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OBITUARY

We Regret to note the untimely demise of Smt. V. Rama Devi, a member of our Trust Board.

She was a woman of self made success having scaled the peaks of glory as an administrator, legal luminary, novelist, creative writer and social worker known for her humanitarian zeal.

Rama Devi distinguished herself in her career having occupied the prestigious positions in the higher echelons as Law Secretary, Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha, Chief Election Commissioner, Governor of Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka. She was respected for her integrity, social concern and service mindedness. Death has snatched away one of my illustrious students.

Chief Editor

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-Triveni Foundation

The Editor is not necessarily in agreement with the views of the contributors. They should accept responsibility for their articles.

Chief Editor

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TRIPLE STREAM

RAMAPPA TEMPLE - A SCULPTURAL MARVEL

I.V. Chalapati Rao

From the dawn of history the highest aspirations and the profoundest experiences of the human spirit found their expression through the medium of Art. The heaven-ward hankering of the soul cannot be effectively transmitted through the limited alphabet. Lifeless grammar cannot be the proper vehicle for transports of ecstasy, flights of imagination, visions of the spirit and the deepest urges of the inward life. Art including the sculpture is the fit medium for portraying such feelings, emotions and experiences. Ramappa Temple at Warangal is a sculptural marvel.

Kakatiya rulers extended their patronage to art, poetry, music and dance. There was spectacular development of civilization and culture. The period witnessed notable contributions to architecture, agriculture, irrigation and water resources as well. Ramappa Temple, Thousand Pillars Temple, Eka Sila Nagaram, Warangal Fort, Trikuta Temple at Kondaparti, Elakurti Temple, Kateswara Temple and many other shrines proclaim the glory of that period. It is unfortunate that they were vandalized by the Muslim invaders. What we see today is enough to imagine their beauty and grandeur.

The period of Kakatiya rule in Andhra Pradesh was a glorious period. They were not only warriors, they encouraged arts and literature by patronizing scholars and artists. They built temples by engaging reputed

sculptors from all over the country. Particularly in Warangal and the neighbouring places we find monuments which show their aesthetic sense.

Ramappa Temple near Warangal is the Crest Jewel with its art and sculpture apart from its cultural value. It was built by Ganapati Deva, a King who believed in his civilizing mission and catholic vision. The architectural beauty of the medieval art of the Hindus is nowhere found with such splendour. It was built during the period when the Kakatiyas ruled the region, 1159 to 1261 AD. It took 23 years for Ramappa, the sculptor, to complete the construction. Kakatiya sculptures were a synthesis of the styles of the Western Chalukyas and Hoyasalas - the Saivite and Vaishnavite features. It is evidence of their religious tolerance and catholic outlook at a time when Saivites and Vaishnavites were fighting with each other.

When the tourist visits Ramappa Temple, he will find beautiful figures of gods and goddesses, women in graceful poses, wonderful scenes and pictures of warriors. It is indeed a surprise how it survived the ravage of the Muslim marauders and the damage of the elements like cyclones and earthquakes. In the sanctum sanctorum of the shrine we find the idol of Sri Ramalingeswara - Shiva. The idol is surrounded by Nagendra, the serpent god with outspread hood like an

umbrella. We find an aura about the Linga, gentle light. Outside the sanctum one finds Nandi (sacred bull) in shining black stone with bells and other decorations. The bullock with its expressive eyes looks like a real one.

The gaily decorated ceiling and the surrounding temple walls contain beautiful figures of *Puranik* and mythological stories and scenes from our great epics - the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. One finds the figure of Sita staring at the golden deer and Rama with the *Aswamedha Yajna* horse ready to start on its triumphant journey. On the other side there is Sathyabhama, Sri Krishna's beloved spouse, with bow and arrow ready to kill the demon Naraka. As we know, Deepavali the festival of lights is celebration of the killing of Narakasura. There is the imposing picture of the devas and the demons churning the ocean of milk using Vasuki, the serpent god as the churning rod. At another place there is Vishnu killing the demon Gajasura. We also find the famous Dance of *Nataraja*. On the front door of *garbha gudi* there is the auspicious scene of the marriage of Parvati and Shiva.

The graceful figures of dancing girls and the various musical instruments are depicted with great dexterity. We find the figure of a girl chasing away the mischievous monkey which catches the fold of her sari! The bracket figures are said to be illustrations of a book on dance written by Jayappa Senani. Even tribal damsels are carved on the stone with slender waists and ample breasts. The beauty

of the bodies is visible from behind the transparent veils! We find Nagini holding snakes in her hands. There is the image of the goddess of the forest dispelling darkness.

A danseuse is seen performing *Perini* dance which is believed to be originated in Kakatiya culture in medieval times. Warriors are seen in a typical battle scene. In a wonderful piece of sculpture there is the wife sending her husband to war placing a sword in his hands.

Flowers and creepers are depicted with great artistic skill. Even the proverbial pranks of Krishna stealing the clothes of the *gopikas* are picturised with skill. The damsel of spring waiting under the creeper for her lover in expectation is another work of art. This scene is depicted with great skill which makes us believe that it is not artificial.

There is a beautiful lake nearby, sending cool breeze to the people and irrigating the fields. It is called Ramappa Lake.

All things considered, Ramappa Temple combines sculptural elegance with scenic beauty and spiritual serenity. The tourist who goes there for sight-seeing in a merry mood will be transformed into a pilgrim looking at the divine scenes in a worshipful mood! India should be proud of such temples which showcase the marvellous art and sculpture of our countrymen. The only thing the Temple needs is a glass case in which to preserve it for posterity.

JNAN PEETH AWARDEE - RAVURI BHARADWAJA

Dr . V.V.B. Rama Rao*

Educated only by the hard realities of the actualities of existence and learning from the real life around him and his own living, Bharadwaja has come up very high. He honoured himself first scaling peaks of sublimity attaining jnan peetha. *Jnan Peeth* Award for him announced recently is considered by the lovers of his multitudinous other achievements as merely nominal. His humility is endless. One simple example is his calling this writer, his friend, eleven years his junior, *upaguru*. Here is a brief essay on Bharadwaja's literary-Gnostic achievement.

Playwright, novelist, short story writer, humanist and most importantly a writer of foremost eminence in the elegiac-diarist mode, Ravuri Bharadwaja has been a writer with an amazing output of nearly 140 books. A totally self-educated man, he did not go beyond II Form. Now an octogenarian forging ahead fast he continues to be a humble learner, his flowing white beard notwithstanding. "*Aardrata*" is one word that sums up the body of Bharadwaja's literary achievement. It is the moving feeling at the root of *karunarasa*, which our poet/dramatist, littérateur Bhavabhuti of yore declared pithily: *eko rasah karunaeva*. Again, it is the word that epitomizes Bharadwaja the poet and writer as man. With nothing to fall back upon except a feeling heart and an imaginative mind capable of delving into tears in the nature of things, he trudged ahead doing many things

one after another for a living, being an apprentice to a carpenter, a farm hand and an odd jobs man.

Pot-boilers apart, Bharadwaja's works fall into three major categories: fiction, reportage and elegiac writing in the diary mode. His most significant contribution to Telugu literature is the last. The elegiac response was triggered by the death of his wife Kanthamma - the Divine Mother figure he missed - who stood by him during most of the vicissitudes of his life. On her death after nearly four decades of companionship, he realized that he had lost not only his better half but also his guardian angel and personal goddess. The diarist's activity started on New Years day, 1986, immediately after the light of his soul vanished.

"*Naaloni Neevu*" relates to musings recorded in 1986, "*Antarangini*" to those of 1987, "*Aithareyam*" to those of 1988, "*Aaina Oka ekantam*" to those of 1989 and "*Okinta Vekuva Kosam*" to those of 1990. The five elegiac-diarist compositions in prose are the record of a gamut of feelings, impulses, ideas, musings and insights of a mind swayed by grief, struck by loneliness and impressed and widened by the vast influx of thought-waves wafting supra-physical and supra-terrestrial love. Husband and wife getting fused into a single being is the age-old concept in Hindu ethos - but one living through the other without being physically

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present, feeling the soothing touch in the breeze, the fragrance in the leaf, flower and tree, the radiance in the star, the cloud and the sun and being in perpetual company of the beloved is an imaginative experience. This is to reassure the grief-prone that all shall be well. The transcreation of the pangs of separation and loneliness into a yearning for the divine and the flair for envisioning God in the physical non-presence of the beloved in these pieces is a transformation seen by the poet as a manifestation of Eshwar.

Kanthamma emerges as the name Bharadwaja has given to the all-pervading joy, love and peace that passeth understanding. The beloved becomes Eshwar, the divine father and mother. The bond on the physical plane transcends into a feeling of love, of understanding and of ripeness. It is "aardrata" that gave rise to the diary jottings-the musings of a "saatwik" in quest of God. These emanate from "swabhava" (nature) of the person as a form of "shraddha" - a concentrated attention and commitment - as the Lord tells us in the Bhagavadgita:

*Trividha bhavati shraddha
dehinam sa swabhavaja
Saatwika, rajasi chaiva
tamasichetitam shrunu.*

Going a little further, the poet in this pentad is a worshipper of the divine, as one with "aarti", "jijnasa" and "jnaana". The devotee transcends the ordinary mortal and becomes a devout worshipper who in his "bhavana" approximates to the divine being and he finds Him in everything everywhere. Being able to discover in Kanthamma the very embodiment of the divine is no mean

achievement, thanks to the mellowed power of "bhavana" as "anubhuti".

Bharadwaja describes his elegiac compositions as little plants of fire sprouting from raw wounds. From the very depths of tears, "aardrata" moves and it ennobles too. Bharadwaja carved a secure niche for himself in the pantheon of Telugu poetry with his achievement. In his elegiac writing he makes us take a look into his heart and what is more, lends us his hand to walk along with him in the vast and extensive regions of "bhavana". In this state he is both a visionary and a creator of something concrete. The poverty and the hardships he suffered are by no means new to millions among us. But not all who shed tears of pain and agony have become poets. None who could not succeed in drawing tears has grown and stayed as a poet for ever in people's hearts. For the emergence of "rasa" empathic response is a prerequisite. For this both experience and the feeling it generates are necessary. Beyond these, in Bharadwaja's words, "for the emergence of poetry with *aardrata* the entire internal life should throb like a raw wound'.

The agonies of the wound would not allow themselves to be squeezed into ordinary words, phrases, symbols and grammar. But these in union would show, to some extent, the macro form of the wound. This is the limited extent to which the elegiac pentad would succeed. "The diary-entry dated December 31, 1988 (while at the *Sahitya Akademi* national workshop on literary translation in New Delhi I had the good fortune to see it on the day it was written) is a sample of the poet's delicately sensitive yearning, his humility and his supplication to the divine. Here is a

translation by way of a sample of the poet's "bhavana" and vision:

Why does the breeze frisk and play like this!
Why does this warm light wave in ecstasy!
Why does the slumbering rocks wake up in glee!

*Wondered the mendicant.
Devotees swarmed in groups
for a vision of Eshwar.
The mendicant came there to beg
for a handful of rice
To assuage the importunities
of the murmuring belly.
"Here arriving is the Lord,"
announced someone.
There was commotion
among the groups of devotees.*

"Who's that Lord? Whoever is he coming for?"
The mendicant demanded
in a voice of daring violation.

*Everyone resented his questions.
The news that Eshwar was arriving
spread in a trice.
Some wanted to stow away their sins,
some their anger
Some their heat somewhere
Some wanted to pass off
for the poorest of the poor
Some for the devotees
And some changed their guise.
In this hubbub
they drove the mendicant far.*

*Like sound crawling from silence.
Like the dawn setting foot on the sky
at wake-up time,
Like a great poem gathering itself
into sounds from thoughts,
Like thunder, like lightning,
like the unending,
Like the un-expanding,
Like the joy past being and past truth,
Came Eshwar.
The crowd made way for him respectfully.
Away from everyone, innocent
and fear-stricken
With his begging bag,
the mendicant stood shivering,
As was his wont he put up his dirty bag.*

*"I took away from you what I gave you.
Now I don't have anything worth giving.
In recompense I give you myself;
This is the purpose of my visit
Come, my minion, come, and accept me,"*

*Said Shiva: with tear-filled eyes.
-The mendicant has been only me.
AITAREYAM (Pub. 1989)*

The only thing the poet wants from us and the only thing that we can give him is to look into the pentad with a measure of imagination and "sahridayata" filling our hearts with "aardrata" in the process. The Jnan Peeth Award might have pleased many and the humanist himself twenty years ago. But Bharadwaja is saintly, very near being a sthithaprajna.

All human actions have one or more of these seven causes: chance, nature, compulsion, habit, reason, passion and desire.

Aristotle

LIFE IS THE BIGGEST EXAMINATION

Yalamudi. K *

It has been the contention of many that much is amiss with the existing pattern of education system. The rot is to be found in many facets of it. One of them is the importance that is attached to academic success. The first line of the poem "*Mending wall*" of Robert Frost runs like. "There is something in Nature that does not allow ----". The poet wonders in the poem that there is a mysterious power in nature, which does not allow the walls to stay as they are. Likewise there is something in our educational system, which is not mysterious, but which is very clear and it is unfortunate that it drives the learners to the edge. It is the great premium our system of education puts on academic success, as if, it is a thing by itself. Always both consciously and unconsciously, an idea is drilled into the simple and formative minds that "Failure is an Insult" It is this which makes one feel helpless and lose hope. But, the real value that is to be taught is, that failures are the stepping stones of success and success is plural.

Besides, as the level goes, it goes without saying that the loaded sub-text of any text is to be given the critical focus to instill the enduring values of life. Unfortunately, it is not done. But, in theory all is hanky-dory. Therefore, the Planning Commission's 12th Plan document on higher education (21.244) puts greater stress on 4Cs. They are, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and

creativity. Sadly In a system of learning that has become merely mechanical and shallow, one does not, naturally, find the orientation that helps one to face the ups and downs of life with equal thanks. At a time when the measuring rod itself is faulty the importance one gives to the measurement baffles one. It is always a big question, how many of those who have passed the academic examination would pass the muster in the biggest test of all i.e. Life. But, the hype one generates for the academic success is such that one is overwhelmed and all sanity is disturbed.

It is a strange scenario. When it comes to theory, everything is fool-proof. Starting from the Minister of HRD down to any educational authority at the last leg of the ladder, all say, all this is bad. Speak to any parent in isolation, same is the feeling. About educational seminars, the less said the better. Rhetoric is high-flown. Even the private players of education in private and for public consumption bemoan the fact that much is amiss. Yet, the system of rote learning and marks -based measurement of success and failure are going strong. The question is how is it that all of us are so full of hypocrisy? Now that RTE act stipulates that quality is not external to the pattern of teaching- learning process, one is hopeful that the tide may turn for the better and rosy days are round the corner. Hope is always alluring. Does not Keats say, in a memorable way, "Heard melodies are sweet, those unheard are sweeter".

* S.R. & B.G.N.R.Govt, Degree and P.G. College, Khammam

As it has been suggested by many educationists, any reform in the system, in the realm of practicality, of necessity, has to begin with the teachers and parents. The brief of a teacher is not that brief. Many tend to think that their job is well-done, if they see to it that the pass percentage is higher and the students score good marks. Yes, it is a part of the job. But, the real contribution of a teacher is totally different. He has to be a guide, philosopher and a motivator, in a nuanced way, in the process of making one a man of steely resolve and with a holistic understanding of things. Symbolically speaking; he is a boat-man in the rough sea of life. In terms of *Zen Buddhism*, his influence should be such that he is a bird on the shoulder of a man, when one is at sea of moral impasse of life.

All this may spring a doubt. Is not a teacher burdened a lot? No, it is the very thing which makes a teacher's vocation a fruitful and a deeply satisfying one. The current concept of a teacher, which is in wide currency, is that a teacher is a facilitator of knowledge. The value neutrality of information underpins this assumption. The equating of information and knowledge/ wisdom reinforces this wide spread thinking process. It has to be given up. Not that all the teachers are ignorant of this responsibility. But, unfortunately, the problem is a real one.

At the same time, there is an urgent need for the paradigm shift in the attitude of the parents. They stop reliving their lost

aspirations in life in the achievements of their children. On the face of it, it may look a genuine desire. But, it is not. Aspirations cannot be transferred genetically. Human abilities vary. Providing an opportunity (which was not available to them) by itself does not justify their pressure on the children. It may not be that overt always. If anything, they are supposed to encourage innovative outlook. They need to instill the most important value of life, that is *endurance* among the children. Endurance is such a character trait that it adds lustre to one's life, despite a heap of failures all around one. How does one account for the endearing and inspiring quality of *Santiago* the old man of Hemming way? Was he a victor? No. was he a loser? Absolutely not. Then what is he? The answer is, he is everything that is optimistic and positive.

As such, standing slightly a cut above the rest in the competitive rut is not everything. In short, it is the responsibility of the entire stake -holders of the system to provide a space to every student to orient his life in symphony with the inherent abilities one is surely endowed with. Hence, in conclusion, one hopes that 'education' becomes a handy weapon that helps one overcome the psychological stress of the system and more so, it becomes a transformative tool to demolish the structural inequities of the day. It is the height of irony that the process of acquiring that weapon itself is turning out to be a sorrowful saga.

If you want to increase your success rate, you must double your failure rate.

Thomas Watson, the Founder of the I.B.M.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CONCEPT OF RELIGION

Prof.V. Visweswariah*

In his memorable address at the parliament of religions at Chicago, Swami Vivekananda declared "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal tolerance but we accept all religions as true." He also asserted "I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this Convention may be death knell of fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal". Swami Vivekananda's mission was to put an end to all religious squabbles and to make people of different religions recognize God as the all pervading spirit. He discarded all superstitions and wrong notions accumulated around various religions and explained the real meaning behind all religions. Religion, he defined, is the realization of Spirit as Spirit. Religion is not in books, nor in theories, nor in dogmas, not in talking, not even in reasoning. It is being and becoming. Different religions are but different paths to the realization of God. God is truth and truth is God. This realization, he asserted, is essentially a manifestation of the divinity within man.

Vivekananda said that every religion has 3 dimensions or parts namely philosophy, mythology and ritual. Philosophy presents the

scope of religion setting forth its basic principles, the goal and the means of reaching it. Mythology consists of legends and stories relating to lives of men and the supernatural beings. Rituals are more concrete in nature and the ceremonies are intended to appeal to the senses which would help the aspiring souls to attain divinity. Unfortunately, in practice, these do not open the hearts of men to God. Instead sectarianism, bigotry and fanaticism develop and retard the progress of human soul. Instead of becoming a blessing, religion becomes a curse. Vivekananda therefore strongly refuted the identification of religion with rituals. He emphasized philosophical aspect of religion and said "Religion without philosophy runs into superstition and philosophy without religion becomes dry atheism"

Vivekananda makes a distinction between religion and *dharma*. Religion denotes faith, belief, emotion, and conduct where as *dharma* aims at fullest manifestation and fulfillment of human life. According to *Upanishads* '*dharma*' is the greatest principle which makes man know 'That' which never changes and by knowing which everything is known.

Dharma encompasses duty, power, nature and truth. If one follows *dharma* there will be harmony and order in the society. *Dharma* also keeps man in harmony with the nature and environment and enables him to

* Associate President, APSCCON / Vice-President, AISCCON

attain his own ends in life. *Dharma* protects man from anguish and despair.

Hinduism does not date from a particular point of time nor does it flow from the teachings of a particular founder. That is the reason why there is tolerance in *Hinduism*. It does not claim that it is the only pathway to realize God and it is called *Sanathana Dharma* which has survived over thousands of years in spite of great upheavals and onslaughts. The tenacity with which it faced challenges and readjusted itself to new conditions is a standing testimony to its intrinsic power and undying vitality.

Vivekananda's concept of religion may be summed up in two words : Be fearless and I am *Brahman* (*Aham Brahmasmi*) which is known popularly as practical *Vedanta* - *Vedanta* in action synthesizing the entire cultural heritage of India right from the *Vedas*. This is a shakthi mantra. Have no fear- endless is your power-great is your strength-you are *Brahman*- Arise -Awake. This clarion call in that particular context of human civilization really shook the world. Man has to offer his all to *Brahman*, to burn himself in the fire of *Brahman* for a new birth. All are one and I am all. It is not nearly a spiritual equation but a matter of great identity. I am not merely my brother's keeper, my brother is I and I am he. This is the *vedantic* approach towards life leaving aside matters of caste and creed as secondary, but going direct to the spiritual fountain of oneness.

Throughout his life he preached his countrymen to know and realize the ethos of India. He advocated spiritual humanism on the

basis of divinity in man. To him a man without religion is an incomplete man. He stated with all vigour "Forget not lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper are thy flesh and blood, thy brother". This can be attained only when we adopt correct system of education namely "character building" and man making education. Such a system of education will be the panacea for all the ills and infirmities in our society

Romain Rolland in his book "*The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*" says Vivekananda's words are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of *Handel Choruses*. I cannot touch the sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of books at thirty years distance without receiving a thrill through my body like electric shock. And what shocks, what transports must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero!."

Swami Vivekananda, a patriot and saint, in his short span of life, less than forty years, has been the father of renaissance in India. He restored Indian philosophy and culture to their rightful place not only in India but in philosophic thought of the entire world. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his "*Discovery of India*," described Vivekananda as a tonic to the depressed and the demoralized Hindu mind. He was foremost among the outstanding cultural ambassadors of India. The country is indebted to this "*Yuga Purusha*," and remembers him with gratitude and offers its devout and respectful "*pranams*" in the year of his 150th birth anniversary.

EDUCATION-AN AMALGAM OF CONCERNS

T. Padmanabhan*

Education as an area of attention and study partakes of the nature of an amalgam of concerns, concerns having to do with philosophy, science, art, a set of practices; it is a process, and a product; it is both Investment and Consumption; it is a plan and a programme, rather an inexhaustible set of programmes. Aim wise it suffers the disadvantage of a plenitude thereof. At what age should formal education begin, knowledge inputs of what description and volume should be decided upon in different age groups, what should be the mode of transmission of knowledge, a mode that carries with it the guarantee of assimilation, all these and many more sub-areas of attention demand study and decisions. Formal and informal education and the most effective combination thereof, parental coaching and other - mostly institutional - coaching also claim attention. The content of education is a matter over which will hang a permanent question mark. When may a student be deemed to have become a 'finished product' in point of education, in other words, when is he to be treated as having achieved a level of education typified by a degree or diploma that qualifies him for inclusion in the category of 'employables,' another problem arises which has to be solved. Also there is the question to be answered: when is he to be deemed to have become truly fitted for the role of a citizen? Mere lowering of the age for voting

is no more than a political technique, devoid of true social significance.

This subject EDUCATION may be found to have become the happy-hunting-ground of specialists, generalists, 'beneficiaries and other stake-holders' and alarmingly enough, of politicians giving rise virtually to rank growth of opinions and criticism. But in this piece of writing a generalist approach only to certain issues of education is intended, avoiding the risk of getting lost in irksome detail, where the 'specialists' will claim exclusive domain. It may be that more of its philosophic aspect comes in for attention. In a paper on 'the power of education' Alva Myrdal made an observation: 'The term education is to be understood, in its widest sense, as any systematic influencing of people's knowledge, skills, and attitudes.' Serving a utilitarian purpose, it is to strengthen the will to take on and the capacity for the discharge of responsibilities in life-context. Viewed this way the matter acquires farther and wider boundaries. All this may serve to highlight a particular significance of education, that it is an area of concern virtually becoming co-extensive with life-context, that the major responsibility therein should attach to the 'learning' activity, that the individual as target of education and beneficiary (or sufferer?) there from, has to shoulder onerous responsibilities, in ever so many ways including effective participation in the roles of investor of effort and consumer of benefits and also of

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transmitter of benefits (to society). This is not to belittle the significance of the teacher's role.

There is in currency a frightening proposition: 'If the student has not learnt, the teacher has not taught.' This represents an extreme of an opinion. It may have to be modified to signify that where the teacher is ineffective as a teacher, the student has to redouble his efforts at learning. It should always be borne in mind that in both categories, persons effect entry with 'vast unmapped territory' in them. Unpredictable stuff, explosive stuff etc. make their presence felt in both categories. It will be to do rank violence to truth to hold either category wholly to blame for such dissuccess as may keep occurring in the educational effort. Suffice it to say that the policies of government invariably keep inducting into both categories elements of unpredictable behavioural dispositions and capabilities.

Those who play a very active role in the education of citizens are the parents, the teachers, the learners themselves, society at large, the government, those who cater to the entertainment requirements of people and so on. These agents/stakeholders are cut out also for the role of 'expert facilitators,' in the task and process of learning. Parents have unrestricted access to the mind of the growing child in its formative years. And the process of education of the child begins in the earliest of the most formative years and continues over most of those years. Then the day care centre, and later the school etc come into the picture. The peer group influence begins right there with the day care centre wherever people are in a position to afford it and/or with the school. (The siblings' company, one

should hope, will not be a disturbing influence.) That is another variable not easily predictable in its effect. The teachers partly take over the role of the parents in the remaining formative years. Over a short period at least there has to be tacit co-operation between the teachers and parents as participants in fashioning the man-to-be in the child. Society at large and government by providing in a larger context the social and social-psychological environment in which alone growth of the child has to take place also come to be determinants of the direction of growth of the child. It is easily possible for the entertainment industry with all its intrusive advertising techniques to offset whatever good effect is produced by the first two; the reason why a reference at this point is not made to society and government is that it is so difficult to predict the permissiveness both bring to bear on the way they play their role, as a context-provider, as a controlling agency, as a disciplining agency etc., and hence to foretell the possibility of both siding with the last agency in the entire process. It could be that the scene is set where the first two agencies have to fight the others in promoting the cause of the child.

This is the peculiar situation in which people intent on doing good to the individual and society through education have to plan for neutralizing the likely baneful effects, on the intended beneficiaries, of the other factors, viz. the entertainment media and untoward happenings in society, and possibly unwise policies of the government. Their task is cut out for them in clear enough terms - to design such a scheme of education as will strengthen the chances of the individual for self-enhancement, through improving the positive

impact of instruction and offset or nullify the negative impact of the disturbing factors mentioned above. The time factor demands of the planners appropriate and adequate allocation of temporal space among subject-areas of study, helping the students become proof against distractions such as have been mentioned above and steadfast in their application to the task of learning. They have to do considerable rethinking about reintroduction into the curricula for the different levels of education, of 'moral science,' ensuring that moral imperatives figure in an adequate measure in the scheme of education. Nothing, it is said and said with reason, is education unless it has taught one life's true values. Such education alone is 'achieved,' any other education is only 'received.' There are two observations weighty with wisdom made by two keen students of humanity. One is: *'the chief constituents of what we call manhood are moral rather than intellectual.'* The other is: 'The test of every religious, political or education system is the man that it forms.' J.G. Holland referred to people with four qualities of head and heart as the truly desirables in any society: 'Men whom the lust of office does not kill, 'Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy, 'Men who possess opinions and a will, 'Men who love honour, men who cannot lie.' Surely an educational system could make a passable attempt in this direction, being guided by the acknowledgement that 'the reach could be longer than the grasp?' Emerson's remark that 'Man is a piece of the universe made alive,' will have to begin its journey as truth with a forerunner that 'the boy is a piece of the educational system made alive.' The extent of

'liveliness' or 'aliveness' varies directly with the content of education, the nature and extent of commitment of the teachers to the task of instruction and the extent to which *society* means business in creating a wholesome environment - physical, psychological, social-psychological - conducive to the fashioning of the right kind of citizenry and so on.

Of true education there are held to be 'five evidences providing proof positive:' 1. Correctness and precision of speech; 2. Refined and gentle manners; 3. The power and habit of reflection; 4. The power of growth; 5. The possession of efficiency and the power to do, to do good. The whole effort of education should be bent toward providing the learners with the advantage of these five priceless boons. These are to be held the only true, the only acceptable 'educational accoutrement.' It is these alone that make education an undeniably social process.

In no more compelling sense is 'education a progressive discovery of ignorance' than in the area of awareness of *right* and *wrong*. It is of the utmost importance to cultivate in the minds of the learners capacity for thinking for themselves. Thus alone can the mind of the learner be turned into a fertile field for *the power of discrimination between right and wrong* to flourish therein. The process of education should be such as will provide to the learners chances of getting acquainted with the different modes/styles of thinking, of identifying the appropriate styles of thinking for the different situations of which life is composed, of strengthening the mind in the art of discovering and rejecting crooked thinking.

The trouble with most learners is that they think with their hopes or fears or wishes rather than with their minds. This is one truth to reckon with in the matter of developing in the minds of the learners capacity for thinking and discrimination. An allied truth is: 'Our most important thoughts should be those which contradict our emotions.' In this direction alone lies the hope for impulse-control.

A Greek educationist quotes A.N. Whitehead from his 'Adventures of Ideas' as referring to 'the relations between human beings oscillating between force and persuasion and 'to the worth of men as consisting in their liability to persuasion.' Such *Persuasion* should be by the simultaneously abstract and concrete discipline called 'reason and logic,' imagination is a powerful aid to developing the qualities of head and of heart alike; through association of ideas and similar intellectual devices it strengthens qualities of head; through fostering capacity for sympathy, empathy and similar emotive etc. tools for forging brotherhood, it helps strengthen qualities of heart. For developing such faculties in the human being right from the time the genetic input starts evidencing itself in him no elaborate syllabus or curriculum is necessary. It is ready to hand in the form of the pearls of wisdom that human history is strewn with, in the form of sayings/proverbs/subhashithas, in the form of lines of poetry which are an irresistible invitation to thought. The only thing required for action is a bit more of attention to details of temporal allocation, ensuring that at least an hour a day is set aside

for such effort, at every stage of education, and in particular in the formative years when the mind's capabilities start firming up.

One thing requires insistent reference and that is the mode of recruitment to the ranks of teachers. Unfortunately predilections and ill-formed policy preferences are found to influence to a great extent the recruitment process and of course the results. Those responsible for taking people into the ranks of teachers disregard the wisdom set forth in a pithy sentence: 'a poor surgeon hurts one person at a time; a poor teacher hurts a hundred and thirty'. Reservation should be for the only category, the category of the competent with faultless motivation. And Society and its agents should ever be on their guard against the wiles of those who successfully manage impression to their advantage by appearing to be competent and healthily motivated in any process of recruitment.

A highly refined thinking faculty relentlessly bent on assertion of the claims of right against those of wrong should be the deathless goal of educational effort. Those who facilitate its development and growth will be establishing their claim to the gratitude of the present and of posterity:

*'Give thanks, o heart, for the high souls;
'That point us to the deathless goals;
'Brave souls that took the perilous trail
'And felt the vision could not fail.'*

Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all - the apathy of human beings.

Helen Keller

A CASE FOR MORE AND EFFECTIVE 'THINK TANKS' IN INDIA

Dr. G.S. Rao*

India is faced with myriad issues and problems. There is a steady decline in the functioning of all the three branches-Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. The body politic has taken a deep dip. India has the largest number of people below the poverty line and according to the 'Human Development Indicators', India still ranks at a low rank of 134. There is a great divide between urban and rural areas with most of the rural people lacking in basic amenities like drinking water, sanitation, health care and education. Above all, population is reaching unmanageable levels.

Neglect of intellectuals in the formulation of national policies is one of the reasons for the present situation. The Cambridge - educated first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru had great respect for intellectuals and took their active assistance in policy making and institute building. The most outstanding example is of the renowned philosopher S. Radhakrishnan, chosen as first as Vice President and later as President of India in preference to political heavy weights.

Intellectual inputs are necessary if the nation has to prosper and 'Think Tanks' can play a vital role in this regard. At the same time, intellectuals should take extra care to show equanimity in their views, as there is a misapprehension in some quarters that intellectuals are elitist in their approach.

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There are known to be hundreds of Think Tanks in developed countries. In India, however, Think Tanks are few and most of them are either working in Government departments or agencies serving in-house requirements. A few non-government Think Tanks exist but do not make any significant impact on public affairs.

Today, public policies are generally being decided to suit party interests or decisions on inconvenient issues are being postponed indefinitely. Although there is some economic progress, there is a growing middle class with large scale joblessness. There is a growing disenchantment with the existing institutions, which is not a healthy sign.

In a democracy, public opinion and awareness matter. To-day, political parties exploit the ignorance of people for their party ends. The media that could play a part in educating people have their own commercial and vested interests and add to confusion. Think Tanks could serve to educate the public on proper lines.

The envisaged Think Tanks may formulate their thinking based on Gandhi Nehru-Ambedkar vision of socio-economic development and Tagore-Vivekananda humanistic philosophy. The subjects of study may include human development, social transformation, education, health care, Center -State relations, inter-state water problems,

improving water resources, population control, environmental pollution, biodegradation and other short and long term issues.

The Think-Tanks should obviously be independent of the government, be nonpolitical, non-partisan, non-ideological in their thinking. The views should be based on analysis and deep study and should not be empirical. The approach should be academic, at the same time pragmatic. It should have an information cell to provide required data. The focus has to be on educating and moulding public opinion so as to take an objective, scientific and rational view of issues.

The Groups should comprise eminent and concerned citizens, academicians, social scientists, scholars and jurists with no prior ideological or sectarian commitments. They may collaborate with other professional bodies like university social science departments. They may conduct seminars and conferences for exchange of ideas. The thoroughness with which issues are studied gives credibility to the views of the groups.

Finally, there cannot be an illusion that Think Tanks will altogether change the public policy of the Government, but they can play a useful role in influencing public opinion, which is crucial in a democratic set-up.

THE DIVINE NINETY ONE

A.V.Apparao *

On the joyous eve of Prof. I.V. C's 91st Birth Day; on 25th April, 2013.

Oh! My beloved teacher
How can I know the depths
And heights of an eminent preacher
Of nature wide and universal
While you pierce the essence
Into my every cell!

Your 'nature,' has been Love personified
With barriers of ego nullified
The 'mantric' effect of your erudite talk
Made every soul awake and rock!

The words in Light you composed
Read in rapt attention had my eyes closed

* Chief Engineer (Retd.) Nagarjuna Sagar Dam,
Hyderabad

Only to see the myriad things
In silence with celestial wings!

You give us your grace
To surpass ourselves,
Seeing the big possibilities
In all of us disciples.

A happy and a special day too
When the Supreme descends into you
With ninety one feathers
In your Cap with colours,
Are they not gifts from Heavens
Carrying power and light in abundance
Replenished to further your Life's journey
Showering His beatitude sharing with many!

INCREDIBLE INDUMATHI

Radha Murthi*

This Indumathi is neither a mythological character nor one out of a novel nor from a history book. Yet Indumathi Jonthale, a well known writer from Maharashtra, is no less than any one of the above. In spite of the hardships she had undergone as a child and as an adolescent she had sailed through life cheerfully and has come out as a winner.

Her autobiography originally written in Marathi and titled Binpatacha Choukat is not only a popular novel but also received several awards and is included in the curriculum for graduate, post graduate and doctoral studies in many universities in Maharashtra.

Indumathi's mother Kamala, who was from a traditional Maharashtrian Brahmin family, fell in love with Sahebrao a non Brahmin. Sahebrao and Kamala's brother Ranganath were very close friends. They both used to actively participate in India's struggle for independence. Only once Ranganath had to go underground for fear of getting caught by the British soldiers' and Sahebrao took charge of Ranganath's household responsibility as there was no other male member to do so. Because of the inevitable close proximity and also because Sahebrao was a dashing, handsome young man, Kamala was attracted by him. Though already married with two

children, Sahebrao was also drawn towards Kamala, as she was good looking, smart and intelligent. Since both of them knew that their love will not be accepted by either family they eloped on horseback one late night.

Soon they got married and had four children. Sahebrao never went back to his first wife and had a happy married life with Kamala for a longtime. They both had opened a small school and taught the children of the neighborhood to earn a living. Everything went off very well in the beginning but as the family grew the expenses too increased and financial problems cropped up, which made Sahebrao very frustrated and irritable. To augment the income he opened a provision shop in one of the rooms of his house. As Kamala had to manage the house, children and occasionally the shop also, she used to be over worked and tired, due to which there used to be arguments between them quite often. So Sahebrao ordered Kamala not to enter the shop and deal with the customers.

One day Kamala was preparing lunch and Sahebrao had gone to the town to buy some provisions for his shop. As somebody came asking for some groceries, Kamala had to open the shop and give him the groceries as he had literally begged her to give some.. As the customer was leaving, Sahebrao walked in and he was beside with rage as Kamala disobeyed his orders, and in a fit of rage hit her with a pestle. She lost her balance

* Sainikpuri, Secunderabad

and fell on the grinding stone nearby and sustained a severe head injury. Some kind neighbors carried Kamala to a hospital where she succumbed to the injuries after struggling for life for four days. Sahebrao surrendered to the police and after a trial was sentenced to life imprisonment. Mother dead, father in jail, their four children became orphans.

On Sahebrao's request his distant cousin came and took charge of his four children, all other valuables, and even the cattle with him. But he did not show the affection and love and the good life they were used to, rather showed them hell on earth. The three elder children aged eight, five and three were made to work like bonded labor, doing all indoor and outdoor chores like, washing, sweeping, swabbing, getting fodder for the cattle and grinding jowar for rotis. Child Indumathi had to look after her infant sister Munni too. The elder three were given meager food and the infant Munni was not given milk but instead given a dried piece of roti which she could not eat. With the result over a period of time she became malnourished and died. She was not even given a decent burial.

After one year, due to the constant efforts of Sahebrao, his three children were allowed to leave his cousin's house and were kept in three different Govt. hostels where they got food shelter and good education.

During her hostel life Indumathi underwent experiences good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant. She joined the hostel as an eight year old girl and left it as an eighteen year old. In those ten years she became a matured, efficient, sympathetic, kind and capable human being. She had the good

fortune of having stalwarts like Shyam Kaka, Anna Sahib Sahasrabuddhe, doctor Gajanan Gaikwad and many more dedicated, compassionate and affectionate people as her mentors during her hostel life and thereafter also. They not only groomed her, financed her upkeep and education but also helped her to get married. With such kind people's help she finished her B.A., B.Ed., found a job and even started working before her marriage at Kolhapur.

As per the advice of her guardian, Anna, she met Mahaveer jonthale an assistant editor of 'Marathwada' daily who had come to Kolhapur as an examiner for the state level dance competitions held there and discussed with him about her personal life as well as her views on various subjects. She made it very clear that she would never sever ties with her brothers, for which he agreed. Indumathi and Mahaveer got married in a registrar's office with a few friends and well wishers around them. But marriage did not mean a fairytale ending for her troubles. In Indumathi's own words in the journey of life whatever she got was only after much struggle. A new problem started for her immediately after marriage.

Mahaveer is a Jain and his mother was a very rigid puritanical lady in her ways and did not accept Indumathi who was the product of an inter caste marriage so easily and treated her as an outcaste. She was made to stay in a corner room of the main house and even food was dropped into her plate from a distance. Though her mother -in- law never used harsh words towards Indumathi, her behaviour was humiliating, and she did not

accept her first grandchild well. But Indumathi with her patience, affection, understanding, and perseverance changed her mother-in-law so much that in her later years she started trusting and depending on Indumathi totally. She even treated her brothers and their families with love.

In spite of the hardships she had undergone, Indumathi has no resentment, no bitterness, and no hysterical outbursts in her narration of her autobiography. The simple straightforward and cool detached way she painted the picture of cruelty some people are capable of showing to fellow human beings especially to children and even infants is heart rending.

Through her autobiography Indumathi gives us a message that one should face the

hardships that come in one's life cheerfully, with courage and a positive approach but without self pity.

I, Radha Murthy, had the privilege of translating her autobiography into Telugu and also meeting her personally. I was very much impressed by her cheerful, magnetic personality. One Mr. Prashant Talnikar had translated her autobiography into English. Indumathi is working as the Principal of Saraswathi Bhuvan High school at Aurangabad, Maharashtra, lives in her own house with her husband, drives her own car and is involved with many social organizations. Her two daughters are well settled in life and are leading happy married lives in their respective homes. Her autobiography is a source of inspiration for many women in society.

BETWEEN TWO BREATHS

Dr. J. Bhagyalakshmi*

Breathing in and breathing out,
It is strange that a simple thing as this
Controls our life
Stands by us every second
Of which we are not even aware.
It comes at will and goes at will.
We have no say in the matter
There are many means to die
But there is only one way to live

To breathe
Breathing is the sole essence of life
The rest of them,
Any number of them,
Do not come to our rescue
When we don't breathe,
Or cannot breathe,
Our will, free will or collective will,
However strong or supreme, we may think,
Is of no help.
After all, our entire lives nestle in
Between two breaths

* Poet, New Delhi

WAITING FOR THE LEADER

B.N.V. Parthasarathi*

*Brahmany aadhaaya karmani sangam
tyaktkvaah karoti yah
Lipyatee na sa paapena padmapatram
ivambhasa*
(Bhagavadh Gita 5th Chapter, 10 th sloka)

Lotus flower exists in water; it survives and grows in water. Water is the source of life to the lotus flower and provides energy to it. Yet the lotus flower is detached from the water, in the sense, it does not get wet by the water. In similar fashion, the soul of a human being lives in the body. The soul uses the body as an instrument. However, the soul is not entangled to the body like the lotus which is detached from the water. Unfortunately, the human being is possessive over his body and he is not conscious about his soul. He feels that he is the master or owner of his body. His possessiveness makes him to think that he is the cause of all actions and deeds and he identifies himself with those actions and deeds. The fact is that body is just an instrument and the actions and deeds performed by the body are purely a natural process, like a lotus flower which survives and grows in water. Once the human being realizes that his body is just an instrument and he is not the body, he will give up his possessiveness over the body. Once he gets detached from his body he will shed his ego. The human being

develops desires since he expects certain results out of his actions and deeds. Once he leaves the results of his actions and deeds to the supreme God, he will overcome the desires. A human being who shuns ego and overcomes desires is completely detached from his body, actions and deeds yet he continues to perform those actions and deeds as they are purely natural process, like the lotus flower which exists in water.

When one shuns ego and gives up desires he becomes selfless. His actions and deeds will be self less and in the process beneficial to the society. His sacrifice of his ownership of his body and desires of his actions and deeds will pave the way for his evolution as a true servant of the society. Great leaders are in fact true servants of the society as they are self less and they sacrifice everything to the cause of the society. Great leaders also realize that leadership is not a position but a choice (Stephen R Covey-The 8th Habit from Effectiveness to Greatness).

Those leaders who rely on a position to acquire power, they become devoid of power once they lose their position. As a consequence they also lose the ability to lead since their leadership is linked to power acquired by position. True leaders are those who demonstrate their power and leadership, even though they do not hold any powerful position or post. True leaders get power by

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their act of selflessness and service to the society. This power is acquired by sheer inner strength and not by external source like a formal position or post. Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda are examples of such great leaders. While Gandhi fought for the freedom of our country, Swami Vivekananda struggled to propagate that the purpose of true religion is to have concern on the underprivileged, to serve the needy and maintain world peace. Incidentally both Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda did not hold any formal post or position from which they derived their power to lead. It was purely their selflessness and the cause of the society which gave them the conviction. This conviction gave them inner strength to continue their mission irrespective

of the hardships they faced. As they did not have any selfish motive or desires while pursuing their mission, they had the courage to face several odds and still accomplish their mission. The world in general and India in particular now need such great leaders as we are passing through a global economic crisis since 2008. We need leaders with vision to steer through these turbulent times. Leadership with vision is possible only when the leader is selfless and has a mission of serving the people to enhance the welfare of the society. Global history so far has proved that great leaders came on the horizon during crisis and showed how problems could be converted into opportunities. Let us hope that history repeats itself.

CULTURE

Prof. Hazara Singh*

Culture, an ardently admired elegance
Has been aptly compared to the bee,
Which picks honey from tender blooms
Sweet in taste and toothsome as manna.
Soft wax obtained from a honeycomb
Is rolled to make pencil-like candles;
A source of light when darkness falls,
The bee, thus, gives sweetness and light.

Darkness often illustrates ignorance,
Whereas light is symbol of knowledge.
Sweet words and the righteous deeds

Render a person lovable and refined.
Ignorance, a grave sin as well vice
Spoils the grace; pollutes the mind.
A man of polish in quest of knowledge
Is in right earnest to imbibe culture.

'As busy as bee' is a golden saying
A cultured man is seldom found idle
Love as sweetness, knowledge as light
And work as worship bequeath culture.
In the march from stone age to space
Traits of culture kept elevating man.
An idle brain is the playmate of devil
A cultured man beams bright with grace.

* Poet and Freedom Fighter, Ludhiana, Punjab

**RUTH PRAWER JHABVALA:
The Booker Prize Winner and Oscar Winning Novelist**

Dr. P.Satyanarayana*

Ruth Praver Jhabvala, British-Indian novelist was born in Cologne of Polish - Jewish parents, Germany on May 7, 1927. She was the Booker Prize Winner and Oscar winning novelist and screen writer who died in New York on April 3, 2013. She emigrated to England as a refugee in 1939, and was educated at Queen Mary College, London. In London in 1951, she met and married the Parsi architect Cyrus Jhabvala. Between 1951 and 1975 she lived in India and has since lived in New York. Her 24 years in India made her reputation; a stream of novels, short stories and essays poured forth that led critics to compare her to Jane Austen. India intensified her sense of not belonging, "I never really had any close friends in India and I felt a terrible loneliness and isolation for many years," she once said. She spoke of "changing countries like lovers" and of being a "perennial refugee".

Her best known fiction was set in India, from '*The House Holder*' (1960) to '*Heat and Dust*' (1975). She gave expression to intense emotions about India, a love-hate relationship that took her decades to break away from. She compared this feeling to being strapped to a bicycle wheel. Strongly observant of Indian life but she shunned its society.

Her first two novels, "*To Whom She Will*" (1955) and "*The Nature of Passion*" (1956), express the novelist's fascination with the country of her adoption, exploring western traditions and conflicts within the frame work of domestic comedy. In "*Esmond in India*" (1958), she introduced the theme with which she has to be identified, the encounter between East and West. The "*House Holder*" (1960) on the other hand, is an entirely Indian novel in subject matter and treatment. This portrait of a marriage was made into a successful film by Merchant Ivory Production with whom Jhabvala has since frequently worked, writing innovation original screen plays such as '*Shakespeare Wallah*' (1973) and "*The Guru*" (1968) etc. She has also adapted several contemporary classics for the same company, not only Henry James's '*The Bostonians*' (1984) and E. M. Foster's "*A Room With a View*" (1986). She has a famous anecdote about James Ivory's (Director of Ivory Production) first encounter with the novelist. When Ivory and E. M. Foster decided to make their debut black-and-white feature from '*The House Holder*', and tried to contact her in Delhi, she pretended to be the maid in a desperate effort to avoid them. The film starring Shashi Kapoor and Leela Naidu was released in 1963 to a critical acclaim. Jhabvala got her first Oscar for best adapted screenplay for '*A Room with a View*', based on E. M. Forster novel.

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Jhabvala's novels of the 1970s signalled a deeper, richer phase of her writing. *'A New Domination'* (1972) examines the mystic Hindu Cults that began to proliferate in the 1960s and their systematic and unscrupulous Exploration of Western traditions.

"Heat and Dust" (1975) is perhaps Jhabvala's finest novel which got Booker Prize. It tells the interlocked stories of two English Women, divided by time and era, but related by family ties and by their experience of India and by their experience of India. An unnamed narrator-whose diary part of the novel purpose to be-travels to India in search of the elusive Olivia, her grandfather's first wife (whose life is related in fragments and flashbacks to 1923); captivated by the vitality concealed within the post-colonial decay of India, she, like Olivia before her, decides to remain there. Olivia, however, as the wife of a colonial officer, had known a more exotic and opulent India. She was seduced by an Indian Prince whose mistress she then became causing a scandal in the bigoted Anglo-Indian society of the time. The narrator, however, in an age when history has over taken the Raj and the imperial past is regarded as something of an irrelevance, became pregnant by the petty clerk in whose

house she boards and is left to deal with her life as she can on her own resources. Jhabvala deftly contrasts the imperial with the colonial, the East with the West; the similarity that recurs a cross gaps of time and culture is, however, in the harsh treatment of woman, whether by exclusion and ostracism, marginalization, or more indifference. As in much of her fiction, Jhabvala indicates and implicit parallel between cultural diversity and gender difference. *Heat and Dust* was successfully filmed by the Merchant-Ivory Jhabvala team in 1983. Describing the technique she adroitly employed, of the echoing stories of two English women caught in poisonous relationships with Indian men across a span of time in *'Heat and Dust'*, meant that she had "exited from India on a double life- one it took me 24 years to manufacture". Jhabvala won her second Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for *"Howard's End"*, again based on E. M. Foster novel. Her last film as screenplay writer, *"The City of Your Final Destination"* was released in 2008.

Ruth Praver Jhabvala's life and fictional art captured the drifting life of a writer buffeted about by the whirlwind of history. India was the Prism that refracted it in many ways.

It is easy to love the people far away. It is not always easy to love those close to us. It is easier to give a cup of rice to relieve hunger than to relieve the loneliness and pain of someone unloved in our home. Bring love into your home for this is where our love for each other must start.

Mother Teresa

TEACHING OF ENGLISH AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

Kalavathi Tiwari*

In teaching a second language the goal is instrumental or communicative. The cultural and literary goals are minimized. In the present-day context in India, the learner of English has to use English for purposes of communication (oral or written), in his/her day-to-day life, in the office, in the market place, in the bank, and sometimes even in social gatherings. English is used as a secondary vehicle of communication within one's own culture and social context. Learning a language means learning the means by which a thought, an idea, an emotion, an experience, a fact or a piece of knowledge is conveyed or communicated. In that sense, language is a medium or a tool and the mastery of a tool comes with practice in the use of it. The four skills or abilities that comprise the mastery of a language are (a) listening, (b) speaking, (c) reading and (d) writing. The four skills are referred to as LSRW without which no language can be used effectively. In the present-day world, we find that communication skills are demanded for employment purposes all over the world; in information technology, in electronic media, in meeting people, and in interviews. So, in teaching English all the four aspects are important. Chomsky's work has affected English language teaching in many profound, though not necessarily in direct, ways. The

concept of communicative competence along with the contribution of British applied linguists like D.A. Wilkins, Christopher Candlin, Henry Widdowson, Christopher Brumfit, Keith Johnson, and others (drawing on the work of British functional linguists like J.R. Firth and M.A.K. Halliday) brought about a real shift in the approach, methods and techniques in language pedagogy and ELT. The goal of language instruction shifted to building up the learner's communicative competence. As a result of the shift from linguistic competence to communicative competence, several communicative syllabuses have been proposed. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) aims broadly to apply the theoretical perspectives of the communicative approach by making communicative competence the goal of language teaching. Learners must use the target language (though judicious use of the mother tongue of the learner is allowed) a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role plays, and problem-solving tasks or activities.

Writing compositions in schools and colleges develops the ability of the students to express their ideas freely. In order to write a composition on a particular topic and to present their ideas coherently in their compositions, the students of secondary/senior secondary schools and colleges should acquire sufficient knowledge in English language structures, vocabulary and grammar.

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Exercises in composition build up the pupils' confidence in writing skills. It is a valuable resource for making young learners creative. It also enhances their communication skills. The students' writing ability as well as their ability to communicate freely can be developed by various techniques.

Modern technology, rapid industrialization, growing number of organizations, increasing international trade and commerce, international radio and television programs, have made it a worldwide necessity to develop communication skills (Mohan, 1990: 17). So many approaches and methods have been propounded with an intention to teach English as a foreign language and there are certain techniques introduced by great linguists to develop communication skills.

Communication is the most significant invention in the scientific and technological history of man. It plays a vital role in trade and commerce, politics and other important areas. The scope of communication is very wide and deep as any simple exchange of thoughts between two persons comes under the fold of communication. Communication, as we have seen, is fundamental to any human interaction. In families, societies, organizations and business, people constantly communicate with each other. Communication is indeed a basic necessity in various walks of life. Those who can master the process of communication can acquire communicative competence. People with good communication skills are considered an asset to any organization. In making communication effective, one should build up self-confidence. This leads one to be competent enough in communication.

Communicative competence is nothing but achieving the goal of learning and teaching any language. There are five communicative competence areas. They are Linguistic, Sociolinguistic, Interactional, Cultural and Strategic.

To be linguistically competent, one should know how to use the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of a language. To be sociolinguistically competent, one should know how to use and respond to language appropriately, how to use fitting words and phrases while communicating. To be interactionally competent, one should know how to use appropriate body language, eye contact and proximity to other people. To be culturally competent, one should be able to understand the cultural behaviour of the members and to be understood by their behaviour. Intercultural communication training is given to the employees in Call Centers and IT companies. To be strategically competent, a person should know how to make it clear that he has not misunderstood others and in a similar way he does not allow himself to be misunderstood.

Rayon, a resource person in ELT states that creative teachers of English use jokes, popular songs and newspaper articles effectively in the classroom. Brahim Elkhailil Afaichil from Morocco says that "Creativity is not made, it's born. Creativity is doing something that is unexpected and different. To be creative means to be resourceful and have a good sense of humour taking into consideration students 'mood and need'. Susan Hillyard who specializes in 'Creative Learning or Teaching' strongly believes in a new method of teaching, Multimedia Imagistic

Teaching (MIT), introduced by Chustavo Tavora, who uses photographs, paintings, drawings and home movies in the classroom. The rationale of this method is the use of low-tech-equipment, such as digital cameras, cell phones with cameras and other gadgets, by using the minimum of creativity.

Hence it is clear that it is the teacher, who with his/her specialized skills, organized plans, systematic handling of the class and students, can improve creativity and communication skills of the students. This is possible only when the students are encouraged to write free composition. The techniques adopted for free composition enable the students to communicate freely. For example, designing posters/advertisement is nothing but written communication. Mass communication is possible through posters/advertisement. Hence it is clear that creativity in the classrooms results in writing composition and through writing composition, written communication takes place.

Techniques adopted to teach English at tertiary level:

Group Activities: A study was conducted by Jacobs and Jessica Ball to examine the use of group activities in ELT course books published since 1990. Ten randomly selected course books were analyzed in order to find the number and percentage of group activities as a whole. The results are discussed in the light of theory and research on cooperative learning, task-based language teaching and the roles of learners, teachers and course books. Suggestions are made so that group activities help foster cooperation among group members.

Theorists in both general education and language education stated that Task-based Language Teaching and Co-operative Learning provide insights into the circumstances and ways that group activities can be of benefit. Co-operative learning is a subject of group work methods. A large body of research suggests that properly structured co-operative learning activities are associated with positive educational outcomes.

CLT aims to develop communicative competence in the learners so that they become effective communicators in the target language. Basing on this NCERT published a policy document in December 2000 that provides for learner - centered teaching rather than teacher-centered. This approach is still very popular and the text-books are designed for this and different techniques are developed to make it effective. These techniques are used in the classrooms in the form of oral composition or written composition with an objective to develop communicative competence.

Communicational teaching is a five year project of exploratory teaching of English as a second language which was planned, carried out and reviewed regularly by a group of interested teacher trainers and teachers of English as a part-time activity but with institutional support from the Regional Institute of English, Bangalore and the British Council in Madras from 1979 to 1984.

The teacher of language should never lose sight of the fact that there are two stages in the acquisition of linguistic competence: The first is to recognize and handle lumps of

language in the context in which they have first been encountered. The second is to be able to lift them out of that context and put them to work at one's own will. It is only when he has reached the second stage that the pupil justifies the energy that he and others have expended in the earlier process. It is essential on the part of the teacher to take all necessary measures to maintain the interest of the pupil in learning a foreign language. They have to make their teaching lively and purposeful by creating interesting situations, using language games and a variety of attractive devices. If the students are encouraged to use the language thus acquired, they feel proud and happy of their success and tend to show more interest and enthusiasm in learning language. Since Free Composition is their own creation, students get sheer joy.

The teaching of grammar should be done by adopting an Inductive Method in order to make it interesting to the students. Plenty of examples should be given to the students to form a single grammar rule. Fluency is to be given more importance. Classroom teaching should be learner-centered but not teacher-centered. Students should be given more and more opportunities to speak out.

Compelling the students to read classical novels, plays and memorizing essays will, in noway improve their communication skills. Instead, teachers are supposed to conduct Group Discussions, Role-Play, Debate etc. in the classroom to build up communicative confidence among the students.

In schools, teacher should give more importance to Language Practice Exercises than elaborated explanation of the lesson. In colleges, teachers should encourage the students to write their diary at the end of everyday. They should also conduct extempore talks and focus on introvert students. They should create an English atmosphere where students ought not to speak any other language than English. Teachers should not discourage their students by pointing out at their mistakes in a humiliating way.

If the class does not know certain words or structures needed, the teacher should practice them with the class beforehand. Especially in the first stages of composition work, careful preparation in the class is of great value. In fact the first one or two compositions can well be done on the blackboard, with the students contributing ideas to the construction. If the teacher makes the task confusing or painful, it will be difficult for the students to develop the right attitude towards writing later.

At every level right from X class to Degree and P.G. level, tests should be conducted in all the four skills in order to promote their communication skills.

English Teachers with their innovative methods should take it as a challenge to make their students communicative competent.

GIVING VOICE TO SILENT WAIL

Sabita Radhakrishna *

Your cry from the depths of your soul is never heard. Because it is soundless. Your grief is unique to you and you alone. Nothing matters anymore. There is no meaning to life. You wail

The tragedy of death. You commiserate with those who face the irreparable loss and your heart is squeezed. There is the relief that it had not happened to you, and you float on the feeling of being forever protected.

Without warning, in one fell swoop, death separates you from the one you love more than life itself. A slow numbness spreads starting from your brain to the rest of your body. You go through the motions mechanically, the last rituals, looking at the stream of people, coming over to condole you, and you listen to clichés. One part of you is touched by their kindness and caring. Another part screams hurt when people lack sensitivity. Well meaning people could never be put off, however much you pleaded for privacy - *she be left with some shreds of dignity.*

Shock and disbelief surge through your being, when you are told she is gone. You can't even cry, because it did not happen. Someone else is laid out, someone else is cremated, the loved one is there in another room, sure to come out smiling, and soon. You freeze as they wrest the physical body

* Communicated by Prof . DVR Vithal, Osmania University (the husband of Smt. D.S.R. Krishna who went to her heavenly abode). She was also my student. - Chief Editor

from your tender clasp, and agonise to hear that her ashes are scattered over the holy rivers, into tie outdoors where she really belonged.

The dead are gone. And then start the sleepless nights. *If only*, you tell yourself, she were here. *If only* we had done this.... The saddest two words and the most painful... *if only*. Regret, bitterness and guilt. The dam bursts. You cry till you have no tears to shed. You cannot focus on things which were dear to you just months ago. The spark of life which people found so attractive to you have gone maybe forever. You lose interest in the home, in how you look or how you dress.

Somewhere out of the blue you hear a voice, "I am just here with you. I love you and want you to carry on as you always have....." You hear it again and again. Petal fresh memories linger of happy times. You learn to shape your lips into a smile.

After the enormous tidal wave, calm sets in, very slowly. A resigned peace thanks to meditation, the solace of spirituality and submission to the inevitable. A calm is born out of knowledge that she is at peace and that her *karma* in this life is fulfilled and that she responded to a higher calling.

The voice sounds again, this time gentler, more persuasive. "Move on, as you always have. Don't let this stop you. Look after what I have left behind. Love them as you loved me. They are in your trust. Move on." And yes, you move on. But you wipe your tears first, as otherwise your path is blurred.

POTANA MAHABHAGAVATAM: A SERIES OF INTERLUDES IN QUEST OF SALVATION OR LIBERATION

Dr. K. Rajamouly *

Every literature is credited for its rich variety of contributions in all kinds of genres. Telugu literature is specially acclaimed for its rich poetic output by famous poets like Nannaya, Tikkana, Errana, Potana and Srinadha. Among all the well-known poets of Telugu literature, Potana has a pivotal place for translating Sanskrit *Bhagavata Puranam* into *Andhra Mahabhagavatam* that stands unique and distinctive in multifarious aspects. The well-coveted work is known for Bhakti, the deep devotion and total surrender to God. It is also known for its lucidity as it is within the reach a common man. Every Telugu speaker quotes some verses from it in one or the other context. Finally, it has won encomiums for its figurative language. It therefore secures for him unrivalled fame as the crown jewel of Telugu literature for its unmatched merits.

Potana, popularly known as Bammera Potana, was a farmer as well as a scholar of Telugu and Sanskrit languages, hailing from Bammera, a village from Warangal district of Telangana region. He adopted the farming vocation to be independent rather than to be dependent on the patron-kings. His maiden contribution, *Bogini Dandakam* was however dedicated to his patron-king, Sarvajana Singha Bhoopala, a popular Sanskrit playwright. He, who was devoted

to Lord Shiva in his youth, became the deep devotee and ardent adorer of Lord Vishnu, treating both the gods with equal devotion and adoration. He firmly believed that it is a blemish on the part of people if they fail to worship Lord Shiva with folded meditative hands and Lord Vishnu with mouthful hymnal chants:

*Chetularanga Shivuni pujimpadeni
Noru novvanga Hari keerthi salupadeni*

As a poet, Potana considered poetry not only a divine art and worthy offering to Lord Rama, one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu; but also a supreme source for all to achieve salvation. He therefore dedicated his magnum opus, *Andhra Mahabhagavatam* to the Lord. He did not believe in hero-worship or king-worship. His sole aim was salvation through divine-worship and divine grace. Like Rabindranath Tagore, he felt that his appropriate offering to God is his supreme art of poetry. He, both as a poet and man, deeply loved compassion and truth and said that all should practice them to be worthy as human beings as not to be traitors to their mothers:

*Dayayu satyambulonuga thalupadeni
Kaluganetiki tallula kadupuchetu.*

For Potana, through compassion and truth one can attain the status of divinity. He

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teaches morals and advises all to follow them scrupulously for the freedom of the soul. He at the same time feels that compassion and truth are really relevant and essentially concomitant for social reform especially in the present days of false values. He identifies with the devotional characters of *Mahabhagavatham* like Prahlada and the elephant king, Gajendra who seek deliverance through the Divine grace as the Divine is the ultimate power for the granting of salvation. A deep devotion and total surrender in the Divine bestows on Prahlada protection against the demon, Hiranyakasipu's ordeals and hazards. Prahlada overcomes all these in deep meditation to Lord Srihari (Vishnu). His father Demon commands him to relinquish his meditation to Lord Srihari but he does not obey. He positively takes them all and remains unshaken in mind and unhurt in body. He treats his deep adoration to Sri Hari as the fittest and the most welcome one in quest of salvation despite a series of interludes. He gives the most convincing and fitting reply against his father's blind wish through a series of living allusions. He cannot be away from his most wishful mellifluous meditation to Lord Srihari in the way the bee does not hover round grass flowers while reveling the sweet honey of the hibiscus, the regal swan does not like to swim in the ocean while swimming in the breeze of the Ganges, the cuckoo does not search for the old leaves while relishing the juices of tender leaflets, and the chakora (partridge) does not fly in gloomy places while being inspired by the full-moon:

Prahlada's deep meditation to God is not averted by deadly commands of his father Hiranyakasipu as his sole goal is communion with God. For him life is God and He is to

take care of life. He seeks deliverance for his father demon also. During the avatars like Lord Varaha, Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, the Lord saves his devotee and grants him salvation. Potana has a strong faith that He comes to our rescue by punishing evil-doers and peril-creators in the way Lord Krishna comes to the rescue of Dhrowpadhi. Like a shepherd He looks after his sheep at all times for their safety as He is the Saviour of not only mankind but also other livings. He comes to the rescue of a true devotee and grants him salvation too. God possesses overflowing compassion for him who surrenders by seeking refuge in Him. Potana himself gets the divine grace for his true devotion. For the description of '*vaikuntam*' he started and completed only the first line: *Ala vaikuntapurambulo nagarilo a mula soudhambu dapala*. He was not able to complete the other three lines of the quatrain. Lord Rama came in the guise of the devotee-poet and completed the three lines to his pleasant surprise.

Potana, as a poet, never takes any credit for translating *Andhra Mahabhagavatham*. He said that he was instrumental in this yeoman contribution. He states the fact that it is Bhagavatham that speaks; and Lord Rama who makes him speak it:

*Palikedidi Bhagavathamata
Palikincheduvadu Ramabhadrundata*

Through *Bhagavatam*, Potana has the sole goal of salvation, the freedom of the soul, his deliverance after a series of interludes. As a devotee, he aspires for ardent adoration for God, as man he aims at deep devotion and as a poet he wants freedom to offer his

work to Lord Rama in quest of salvation. His sacred work of *Mahabhagavatham* leads him to salvation. Why does somebody else speak so?

... .. Ne
Palikina bhavaharamagunata
Palikeda verokandu gadha palukaganela.

As a poet, Potana portrays in *Andhra Mahabhagavatham*, the sense of devotion towards God on the part of a true devotee and presents the ways to attain salvation. For his true devotion to God, he is called Bhakta Potana. When he is in deep meditation, Lord Rama appears in the form of a king and apprises him of the need for the translation of Vyasa's Sankrit *Mahabhagavatham* into Telugu. He readily accepts to undertake the stupendous work with great dexterity and ardent dedication. He skillfully handles the concept of devotion, Bhakti. The wide popularity of the book is ascribed to the theme of salvation. It is God's infinite mercy alone that grants His devotee salvation and captures a special mention in Bhakti literature especially in *Andhra Mahabhagavatham*.

Potana starts his *Andhra Mahabhagavatham* with the invocation in the epic tradition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*: 'to justify the ways of God to man'. Potana's epic of epics reflects the theme in the other way round that it is to justify ways of God to a true devotee, the *Bhagavatha*. He prays to God in the form of a hymn like Milton who starts his epic with an invocation. He admits that God can bestow on His devotee the shower of blessings for due reward through divine grace. He prays for kaivalya. God is now here to save the universe and care for His devotees. He punishes the sinners. He creates the

universe as a part of His lila. He is none but Lord Krishna, Son of Yasoda.

Andhra Mahabhagavatham is a series of epics in twelve cantos with inroads into the salvation of the soul. It reflects technical brilliance and artistic excellence in portraying the theme of salvation. It is distinctive for its use of figures of speech especially similes and metaphors. Potana employs the figures of speech with telling effect and realistic picturesque. The use of figurative language and samasas, excellent clusters of words is an integral part of *Andhra Mahabhagavatham* to enrich his bhakti lyrics. He describes the battle of Satyabhama, accompanied by Lord Krishna, presenting it visual effect with snapshot details. The battle is the rain in the field with infinite arrows shot by her. He uses a series of metaphors for dramatic effect in the quatrain. Satyabhama is lightning, Lord Krishna is the dark blue cloud, the arrows are constant rain drops, etc. The battle as a whole is the rainy season with the constant shower of rain:

It is no exaggeration to say that the sound echoes the sense in the stanza. *Andhrabhagavatham* reflects the same telling effect as it is embedded with *alankaras* (figures of speech) and *samasas* (clusters of words) to facilitate the readers with the felicity of expressions. For example, '*sarojakshundu*' is the word with the combination of two words: '*saroja*' and '*akshundu*' meaning 'lotus' and 'one who possesses the eyes' respectively. The cluster of words means 'a person with lotus-like eyes' i.e. 'Lord Krishna'. Here the two words with individual meanings mean together some something else.

It is '*anya padartha pradhnam*'. Such cluster or samasa is called '*bahuvreehi*' and the most preferred one for felicity of expression. Potana is fond of extensive use of '*samasas*' along with the figurative language, '*alankaras*' like alliteration for musical effect and similes and metaphors for telling effect to result in the comprehensive understanding of the subject of liberation. Both the saint-poet and the devotee-reader feel that it is superbly suitable to the subtle subject of Bhakti literature like *Andhra Mahabhagavatham* and it is an unquestionable trait for the epic stature.

In the Bhagavatham, the three different characters- God, devotee and demon- are portrayed in every episode like Milton who similarly creates the characters: God, Adam and Satan in *Paradise Lost*. The first one as per Potana and Milton is God who is the savior of His devotees at all odds and frauds; obstacles hurdles; ills and perils. The second is the *Bhagavatha*, the *bhakta* or the true devotee like Prahlada for whom the demon Hiranyakasipu is the worst hazard in the path of devotion for his communion with God. In *Paradise Lost*, Adam, who is innocent represents the race of man and eats the fruit of the forbidden tree, resulting in his disobedience by the beguiling craft of Satan. The third one is the demon like Hiranyakasipu, Narakasura or Ravanaasura, a representative of some or the other evil trait. He creates hazards in the path of devotion of good

characters like Prahlada but they face them with ease. In Milton, Satan, in spite of his unconquerable will, fails to go against God's will in quest of retaliation and eventually experiences his defeat.

Andhra Mahabhagavatham reflects the message that God has infinite grace to shower blessings on man who is in deep devotion and ardent adoration of Him. Man in true devotion passes through a series of interludes to lay inroads in the path of salvation. The *Bhagavatham* is the tale of tales, told about the *bhagavatha* (the true devotee of God). It is for God to be pleased when His true devotees are rewarded and awarded; revered and honored. If it is contrary or any offence is committed to His true devotee, all the demons responsible for the sinful guilt and crime against God are punished. The *Ambarisha-Durvasa* episode of the *Bhagavatham* is the best example for this. It is Sage Durvasa, who offends Ambarisha, an absolute devotee of extreme humility who is duly punished in spite his approach to every god for protection. It is Hiranyakasipu, who compels Prahlada to forget Lord Vishnu, who is slain in spite of all possible means to escape death. Every episode of the *Bhagavatham* narrates the story of a *Bhagavatha*, a true devotee who is rescued by God as He has divine grace for His devotees to grant them salvation which every pure heart and high soul craves to secure in the path of *Bhakti*.

Next to knowing when to seize an opportunity, the most important thing in life is to know when to forego an advantage.

Benjamin Disraeli

A SILENT VOICE AND UNHEARD AGONY: A study of Buchi Emecheta's *The Slave Girl*

S.Prasanthi Sri*

Buchi Emecheta has to be read and understood as an African or Post-colonial writer whose quest for emancipation of women is shaped by consideration that are of more immediate consequence to the non middle class women. Much of the feminist movement in the West appeals to women who are ready to forego the comfortable zone of being "just" house-wife and mother.

In a study of African fiction by African women attention should be paid to the strong historical sense that explicitly marks their work. Whenever blacks and women are linked, black women are ignored in two ways as black people and women. Western white male is presented as a colonizer not only of the land and male but also the psyche of the black women.

The black women writers use colonization as a valid metaphor to portray their predicament. Colonialism may be defined as power game while the colonizer admitted that the Black in general; the aggrieved black male oppressed the women in the family. The woman is forced into a subordinate position of silent suffering as she is emotional and irrational to men. Her situation and that of the colonized people are linked in joint martyrdom. Thus she has become a martyr of colonization and patriarchy.

Further, she has been of ransom values to the victors in war or political ventures. Till date, the Black women have no rights to own property. Her labour: at home on, on the fields are never valued. Given the above condition, the Black male could easily ignore the needs of women, the question of women rights never arose. It has been accepted that African women could be raped into submission, exploited as labourers and endowed a sub-human status as slaves. The coexistence of dual political system of colonization and patriotism created havoc in the lives of African women. As Morola Ogundipe Leshe puts it: African women are shackled by their own negative self image by centuries of interiorization of ideologies of patriarchy and gender hierarchy. Her own reaction to objective problems are therefore often self defending and self crippling.

Girls learn during invitation rites that their future will determine exogamy and exchange arrangement and then will remain in an environment familiar from childhood to them, for the whole of their lives. Girls once married off, will end up in another village. They must then spend greater part of their lives among "strangers." Thus from the early age, the girls are instilled with knowledge that they are "in transit" at home. From the earliest childhood, she is an outsider who is being prepared for the central role that she will play at her in-laws where disillusionment awaits her. A great sadness is that her children belong

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nowhere. She has to be obliging both to her husband clan and her maternal clan. Her identity is diminished due to these contradictory loyalties. Her alienation is complete by adoption and internalization of the principles of the dominant ideology. Girls are taught their move to "the others" is of vital importance to survival of their own.

The girl in black community is useful only for two reasons, the Bride price she brings and for producing able sons to the clan and the cultural restrictions like puberty rites, menstruation, marriage and motherhood make them submissive.

The Slave Girl depicts the story of Ogbanje Ojebeta who is sold by her brother Okolie Ojebeta. She is a daughter of Okwuekwu Ode and Umeadi. She was living in a wealthy family with her two brothers in Izuba village before an epidemic called Felenza. The epidemic killed most of Izuba people including her parents. To avoid, however, such a catastrophe Okolie and Ogbanje decided to leave the village for Onithsha where their so-called relatives live.

During their outward journey, they meet their aunt Uteh and her husband Eze, who do not allow them to continue their journey. Unfortunately, Okolie and Ogbanje travel through the dark forest and they walk for a long time and take canoes until they reach Onithsha village.

As they paddled through the bushes, they seemed to be entering the belly of the Earth. It was as if they were being gradually but nonetheless determinedly swallowed by dark, mysterious all green world: the walls of

which were enveloping and then fencing them up. Overhead hung the tangled branches of huge tropical trees on both sides with large leaves, creeping plants and enormous tree trunks all entwined together to form this impenetrable dark, green grove.

When reaching the Out market, Ogbanje Ojebeta is astonished as she has never seen such a big market, with different people from different cultures with such variety of materials coming from United Africa Company. Surprisingly, she remarks that most of the people had a glance at her.

There is a wealthy woman called Ma Palagada to whom Okolie had decided to sell his sister because he was badly in need of money. So, Ojebeta was sold for eight English pounds, the amount which is suggested by her buyer. Accordingly, she came to increase the number of Ma Palagada's slaves.

Although, it was hard for Ojebeta to live away from her brother at the outset, she gradually got used to this new situation and she became an active member of Ma Palagada's household. She worked along with the other slave women. In the meantime Ojebeta meets good luck with Clifford's arrival from Lagos. In fact, Ma Palagada's son fell in love with her, by his mother's consent. Ojebeta could see life with new eyes because she stops working hard as the other slaves do. Ma Palagada thinks that this is a way to get back the money spent to buy Ojebeta.

Ma Palagada suffers from a long standing serious illness; her daughter comes from Asaba along with her two young children. The household atmosphere changes a lot

because of Victorian attitudes and behavior she brings to oblige Obejeta to look after her children and she plans to take her to Asaba as her house-maid. Even here Ojebeta meets with ill-treatment. She endures all with great patience. Ojebeta turns away on the D-day to the native village Ibuza, where she resumes breathing the air of freedom.

"I would rather be a poor girl in Izuba, than a well fed slave in this house with Ma

Palagada."

Finally, Jacob Alice married the thirty five year old Ojebeta and Jacob paid back money to Clifford who has joined the British army. Ojebeta now is called Mrs. Ogbanje Ojebeta Alice Okonji. Being a house-wife and put in a position of security, she feels that she is no longer a slave but the master mistress of the house.

2012 JNAN PEETH AWARD TO DR. RAVURI BHARADWAJ

We are delighted to know that Dr. Ravuri Bhardwaja has been awarded the prestigious Jnan Peeth Award for 2012. He won this honour in his 86th year after literary career of 60 years, having proved the truth in Johnson's observation. "Slow rises worth by poverty depressed".

Ravuri wrote 17 novels , 7 mini novels, 500 stories in 43 anthologies, 7 essays and other works based upon realism. His true-to-life short stories depicting the hardships and miseries of the poor appeared in Telugu periodicals. He had a stint as a writer and producer in the A.I.R. His literary output spanned a wide variety consisting of short stories, novels, plays, scientific articles and children's literature. Most of them were human interest stories.

The book that was selected for the Award was 'PAKUDU RALLU' portraying the lives of the women (gullible girls) who were lured by the glitz and glamour of cinema and suffered disgrace and humiliation in society. It is a mirror of what is happening to the credulous girls. His other novel 'Jeevana Samaram' depicts the fate of poor people in several trades and professions and provides voice to the voiceless.

The death of his wife Kanthamma was a great tragedy in his life. After this he looked like one from whose day light had departed. He produced plaintive verses expressing his agony.

For the first time Jnan Peeth Award Committee recognized and rewarded democratic touch in literature.

Chief Editor

THE TICKETLESS TRAVELLER

Dr. Laxman Palsikar *

... Once the world famous American writer Mark Twain was travelling in a train towards Liverpool in London. He was eight eighty then. During the journey he saw the ticket master at the entrance and began to search his pockets. When the ticket master went to Mark Twain, he saw him busy searching his pockets. This made the ticket master say to Mark Twain that he need not worry so much about the railway ticket as he was known to everybody as a well known writer and philosopher throughout the world and he need not worry for that silly ticket and went away.

The ticket master completed his job and returned and found to his surprise that Mark Twain was still searching his pockets! This astonished the ticket master and on his questioning, Mark Twain retorted that he was not searching for the railway ticket but the written slip on which he had written "Where am I going?" This made the checker leave the place once again but the ironic question made by Mark Twain compelled the

ticket master to meet him once again and ask him what was meant by the question he had written on the slip. The author said he wondered where the youth were leading themselves in this directionless route!

Mark Twain pointed out that the passengers in the train in their mad rush were going ahead without any direction in their purposeless life. The philosopher said that the world is least worried about the responsibilities trusted upon them by their forefathers to tread the path which leads them to improve their status in the society by educating themselves, adopting proper ways for meaningful life. The author was stunned to see the fully packed train enjoying not the three famous www.com but those three wwvs indicating wine, wealth and women. The seasoned author pointed out that the youth had gone astray and they had become directionless which certainly leads them to disaster in which he himself was engulfed himself and wanted to point out that better paths are available for the people to tread for a good future and bright life. But Mark Twain was shocked to see the mad rush towards the make-believe world which pressed the author to check himself whether he was on the right track & asked "Where am I going?"

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Cleanliness and order are not matters of instinct; they are matters of education, and like most great things, you must cultivate a taste for them.

Benjamin Disraeli

'THE ESSENCE OF EDUCATION' IN HERMANN HESSE'S SIDDHARTHA

K. Srilakshmi*

Siddhartha, a moral allegory, was written by Hermann Hesse, who is ranked with the great masters of the 20th century world literature. Hesse was a German-Swiss poet, novelist, and painter. He received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1946.

Siddhartha is a German novel translated into English. It is a thoughtful and philosophical novel which is based on Indian mysticism and tries to solve the enigma of human loneliness and discontent. It explores an individual's search for authenticity, self-knowledge and spirituality. The Sunday times commented: 'A novel of great pellucid beauty...subtle distillation of wisdom, stylistic grace and symmetry of form'. Hesse's narration is coherent and the clarity of this short tale allows one to look through its profound depth. The preeminent part of the novel is its thoughtful and most persuasive message: 'Wisdom is not communicable'. The story takes place in ancient India around the time of Gautam Buddha. The hero, Siddhartha, a Brahmin son endowed with all the virtues, goes through the fires of various experiences to emerge to a state of peace and holiness. Before he has achieved this beatitude he undergoes a series of episodes through which he finally realizes that one cannot become wise and attains knowledge by attending lectures.

In the beginning of the novel, everybody was happy with Siddhartha but he himself was not happy. He had begun to feel the seeds of discontent within him and nothing can make him happy and suffice him. His only worry was, his worthy father and his other teachers, the wise Brahmins, had already passed on to him the bulk and best of their wisdom, but his intellect was not satisfied, and his soul was not at peace. Nobody showed the way, nobody knew where the Self was. And among the wise men that he knew and whose teachings he enjoyed, there was not one who had entirely reached it - the heavenly world - not one who had completely quenched the eternal thirst. With all those questions Siddhartha started his journey in search of knowledge to quench his thirst and to attain the stage of the ultimate bliss - Nirvana or Moksha - by leaving behind the life his parent's love and his village. First he joined the Samanas, wandering ascetics, in the forest and Siddhartha learned a great deal from them: how to think, how to wait and how to fast. Still he confined to thirst and continued his journey by renouncing the Samanas and was attracted by the rumours spread about Buddha and attended his lecture. Though Buddha's philosophy was supremely wise Siddhartha did not swear allegiance to Buddhism because it does not account for the necessarily distinct experiences of each person; and he became well aware of a truth that the way to ascent towards the goal, alone, can be presented by the teacher but it is the

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individual who seeks and explores an absolutely unique and personal meaning in the quest and hence the secret of any victory lies in the victor. Thus he resolves to tread the path of the common man and tasted the pleasures of being a mendicant wanderer, then as the consort to a courtesan, then to a wealthy man of business, and finally as a companion to a humble ferryman, whose wisdom comes from the endlessly murmuring river. The river, in the novel, symbolizes a great treasure and resource of knowledge which acts as a reflection of Siddhartha's soul and his experiences and Siddhartha thus attains his final peace which comes only after he has had his full share of pleasure and pain.

The Buddha, after a great hardship, after a good deal of intellectual endeavour, in a flash came across the truth, the truth of enlightenment. Siddhartha realized that the enlightenment came to Buddha not by sheer intellectual endeavour but by the exercise of another power which everyone of us possesses and which enables us to see what the truth of things is. Thus he understood well that "Wisdom is not Communicable". Swami Vivekananda and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan said similarly to what Hesse said. The former said, 'Knowledge is not information', and the later said, 'Nothing like knowledge; knowledge is not mere information, not mere scholarship, it is not mere criticism, it is education in depth'. Knowledge without wisdom makes the

learned man a stupid when he relies on books and on authority to give him understanding. Understanding only comes through self-knowledge, which is awareness of one's total psychological process by cultivating right relationship between the individual and the society. Thus education, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered.

The right kind of education helps the individual to be mature and free, to blossom greatly in love and goodness, with an inward transformation in everyday action with a deep and creative intelligence by integrating both mind and heart. It encourages thoughtfulness and liberates the individual from fear, which is caused by ignorance. To be without fear is the beginning of wisdom. So, one should constantly search for truth in all aspects of life say, political and religious, personal and environmental with a spirit of inquiry. Such an exploration for truth is the true mark of education. Though the expedition is full of hurdles and troubles, the individual is going to be wise. Then the youth will understand the significance and there is hope for a better world. In the quest of suffering and fear, Siddhartha's tortuous road leads him through the temptations of luxury and wealth, the delights of sensual love, towards the fulfillment of his destiny, a ferryman guided him to realize that wisdom cannot be communicated to him by any of his teachers.

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

"NEED FOR RADICAL EMPATHY": A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF *OLIVER TWIST* AND *UNTOUCHABLE*

Dr. P. Somanath*

At the time of celebrating the 200th birth anniversary of the prominent Victorian novelist, Charles Dickens, it is quite fitting to remember one of the celebrated trio of Indian novelists in English, Mulk Raj Anand, in view of their similar fictional concerns and study their novels comparatively.

Though Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1839) and Anand's *Untouchable* (1935) are produced with an approximate gap of 100 years, they appear remarkably similar in their social protest coupled with deep social realism, artistic integrity and humanistic commitments to the issues in their contemporary societies. They are against the social stratification and not against any one individual. Both the novels are meant to appeal not only to our sentiments but also to our literary sensibilities. This article seeks to explore these similarities as well as distinctions of the two novels.

Oliver Twist, challenges the organizations of charity (workhouses) run by the church and the government as per the Poor Law of 1834. Residents of the workhouses had no rights. The workhouses were operated on the principle that poverty was the consequence of laziness. It was expected that the dreadful conditions would inspire the poor to better their own circumstances. But they

did not provide any means for social or economic development.

Oliver is an orphan born and raised in a workhouse for the first ten years. The name 'Twist' refers to the outrageous reversals of fortune that he is going to experience. Dickens uses Oliver's situation to criticize the public policy toward the poor in England of 1830s. The legal system portrayed in the novel is heavily biased in favour of middle-class and upper-class individuals. In the then prevailing class system, the upper-class consisted of gentlemen who were aristocrats and they did not have to do any work. The middle-class occupied the second place in the social ladder and promoted work as a moral virtue. It interpreted poverty as a sign of the weakness of the poor individual. The Poor Law punished the lower-class who occupied the third and lowest place in the society. The middle-class bureaucrats displayed their hypocrisy when they treated a small child cruelly but upheld charity to the less fortunate.

Oliver Twist is inspired by the story of Robert Blincoe, an orphan and a child labourer in a cotton mill. Dickens himself spent his early youth as a child labourer in a blacking factory, a place where shoe polish is made. He gives a realistic presentation of the orphan homes, the experiences of the workhouse, the squalid streets, dark alehouses and thieves' dens located in London. He exposes child labour, the recruitment of children as criminals and the presence of street children.

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Coming to *Untouchable*, one can see the novel steeped in social realism as Anand presents the rigidity of caste system in the pre-independent Indian society as against the class system in the Victorian British society and the practice of untouchability as the worst offshoot of caste system. The poverty and slavery of the low-caste Hindus, the inhuman exploitation and the hypocrisy of the upper-caste Hindus are given a vivid presentation. Bakha belongs to the lowest caste even among the untouchables. He carries a stigma because of his scavenging work. It isolates him from his own society. He is the universal figure showing the oppression, injustice and humiliation of the outcastes in India. The happenings in the novel are pan-Indian in character. Bulandshahr represents a normal Indian town found anywhere in India.

Anand presents caste system, the organized evil, as the real enemy of the Indian society because it damages the homogeneity of the society and gives scope for exploitation and alienation of the low-caste by the high-caste. The exploitation takes several forms - social, educational, economic, political, religious and even sexual. Social exploitation is at the root of all other exploitations. What is more, there are lower castes within the lower castes. Thus, even the outcaste Hindus who do not belong to the sweepers, treat the scavengers as untouchables of still lower grade. Centuries of segregation has sunk into the minds and hearts of the lowest of the low. So much so, the untouchables like Bakha's father, Lakha, do not blame the high-caste ones for their exploitation, neither do they blame themselves. Lakha, thus, symbolizes passive submission.

Just as *Oliver Twist* was inspired by Dickens' own experience as a child labourer, *Untouchable* was inspired by the experience of Anand's aunt when she had a meal with a Muslim and was treated as an outcast by his family. Bakha's character is modeled after one of Anand's childhood friends, a sweeper boy, who was humiliated by Anand's mother for being a sweeper boy but whom Anand adored as a hero. In his preface to *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Anand says:

All these heroes and the other men and women... were the reflection of the real people I had known during my childhood and youth.... They were the flesh of my flesh and blood of my blood.

Coming to characterization, it is important to note that Oliver is so inherently and unrealistically good that he turns out to be unbelievable as a character. His purity and virtue are absolute and incorruptible. He is not a complex picture of a person torn between good and evil. He is a saint-like figure and goodness incarnate. On the other hand, Bakha is completely realistic. Oliver is only a victim whereas Bakha is simultaneously a rebel and a victim. Rebellion is germinated in Bakha when he is slapped by the high-caste Brahmin for defiling him. The slap, the humiliation at the temple steps, the molestation of his sister by the priest, the shouting of the thankless mother of the saved child and a woman's throwing of a thin slice of bread at him from the top of her house enrage him but his hereditary serfdom acts as a handicap to his spontaneous rebellion. He feels like a tiger at bay. Saros Cowasjee in *So Many Freedom* says:

He is a tiger in a cage, securely imprisoned by the conventions which his superiors have built up to protect themselves against the fury of those whom they exploit.

Anand captures realistically the conflict between the rebel and the victim in Bakha's character lending credibility to it.

On the surface, Dickens appears to be using *Oliver Twist* to criticize the Victorian idea that the poor were naturally destined for lives of degradation and desperation. But, at the end of the novel, we discover that Oliver is the lost nephew of the upper-class family that randomly rescues him from the pickpocket group, as in picaresque novels. As such, a Victorian reader could interpret the novel as saying that Oliver's seemingly innate goodness is inherited from his well-off parents. Obliterated as a character who lends support to the very stereotypes Dickens seems to be condemning. After reading the two novels, one comes to feel that the portrayal of Bakha is more convincing than the 'idealized portrait' of Oliver.

Coming to the technique employed by Anand, it should be noted that *Untouchable*, like *Mrs. Dalloway*, observes the three unities of time, place and action. It is the story of events of a single day in the life of the protagonist, Bakha, at Bulandshihar town. Further, Anand makes use of Bakha's monologues to put forth some of the basic questions on the Hindu caste system. He uses the temple as a monstrous symbol of segregation of the low-castes. Anand makes use of dramatic irony as an effective tool to drive home his point. For instance, the castes which look after the cleanliness of the high-

castes are made to live in dirt. Similarly, the caste Hindu women expect the untouchables to call them 'mothers' but they treat the untouchables in an un-motherly way as seen in a woman throwing a piece of bread at Bakha from the roof of her house. The hypocrite shopkeeper accepts the money of the untouchables by splashing water on the coins but throw things they buy. Further, even bulls are allowed to rush through the streets but not the untouchables indicating their inferiority to animals.

Dickens' achievement lies in giving voice to those who had no voice, establishing a link between politics and literature with his social commentary. In a New York address, he expressed his belief that "Virtue shows quite as well in rags and patches as she does in purple and fine linen". "Never be cruel" - this is the mainspring of Dickens' compassionate approach to the weak, the infirm and the oppressed. He has touched with pity and tenderness the springs of national life. His message is: "Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts".

For the coercive practice of untouchability, Anand proposes the solution of the modern flush system. This alone would decimate the stigma of untouchability attached to the scavengers. Gandhi's advice of accepting only grain and not the leftovers from the high-caste people in return for their services is intended to protect their self-respect. Thus, instead of the Marxist idea of retaliation against the privileged, Anand seems to be more convinced by the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence.

TEACHING SOFT SKILLS AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR ENGINEERS

P. Suma Bindu*

Over the years there has been an increase in emphasis on 'soft' skills and particularly communication skills in the engineering programs. Reflecting both the demands of potential employers and professional bodies, as well as the creativity of course designers, modules such as first year 'study skills' and final year 'professional skills' have become more and more common. The greatest focus has been placed on fundamental topics such as presentation skills, effective report writing, teamwork, and time/project management. While this change is certainly a positive one, these modules seem to be among the more challenging to teach and assess successfully, the criteria for success being that the student can understand the concepts presented, apply them using exercises, and demonstrate the resulting competence through assessment.

A modified teaching approach is required that addresses the professional students. The approach needs to add interest and obvious relevance; students need to feel that any guidelines presented can solve a pressing issue or concern that exists in their world. Above all, to be successful the teaching approach must be dynamic, interesting, practical and organized to manage tactically the attention span of the audience.

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Modifying the approach

Keeping a large number of undergraduate students continually engaged is not the easiest of tasks, particularly considering the challenges. It was decided that a different and more dynamic teaching approach was required to stimulate students in place of traditional lecturing styles based essentially as one-way communication. If students frequently had to respond, discuss, react or participate they would be far less likely to disengage or go to sleep! Allowing them to make mistakes in a supportive environment would also go some way to convincing them that they needed to improve their skills and were doing so by attending the learning sessions. Some might argue that a high level of interaction is only practicable with smaller audiences. Whilst smaller groups are indeed easier to manage this was found not to be the case, although an experienced lecturer is required who is willing to engage in open discussions and deviate from a detailed lecture plan if necessary.

Towards a task-based approach

Typically, a traditional ELT syllabus lists learning items in terms of structures, functions, notions and vocabulary which are then set in situations and which usually integrate a variety of skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). This dominant approach has been characterized as product-

orientated because it focuses on what is to be learnt or on products. The problem with this approach, as Nunan (1988) has pointed out, is that input cannot be equated with output and that teaching cannot be equated with learning. In short, what the teacher teaches is not what the learner learns.

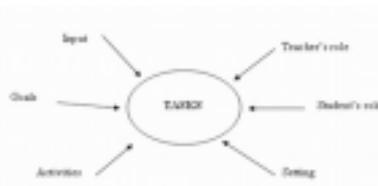
Swan (2005) in his critique of task-based learning laments the polarization of attitudes in relation to recent discussion of language learning. On the one hand traditionalists argue in favor of a linear, atomistic syllabus design. Bygate's distinction (2003, p. 176) between tasks and exercises helps to situate this debate. He defines 'exercises' as "activities which practice parts of a skill, a new sub-skill, a new piece of knowledge". In contrast, he defines 'tasks' as "activities which practice the whole integrated skill in some way". The implication drawn from such research and discussion is that units of learning that involve the strategic use of holistic repeated "tasks" and supporting atomistic "exercises" provide one means of avoiding narrow ideological positions. A task-based unitary framework is therefore proposed here that leads to student-led holistic outcomes in the form of written reports, spoken presentations and substantial small-group conversations that lead to decision-making outcomes.

Components of a Task

Tasks contain some form of 'input' that may be verbal (a dialogue/role play/reading) or, nonverbal (pictures/a gesture) followed by an activity, which is in some way derived from the input. This activity sets out what learners need to do in relation to the input. Tasks have

also goals and roles for both teachers and learners.

Components of a 'Task' (Nunan: 1989)



From the above diagram, a task can be viewed as a piece of meanings focused work, involving learners in comprehending, producing and/or interacting in the target language.

Before taking up the task of converting the textual content into various tasks, the following points were noted and kept in mind by the investigators:

The objective of the task must be stated very clearly

- The task must be appropriate for the level of the learners
- The task must equip the learners with the ability to apply classroom learning in new situations.
- Tasks must be interesting and motivating to the students
- The form the input takes, must be clear to the teacher
- The roles of teachers and students must be specified clearly
- Through the task, learners must be encouraged to negotiate meaning
- The language that will be generated by the task must be predicted

- There should be variety and flexibility in the tasks.

The following are eight well documented techniques that can be used flexibly to transform any 'standard' lecture into a more dynamic one. These techniques are summarized below.

An emphatic and captivating introduction: A successful training session must begin by creating a sense of urgency and somehow capturing the interest of the audience, usually by emphasizing the importance of the topic and its relevance. What rewards can be obtained by applying the content of the session? What pitfalls exist for those who lack the competence? However, it is important that in emphasizing the importance of a topic the presenter is not perceived as 'finger wagging'.

Use of relevant examples and 'storytelling': Examples, stories and anecdotes turn theories and guidelines into perceived reality by providing a true-to-life basis for their application. They will also capture the full attention of most audiences. Use plenty of these - at least one for each principal point covered - and, wherever possible, focuses on real examples rather than hypotheses. Let the students share their similar experiences.

Group exercises: Have students perform short exercises in groups to try out the application of concepts presented, followed by debriefing where each group reports its findings, progress and difficulties to the audience. Exercises of this type break up the session, increase engagement and can

be easily conducted - even in a lecture theatre. They also force the students to admit their errors, even if these errors are not reported to the audience, and this helps to establish for them the fact that they have learnt something.

Brainstorming: This is another interactive technique to provide stimulation and variation. Provide an open question and have students brainstorm in small groups (usually together with those sitting next to them) before beginning a discussion session.

Demonstrations/simulations: It is much more effective to demonstrate an idea than to talk about it. Documentation could include some type of physical simulation, a simple game, or even a video clip. Role playing is particularly effective as it involves the students in an active way, provided that a risk-free and supportive environment is provided to those who participate.

Opinion polls: This is a 'quick change' and helps students to engage in a new activity or a new aspect of a topic. For example a quick show of hands: 'How many people think ... ?'

The mind break: Used to refresh the listeners' attention span during more demanding presentation components, for example, 'take a 2 minute break to chat with your neighbor before we move on ...'

Facilitation vs lecturing: Whenever possible, lean towards the process of facilitation rather than lecturing. Prompt the audience with relevant questions, challenges their ideas, and shapes an understanding based upon the responses and active discussions

rather than reading a script. It is, however, important to be respectful towards students who give wrong or poor answers.

The techniques presented above provide some of the most important ingredients for an engaging lecture. They are well documented and widely used in isolation. Not all are applicable to all situations and types of material, and the next step is, therefore, to devise session plans into which they are woven appropriately. The choice of techniques will depend largely on the topic to be presented and to some extent the lecturer's personality and individual style.

Perfect communication is near impossible in the classroom because it

depends on many variables. However, if the teacher is to be successful, the content of his message should be clear in his mind and be put in suitable code and transmitted through appropriate media. There is need for a careful sequencing of ideas and the use of activities that is within the experience and understanding of the students. Whatever learning experience the students are exposed to, they should be allowed to practice it. Learning takes place through the active behavior of the students. It is what the student does that he learns and not what the teacher does. The teacher is only a facilitator of learning. The quality of learning that takes place in any situation, to a very large extent, is dependent on the effectiveness of the teacher's plan and communication.

SUNUP

C.M. Mohanrao*

With the day's infinite charms
 Inspiring love, disturbing memories,
 With unreachable horizon in his backpack,
 From on the spiky hilltop, not far away,
 The sun like a sly smuggler stealthily
 Nosedived into the deep ocean
 With his long arms stretched
 Leaving in the lurch entire world.
 It was dark, grisly dark all around
 I could not see anything before me,
 Even the Bible....
 My head dashed against
 the merciless wall.....
 I thought I was betrayed
 Tension -ridden, worry-worn,
 Sorrow-stricken, bone-tired,

I knew not when the rejuvenating sleep
 Had lulled me to rest in her
 soft as velvet lap.....
 Sleep unlike death has her own limits....
 But now,
 The gentle zephyr is tickling my nostrils
 With sweet earthy fragrance
 Of the morn chasing darkness,
 The little birds on the mango tree
 Are chirping matins
 The oranges in the backyard are blushing
 Mr. Rao my neighbor is knocking
 At the door for the morning walk,
 The bedewed roses
 in the front yard are welcoming
 With an innocent disarming smile
 As that of a toothless child
 Worth many a Shakespeare.....

* Poet, Hyderabad

CROSS CULTURE AND POETRY: SITES OF CONFLICT IN YASMINE GOONERATNE

Dr. Y. Somalatha*

South and South East Asian literatures rendered diasporas of wide variety. Wilson Harris says "cultural heterogeneity or cross cultural capacity gives an evolutionary thrust to the imagination." The statement cannot be generalized because many a promising writer might suffer partial debility in his or her creativity when moved to a cross cultural context.

Asian -Australian writer, Yasmine Gooneratne's poetic creativity had been adversely affected by migrating to Australia, leaving her homeland Sri Lanka. The landscape, people and environs of her native Sri Lanka enthused her to bring out several anthologies of poems: *Word, Bird, Motif: Poems*(1970), *The Lizard Cry and Other Poems*(1972); *Celebrations and Departures: Selected Poems* (1951-1991).

As an immigrant in Australia, intermittently visiting the United States, she felt happy to be away from "somewhat confined society in Sri Lanka". However she was dismayed to find herself deprived of poetic creation. Though she never expressed regret and comforted herself with her varied other achievements-Committed teacher of English Literature in Macquairie University, Australia, a literary critic, novelist and editor-we find her loss of the genre of poetry has been with her

till date. *Senkenda Memorial Prize* for original verse is the only recognition for her poetry inspired by her homeland.

Critics point out Gooneratne's poetry is autobiographical in nature. It reflects her varied experiences of native land, travel, expatriation and wide reading of British and Indian authors. Referring to the autobiographical element in her poetry she writes in her essay "*Uninvited Guest*": "It is very natural that this should be so, for in locating her own place in the world a writer will always look back at people who shaped her response to that world, and at the experiences which have brought her there"

The themes range from identity and language, aspects of immigration and collision of culture. However the present article emphasizes that for her the theme of poetry is poetry itself. To prove this and include the idea how cross cultural ethos adversely affect creativity, especially what has been natural and chosen first love of the artist, are the objectives of the article. From this viewpoint, Gooneratne's two poems "*There was a country*" and "*On an Asian Poet Falling Among American Translators*" are studied.

"*There was a Country*" speaks of her loss of poetic ability. It is ironical that she renders a poem about loss of poetry. In her homeland, poetry came to her with ease and in abundance. As an immigrant in Australia

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she could not write any poetry at all. She understands the demands of Australia are overpowering, and only bottomless depth of grief might cause poetry to be let out from her system. She is not prepared to welcome unbearable sorrow for the sake of writing poetry.

The poet refers to Sri Lanka, a country which merely exists in her memory. As poems of great artistic finesse were very close to the fertile soil, she could bring them without deep anguish or agitation. The beauty of the landscape and her friendly familiarity with it are points to reckon with. As in a drizzle the vegetation reveals its freshness, in Gooneratne the drizzle of thought, feeling and emotion contrived charming words patterning themselves into lines of great meaning and beauty. Yet, her urge for sophistication made her sieve them in order to remove the peripheral and retain the quintessential. The rural images in this poem--hedge, stream, sift, yield--direct our attention to her passion for her homeland's pastoral setting. Occasionally failing to be spontaneous, annoyed with herself, she would kick the patch of ground below her feet.

To her great joy and amazement, something radiant, waiting to well up, would delicately split the soil and emanate into poetry. The soil is a metaphor for her imagination. The very initial frustration often facilitated emotionally rich poetry. The mind of the poet and the land have had such intimate affinity.

In her immigrant home in New South Wales, Australia, she could "barely write any poetry". However it is reported to her that poetry in Australia is a regular phenomenon

and understandably happens all the time. For her immigrant psyche, her disillusionment with poetry is certain for she could not hold words together. We understand the soul of the poet is totally inactivated in the new land.

Gooneratne comes to the conclusion that creating poetry is strenuous as delving deep into the layers of the earth for precious gems or digging deep into the bowels of the earth for crude oil. The hope of either creating valuable poetry or crafting mundane verse stanzas is an illusion in the strange land.

Despite possessing the equipment and the ingredients for writing poetry--paper, pen, language and thought, the Muse evades her. The absence of serenity and imagination, perhaps are the reasons. Hence her rich emotions like love, anger, pity and sharp intellect gifted with wit and conceit come to nothing. The overall ambience of Australia--drab and grey, culturally shocking--makes her insensitive to any mode of poetry. Here it is pointed out "poet's vulnerability to confused emotions.

In her homeland, Sri Lanka, even a passing grief or joy drew from her uncountable number of elegant poems. There she was endowed with a pure poetic personality. She herself used to be amazed at her poetic fecundity.

In the domiciled country, alas, she is dumb. The alien culture of Australia benumbed her senses. A part from her natural self has been stifled. Examining her own immigrant predicament, she concludes that in the land of desolation the only provocation for poetry could be terrible grief or irrevocable despair.

She prefers to abandon poetry rather than maddening herself with sorrow. She opts not wearing a crown of diamonds as a poet, choosing to live normally accommodating herself to the land of migration. Here is the ultimate statement on culture compromise.

The poem "There was a Country" focuses on the fact that change of culture destroys some prime instincts and nourishes certain acquired traits. In the case of Gooneratne, poetry is lost forever in the process of accommodating herself to transnational culture. The inputs from the adopted culture make, break or replace significant traits of the individual.

A reading of Gooneratne's another poem "On an Asian Poet Fallen Among American Translators" reveals that her fundamental identity is with Asia. As a visiting Professor to Universities in the United States, she felt thrown into the midst of American Academics who, all the time misinterpret her poetic intentions. In her grouse, she says, "America provided good material for satire".

In this poem she reacts adversely to America-its imperial stance, its emotional dryness and above all its pretentious poetry. Two hundred years old America has no heritage. Americans could build a nation and increase their power. But they could not acquire the skill of being polite with 'others' or learn the craft of poetry. Their disgust for non-American cultures impairs their facial expressions. By some misadventure if they produce a sort of poetry, Poetry, personified, itself receives a terrible shock for being born to stare into the void of non-cultivated

America. Their aggressive nature connects their "so called" poetry to decay and death.

Gooneratne addresses the United States directly and says that the very touch of the corrupt nation brings death. She abhors the American dream to subjugate the vast continent of Asia. Asians had never been at America's beck and call. They are not its servants and never will be. She rejects outright America's stealthy wooing of Asian writers with literary awards and prize money.

Gooneratne establishes the supremacy of Asian poetry over the clumsy attempts of Americans at writing poetry. The infectious fingers of America should not tamper with the magnificent poetry of Asia. T. S. Eliot escaped America to grow into a poetic genius. Ezra Pound became mad with anger. Robert Frost comforted himself with his erratic success and soon became coldly silent.

Nevertheless, there are still some Americans who aspire to become poets. Some waiting for the Muse's grace, bide time gathering the seeds of the coastal plants. Others try to bring back memories of childhood to inspire themselves towards innocent poetic expression. Some incorrigible optimists await their negatives to turn into positives. A minority of keen aspirants work towards keeping the past alive. They seek truth in the midst of plentiful broken images. The broken images proffered by American greed, cruelty and evil impede their efforts towards poetry.

America is a quarantine for lepers, who suffer from extreme prejudices. It is a burial ground of poetry because its conflicting

cultures strongly repel the truth of poetry. Fine poetry emanates from simple, splendid belief "in the worth of human beings as individuals, irrespective of all attempts to stereotype or categorize them in terms of class, race, color, intellectual ability, gender or religious belief". Genuine poetry would not grow on a land of inequality, arrogance and irrational prejudgments. A deep sense of harmony and universal perception are the prerequisites to create good or great or glorious poetry.

Yasmine Gooneratne denigrates America with utmost animosity. In the anger of the poet, one perceives cross cultural maladjustment. When cultural prejudices are perpetuated, communication becomes lopsided. Cross cultural communication is like walking on a razor's edge. We anticipate very many casualties. It is time the world's intellectuals paid significant attention to how "Diaspora affects the literary canon".

SLUMBER -10-12-86

Late Sri S. Krishnamachari*

Slumber! You are the solace
To numberless day long toiling race;
You cover your blanket over their worries,
Put them to rest with your smiling face,
Rebukes, retorts, fists and thrusts you hate,
You call them to your lap for blissful peace;
To the victim of battling crowd
you are their mate,
In your call, their hatred and
fears at once cease,
The tiny tots who find wonders all round,
To the lullaby song, you close their eyes,
Take them to your dreamland

with your bugle sound,
Make them jump in forgetful smile
in their dreams nice.
But! the opulent in their race for wealth
forget peace, life and joy in meaningless pursuit
when they need you most in their losing health,
You scoff at the selfish guiles and
kick them with your boot.
You are an angel Goddess for
the oppressed and the grieved
You elude the rich and the criminal lot,
For peace and calm
everything you have achieved
Remain Oh! Slumber! always
in my blissful thought.

* Poet, Hyderabad

It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err.

Mahatma Gandhi

OXFORD DICTIONARY & THE WORD OF THE YEAR

S.K. Mangammal Chari*

While going through Times of India, I was surprised to find a word - 'OMNISHAMBLE', chosen by Oxford Dictionary as an apt word for this year. It is defined as a situation that has been comprehensively mismanaged, characterized by a string of blunders and miscalculations. [Times of India 14-11-2012].

O.U.P. Lexicographer Susie Dent felt that the word was chosen for its popularity as well as linguistic productivity. Every year O.U.P tracks, how the language is changing and what words are to be chosen, that best reflect the mood of the year.

According to Otto Jespersen, 'English is far ahead of any competitor for, no other language is preferred and is spreading in remote areas.'

Word is a unit of expression, a form of speech, a term, a sound etc. according to Oxford Dictionary. During the pre and post Chaucerian era, (Anglosaxon) old English words such as 'Peow' (Slave) Wealt (foreigner) Scealc (Servant) were used, which were proved to be impracticable. Later Spencer and Milton and even Shakespeare used great many words like doth, doeth, pheob, pandemonium, aslant, assassination, barefaced, brothers, which were new only to written language, while living colloquially on the lips of the people.

They were makers of English whose language was influenced by Latin, Scandinavian and French. Shakespeare's language consisted of picturesque adjectives of appeal to the outward senses e.g. Bright, brittle, fragrant, pitchy, snow white etc. Shylock one of Shakespeare's most interesting characters used the words - Synagogue, Nazarite, Publican, Pilled . 'The skillful shepherd pil'd me certain wands'.

In the history of language, we notice that meaning of important words has changed or expanded. In Gandhiji's opinion, even in Gita the author has himself extended the meaning of the common current words. For him, Gita is not an aphoristic work, but is a great religious poem.

Lo! The present generation use all the words mixed with French, German, Indian, South Asian due to their involvement in World Wars I and II. For example 'Hiest' is a verb derived from 'hoist' or lift. Faith is a noun taken from the Latin word for confidence or a trickster. The word like 'Faithiest' is not a man of confidence but the word like 'nobelist' and philosopher signifies absurdism; on examining, the words 'Qurky, Gooky, Hooky, Bogey, Surriel, Cassandras,' are extremely difficult to find a place in the dictionary. "I, kona, hiki, ana, aki, iluila, ua; are of Hawaiian language, where not a word, ends in a consonant as in contrast to English Language.

* Poet, Scholar, Habsiguda, Hyderabad

Recently war of words led to deletion of some of the Indian words from Oxford Dictionary. Hence we may have to consult Oxford Dictionary constantly to know and understand the exact definition, expansion, or deletion of words.

Being a student of Philology I am still at a loss to distinguish between Diphthong,

Slang, (dialect), Cockney, Colloquial language with compound vowel sound as 'ou' in loud.

Words, words and words! How much of stir they produce, if added, altered, modified or deleted. The dialect spoken by the settlers in England belonged to the Germanic (Tectonic) termed as Indo European, more appropriately, Aryan.

A SAPLING

Dr. Suresh Chandra Pande *

Once in a glamour
Clamour of physical demeanour
Nearly a decade ago
In my native garden
Like a promising warden
I planted a sapling tiny
Timely reared
It grew shiny
Grew and grew
Keeping pace it grew
Knowing no diminution
Amid abundance of weeds
Mother earth's innate needs
Within years four or three
Deep rooted it bobbed
As if **SPRINTER** of a tree.
Thick thorny trunk overpowered
All taints, onslaught of weathers
So anon it bloomed
Bearing fruits in flowers
'Lavished a surfeit of yields
year after year
To fill the coffers

Then untimely
Stooped to droop
As was overburdened
Branches broke stems peeled
The tree collapsed with a bang
Never to rise again!
Adieu! I bade farewell
with memories Sweet or sour
Whenever now
I visit the garden
Like a promising warden
Much to my surprise
I find a compromise
That which comprise
The old and the new
The past and the present
To tantalize frisky futurism.
Soil's surplus value
Seems to have conserved
In its milieu seeds
will they ever sprout?
Deathless soul's view
Too affirms an afterlife
sure so confirmed.

* Poet, Anandpur, Nainital (UP)

SELF-SURRENDER, FREEDOM AND CELEBRATING LIFE IN TAGORE'S *GITANJALI*

J. Ravindranath *

Globalization has only turned the pendulum back and freedom of market has become superior to democratic freedom. The protests against globalization have assumed the form of religious idiom in many countries causing more confusion among the people in the aftermath of the undermining of the leftist opposition. The modern poet who opposed traditional thinking is seen as advocate of the Western culture and his freedom is curbed by the government on the one hand and religious people under the sway of the fanatical leaders. Vexed and cynical due to the onslaught from various corners and at times the very people whom he wants to influence and change, the poet in the present day is to remain stubborn and hopeful to see an end to "the clash of ignorant armies in the night" written about by Mathew Arnold way back in the nineteenth century. The romantic element and piety return to the poet who has turned skeptical in the modern age and he thinks that literature and poetry rather than power politics can usher in a better world. In these days of hypersensitivity when people get offended easily and resent any criticism of their faith, the freedom to create and criticise is the need of the hour.

Tagore's *Gitanjali* has put the Indian poet on the world map of literature. Krishna Kripalani writes that "love of God and love

of man, strength in sorrow and humility in joy, an innocent wonder that hides centuries of thought, invest these songs with an appeal that is both universal and perennial". In the present time of wars which are punctuating peace, is it possible to go back to the frame of mind when Tagore wrote these poems and appreciate them? This article attempts to understand Tagorean concepts of freedom and life in the present times of conflict and violence and people's protest against injustice however weak it may be.

Self-surrender and freedom: Krihna Kripalani writes that Tagore's "religious poetry which culminated in the passionate sincerity, an utter simplicity of *Gitanjali* was wrung out of his heart's blood. His religious insight, like that of all great saints, was born of deeply experienced sorrow and loneliness".

Tagore writes that his song is simple and the jingling of ornaments would drown His whispers. His vanity vanishes in the sight of God, the master poet at whose feet the poet Tagore sits humble. He wants to make his life a flute of reed to be filled with divine music. In the hall of God, the poet has a corner seat. His idle and empty life breaks out in futile tunes. He asks Him to instruct him to sing in the dark midnight in the hour of silent worship. The poet has been invited to the world's festival and he saw and heard whatever he

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could and played his tunes. He asks whether the moment of darshan came to offer his silent salutation. The poet notes that the song which he came to sing remained unsung and he spent time in setting the strings of his instrument right. Neither the time nor the words have come and only the agony of desire remained in heart. He hasn't seen God's face or listened to his words but heard only the gentle footsteps on the road before his house. God's seat has been made, the lamp remains unlit but he hasn't been invited into the house. The poet is hoping patiently for the moment of meeting Him. He thought that he reached dead end in his voyage. His resources depleted and obscurity stared at his face. But he finds God's will is endless in him. The new melodies of heart spring forth while old words dry out on the tongue. A new country of wonder opens up where the old paths are lost. If God is silent, the poet fills his heart with silence and is vigilant like starry night in patience. At dawn, His voice pours out in golden streams from the sky. From the poet's heart rise songs like birds and divine melodies blossom into flowers in all his forest grooves. The poet's journey is long, he rode the chariot of first gleam of light and voyaged through the wide world. The farthest course takes him nearest to God and the most complex training helps to the utter simplicity of tune. The traveller has to knock many doors before he comes to his own and the cry for destiny floods the world and receives the assurance "I am."

Krishna Kripalani writes that 'the key stone of his spiritual philosophy or intuition' is that "he will see God within himself and also permeating everything in the universe, remote and self-isolated, luring men away from this world or a jealous tyrant, scared of Satan

and bribing mankind with his favours" (198). The critic says that self-surrender and humbleness may not go far in exploring the secrets of universe. There is a chance that humbleness can make people passive in face of change. The wonder of nature has to propel man to unravel the enigma of universe rather than praising the given. The destiny has to be chalked out but not accepted as unalterable since human endeavor has achieved the progress so far but not the surrender before a force imaginary. This argument can be reflective of height of arrogance or granite-like will power to create a niche permanent for mankind in the bosom of universe.

On the positive side, the doctrine of self-surrender accepts that whatever happens is for one's good in the end. There is "a destiny that shapes our ends." It makes the best of the present and the world of opportunities available. It believes that by subordinating one's ego to the higher powers, one can realize one's innermost desires. It avoids frustration born out of failure of one's will or efforts whereas firm will could lead to failure and frustration. At times it may lead to the emergence of megalomaniac leaders such as Hitler. The Spiritual concept of freedom expects a person to strive with diligence to attain divinity whereas the rational or agnostic outlook of the West expects that one has to fight on with endurance of the old man of Hemingway or tenacity of Stephen Hawkins or willfulness of a Stephen Jobs who braved cancer to realize his goals. But materialistic interpretation of history supports understanding of historical laws and practice that would give one real freedom and an individual cannot hope to be free while his

nation is not free and working class is at the mercy of the vagaries of markets.

Freedom: The poet's heart aches at slavery but is ashamed of hoping for freedom. He clings to the tinsels and shroud of dust and death even though God is the poet's best friend and has priceless wealth. Though the poet's debts are large and shame heavy, he is afraid of the granting of prayer by God. The poet is building the wall of ego around him and his true being is buried in its dark shadow.

The prisoner says that he forged a chain with great labour to rule the world with his invincible power and at last he found himself enchained. Mundane love is a bondage and possessive whereas divine love is free. The divine love waits even though the poet doesn't pray or keep Him in his heart.

The poet wants to awaken his country into a heaven of freedom where one finds- a fearless mind, self-respect, free knowledge, truthful words, universalism, untiring effort for perfection, clear and living stream of reason and expanding empires of mind and action. He prays the Lord to root out penury in his heart. He also prays for strength to have equanimity, service with love, stand upright for the poor and against the insolence of the mighty, broadmindedness, and to bring surrender to is will.

To him freedom is more mental rather than merely political. His insight into unity of life in diversity of creation cancels hierarchical thinking and 'temporary' tyranny in the cause of freedom. Tagore's concept of freedom is for national regeneration but not chauvinistic or xenophobic. His spiritual outlook

champions the puny against the Mighty. His faith doesn't degenerate into superstition and clear stream of reason does not lead to mechanical materialistic attitude. He is against greed and he seeks help from the grace of God to inculcate optimism. Tagore has aspired for freedom untrammelled by political organizations and movements wedded to force. To him freedom is more mental rather than merely political. His insight into unity of life in diversity of creation cancels hierarchical thinking and 'temporary' tyranny in the cause of freedom.

Marxian concept of freedom has also focused on cultural changes which would propel and succeed political and social revolution. It wants negation of conformist or status-quo philosophy and tries to posit new freedom. But the history of socialism shows that freedom has soon turned into shackles of new kind proving Dickensian prophecy true. Continuous struggle for freedom has become a necessity in order to defeat the old forces and in the fight to the finish the reactionary forces have also won at times leading to curtailment of freedom for artists. Many Russian and Chinese writers have become victims of 'ignorance of historical law'. The yesterday rebel has become a new commissar and democratic freedoms have vanished.

Celebration of life : The poet wants to mingle various strains of joy-- the joy that makes the earth flow in excess of the grass, the joy that makes love and death dancing over the wide world, the joy that pulsates life with laughter, the joy that sits still with its tears on the open red lotus of pain, and the joy that throws every thing it has upon the dust and knows not the word. The same

stream of life that courses through the poet's veins goes through the world and dances in rhythmic measures. It becomes blades of grass, leaves and flowers, gets rocked in the ocean cradle of birth and death, limbs glorious and pride dancing in his blood this moment.

The poet says that His joy in Him is full and He has come down to offer love. In his life, His will is taking shape and love unites the poet and God.

When the poet wants to yield, he asks the other to take it up and sees struggle in vain. He asks God to come and occupy his seat (a mat on the floor) at his will and pleasure.

The poet says that he searches the ocean of forms to gain the perfect form of the formless. He is weary of travel and wants to seek immortality and tunes to eternity. The poet was not aware of the moment when he crossed the threshold of life. In the morning, he felt that he was no stranger in this world and god appeared to him as his mother. He loves life as well as death. In the playhouse of infinite form he has had his play and he has seen the formless. Divine touch thrilled his being and made him fearless of death. When the poet was playing divine play, he didn't know his shyness or fear and his life was joyful. On happy days, he never cared to know the meaning of His songs but picked up the tunes and his heart danced with cadence. The world stands in awe of the infinite. The poet says that the flower is in splendor among the thorns and at the end of the stony path a person wants in "virgin solitude" .

To Tagore "perfect freedom lies in the harmony of relationship which we realize not through knowing but in being. Objects of knowledge maintain an infinite distance from us who are knowers. For knowledge is not union. We attain the world of freedom only through perfect sympathy"

Facing Death with a sense of acceptance: Let all the strains of joy mingle in the last song-the joy of the earth, the joy of dancing of life and death , and the joy of freedom. The poet invites death in waiting for whom he has seen vicissitudes of life. He prepares the garland for the Bridegroom and to meet him in 'the solitude of night.' The poet knows that when he dies, "Yet stars will watch at night, and morning rises as before". He bids farewell to his brothers, thanks for receiving more and asks for merely kind words. Now he is ready to oblige the summons for his journey. The poet wants others to wish him good luck and sees the path as bright and beautiful and fearless. He says that the evening stars and "plaintive notes of twilight melodies" greet him at the end of his Voyage. The poet knows that he is conquerable. He is certain that his pride will be smashed, his life will burst in exceeding pain and his empty heart will sing like a hollow reed and the lotus has to give out its innate honey at one time or other. When the divine eye calls him in silence , he shall oblige. The poet dives down in to the ocean of life to catch the formless. He takes his harp of life into the music hall of the abyss and after its last utterance, he lays it down at the feet of the silent. He sought Him through his song to and learnt all his lessons of life. He wants all his songs to merge into "a single current and flow to a sea of silence in one salutation' to Him.

He wants to fly back to his eternal home like a flock of homesick cranes flying endlessly the way to their mountain nests.

Radha Krishnan writes that "though Rabindranath was essentially a literary artist, his voice was raised whenever grave injustices

were committed....Tagore along with Gandhi was responsible for the awakening of the national spirit and all through his life he was much against the cowardice of the weak as against the arrogance of the strong. In his patriotism there was no trace of hatred, bitterness or chauvinism".

QUILT

(A poem in Telugu by Dr N Gopi, translated by Dr. Usha K Srinivas*)

For our multicoloured quilted cloth
No Vimal designs are a match
I still remember
Our mother stitching it over ten days
This quilted cloth is the synthesized design
Arranged by our mother
from the collected old clothes
Past and present united
In her hands casually
When seated on this
Flying like on a magic carpet
Reaches us to islands of memories
Whenever (we) lie down on this quilted cloth
(We) feel rested (as if) lying
In the lap of mother, grandmother
and sister at the same time.
Our children fight for the quilted cloth
vying with each other
Seeing this game, mattresses feel downcast
Our quilted cloth is hereditary affection
spread from generation to generation

Whenever its stitches come off
There appears my wife with needle and thread
She then, holds a sword
Appears to be waging a war with
the deity of time

In the summer, this is a swan's down-bed
In the winter, a warm blanket
For sleep, quilted cloth is a must for me
In the dreams it had offered me
I have tasted ancient human perfumes
Contained the Himalayas in (my) embrace
Bound the river Ganga in a jug
Swallowed the round earth like a tablet
When (they) dry the quilted cloth
on the parapet wall
It indicates that there are children in that house
If it gets wet once, it turns sad
Shedding drop by drop for five or six days
Though (we) don't notice
The quilted cloth is an image for
the culture of our laboring class
A banner for the delicate
netting of attachments.

*Poet, Translator, Hyderabad

BOOK REVIEW

Glory of Indian women. Author Kharidehal Venkat Rao Pages 330, Copy right © 2012 Kharidehal Venkat Rao, Publisher Strategic Book Publishing & Rights Co.

The author Kharidehal Venkat Rao was inspired after reading Mahila (written by Smt. Komaraganti Jayaprada in Telugu) and decided to translate it into English to help Children of Indian origin living in other countries and the readers who feel at home reading English, to get introduced to Indian culture, ethics and morality; a noble thought indeed.

A few well known ideal woman characters from Epics and Mythology are introduced. Every character is an embodiment of chastity and self confidence that made them face the test of time; with high values, patience and dharma they are remembered for ages. Along with characters like Sita, Ahalya, Arundhati, Damayanthi etc. Eshwaramma, mother of Sri Satya Sai Baba is also included.

A number of topics dealing with do's and don'ts, in every walk of life are explained in section II 'Voice of Women'. As the author is a devotee of Sai Baba, readers who are devotees of Baba also may have the pleasure of reading extracts from the speeches of Baba. Much light is thrown on various responsibilities that women need to shoulder.

Readers are bound to appreciate sections III, IV and V dealing with the wise sayings of elders that held the younger generations to get on to the right path of life. Our age old culture on its long journey assimilated much from others, but our youth are more towards western culture, laments the culture.

Except festivals like Vijaya Dashimi, Deepavali, Sankranti many of other festivals, and their significance are forgotten. The author has taken care to explain the signification of many of the sacred days in every month starting from Chaitramasa to Phalguna, 60 Years from Prabhava to Akshaya, are well explained. His Keen interest to educate readers is highly appreciative.

Readers anxious to know more of Indian/Hindu culture, customs traditions love to read the book.

The language is simple and the narration is good, making the reader go through the pages easily. It is a good effort by the author Kharidehal Venkat Rao to reintroduce Indian culture and values to the present generation through the glory of Indian Women.

Prof. P. Pramada Devi, Hyderabad

Name: Super Scientific Concepts of Ancient India, Publisher: Earth system Sciences Awareness and Research Association, Editor : Dr. T. Ramakrishna

We Indians are proud of our past... we talk of our past with pride... connect every modern technological advancement in any part of the world to our ancestors and their works. When someone talks of an Atom or Neutron or Proton or something else we immediately grab the opportunity to exhibit our superficial knowledge by saying at least "what is great about it... go through our Vedas, Upanishads these are all very well described over there". Permit me to say most of us do not know what Vedas talk of or Upanishads talk of.

There are fifty lectures delivered by eminent speakers and experts in their respective fields and these lectures expose us to the depth of his knowledge in the respective field. Each lecture is not an exhaustive one by itself but it just gives an insight into the subject.

The association's love for the environment and the nature and the mother earth is very evident in every lecture. The speakers talk of earth quakes, seismic zones Panchabhuta Parirakshana, nature cure, yoga, organic food and ayurveda explaining how the Panchabhootas (five elements) could be used for curing many a disease.

There is no subject which is left out of these lectures, from chronic illnesses, regression analysis, treatment through acupuncture, aura analysis and treatment of illnesses. Well, the speaker's talk of Sankaracharya and arithmetic. Does it not show the areas covered in these lectures.

Sri Subramanya Sastry talks informatively, though not at length, about Grahas, Jyotisha Sastra and its divisions Ganitha, Hora and Samhita. He even links Jyotisha Sastra with Ayurveda for identification of seemingly incurable fatal diseases.

Dr Venkatacharya talks of Pancha Bhutas and how the imbalance of these in our body could be reason for an illness and how the illness, disease, could be cured by bringing back the balance of the five elements (Pancha Buthas). Dr Ramakrishna takes us a little deeper into the power of Pancha Bhutas, and talks of Githa, Kautilya's Artha Sastra and Lunar Radiation and the Cycle of Evergreen Revolution.. quoting from Mantrapushpam. In another lecture he talks of the mental pollution a direct effect of the crazy vulgar, obscene advertisements.

Prof Sai Prasad talks of Darwin's theory of evolution the re-incarnation.. birth after birth, the energy of the soul, the external superiority and the internal energy of the soul and the difference between the two.

Sri Gajavada Ramulu narrates the astronomical calculation to exactly say when the Mahabharath War took place. The calculations by Ved Vyas exactly tally with the planetarium projections as of today. We will be surprised when Dr Narendran talks of Yoga and the pregnancy and the care of the unborn, still in the womb of its mother through Yoga. We wonder how can there be a connection between artificial intelligence and how Panini's grammar could be brought in when we talk of Computer Programming Language I"C" or "C++" etc.

The book a collection of speeches which everyone should read to know a little about ourselves before saying with pride 'our Vedas, Upanishads, our sastras, homas etc'

Ramakrishna Chitrapu, Rajahmundry

Name of the Book :Tears and Smiles, Author: H.Tulsi, Dr H.Tulsi, Kakani Ngr, NDA Post, Visakhapatnam, 530 009, Price Rs 200/-

Tears and Smiles is a unique book for more reasons than one. For one thing, it is not a book to be gone through in one go. It is a collection of poems to be read slowly since it has moods, feelings, experiences and perceptions. For that reason it is called tears and smiles which are caused by myriad happenings giving rise to many kinds of feeling. Another uniqueness lies in the fact that it is also a collection of metrical structures - quatrains, sonnets Shakespearean and Petrarchan, Rondeaus, Ballads, Elegies, Terzanelle, and Quatrains, Quintets and Kyrielles, to list a few. Either as a coffee table book or for bedside reading, the work makes one feel sad giving an opportunity to mull, murmur.

Of cathartic content forty poems are placed first expressing grief on the passing away of a famous personality, friend, poet or statesman. A Terzanelle on Srinvasa Rangaswami who is called the Atlas of Muse India, Bharat-born goes like this:

*Despite your death's sudden,
staggering blow
Collapsing not, we'll carry on with grit:
Though lost a sturdy oar, we still shall row.*

The poem on Mahanand Sharma is a Petrarchan Sonnet:

*For many years your poems were adorning
Our MM pages, adding to its stock.
You stood behind us like a solid rock,
Till halted He Himself, your days' re-
dawning!*

The lament on the passing away of Stella Browning of the U.K. is a powerful gushing of feeling:

*Her kith and kin and fellow poets
too may find
Some solace, true from
her writing left behind.
But, for Metverse Muse, fallen is
a great Pillar of strength, which
none can ever recreate.*

The Hexameter Qartrains on Indira Kumari linger long in our memory. The tribute to Krishna Srinivas is in A Ryme Royal Sequence:

*Was he an idol of India alone?
Nay, he belonged to the whole universe!
As 'World Poets' 'Poet' he was well known!
With gems was studded his poetic purse:
Quite weighty his works, although in Free
verse.*

The Petrarchan Sonnet on Rudranarayan Misra is remembered with tears in the poet's eyes for his affection and high esteem:

*When came the news of your demise
that day,
On phone, I blurted out: 'It cannot be!'
But realized soon that, sadly, it was true.
Despite your age, you travelled all the way,
To Vizag, three times, just to call on me!*

Your court'sy calls compound my debt to you.

Our national leader and world personality, the daughter of India, Indira Gandhi, revered as 'amma' is paid homage in a requiem:

*Her own guardsmen gunned her down
Such infamous treachery
A blow on human race itself
Was this deed of butchery!*

The comic poems surely make us laugh, smile, chuckle and guffaw or take to side-splitting laughter. Here is a just one

example (for fear of prolixity or over-writing) of one short Pentameter Tercets:

Sailor: *A hole there is, in our boat
And water gushing in! We'll be undone!
Captain: 'It's best to make a hole, another:
Then all the water flowing in from one,
Out will gush, faster through the other.'*

All the comic poems deserve praise for they make joyous reading. Dr Tulsi's relentless imaginative, poetic, creative journey goes on, on and further on.

Dr V.V.B.Rama Rao, Noida

READERS' MAIL

Nowadays, people in general and the youth in particular, rarely find time to read biographies of great persons like Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi, Nehru and other luminaries, ancient and modern. Short essays like your recent editorial 'My Life is My Message' and your other writings, besides giving the readers a clear exposition of their noblest teachings, inspire them to read and know more about them, develop good character and broaden their outlook. Circumstances now compel parents and students to think of employment opportunities rather than the real purpose of education. It is therefore the responsibility of educationists to revise the courses and prescribe suitable reading materials to change the prevailing trend. Being a teacher, I think some of your highly instructive and stimulating

articles should be included in school and college text books.

M.G. Narasimha Murthy, Hyderabad

Your editorial under the permanent title called "Triple Stream" has covered this time in the issue of April-June 2013, the bottom-line and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi's lifestyle, teaching and preaching which is not just meant for reading and discussing but for imbibing and implementing as his message is complete. There is no substitute to Gandhi to save the present crisis of modern and contemporary world. Short but full length coverage is superb.

Dr M. A Waheed, Hyderabad

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The following is the list of Donors/ Members who have joined the TRIVENI family during April- June 2013. The TRIVENI FOUNDATION welcomes them.

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AN APPEAL

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Our dear subscribers may note. In view of the escalation of the paper cost and printing charges it has become increasingly difficult to meet the expenditure of the journal. We are constrained to increase the annual subscription to Rs.200/- and life subscription to Rs.2000/- We shall be grateful if our old members also cooperate with us by sending the balance amount. Donations are welcome.

TRIVENI FOUNDATION