose my will.
Your acts in good faith may not need my nod
As the understanding, based on mutual faith
May create in you the endearing team spirit.
Thus, I shall endeavour to redeem my pledge
To bring you up as an exalting human being.

*

HONOUR

P. K. Joy

You have honoured me
by giving me *Padmavibhushan* Award
For my outstanding poetry
that enhanced your world regard
And the local government named
a street after my name
For my distinguished writings
which enhanced its fame.
Now sitting in the narrow foot-path
of the street that bears my name

I'm selling cine-magazines to earn
my daily bread, with shame.
The lofty citations of the honours
hang on the mud-wall of my hut.
When I return home in the night
They'd pity me and hang their heads.
I too often look at them with disdain
and ask them to explain their worth
While in the hands of a poor scholar
who earns his food through menial work.

*

THE DISCLAIMER

Khaja Nizamuddin

A statue wrapped in a thick opaque plastic paper was unloaded from a truck. Some conjurers and some inferior creatures gathered round it. Nobody spoke. Only some furtive looks were exchanged. The truck and all disappeared. The statue stood there alone till it grew dark. The dark night began melting into small flakes. The flakes turned into small drops that flowed towards the statue and started turning into shadows. The shadows began echoing.

“No sari, o palm.”

“Is there any bird in the right hand?”

“No,”

“Beard or narrow trousers?”

“No.”

“Thick moustache?”

“No.”

Some shadow of a hammer erupted. A big sound cracked the silence.

The shadows started slinking away.

The shadows started appearing again. They started groping.

Echoes were noticed.

“Chappals on the feet?”

“Yes,”

“Dhoti?”

“Yes.”

“An extended arm and one hand on the waist?”

“No,”

“Hell with this.”

The shadows of hammers arose; a big sound tore the silence apart. The shadows cringed.

A few shadows arose again and started

buzzing round the statue.

“Is there any book in the hands?”

“No.”

“Leave, be back.”

The shadows disappeared.

Some shadows crawled across.

Whisper spread again.

“Is there any scythe?”

“No.”

“Yoke?”

“No.”

A big sound broke the silence.

Whole night the shadows thundered along. Some search was made, hammers were raised, and big sound continued torturing the silence.

It dawned. The inferior creatures gathered round some pauper’s chattel. The shadows of the hammers did their work. They tore the wrap restlessly. The statue was no more. They found a broken stick, bare ribs, bare legs, two pieces of spectacles, broken face, blinded eyes and pieces of his smiling lips. Self proclaimed torch bearers, who fraudulently posed their light to be an inheritance, frequented, furling their light with credibility gap, rays more violent, more ornamental, with only some residues of honesty.

All tried to assemble the pieces but in vain.

It was difficult to reassemble and impossible to reincarnate. The pieces of the statue seemed to bear the disclaimer, “any resemblance to any person living or dead is purely incidental”.

✱

MUNDANE DISTORTIONS IN THE DIVINE DISCOURSE

B. S. Murthy

William von Humboldt who wrote seven-hundred verses in praise of the Bhagvad-Gita averred that it is the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue. All the same, the boon of an oral tradition that kept the divine discourse of yore alive for millennia became the bane of the Gita going by the seemingly mundane distortions it had to endure. Strangely it was Sir Edwin Arnold the Englishman who sought to separate the divine wheat from the mundane chaff by branding s23-s27 of ch8 as the ranting of some *vedanti* in his century old 'Song Celestial'. While interpreting the Gita in English verse, an attempt was made by the author to identify the interpolations in it and codify the same for the benefit of the modern reader. One way to scent the nature of these, if not zero in on every one of them, is to subject the text to the twin tests of sequential conformity and structural economy. Sequential conformity is all about uniformity of purpose sans digression and structural economy but represents the absence of repetitiveness.

The pundits and the plebeians alike aver that the philosophy of the Gita is the practice of disinterested action. In this context, it may be noted that while postulating *nishkaama* karma, the theory of disinterested action, Krishna was critical of the ritualistic aspects of and the mundane expectations from the Vedic ceremonies (s42 - 46 and s53 of ch.2.). Given that the pristine philosophy of the Gita is to tend man on the path of duty without attachment, the about turn in s9-s16 of ch.3

that formulate the procedural aspects of the rituals and the divine backing they enjoy cannot stand to either reason or logic. Such contradictory averments attributed to Krishna wherever occur can be taken as interpolations and the same are delved into in this article.

Next on the agenda is the aspect of structural economy and one finds the similitude of a given content in many a *sloka* in the same or in a different context throughout the text. Obviously, some of them are interpolations but which were the originals and which are the imitations could be impossible to find out for they snugly fit into the overall structure. Whatever, save lengthening the discourse, they do not belittle the same and fortunately not even tire the reader, thanks to the exemplary charm of Sanskrit, which for the 18th Century British intellectual Sir William Jones 'is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either.' Identified here are 109 *slokas* of deviant character or digressive nature that can be taken as interpolations with reasonable certainty. Readers may like to mark these verses in their Gita and then read it afresh by passing over them for a refreshing experience.

Besides the interpolations s9-s16 of ch.3, s17 and s18 of the same are clear digressions, and other such in the rest of the chapters wherever they crop up are dealt as follows:

Chapter - 4: It should not be lost on one that s11's return of favour by the Lord is juxtaposing to the stated detachment of His

as espoused in s14 of the same chapter. On the other hand, s12 that is akin to s20, ch.7, itself an interpolation, and s13 the contentious *chaatur varnyam mayaa srustam* - do not jell with the spirit of the philosophy. Why hasn't Krishna declared in s 29 ch.9, 'None I favour, slight I none / Devout Mine all gain Me true'. Slokas 24 to s32 that are of religious/ritualistic nature seem clearly out of context and character. Prior to this seemingly interpolated body of eleven *slokas*, the nature of the Supreme Spirit and the conduct of those who realize it are dealt with. Thus, the discontinuity in the text brought about by the body of these interpolative *slokas* would be self-evident. And s34 that advises Arjuna to seek wise counsel is irrelevant in the context of the discourse fashioned to set his doubts at rest in the battlefield itself.

Chapter-5: S18 avers the Omnipresence of the Supreme in Brahmans, cows, elephants, dogs and dog eaters. This tasteless description could be but an interpolation as it ill behoves Krishna's eloquence and sophistication of expression seen throughout. Incidentally, the succeeding s19 makes it clear that whoever recognizes Him in all beings attains the Supreme State in life itself. S27-s28 that deal with yogic practices and s29, which asserts the Supreme as the beneficiary of sacrificial rituals, are but interpolation for reasons that bear no repetition.

Chapter - 6: S10-s17 deal with aspects of ascetic practices which are but square pegs in the round philosophical hole the discourse is and so are interpolations, even going by what is stated in the very opening verse, 'Forego none if forsake chores / Eye not gain 'n thou be freed'. S41 and s42 are clearly interpolations not only for affecting the

continuity of the text but also for what they contain. S41 would have us that those who perform the *asvamedha* (ritualistic horse sacrifice) would reach heaven to be born again rich. Likewise, s 42 would have us that, 'or such would be born in learned homes'.

Chapter-7: S20-s23 besides affecting the continuity in character of the discourse, would advocate worship of gods for boon seeking that Krishna chastises in s42-s44, ch.2 and that renders them interpolations.

Chapter - 8: It can be seen that s5 places the cart before the horse. Besides, s9-s14 too are interpolations going by their content that's out of context. It is worth noting that s1-s4, s6-s8 and s15-s22, if read together would bear an unmistakable continuity of argument that the interpolations deprive. And s22 is a seemingly concluding statement of the Lord that only through un-swerved devotion the Supreme could be reached from which there is no return (s21). Then appear s23 to s28 which if literally taken would imply that if one dies when the moon is on the ascent, he would go to heaven and, to hell if it's other way round. Needless to say, these *slokas* spelling superstition in an otherwise thought-elevating treatise are but interpolations which Sir Edwin Arnold dismissed as the work of some *vedanti* and thought it fit, justifiably at that, not to include them in his 'Song Celestial'. In this connection, it may be noted that the relationship between the state in which a person dies and his imminent rebirth is covered in s14 - s15 of c14, which seem to be authentic.

Chapter - 9: S7, that contravenes s15-s16 of ch.8, and which echoes interpolative s18-s19 of the current chapter, is an interpolation. Also s15 of is but a digression

to facilitate the interpolations in s16-s21 and s23-s25. What is more, there could be some omissions from the original, given the seemingly incomplete exposition of the promised dharma in s2. Further, in s 30 and s 31, it is said that even a reformed sinner is dear and valuable to Him. Then in s 32 it is stated that women, Vaisyas and Sudras could win His favour through devotion, sounding as if they are all in an inferior league. Leave aside the Lord's averment in many a context in this text that the Supreme Spirit lies in all beings, it is specifically stated in s34 of ch.10 that He symbolizes all that is glorious in woman. Given this, and the background of the interpolations, s32 surely is a case of trespass. S33 of this chapter is but a joining medium of the said obnoxious verse and in itself is patronizing in nature towards the virtuous Brahmans and thus is an interpolation.

Chapter - 11: Owing to the improbability of their being, s9-s14, make an amusing reading. S3 states that Krishna grants Arjuna the divine sight required to espy His Universal Form. Of course, the ESP that Vyasa granted Sanjaya (s75 ch.18) might have enabled him to monitor the goings on at the battleground in order to appraise the blind king Dhrutarashtra about the same. Thus, only from Arjuna's averments could have Sanjaya gathered what he was divining of the Universal Form, which obviously was beyond his (Sanjaya) own comprehension. But s10-s14 would have him describe the Universal Form as though he himself was witnessing the same, even before Arjuna utters a word about it. In this context, it is worth noting that the Lord made it clear in s52, 'Ever craved gods 'n angels too / Just to behold what thee beheld'. Thus, the Universal Form that was seen by

Arjuna surely was beyond the scope of Sanjaya's ESP and hence, s9-s14 that picture beforehand what Arjuna would witness later on are clear interpolations. Contrast this with the parallel situation in s50-s51, when the Lord reassumes His human form, but handled differently by Sanjaya. The s29 which seeks to emphasize what was already pictured in s28, albeit with not so appropriate a simile, could be but an interpolation.

Chapter - 13: One might notice that s10, advocating asceticism to which Krishna is opposed, doesn't jell with the rest, either contextually or philosophically, and thus should be seen as an interpolation. S22, which states that the Supreme Soul lay in beings as a sustainer, consentor, enjoyer and overseer, contravenes its very nature expostulated in s16-s18, ch.15. Besides, as can be seen, it affects the continuity between s21 and s23 of this chapter. S30, akin to s15 is an irrelevant interpolation.

Chapter - 14: In this chapter that details the three human proclivities - virtue, passion and delusion - s3, s4 and s19 that deal with the Nature and the Spirit are digressive interpolations.

Chapter - 15: S9, s12, s13, s14 and s15 being digressions are clearly interpolations.

Chapter - 16: S19 which implies that the Supreme Spirit condemns to hell those who hate Him is an obvious interpolation that contravenes Krishna's affirmative statement in s29 ch.9 and other such averred in many a context in this text.

Chapter - 17: S11-s13 that deal with the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded in ritualistic sense and s 23-28 concerning Om, Tat, Sat and Asat of the Vedic hymns are clear interpolations for reasons the reader is familiar

with. However, s7-s10 that deal with the food habits of the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded would pose a problem in determining whether or not they are interpolations. Can eating habits be linked to the innate nature of man in an infallible manner? Perhaps, some future research and analysis might resolve the universality or otherwise of this averment, and till then, it is appropriate to reserve the judgment on these.

Chapter - 18: One can note that s12 breaks the continuity between s11 and s13 with hyperbolic averments and s56 combines what is stated in the preceding and succeeding slokas, and thus both seemingly are interpolations. s41-s48 that describe the allotted duties of man on the basis of his caste are clearly interpolations. In essence, the discourse till s40 is about the human nature and how it affects man. As can be seen, the duties on caste lines detailed in the said interpolations have no continuity of argument. As in earlier chapters, the text acquires continuity if only these verses are bypassed.

S61 avers that the Supreme dwells in humans and deludes them all by his *maya*. This is contrary to what is stated in s14, c5, 'It's his nature but not Spirit/ Makes man act by wants induced'. Thus, s61 clearly is an interpolation as it contravenes the neutrality of the Supreme Spirit in the affairs of man affirmed throughout by Lord Krishna.

For those who may like to see how the Gita reads if the above cited 109 *slokas* are bypassed the same are summarized as under.

Ch. 3: s9 - s18 and s35 (11 *slokas*);
Ch.4: s11 - s13, s24 - s32 and s34 (13 *slokas*);
Ch.5: s18 and s27 - 29 (4 *slokas*);
Ch. 6: s10-s17 and s41 - s42 (10 *slokas*);
ch.7: s20 - s23 (4 *slokas*);
ch. 8: s5, s9 - s14 and s23-s28 (13 *slokas*);
ch.9: s7, s15-s21, s23-s25, and s32-s34 (14 *slokas*);
ch.11: s9-s14 and s29 (7 *slokas*);
ch.13: s10, s22 and s30 (3 *slokas*);
ch.14: s3-s4 and s19 (3 *slokas*);
ch.15: s9 and s12-s15 (5 *slokas*);
ch.16: s19 (1 *sloka*);
ch.17: s11-s14 and s23-28 (10 *slokas*) and
ch.18: s12, s41-48, s56 and s61 (11 *slokas*). *

A POEM FROM A SMALL BOY

Let's take time to celebrate our differences and respect each other.....

Nominated by UN as the best Poem of 2006 – Written by an African Kid. Very smart kid.

When I born, I black
When I grow up, I black
When I go in Sun, I black
When I scared, I black
When I sick, I black
And when I die, I still black

And you white fellow
When you born, you pink
When you grow up, you white
When you go in sun, you red
When you cold, you blue
When you scared, you yellow
When you sick, you green
And when you die, you grey
And you calling me colored??

*Courtesy Sri Aurobindo's Action,
March 2008*

*

AMAZING 'PERU' — A TRIP OF A LIFE TIME

K. K. Krishna

The mountains of Peru

Now let me tell you about the mountains of Peru, the Andes. They are the longest chain of mountains in the world, well over 7000 km long running along the West side of the South American continent. They were formed hundreds of millions of years ago when the South American plate drifted away from the African landmass and collided with the Pacific plate, pushing up the softer Pacific plate to form the second highest mountain range after the Himalayas which, as we all know, were formed when the Indian sub continent rammed against the Asian land mass forming the Himalayas and the high Pamir plateau of Tibet. So the birth of these two gigantic ranges happened much the same way, by the collision of massive tectonic plates. Interestingly, the massive collision in South America has thrown up a large line of volcanoes along the whole length of the Andes, most of which are dormant now. While curiously the Himalayas do not have any active or dormant volcanoes, although there is a lot of seismic activity and earthquakes in the Uttaranchal area which is comparable to the seismic activity that is common in the Andes. The Andes and the Himalayas are roughly diametrically opposite to each other on two sides of the globe. The Highest peak in the Andes is the Aconcagua in Argentina which is a bit short of 7000 meters where as the Himalayas have more than 100 peaks that are taller than 7200 meters.

The Andean mountains are massive and breathtakingly beautiful. I assume the Himalayas are also awe inspiring -

unfortunately we have not yet visited the Himalayas (they are still on the list of things to visit and one day we will get there).

We landed in Lima the capital city of Peru and took a connecting flight to Cusco, a city whose origins are lost in antiquity. Cusco is set high in the Andean mountains, more than 3300 meters above sea level. From there we took a van and drove for an hour over the mountain roads (which by the way are in very good condition) to check into a vacation lodge on the banks of the Urubamba River (pictures below). The valley floor here was more than 2500 meters above sea level and the lodge itself was in the cradle formed by huge mountains over 5000 meters tall. From Urubamba we took day trips to various places with interesting names such as Cusco, Pisac, Ollantaytambo and Machu Pichu - all of which are famous Incas settlements.

About the Peruvian Civilization

The original people of Peru are of Oriental stock, like the Red Indians of North America and the myriad tribes that inhabited the current Mexico area (eg Aztecs) and the countries of Central America (eg. Mayan). Around 25000 years ago people from Asia crossed over the frozen Bering Strait (between Eastern most portion of Russia an Alaska) and gradually spread across the whole of North America and South America.

There are evidences of settlements in Peru from as early as 4000 BC. More complex cultures began forming around 800 BC. Of note are the Chavin people from the

central high lands with their very high quality stone buildings. Around 100-200 AD more evolved cultures sprang up – Moche in the North Coast who left a treasure trove of information through their elaborate potteries, the Lima cultures near the current capital city and the Nazca cultures in the south coast, famous for their massive geoglyphs - large stone arrangements in the form of various animals and other patterns – that are so large that one has to fly in a plane to see what the shape is. Following these came the Wari in 800s who covered a good part of modern Peru, followed by the Chimus and Lambayaques in the North coast and Chancays, Cajamarca, Huancas in the central islands, till all these were supplanted by the mighty Incas who ruled in the 1400s and early 1500s. It was fascinating to know that Peruvian people had such a continuity of well organized sub cultures, kingdoms, settlements and left large archaeological evidences behind. Coming from an old culture like India sometimes we make the mistake of under estimating the longevity of cultures else where in the world.

The Incas were special because within a century they expanded their empire over a vast area in South America and forcibly integrated many sub cultures into a sun worshipping culture. They were great builders and administrators. Expansive Inca ruins can be seen all over Peru still and many societal norms (Ayullus – groups of 10 families that exist in harmonious interdependence) that were instituted by the Incas still continue. Most importantly, the Quechua language of the Incas is still spoken by nearly 40% of the Peruvians.

The Inca Empire was founded by the legendary Manco Capac around 1300s. Legends of Manco Capac's origins abound -

as the son of the Sun God Inti, as the son of Viracocha the mythical creator who rose from the Lake Titicaca and created all the elements of the Peruvian civilization and also the story of Manco Capac directly rising from Lake Titicaca along with his brother Pachacamac.

Pachacuti, around 1430s, was the first major Inca emperor. He expanded the Inca influence across whole of Peru and organized the country's administration under four provinces (Antisuyu – eastwards, Contisuyu – westwards, Chinchasuyu – northwards and Collasuyu – southwards). Machu Pichu, the retreat in the mountains for Inca aristocracy was also built during his reign. Pachacuti was followed by Tupac Inca I&II and Huana Capac. Huana Capac expanded the empire to its zenith but died prematurely without a clear succession plan as to which of his two sons – Huascar Capac or Atahualpa would lead the empire.

Needless to say, a civil war broke out between the two brothers and it was at this time Francisco Pizarro, the Spanish Conquistador with 267 horsemen, marched into Peru and brought the mighty empire to an end. The mess of the civil war, the confusion of seeing strange white men with beards, strange animals - the Incas had never seen horses before, the legend that white gods will come from the north side sea etc all caused a seizure in the Inca minds. Francisco Pizarro, through treachery, kidnapped Atahualpa and demanded ransom of a room full of gold and silver. In parallel he arranged for the assassination of Huascar Capac, Atahualpa's brother and blamed it on Atahualpa and also put him to death. Within a short time, with extreme cruelty, the Spaniards wrested control of an empire and a culture that had developed

over centuries. Ironically, Francisco Pissarro, the son of a farmer from Spain, who had conquered a territory larger than Hernando Cortez (the Spaniard who overthrew the Aztecs in Mexico) was himself assassinated in his palace in Lima by one of his key subordinates.

The Incas were monumental builders. Expansive structures can be still found in Cusco. Many of the city's modern buildings are still standing on Inca laid foundations. Inca built agricultural terraces can be seen throughout the sacred valley, the fertile 200 km long Urubamba valley. The exotic location of Machu Pichu is a sight that has to be seen as its setting and magnificence are beyond description.

For all their achievements the Incas did not invent writing. They communicated verbally through, the, Quechua language and kept records through bundles of knotted strings, called Quipus – whose knots, color, lengths and spacing of knots could contain an intense amount of information. The Incas also did not use the wheel and all their massive stone constructions were made using brute strength – dragging, sliding, pushing and rolling of the stones. Complex stone masonry, perfectly fitted stones without any mortar is a common thing in all Inca constructions. It is said that no two stones are identical in the massive citadel temple of Sasqaqaman outside Cusco.

The Gold of Peru

There are rich gold reserves in Columbia, Ecuador and Peru and many of the cultures of the past used gold and silver as a decorative metal. The Museum of Gold in Lima has a collection of items – gold drinking cups, gold

dresses etc that indicate the vast wealth that the Inca Empire had. It was the lure of this gold, stories of which were carried along the coast up north to the region of Panama (which was the original seat of the Spanish in South America) that brought the Spanish into Peru. Life changed after that forever.

The character of the Spanish Conquistadors was conquest and plunder - their hunger for gold was limitless. Most countries in South America were founded by men who believed in such objectives and it is no surprise that even after 500 years a responsible ruling class has not evolved in any South America country and the continent's history is one tragedy after another of misrule by military dictatorships.

A Lake on the roof of the world - Titicaca

We flew from Cusco to Juliaca, a city in the south of Peru and took a van and crossed the sister city of Puno and stayed in a hotel on the banks of the Lake Titicaca. It is an enormous lake, more than 8000 square kilometers – 170 km long and 60 kms wide. The lake surface is at an elevation of 4200 meters above sea level. One feels dizzy, nauseous, exhausted, gets tired easily and feels short of breath (all signs of altitude sickness) because at that elevation the oxygen concentration is only 60% that of sea level. The sunlight is so clear and strong that within a few hours outside we all go tanned to near black levels on all the exposed skin and it took us more than 3 weeks to get our normal brown color back.

On the Lake Titicaca, we visited floating islands – built out of reed grasses that grow on the lake and near its edges. There are more than 30 of these floating islands, which support

a population of more than 2000 people. There are schools, hospitals etc on these islands. The people who live on these islands, the Aymaras, hundreds of years back apparently were fleeing enemy attacks and fled on reed boats and eventually came up with the idea of building islands by literally stitching together (with long stakes and powerful reed ropes) bunches of reed grass plants and then covering them with layers of dried reed grass. These islands are like large rafts made of 2 meters thick grass sponge like material and often larger than 2 football fields.

In the middle of the lake, we visited an island by name Tequile. The unique thing I recall about this island is the hat coding system they had, a different type of hat to signify different stages/situations of life – child, student, available bachelor, engaged bachelor, married man, widower etc.

From the mountains flows the mightiest river in the world

I have always wondered at rivers and the timelessness of their flow. They go on forever while all the life they support in their bowels and on their banks seems to go through a perpetual cycle of death and rebirth.

In India, the Ganges flows down from the Himalayas and was born after the Himalayas were formed. Amazon is another story. It is older than the mountains that feed it in present. It was already a massive river system when South America and Africa were together, flowing Westwards (its sister river, the Congo still flows Westwards in central Africa). When South America drifted and collided with the Pacific plate and gave rise to the Andes, the Amazon's Westward flow got blocked and it lost its way for millions of years

and survived as a large network of rivers, lakes and jungle in what is presently Brazil and surrounding countries, till one days the waters rose high enough and burst open a new outlet into the Atlantic. The Amazon jungle covers an area of 5.5 million square kilometers spread across 9 countries in South America and is bigger than the Indian sub-continent (India, Pakistan and Bangla Desh together are around 4.5 million square kilometers). The Amazon is more than twice as long as Ganges, its flow is 8 times larger than the Ganges and Brahmaputra combined.

The Amazon takes its initial massive shape in the North Eastern part of Peru. It is formed by the joining of the Ucayali and Maranon rivers near Iquitos city. There are a many smaller rivers (each of them is pretty big themselves) that feed into these rivers. We took a flight from Lima into Iquitos, located well into Amazon jungle. Iquitos has no road or rail access and can be only reached by air or on slow river boats. Iquitos was founded in the rubber boom of late 19th century and today is a hot, humid and slow town that mainly depends on Peruvian government employing people in the mining and forestry related industries. Outside of Iquitos is Porto Nanay, a small river port on the river Nanay that along with another smaller river Momon also join the Amazon near Iquitos. The Amazon is more than 5 km wide already at this point of time and it still has 5000 km to go before it reaches the Atlantic. We took a small river boat in pouring rain and went 50 kms up river and stayed at the Amazon Rain Forest Lodge, a collection of thatched cottages (with reasonably modern plumbing!) set up in a clearance in the jungle.

The experience of staying close to the jungle was exciting. We took a dawn time

canoe ride on the river, spent a few hours trekking through the thick jungle – led by a man with a machete sword who cleared a path for us through the thick under growth, visited a couple of jungle tribes, tried shooting with a blow gun, danced to a few tribal songs, tried our hand in piranha fishing and toured a mini zoo with Amazon animals.

Modern Peruvians and their Cuisine

Most modern Peruvians are a mixture of European and Andean Indians. In the high lands, there are many pure Andean Indians still living in their age old of agriculture and animal farming life styles. There is a small segment of people who have mostly European blood. Japanese and Chinese immigrants can also be found in all cities in Peru.

We found the Peruvians warm and friendly. They are good listeners and pay attention to what you are saying and respond to the point.

Chinese food, with a Peruvian adaptation is widely available and enjoyed by the masses. The Peruvian cuisine is mostly sea food based. Their national dish is called Ceveche - an un tossed salad of vegetables, boiled fish and some rice, which according to my daughter tasted horrible. Peruvians also eat a lot of pork and also animals like Guinea pigs. Amazingly, we found that we can get a version of vegetable pulao also in Peru and we all devoured it with great gusto whenever we had a chance.

Peruvian wines are of good quality. The country folk drink fermented corn liquor that is a cross between congee and bad beer.

Almost all Peruvian cities have Indian

restaurants or a chain that goes by the name “Govinda”, run by the Hare Krishna Organization.

We met three Indian families – all coming from the US – during the Peruvian trip – all of them were drawn to Peru because it was an exotic destination. My guess is they, like us, also had a secret stash of Indian food condiments – pickles, powders, packaged curries etc – which we used to supplement our diet in all the locations we visited in Peru. Who could have thought that a mango pickle made in Hyderabad will be enjoyed heartily on the banks on the Amazon deep inside the jungles of Peru!

Finally the capital city Lima

Lima was the seat of the Spanish Viceroy for South America for hundreds of years after the Spanish conquered most of South America in the 1500s and early 1600s. As population grew, provincial states were ruled by governors. As Spain’s influence waned and world events turned, the ascendance of Britain, the French and America revolutions, colonization of the rest of the world, industrial revolution etc most of these provinces started asserting their independence from the Viceroy of Spain. Through the early part of the 19th century, one after another of the countries of South America declared independence. The legendary Simon Bolivar and Jose San Martin were the founders of modern Peru.

Peru has had its share of military rulers and populist elected leaders. The country’s history of the last 150 years has many ups and downs under many military and civilian rulers. Despite its phenomenal natural

resources, Peru has been unable to establish as an industrialized democracy. Most of the industries are mining based (peru has a lot of metallic/mineral wealth) and oil based (Peru has good reserves in the North) and fisheries/agriculture based. Peruvians enjoy a \$3500 per capita, but like most of South America, a small minority of the rich owns a very high proportion of the nation's wealth.

Lima is a modern city and is very clean, but rather dusty and it is on the coastal desert. It never rains in Lima – its location in the

desert, the high mountains very close by and the cold sea on its west, all suck up the moisture and Limaites can go for years without seeing the smallest of showers. All water is piped in from the highlands to support the 7 million Limaites.

Overall, Peru was an amazing destination. We were a group of 11 Indians and we enjoyed ourselves very much. Peru is not a place for a 1 family vacation, one should always go in a large enough group to enjoy the treks and the travels more. *

MOTHER OF NATURE AND ROUTE OF CHEERFULNESS: TWO SONNETS

Manoranjan Das

Earth is the free source of our raiment with
all,
Where the beauty of life is cultivated;
Here we get all amenities; that's related,
To the form and feature of our future; it's real...
Earth is the fine footstool of God, by reigning
HIS highness as everending abundance for us
And earth acts as parents and nurse in every
phase
For our livelihood; that is for ever running...

Earth is the mother of nature, bearing all
Pains and pleasures with incidents and
accidents.
There the accumulation of historical notes
Is magnified with consequence that rotates
From the past with pious covering, and eternal
Evidence, and ah! earth is the path of patients...

II

Earth is vestibule to glorious mansions,
On which we move for ever pressing, that

relates
To necessities and luxuries. The extensions
Of our actual need are here with probable
dates.

Ah! Earth is the protector of us as father.
Here expectations are saved and heightened
With sweetness and happiness properly; that's
fair
For our survival, and that is ever enlightened.

Earth is the supplier of our life's equipments
Where all the routes of cheerfulness get stored.
There the tenderness widens like monuments;
That's significantly, reformed and murmured...

Earth is, outstandingly, beautified with holiness
Where time runs rhythmically with goodness.

[Getting in mind 'The Earth Day', the
22nd April...]

*

ACQUIRING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: A STRATEGY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Vani Devulapally
M. Koteswar Rao

Communication is one of the essential conditions of social interaction. Without communication, social interaction may not be possible because human interaction is essentially communicative interaction.

Communication is a dynamic interactive process that involves the effective transmission of facts, ideas, thoughts, feelings and values.

“Communication is the process involving the transmission and reception of symbols eliciting meaning in the minds of the participants by making common their life experiences”. -Baird Jr. E. John.

As communication skills are crucial to professional success today, the ELT (English Language Teaching) became innovative giving rise to various new methods/approaches such as Oral Approach, Situational Language Teaching (SL), Direct Method, Audio Lingual Method, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Total Physical Response, the Silent Way, Community Language Learning, the Natural Approach and Suggestopedia. Of all these methods and approaches, the CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) has been developed as an independent discipline in itself.

The present paper is an individual action research and it examines how fruitfully chomskian theory of CLT, when it is tinted with the communication competence, worked out when it is experimented in a professional

college.

The theory of Noam Chomsky:

With the advent of the theory of Noam Chomsky in his classic work, *Syntactic Structures* (1957), the then predominant learning theories were wound up.

According to Chomsky, language learning is not a mere activity of imitation and reproduction akin to the mimicking of a parrot. Rather, he believes that the human mind is potential enough to create, transform and generate unique linguistic utterances. So, he gives more emphasis on the basic aspects like the creativity, uniqueness and communicative potential of individual sentences.

This novel approach to Language Learning is not exclusively linguistic in nature. It is an inter-disciplinary application drawing on the work done by British functional linguists like Halliday, Socio-linguists like Dell Hymes and Philosophers like John Austin. The underlying theory that Chomsky proposed was the theory of competence which is latent in every normal human being.

For a Learner, Grammatical competence is also as necessary as communicative competence. But Hymes rejected Chomsky's theory of grammatical competence. He believes that language is not an outcome of rules; it is outcome of communication and culture. To become an effective speaker, the

speaker is expected to have not only the knowledge of grammar but also he/she should acquaint himself with the situation, context and the speech community.

To some extent, Dell Hymes is right. But when we experienced the same with the blend of chomskian theory of competence imparting enough modification in ELCSL (English Language Communication Skills Lab) in an Engineering College, the results we got were astonishing.

75% of the students with vernacular background (Telugu/Urdu) responded well.

The method we followed is as follows:

- a. Fundamental Grammatical rules (Like parts of speech, tenses, conjugation etc.) were taught.
- b. Phonetics has been introduced.
- c. E-Learning and the teaching aids of audio – video, news paper clippings, video clipping were used.
- d. The tests targeting the cultural aspects of the foreign language they were learning were administered.
- e. They were through contextualized spoken and written tests.
- f. More emphasis was given on weak students.
- g. Silent speakers were motivated highly to speak and participate in the mock skills like GDS (Group Discussions) and public speaking conducted regularly.
- h. Translational methods were used whenever necessary.
- i. The mistakes done by the learners were

rectified immediately with the explanation of rule position therein.

j. Above all, the learners were given enough freedom to communicate and exhibit their skills with a great encouragement intertwined with high motivation.

Though it is a challenging task to a modern language teacher (EL) who is expected to play multiple roles like a guide, philosopher, facilitator, trainer, mentor and role model, the contentment when we get in transforming a simple learner to a successful learner by becoming a successful teacher is an immense pleasure which is beyond expression.

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'Learning to use and Using to learn': 'The two way approach to communicative skills'
A conference paper presented in a zonal level seminar. *

“SANGEET SAMRAT”- SAALURI RAJESWARA RAO

Janga Gandhiji

Listening to the dulcet tunes you had
composed
A moist zephyr blew in summer's height
The cool moon spread the veil of her moonlight
The spring showered a rain of blooms
Nagavali, Godavari, Krishna - the rivers
startled for a moment before flowing on...

In your music, word and emotion confluence
With the sound of Harmonium waves,
with aptness of language, with the greatness
of feeling
your voice sounds mellifluous

While the breeze spreads the fragrance of God
made flowers
You spread honeyed harmonious music
Your music practice full of diligence,
Your 'bringing together' of tunes,
filled life breath in Raagas
like "Shankarabharanam", Todi, Kalyani,
Mohana

'Missamma, Malleshwari, Jayaprada, Illaalu,
Dr.Chakravarthi'
memories of your pristine creations.
They are the paeans to the Golden Era of
Telugu Movies
In Saluru / Shivaramapuram - your birthplace
like fragrant flowers blossoming
your admirers are all singing
the famous song you had composed-
"Paadamani Nannadaga valena, paravasinch
paadana naa"

You are
the personification of 'Bhageeratha'
to the cine music awareness.

*English Translation – Ambika Ananth,
Bangalore*

*

FROM A BING BANG? NAY!

Raparla Janardana Rao

They say it all came from a 'Bing Bang'
Nay, I say, it was all in sweet silence
From a melted heart, as plaintive note it had
its origin
Otherwise, how silent the genetic stars and
Moon move?
The Mother's solitary egg and a petty particle
father,
In union, sans whisper, we are all from.

All in order, never in splinters for a result glory
Do the flowering plants bloom with sound?
Lovers longing looks make no noisy voices
In silent moments, they unite their hearts open
Didn't the dacoit bring out the epic
Ramayana, starting with 'Maa Nishada' on a
heart rending episode?
Let the bang concept be banged
Oh! in silent sweetness, we all have come.

*

LEAVE ME ALONE

H. Vasudeva Murty

Why vex me?
A bundle of cares and anxieties.

The tenaer twig move,
The falling of withered leaves,
The blow of gentle breeze,
The out flowering of rose bud;
The nimble move of the squirrel
up and down the tree,
The humming of busy bee
Send shivers along my spine.

A refugee
Prying far from the madding crowds,

Not daring speak or spoken to
Neither by words nor by deeds
Did they offend me.
Somehow sensing them hostile,
I turn away from them.

Hence, why trouble me?
A truant, I may be labeled
Do not care I,
I am at home when I am alone
Taking things as they come,
Though I stumble at every straw
And I am dejected at every difficulty.

*

THIS LOGICAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(For Report Writers)

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes;
But the plural of ox should be oxen, not oxes,
Then one fowl is goose, but two are called
geese;
Yet the plural of moose is just moose and not
meese,
You may find a lone mouse or a number of
mice;
But the plural of house is houses, not hice. -
The cow, in the plural may be cows or kine,-
But the plural of vow is vows, not vine.
And I speak of a foot, and you show me your
feet,
And I give you a boot, could a pair be called
beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called
beeth?

If the singular is this, and the plural is these,
Should the plural of kiss not be nicknamed
kese?
Then one may be that, and three may be those,
Yet the plural of hat could never be hose.-
We speak of a brother, and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say
methren,
The masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine she, shis and shim!
So that English, I think you all will agree,
Is the trickiest language you ever did see.

*The following has been reproduced
from SEARO News of 21 July 1969.*

*

BOOK REVIEWS

Building Bridges, by Frank Jousen, Tiruvuru. 2008, pages - 61, Rs. 25.

Frank Jousen like Schopenhauer or Max Muller has a deep craving for India and his poetry is the testament of this reality. Having fallen in love with a country of varied hues of culture, religion and tradition and the oldest civilization of the world, the vision of Jousen is as large as vast as the sky and as deep as the ocean. His is the poetry of the life, and its multicultural and multi-dimensional approach which has an inherent and incessant urge to unfold the enigma called Truth and the present collection *Building Bridges* is an authoritative attempt in this direction.

The present collection *Building bridges* dedicated to the founder, the staff and the children of IDEAS (Initiatives in Development, Empowerment and Awareness Society) a non-profit voluntary organization based at Tiruvuru (South India). Actually the collection is edited by Avvari Showraiah, the all in all of IDEAS who has been working for the street and working children for the past seventeen years and is a dedicated social worker. Only the persons like Awari who have a noble mission of Social Service before them can do such a commendable work in this age of growing competition and declining moral values. When our eyes are accustomed to see wrong and ears are accustomed to lies and we have gone strayed in the jungle of materialism, the light houses like Frank

Jousen and Avvari Showraiah will definitely succeed in guiding the humanity at large.

The collection has 51 poems, mostly addressed to India and her glorious background. Jousen is the votary of Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Theresa who are the icons of Indian social reform. The poems of Jousen bespeak of global peace and brotherhood because his prime concern is Man and his predicament. When he visits Gandhi Museum in Madurai, he recalls Mahatma Gandhi and says:

All your life you fought for
The freedom of forgiveness
The worldwide waves of
Your fasting and your speeches
And the elementary spinning
Of the never-ending wheel (51)

The poems like 'Talking to Banyan Tree', 'Flying Back', 'Poverty Poem' and 'Building Bridges' are the poems in which Frank's thought and vision mingled with humour and irony are visible. The poem 'Two Poets Standing on the Grass' is a fine example of comparison and contrast between two poetic geniuses, Tagore and Whitman. The poem, 'On the eminent Death of Domestic worker' gives a comparative analysis of the son of a rich fellow and a domestic worker.

Another poem 'encouraging Beggars' written on the three quotations from the south central Indian Railways is full of irony and reflective quality. But poet's deep love for India

is recurrent in many poems: I will give/ So/ Anniversary, there is/ Good by India for now/ There's no country/ That's so difficult/ To stay in/ And so hard to/ Say goodbye to/ At the very same time (54)

Frank Jousen is vivacious German poet who has refreshing verbal expression with an array of varied shapes and forms like the colours of India. It is a very modest attempt of the poet to remind every Indian, the rich, glorious and charming heritage of India. In fact, the poet in the nosegay of these refreshing flowery poems has tried to express his deep love and adoration to a great country. And to some extent the aroma of Indianness has glorified the poet also. The book is a must read for the persons who are deeply influenced with western culture and have forgotten their own glorious past and is also worth reading for the persons who have deep love for this nation.

Shaleen Kumar Singh

Destination, (poems), Hazara Singh, Self-publisher, Ludhiana, pages - 142, Rs. 200.

Hazara Singh who celebrated his 85th birthday at the time of the Diamond Jubilee of Independence of India, has written a collection of verse reflecting his thoughts on current events. Parts of the manuscript show thoughtful, empathetic, inspirational and insightful glimpses of the way life and love and politics influence people the world over; for example those in the section headed 'On Man'. In this section his 'To a Child: A Father's Pledge' is particularly moving. Other verses

are impressions of global situation, world leaders and of local events. A deeply thoughtful and meditative nature is clearly evidenced in this writing.

There are seventeen sections and epilogue. Hazara Singh has entitled the sections: Longings, Pathfinders, Martyrs, Post-Independence India, Degeneration, Outbursts, Environment, Historical, To Our Neighbours, On Man, Reflections, Introspections, Recollections, Realities, Old Age Moods, Tercets and Haikus. Most of his verses have no set rhyming pattern. Usually the subject covered is grouped in lines of four, or eight, or ten.

Changes of pace and length keep the reader interested and involved. The poem 'Fire' is short but the message is conveyed in the verse pattern and line length of this introspective poem:

Fire, despite its dazzling flame
Blurs seldom our power of sight
The flame, with its sizzling heat
Lends joy to each home and hearth

But the cold fire of envy and hate
Though is without smoke and flame
Yet consumes our power of reason
Depriving life of the joy it holds.

Some of the verses have a discernible rhyming pattern, and these vary, as demonstrated in the first verse of 'To Our Pakistani Brethren' which has such a pattern, consisting of five lines ABACD, but using CD as a rhyming of the eye, and with the fifth line of the verse repeated as the final line.

However, in each of the successive five

verses, the pattern changes to ABABC and this is the tool which emphasises the message.

In 'Old Age Pastime' he tells us in the final verse that his pen gives him more comfort than a pet:

Some people take to the keeping of pets
Dogs, cats or even the wing-clipped
birds

So that wagging tails, warm purring rubs
And chirping notes ward off loneliness
Any healthy company the pets seldom
give

Seek lot of care to share their affection.
A prolific pen, provides pleasant pastime
Lets not the wielder feel lone when alone.

Hazara Singh, even at an advanced stage in life, illustrates with words his philosophy of living.

Dedicated to 'participants and the martyrs of freedom struggle, and to those committed to the transformation of political freedom into social equality, economic justice and dignity of individual', Hazara Singh's work should receive attention from English scholars as well as those interested in the history of India and on the emergence of its future cultural climate reflecting global current events.

Austin Kehoe

READERS' MAIL

Gratefully acknowledge TRIVENI (Jan-March, 2008) which is as resourceful as ever. Great people had commended TRIVENI many a time. Me, an humble bureaucrat-turned poet can add nothing to what they said. Anyway, TRIVENI is satisfying read for me.

Pronab Kumar Majumdar, Kolkata.

I congratulate you for running your prestigious & reputed journal to promote the cause of literature & culture in India & abroad.

Dr. Sudhir Nikam, Mumbai.

In response to the article on Sri Sri, the poet extraordinary, I feel the Government

could at least release a postal stamp in memory of Maha Kavi Sri Sri on his birth centenary.

G. Shanti Kiran, Ooty.

Your editorial in the Oct-Dec. 2008 issue of Triveni is superb. Even a bland subject like family planning could beautifully adorn the prime place of the editorial of the prestigious magazine 'Triveni'. May God bless you with long life & good health to continue the good work you are doing.

Dr. G. Lakshmipathi, Hyderabad.

WHO'S WHO

- Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao
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 I. K. Sharma
 Atmaram Shamrao Gangane
 B. P. Acharya
 Jyothi Keerangi
 Dr. K. Sandhya
 Aejaz Fathima
 M. Nagaraju
 Dr. I. Satyasree
 Prof. G. Surender Reddy
 Rudranarayan Mishra
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 N. Siri Rahel
- Dr. Ram Sharma
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 C.V.G Krishnamurthy
 Kalavathi Tiwari
- P. V. Laxmi Prasad
 G. Sankara Bhanu
- Prof. Hazara Singh
 Dr. P. K. Joy
 Khaja Nizamuddin
- B. S. Murthy
 K. K. Krishna
 Manoranjan Das
 Vani Devulapally & M. Koteswar Rao
- Janga Gandhiji
 Raparla Janardana Rao
 H. Vasudeva Murty
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 Retd. Professor, Warangal.
 Poet, Jaipur.
 Writer, Parbhani, Maharashtra.
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