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THE TRIVENI SYMBOL

Padma (the Lotus) represents the purity of love, *Jyoti* (the Flame) the light of Wisdom and *Vajra* (Thunderbolt of Indra) the splendour of power.

TRIVENI is devoted to Art, Literature, History and Culture. Its main function is to interpret through English the creative writing in different languages of India to the people of all States and to the world outside.

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TRIPLE STREAM

CAN MEDIA REGULATE ITSELF ?

I. V. Chalapati Rao

Editor

The Press is called the Fourth Estate and the watch dog of democracy. There is a tremendous growth in newspaper circulation in the developing countries, particularly in India. It is estimated at nearly 107 million copies of newspapers. Total number of readers is about 200 million. We can imagine the extent of influence exercised by what is published in them. There is no doubt that the press is a major player in the country's democratic process. Therefore, the most important function of the newspapers is to provide authentic and reliable information to the readers by sourcing it accurately. I am afraid, most of the newspapers especially regional language papers are remiss in the discharge of this all-important function. We find exaggeration, sensationalism and even distortion by using loaded and ambiguous language. Trivialization is often found in prioritising the items of news.

Open any newspaper, one finds news of violence, murder, robbery and crime. Too much importance is given to cinema, food, films and fashion with large-size, multi-colored photos. The reader gets the impression that we were hijacked from our primitive culture and launched into a new culture of conspicuous spending otherwise known as Five Star Hotel culture. Film stars are our icons and models are our role-models. It is a pity that leadership has passed out of the hands of social, political and spiritual leaders. Is this the land from which sprouted forth great souls like Buddha, Vivekananda and Mahatma

Gandhi?

The other day the Indian News Papers Society's out-going president, Jabco Mathew delivered his Annual meeting address in which he criticised Government's media policy and termed Government's proposed legislative initiatives as undemocratic. He called them a "serious threat to the freedom of media and to the country's economic viability." Obviously the Association is solely interested in promoting and safeguarding the business interests of its members. Perhaps they do not know that the decision of the government was taken after receiving several representations from the public and waiting for too long. Even now it is doubtful whether they can resist the pressures of lobbying from the vested interests.

Instead of presenting one-sided views on subjects that affect the life and thinking of the readers, media should influence opinion and decision making by promoting discussions of issues that matter. As Sri N. Ram, the chief editor of 'The Hindu' said, the real future of the media lies in creating a template for discussion. Discussion is different from argument. Argument is to find out who is right. Discussion is to find out what is right. There should be liberal discussion on important, current issues like rural development problems, corruption, reservation, secularism and education. The object of media is not to pander to the low taste of the public but to educate the public in partnership with the schools and colleges.

As far as T.V. is concerned, channels have proliferated but standards have drastically declined. Technical excellence is followed by cultural degradation. Cinema and T.V. have become weapons of mind pollution, mass distraction, rampant consumerism, casual sex and commodification of women. Advertisements in cable and cyber network have reached Frankenstein proportions. Dialogues smack of vulgarity, obscenity and billingsgate! We find violence and bloodshed in visuals. Hapless children are the worst affected victims. The message they get by viewing the films and serials is: Drinking is fashion, smoking is glamour, drugs are the 'in' things, schools and colleges are places of gang wars and eve-teasing, teachers are jokers and police officers are butts of ridicule! Music albums provide juicy bits of sound bytes and excitement. Those who criticise are called culture cops. Television broad casts that come via satellite and cable are functioning without any broadcast law or regulatory framework.

Speaking about the American T.V., Grover Mary, the American comedian, said "I found T.V. educational because when anyone turned on T.V., I went into another room and read a book!" But children and half-baked youth who are impressionable cannot resist the exposure to temptation.

Children are spoiled with raised expectations when they see movie idols and cult figures who are housed in luxury, transported in splendour and paid fabulous sums. They are glamour struck and become oblivious to the realities of life. They do not realise that the cardboard heroes are dream merchants. The youth get disoriented when real life does not match their expectations.

There is a high incidence of the suicide rate on this account.

Freedom of the press does not mean absolute freedom /license. In a welfare state it is the responsibility of the government to protect the people, particularly children from the exploitation of the ruthless commercial forces, when the media fails to adopt voluntarily a code of conduct in public interest.

Justice R.N. Ray, Chairman of the Press Council of India expressed his strong opinion as follows: The greatest threat that the Indian Press faces at present as a result of the globalisation, is market driven economy. Serious decline in news values, lack of interest in real issues, sensationalism, trivialisation, profit motive, consumerism are some of the unfortunate characteristics of the press today".

In his Presidential speech in the conference held in the Jubilee Hall, Hyderabad in connection with the Annual Day Celebration of the Press Council of India on the 16th November 2009. Justice R. N. Ray referred to the following evils of the Media: "Emergence of big media houses, corporatisation, monopoly, distortion, disinformation, 'paid news syndrome', suppression of news and concerns of other interests, promotion of certain politicians and political groups, business magnates, commercial and industrial interests, 'trial by media's incorrect reporting of court cases and devaluation of the office of Editor". The list is long enough.

Paid news syndrome especially during the recent elections is a dangerous trend in democracy. If not checked, this syndrome will become cancer. During the

26th November attacks and the on-gong political turmoil in Andhra Pradesh at present the role of the mass media is known to every one. When will our media reach the standard of BBC, CNN, FOX and others? As Dr. Ram said recently, television journalism is superficial and hysterical.

Mr. M. K. Dua, Editor-in-Chief of the Tribune Group said, "Even if the news paper has become a product like the tooth paste, as some owners claimed it to be, nobody can sell an adulterated tooth paste, as it could harm the health of the consumer".

We find that the press which is expected to be the watch dog of democracy, has now become a lapdog of the big business

and a blood hound to those whom it does not like. In spite of being a quasi judicial authority with all powers of the civil court, the Press Council of India has been unable to stem the rot. All along, the government has been dilly dallying and toying with the idea that the press will voluntarily adopt a self regulated code of conduct. The Press council itself has made the correct diagnostic study but could not give a prescription.

Now it is clear that it is too much to expect the press to regulate itself. Drastic maladies require desperate remedies. Government should muster enough courage to introduce a stringent regulatory mechanism. Already it is late. Things are moving from bad to worse.

WALLS

D.C. Chambial

Walls surround us
Once
There were no walls:
Pranced
unhesitantly
from
one house
to the other,
one mohalla
to the other;
ran,
danced,
made merry,
A bliss that was!

Since the walls
Have come up
each mohalla,
each house,
each man,
lies imprisoned
within the walls.
Yearn for openness
to fly like a bird

We have evolved
and progressed
with science
as our servant
Live in
the third millennium!

Editor Poetcrit, Maranda, Himachal Pradesh.

Dr.N.R.Narayana Murty of INFOSYS

G Sankara Bhanu

Dr. Narayana Murty is the Founder-Chairman of the famous infosys Technologies Limited. He is one of the most admired global business leaders. He has been awarded the Padma Vibhushan by the Govt.of India, the Legion d' honneur by the Govt. of France and CBE by the Govt. of U.K. This article is an exegesis of "A better India ,A better World" written by N.R.Narayana Murty (NRN) published by Penguin Group.

After reading his book " A BETTER INDIA AND A BETTER WORLD" I came to think that he should be a role model to the Youth of India. The book is a compilation of thirty eight speeches selected out of one hundred and fifty delivered by NRN around the world covering issues seminal to the future of India and the world. It serves as a manifesto for the youth, the architects of the future. When NRN was a graduate student in Control Theory, in IIT Kanpur, he chanced to participate in a chat at breakfast led by a famous computer scientist who was on a sabbatical from an American University. He was explaining new developments in computer science, a relatively new arena at that time. He was articulate, passionate and convincing. Young NRN was so much influenced by the discussion that he determined to study computer science . Narrating this marvelous experience in his lecture in Stern School of business. New York. NRN points out how one role model can alter the future of a young student for the better. Now NRN has grown as the role

model for budding scientists and entrepreneurs in India and abroad.

Another experience, though ghastly, left an indelible mark on young NRN. In the context of his early career struggle, NRN was returning back from Paris to Mysore. Inquisitive NRN chose to travel by road. Thanks to a driver he came up to Nis, a border town in between Yugoslavia(now Siberia) and Bulgaria. At the railway station he happened to meet a girl, a co-passenger. He had a conversation with her in French. She was narrating the travails of living in an Iron Curtain country. Another co-passenger grew suspicious of them and informed the police that they were criticising the communist government of Bulgaria. Soon the girl was whisked away and NRN was dragged out and locked in a small room. Poor NRN was held in that bitterly cold room without food or water for three days. Next he was dumped into the guard's room in a train and was released 20 hrs. later after reaching Istanbul, Turkey. This horrifying experience opened the eyes of young NRN who realised the inhuman aspect of communism. All his previous affinity for communism was purged out. Cruelty of Bulgarian police transformed NRN from a confused Leftist into a value-based compassionate Capitalist. This transformation is vividly presented in the speeches compiled in this book.

NRN appears to be a voracious reader. Hence we come across many wonderful quotations of eminent writers and leaders, most appropriately used in his

Principal (Retd.), Tarnaka, Hyderabad.

speeches. In many of his speeches NRN eulogises our achievements in various fields. At the same time he reminds us of hunger, illiteracy and disease, prevalent in our society. While the benefits are shared by the privileged, the hardships are suffered by a large section of the population. What will it take to bridge the great divide? The question is answered, in detail by NRN in his speeches. His speeches are relevant and convincing because he has translated them into action by founding and developing Infosys.

NRN explains how he was highly influenced and practically guided by three seminal books .(1) The Protestant Ethic and the spirit of Capitalism by Max Weber (2) My experiments with Truth by Mahatma Gandhi and (3) Peau Noire, Masques Blancs (Black Skin, White Masks) by Franz Fanon. Max Weber emphasizes in his book the importance of good values, hard work, honesty, austerity and focus on entrepreneurship in bettering the life of an individual and the society. The underlying stress in all speeches of NRN is that values become extremely important in our quest for aggressive development and for recognition as a trustworthy and productive member of global community.

The biggest lesson from Gandhiji's book as well as his life is the importance of leading by example. Walking the talk is extremely important to develop inspiring leadership. NRN has followed this Gandhian principle, succeeded and advocated the same through his speeches. Our present day politicians are not trusted by people because of the large gap between their words and deeds.

"Black Skin, White mask " explains

the coloniser's mindset of most of our bureaucrats and politicians even in the post-colonial period. This attitude is decelerating the progress of the poor and increasing the chasm between the rulers and the ruled. NRN pleads that our leaders should change their colonial mindset so that they can relate to the reality and seek solutions that can provide equitable and inclusive growth.

In every speech NRN emphasises the importance of executing ideas rather than just articulating. It is sheer cowardliness to keep discussing an idea without making any progress towards implementation. NRN is a believer in the role of youth in building a great future. He is a proponent in bringing younger people into leadership positions. Hence he starts off this book with a series of lectures delivered to student audiences. NRN acknowledges the benefits of the 1991 economic reforms ushered in by P.V. Narasimha Rao, Dr. Manmohan Singh and their colleagues in his lectures in Harvard University. Delivering a lecture in London NRN extols Jawaharlal Nehru's vision in building the temples of New India. I.I.T's and several research centres of excellence. In the lecture at the Global Land Forum, Singapore, NRN elaborates his pet subject "Compassionate Capitalism".

He deliberately kept all his speeches simple in ideas and expression so as to communicate powerful concepts to the youth in a simple way. As Manmohan Singhji compliments, these speeches will inform, inspire and guide many in the years to come. Bill Gates, Chairman of Microsoft emphasises that Narayana Murthy has delivered through his speeches a timely message about the importance of values and leadership in business.

TRUTH IS MYSTERIOUS

G.S. Rastogi

In his inaugural address to the Benares Hindu University in 1916 Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose said "Truth is one, wise men call it by different names". It is difficult to accept the statement. Truth seems to me quite mysterious. They say that Truth shall be victorious but I have been skeptical about it. I wonder what idea of Truth they have that shall ultimately triumph. Looking back into the history of civilization I don't find any well-defined concept of Truth. What is evident is that the forces that mould society, the laws, stated or unstated, that govern it and promote harmonious relations among the members constitute the Truth. All actions and ideas that tend to disintegrate or disrupt society are false and must be categorized as untruth.

In a way Truth is very vague and can be interpreted in a myriad ways. It is even more vague than the concept of God. Faith in God gives us a good deal of moral support. We believe that He alone can save us from 'fate' or the sword of Damocles that hangs over us in the form of threat of death from hunger, disease, natural disaster or some other calamity. In times of distress we lean upon God to rescue us. He is the last court of appeal. He gives us hope. But Truth remains vague and mysterious and gives little or no support. We may cling to it but the outcome in any given case may not be quite palatable.

What is most clear and evident is that 'might is right', however we may camouflage it. According to Darwin in Natural Selection, the fittest survive. There is little room for the weak whether in nature or in human society. It is always the weak and the poor who suffer the most. The governments are controlled by the powerful and the poor hardly count though the governments profess otherwise. They are treated as mere cogs in the wheel of society and serve as cannon fodder in times of war.

Man is endowed with certain basic instincts like love, hate, anger, envy, pity, greed etc. He can partly control some of them but he can never completely overcome them. These condition our life and thoughts. Just as in our daily conversation the reference to God is inevitable whenever we can't understand the cause of certain events, so is the case with Truth. We use it all the time but we also notice that two persons hardly agree on a point. They differ. Each considers his view right and that of other wrong or not in tune with truth.

There are certain situations where it is easy to draw a line between truth and falsehood. If 'A' has taken a loan or something and later denies it, he is obviously lying. But cases are not always as simple as that. Sometimes it is not easy to determine what is true and what is false when the two parties differ in their perception of some event. Each party may believe and maintain that its version alone is truth and that of the other is false.

606 Kusum Deep Chowk, Lucknow

An example comes handy from a Japanese film, *Rosh Oman* by a well known director Akira Kurosawa in which a man is a witness to a rape and a murder case. But when he is confronted with versions of three or four persons, his own version becomes shrouded in uncertainty and he himself begins to doubt the veracity of his statement.

Often Truth is colored by one's personality or convictions. A dozen persons may witness an episode but often their descriptions of the same episode may vary from each other, without being tutored. Sometimes it is very difficult to hit the Truth. The famous case of Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935), a Jew and a French army officer whose false imprisonment for treason (1894) roused issues of anti-Semitism and militarism that determined French politics until his release in 1906. Though in this case Truth was found after a lapse of 12 years, it is tragic that the victim had to undergo a lot of suffering for no fault of his. But in the case of the murder of President John F Kennedy, even after a lapse of more than 40 years the identity of the murderer remains a mystery. In our own country the case of Bofors that wrecked the government of Rajiv Gandhi, remains unresolved even after about 20 years.

There are many tricky situations where it is highly impossible to find out the truth. Not every judge is endowed with the wisdom of Solomon. Here is an example. It is said that once two men claimed an infant as their child. They quarreled bitterly for the possession of the child. Finally the case was brought to the court of King Solomon. All kinds of inducements and threats were used to make the false mother to come forward

with the truth but with no avail. Finally the king summoned two soldiers and ordered them to cut the child into two parts and give each woman a part of the child. At this the genuine mother burst into tears and requested the king to give the child to other woman as then the child would at least live and not die. Now the king knew who the real mother was and gave the child to her and punished the other one.

There is a marvelous short story by the noted writer R.K. Narayan. It is about the hero, Shekhar who thought that Truth "is like the sun. I suppose no human being can ever look it straight in the face without blinking or being dazed. He realized that from morning till night, the essence of human relationships consisted in tempering truth so that it might not shock. This day he set apart as a unique day-at least one day in the year we must give and take absolute Truth whatever may happen".

He had to pass through several trials. He had to be blunt to his wife over the morning meals, brusque to his colleague who informed him of somebody's death and antagonized his headmaster to whom he truthfully told that there was no use in his continuing and his music lessons. To observe complete truth he had to throw all courtesy and politeness out of the window. Ultimately he realized that "If I practice it for a week I don't think I shall have a single friend left".

Recently an interesting fact has come to light which throws fresh light on Judas's "betrayal" of Jesus. A second century text claims that the most reviled man in history was just doing Jesus's bidding. Lost for about 1700 years, an ancient Coptic-an ancient

Egyptian language text, written on papyrus, the Gospel of Judas has come to light which reveals an alternative view of the relationship between Jesus and Judas during the week before Passover Feast of the unleavened bread - an eight day Jewish festival-in which Jesus reveals to Judas the “mysteries of the kingdom of the true God”. Jesus asks Judas to help him return to the kingdom. But Judas must help him abandon his mortal flesh. “You will sacrifice the man that clothes me”. Jesus tells Judas, and acknowledges that Judas will be cursed by the other generations.

The revelation has created doubt whether Judas was a villain who sold his soul for thirty pieces of silver or a genuinely devoted follower of Jesus who acted as per the instructions of his master. It is difficult to pinpoint truth. Sometimes it is just a feeling. It is many faceted. There are situations where every individual has his own angle of vision and hence the differences. For thousands of years, they thought, including the Church that the Earth was the center of the universe. When Galileo observed that it is not the case he was jailed for blasphemy but now everyone knows the truth.

I SHALL WAIT.....

Dr. Kumarendra Mallick

The sky is clear and blue
water-thin clouds are just a few,
the mild breeze from the south
caresses my face,
a sea-gull couple
makes merry-go-rounds
in the transparent ripples
in the quieter sea
their fins the fishes flash. . . .
an ideal moment to sail out
into the vast infinite expanse

Yet,
Lonesome in the harbour
I shall wait,
I shall wait many a sunrise

and many a sunset
for you to step into my little boat
and hold the rudder,
then only I shall row
from the joys of today
into the dreams of tomorrow
I shall row beyond today
To welcome each of your dawns.

I shall wait
move not an inch
till I get your glimpse
to thread the needle of today
a new tomorrow to stitch. . . .

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Patanjali and Sri Aurobindo

Dr.KV. Raghupathi

Patanjali and Sri Aurobindo represent two ends of the unbroken and unceasing spiritual tradition in India. Patanjali was born to put the house of Yoga in order to systematize it for easy comprehension and access. The system produced by him is known as ashtanga Yoga, the eight-limbed yoga comprising yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, and dhyana.

Sri Aurobindo belongs to modern times. He was a poet, philosopher, freedom fighter, nationalist, and above all a rishi and yogi in the Vedic tradition. In 1910, soon after his acquittal he secretly sailed for Pondicherry, his final home for practicing intense Yogic sadhana. It was there that he became a silent but spiritually dynamic person fully focused on his new path which resulted in a new vision, a new philosophy, and a new experience. This transformation led him to proclaim that the advent of the Supramental on earth was inevitable. Bringing the Supramental consciousness and power down to earth was Sri Aurobindo's central work. He explained this process as well as his yogic experiences in his writings, which run into several thousand pages. These include the Life Divine, the Synthesis of Yoga, Essays on the Gita, the Ideal of Human Unity, the Human Cycle, and the Record of Yoga.

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Kadapa*

Integral Yoga and the Physical Being

Although both Patanjali and Sri Aurobindo expounded on yoga, they seem to differ on several counts. If Patanjali's is ashtanga yoga, Sri Aurobindo's system could be termed panchanga yoga, the five-limbed yoga which includes the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic, and the spiritual aspects of the human being. Sri Aurobindo called it purna yoga or "integral yoga". To understand his philosophy properly one needs to view the human being in its five-fold nature and see how each aspect leads to the other, characterized by greater perfection, and finally to the Supreme.

Sri Aurobindo's yoga begins with the physical, whereas Patanjali's begins with character-building for which he prescribes the five yamas, major moral precepts, and five niyamas, spiritual disciplines. For Sri Aurobindo all creation begins with matter, and life is a later development. Therefore, he gives precedence to the physical. He says: "Perfection is the true aim of all culture... If our seeking is for a total perfection of the being, the physical part of it cannot be left aside; for the body is the material basis, the body is the instrument which we have to use. Shariram khalu dharmasadhanam, says the old Sanskrit adage, the body is the means of fulfillment of dharma, and dharma means every ideal which we can propose to ourselves and the law of its working out."

Both Patanjali and Sri Aurobindo do not endorse the view of some schools of philosophy, sects, and spiritual seekers with extreme ideologies treating the body as something gross, inert, and unconscious - a virtually insuperable impediment to spiritual realization. Neglecting the body or inflicting injuries upon it is antithetical to spirituality and amounts to a serious violation of natural laws. For Sri Aurobindo the descent of divine consciousness into the body is vital. So it should be trained and transformed. To facilitate this process Patanjali prescribes pranayama, which purifies the body by eliminating toxic substances. Though Patanjali does not prescribe elaborate asanas in his Yoga Sutra, such later yoga texts as Hathayoga Pradipika, Shiva Samhita, and Gheranda Samhita fulfill this purpose.

For Sri Aurobindo when we set perfection as the goal of life, the body cannot be ignored and has to be made integral part of the process of transformation:

A total perfection is the ultimate end which we set before us, for our ideal is the Divine Life which we can wish to create here, to life of the spirit fulfilled on earth, life accomplishing its own spiritual transformation even here on earth in the conditions of the material universe. That cannot be unless the body too undergoes the transformation. The body itself must reach a perfection in all that it is and does, which now we can hardly

conceive. It may even in the end be suffused with a light and beauty and bliss from the beyond and the life divine assumes a body divine (8-11).

In Sri Aurobindo's philosophy the body is taken to be starting point of sadhana; diligent effort ought to be made to train it appropriately and make it a fit instrument for a perfect life. The body should be kept healthy by cultivating good habits of food, sleep, hygiene, and physical exercise. The objective is not only to develop physical stamina but also to command life energy at any required time by regulating the various functions of the body.

The Psychic Being

The next important element in Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga is the vital. It is the life-energy made up of will, action, desire, sensation, feeling, passion, and such related instincts as anger, fear, greed, and lust. The vital being is thus a vast kingdom full of forces acting upon and reacting upon one another. The organization and training of these complex forces is of the utmost importance in building up one's character. Sri Aurobindo says that true knowledge comes from within, and conditions must be made suitable for it to manifest. For this, a strong, straightforward, and harmonious character has to be built by awakening the will, overcoming its weakness. "The only way for him is to train himself."

LIFE IN MAHABHARATHA

M.Srinivasan

Historicity of Mahabharata stands on a more solid and factual foundation than Ramayana. Vyasa was a more objective observer and critic of life than Valmiki and therefore provides a more faithful and factual reflection of the life of the age. Some of the main characters, events and places mentioned in Mahabharata, like for example Sri Krishna and the ancient city Mathura have historical and literary evidence.

While the life in Ramayana mostly flows in the forests and Ashramas life in Mahabharata occurs mostly in royal courts and in the battle fields or in other words life in Vyasa's epic has a distinctly political character. The other aspects of life like the social and cultural and even many of the philosophical, ethical, religious and spiritual discourses, occur in the context and background of a political story. Let us now examine briefly the political story of Mahabharata.

The political land scape of Mahabharata was filled with many small and bigger kingdoms. The life-force which animated Indian polity was driven by two major instincts. First is the centripetal urge for local independence inspired by provincial patriotism, or the sense of honor and prestige of the clan. Second is the urge for a united empire covering the whole of Bharatha Varsha.

The sages and wise men of the age favored the ideal of a united India under the suzerainty of Dharma, Dharmarajya. In

practical terms it means political unification of India within the ambit of a powerful empire and under the reign of strong and righteous monarch who rules justly. The Rajasuya yagna is a religio-political institution created by a political mind of India to achieve this aim of a united Bharata. However in most cases Rajasuya became a religious sanction for the imperial ambitions of rulers to become the undisputed emperor of India. There were probably many more or less successful attempts towards empire building before the war of Mahabharata.

During the period of Mahabharata, the main political contenders for the empire were the kingdoms of Koshal, Maghada, Chhedi, Videha, Haihaya, Kurus, Panchalas and the Bhojas. Among them the most powerful were probably Maghada, Panchalas and the Kurus. The political story of Mahabharata is woven around a family feud between two sections of the Kuru clan, Kauravas led by Duryodhana and Pandavas led by Yudhistira and guided by Sri Krishna, the avathar and the divine charioteer of Mahabharata. Vyasa makes it clear that Sri Krishna is the master-mind of the age. The political objective of Krishna is to establish a united empire holding together the whole of Bharata under the reign of Pandavas with Yudhistira, the most righteous and noble Kshathriya of the age, on the throne.

The Political Significance Of Mahabharata:

Mahabharata contains some important land marks for the evolution of Indian

Scholar and Writer

Courtesy: Sri Aurobindo Action

civilizations. Life depicted in Mahabharata gives the impression of a more mentally developed but less refined civilization than Ramayana. Greater mental development is the result of positive evolution in the Brahmana class. In Mahabharata we find a great creative efflorescence in the Brahmana activities like religion, philosophy and ethics. But in Mahabharata we also find a certain rudeness, lack of culture and a degeneration of Kshathriya class. This ruling and warrior class in ancient India was in general educated, intelligent and trained in the lofty Kshathriya traditions of courage, heroism, chivalry, nobility and generosity. But on the negative side it is also prone to rudeness, impulsive violence, arrogance, pride, lust and loose indulgence in sensuous enjoyment. During Mahabharata, this negative side of Kshathrias tends to predominate their character and life.

For example Jarasandha, king of Maghada who has imprisoned hundreds of kings in order to offer them as a human sacrifice to God Siva, Sisupaala who has the habit of abducting and molesting others' wives, Dhuryodhana who tries to disrobe the Paandava queen, Draupadi, in the open royal court in the presence of others are some of the degenerate Kshathrias described in Mahabharata. One positive contribution of Kurukshetra war to the evolution of Indian civilization is the cleansing of this degenerate Kshathriya class and the establishment of the better and a nobler political order under the reign of Yudhishtira.

The Spiritual Significance Of Mahabharata:

However, beyond the political significance, the epic of Vyasa has a spiritual significance for the future evolution of

humanity. To comprehend this higher significance we have to understand the Indian theory on the evolution of human civilization. According to ancient Indian thought, progress of human civilization proceeds through four cycles or stages, Chhathuryuga.

First is the Satyayuga in which truth and goodness exists born in and natural in man, and all humanity lives in a state of spontaneous unity and harmony. The next two stages are the Tretha and Dwapara yugas in which there is a gradual dilution or diminution of truth in human consciousness or nature. Truth is no longer natural and born in and therefore it has to be enforced by will and discipline and social and political regulation. The fourth stage is the Kaliyuga in which truth virtually disappears from human consciousness and as a result chaos and disorder, falsehood and adharma reign supreme over human life. After the Kali begins the next Chaathruyuga. According to Mahabharata, Kurukshetra war occurs at the transitional point from Dwapara to Kaliyuga.

We need not accept fully or literally this Indian theory and its gigantic time-scales. The first important point to note in this Indian theory is that it conceives human evolution as a cycle process through many chathuryugas. The Indian theory conceives Kaliyuga in entirely negative terms. But according to Sri Aurobindo, the destruction which happens in Kaliyuga is not at all evil: it is a cleansing which clears the way for the future evolution of humanity. What is destroyed in Kaliyuga are the old forms, values and ideals which are out of tune with the future cycle of evolution, the next Chaturyuga, which will perhaps lead to a new and higher harmony of truth with some

new spiritual potentialities of the Infinite which are unmanifest in the earlier Chaturyuga. Some of the seeds of this next cycle of Chaturyuga were perhaps thrown in the later stages of the earlier cycles or in other words, the seeds of the new and next Sathyayuga were sown in the Kali of the earlier cycles.

We are at present perhaps in the transitional period between two Chaturyugas. According to most of the occult and spiritual traditions, in the Sathyayuga of the next cycle of evolution, humanity as a whole, if it consents to it, will be led to its ultimate spiritual destiny. The Mahabharatha, which occurs somewhere in the dwapara-kali era of the earlier Chaturyuga and composed during the beginning of Kali, contains some of the seeds

of a spiritual synthesis of the future. Bhagavat Gita, revealed to Arjuna by Sri Krishna during the Great War of the Bharatha, contains the essence of this spiritual message of Mahabharatha.

After the early vedic age, Indian spirituality gravitated towards meditation and outer renunciation of life. Bhagavat Gita presents a new and fresh spiritual synthesis with an emphasis on work and inner renunciation which can be put into practice even in the midst of life and action. We believe that this life-embracing and dynamic yoga of the Gita will be an integral and important part of the spiritual synthesis of the future which will lead humanity to its spiritual destiny. This is the most important evolutionary significance of Mahabharatha.

‘YES, WE CAN’

words from Mr.Barak Obama’s famous Victory speech on 4-11-2008

M.G Narasimha Murthy

On the glowing American horizon,
Dawns a new era of hope and
communication.
Obama, the leader America was waiting for,
Emerges from the masses, a rising star.
Breaking the barriers of religion and race,
Obama smiles, beaming with confidence
and grace:
"Change has to come to America" he
declares!
Recalls Lincoln, Kennedy and Dr. King,
As millions of Americans dance and sing.
Elegant orator, par excellence
Promises equality, justice and strong
defense,

And measures to crush agents of violence,
Defeat terrorists and their evil designs;
Shares India's desire to isolate centers of
crime.
Facing challenging tasks at this crucial time,
Violent conflicts, failing Banks and
economic trends,
He seeks the goodwill and support of all
nations,
Treating them as partners and trusted
friends,
'OBAMA' now personifies 'YES, WE
CAN'
Our youthful world's best slogan!
Now is the time for all statesmen to join
hands
And say 'YES, WE WILL' and hail the
brave new icon!

Retd Principal, Hyderabad

SOFT SKILLS TRAINING – RURAL YOUTH

Bhaskara Rao. Varanasi

An old wine in a new bottle, 'soft skills' is a euphemism to social skills, the training in which was criticized as naively positivistic and insensitive to the meanings created by participants and destructively reductionistic in its analysis. Some even saw it as an imposition of middle class manners and mannerisms on the working class and the rural folk, who have been rising to compete with the urban elite in technical and scientific domains and managerial positions.

Having rejected social skills training, the behaviorist model, the HR professionals in India focused on communication skills in English language for technical jobs. Gradually it began to dawn on their minds that the employability is much more than mere speaking, listening, and writing in English. They gave the name soft skills to include emotional intelligence, cluster of personality traits, punctuality, honesty, personal integrity and so on. Soft skills list contains more value-words than skills. One can only open search sites on the Internet to find ever increasing terms under the head. People's skills and life skills are the other emerging terms to mean same thing.

All are agreed that they are acquired qualities not necessarily in-born and as such the individual can learn if he is sensitized to their value and utility in the market place for

jobs, careers, and professions. However the training system should take into account the Pygmalion effect. The flower girl from the slum remained always a flower girl to the linguist professor Higgins who taught her diction and decorum to behave like a lady without treating her like a lady.

Treating the rural or so-called backward with dignity and respect to his existing status, the familiar culture from which he hails is important. What is being taught is how to be flexible and adapt to changing market conditions. It is pertinent to quote. Prof. Amartya Sen and Nandan Nilekani in this regard both from newspaper reports.

1. 'Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen warned that any attempt to ban English in Uttar Pradesh would be divisive and further exclude the 'non-English speaking have-nots' from the national mainstream.

..... they (those who oppose English) will not be able to prevent people from doing English in India as the language of Commerce, Industry, rule of law and public use...are in English.

2. 'I am a huge believer in market because markets are caste and religion neutral and can solve a lot of identity problems. If there are right skills and capabilities anybody can use the markets to raise their level. But they need to have the pre-requisites of good education, English language skills, etc. English language provided, 'upward mobility to a chunk of our

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people, but if there is a poor guy in a small village in Bihar and he is not taught English, does not go to school and does not know what the world is all about, how is he ever going to come out of misery? So, the challenge is to give every one an opportunity and my book is about that'.

Nandan Nilekani

Here is what an educationist wrote in the Hindu weekly Magazine recently.

3. Here is a wide open space, one where the government is not doing much today. We have several big corporate foundations, international NGOs and international foundations and a growing community of people genuinely interested in making a difference.

Can this community not think out of the box and reach out to millions of young girls and boys who are waiting for an opportunity to break free from the vicious cycle of poverty and hopelessness? Does this not make economic sense in a country that seeks to leverage its demographic dividend?

A decade ago I was invited to conduct a seminar on communication skills to the final year students of Engineering college situated in semi-urban area. I began the seminar telling them the story of Michael Faraday, the story of a school dropout with rural background who eventually became a great scientist, known to the students of Engineering. It was given as an exercise in listening skills. It was only a ruse to make them attentive and earnest. The intent is to inject the idea of a self-taught man of values and sense of purpose in life.

It had salutary effect on the audience, many of whom identified themselves with

Faraday. I quote now as I always did in my seminars what Faraday had to say years later after he became a scientist of name and fame. 'My education was of the most ordinary description, consisting of little more than the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic at a common day school'.

Later this man, when he became Director of the Royal Institution and had to give weekly lectures to the public promoting science, he engaged a tutor and learned English composition to pay back to the society in return to what it did to him even though he was exempted from doing so. The story says that he attended lectures at the Royal Institution and took copious notes as a child of 14 before he was recognized and picked by Sir Humphry Davy the scientist who claimed that 'the greatest of all my discoveries was the discovery of Michael Faraday'. There is enough inspiration generated in the class which needs to be fostered by the environment, by institutions like the Royal Institution, London, and men like Prof. Davy.

Being proficient in English language skills involves reading more and more of English literature - fiction, expository writings, magazine articles, and English dailies. Learning spoken English involves speaking and listening more and more and watching good English movies and TV shows on current matters and conversing with friends in English as far as possible. In fact proficiency is defined as competence gained through training and practice, ten percent training and ninety percent practice. Attending any number of seminars or behaviorist model coaching classes will not do unless followed by practice, practice, and practice. It is a performing art! Here is another titbit from a newspaper.

4. 'The programme organized by the Lead India 2020 Foundation in Hyderabad on 15th Oct 2008, brought out the latent talent among school children from rural background studying in Government schools. They underwent a five day training programme. They expressed their views. The way they articulated their ideas showed the high degree of self-confidence in expressing their views on making India a global leader on the 77th birthday of APJ Kalam. The youngsters surprised everyone with their fluent speech and clarity of practical ideas to uplift the country.

Reading English daily the learner comes across many new words, for journalists are fond of using the vogue and fashionable words, some of which have not entered the dictionaries a decade ago. So the learner may refer to Internet services. Still the dictionary is a valuable resource from which one learns synonyms, antonyms, pronunciation, idiomatic usage, colloquial use.

I have packed my essay with titbits from English Dailies deliberately. Both trainer and the learner make use of this resource for learning to improve reading, English language use, and enhance information intake and alertness to important news items.

What the rural poor miss is the parental programming which the urban middle class enjoy. To explain parental programming I refer to Polonius's advice to his son in the drama Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark. (In the box). Every bit in it is about Soft Skills. Reading fiction and watching English movies, the rural child may get the exposure to many things more readily although vicariously than perhaps the training films and videos specially designed to teach English pronunciation or

phonetics etc.

Of the three factors parental programming, internal aspirations and external factors, that contribute to the development of the child, with internal aspirations in place, today the rural youth is waiting for external factors, initiatives, to happen.

A Father to his Son

Polonius Advice to His Son

Polonius. Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing
with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character

Give thy thoughts no tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act,

Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,

Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.

Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,

Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;

Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;

For the apparel oft proclaims the man,

And they in France of the best rank and station

Are most select and generous, chief in that.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be;

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,

And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.

This above all : to thine own self be true,

And it must follow, as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man..

A CULTURAL READING OF TAGORE'S MUKTA-DHARA

Vinod. V. B.

It is the good fortune of an(y) Indian that he is born in the country of Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore's personality is a composite one and understood rightly, it means, Gurudev. He contained within himself the facets of Indian Culture that, understanding him is to understand the culture of the land. As a creative genius he did not only turn out poems, plays, novels, essays, lyrics, and paintings of exquisite beauty but also insisted on the Arnoldian "high seriousness" of an artist.

A work of art for him was both Art (from the point of view of aesthetics) and art (from the point of view of ethics). And there are as many questions of ethical significance he raises as there are questions of aesthetic importance. He seldom refrains from giving a message through his works. And these messages are ever relevant as they are some of the perennial concerns of man. Tagore was steeped in the eternal values of his land which are enshrined in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas, and the other cultural manifestations like folk art, dance, and drama.

In his plays Tagore raises certain vital issues which draw the spectator/ reader to sit up and ponder. He preferred a thinking man for he meant to move men to moral action. His plays are largely symbolic in nature, thus facilitating an optimum generation of meanings. Mukta-dhara is one of the "Three Plays"

translated by Marjorie Sykes. It brings out many meanings of freedom, thereby encompassing the individual, social, political and global connotations of the word.

The king of Uttarakut, Ranajit, commissions the royal engineer, Bibhuti to construct a dam to stop the waters of Mukta-dhara from flowing into the lower country of Shiv-tarai. This causes in the Shiv-tarains grave consternation. It is the adopted son of Ranajit, Prince Abhijit, who breaks the dam to bring the waters down to Shiv-tarai like a latter day Bhagiratha.

Mukra-dhara is about the construction of a dam, the triumph of science, the joy of Bibhuti, and the celebration in Uttarakut. Mukta-dhara is also about the destruction of the dam, the martyrdom of Abhijit, and the celebration in Shiv-tarai. Mukta-dhara is above all, about mukta-dhara herself: her irresponsible flow of energy and freedom.

The construction of the dam offers more than one meaning: it is a sign of growth. Growth made possible by the harnessing of the resources of Nature. And to this end the possibilities of science are exploited by Bibhuti. But Bibhuti realizes this by curbing life-giving forces; nay life itself.

Thus one is drawn toward the ambivalence of Growth. As a promise of better living conditions it is a necessity. But when it is achieved at the expense of precious

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human life, it has an unhappy portent.

The destruction of the dam too provides more than one meaning. The comparisons the Tower draws with the trident of Bhairava imply a certain apprehension. There is at once a sense of triumph and there is an uneasy calm that Bhairava has been slighted. Such a state of mind indicates a certain reluctance to accept change; the fear of completely and willingly disowning the mooring of tradition, of the entrenched beliefs and values.

The dam is indicative of the possibilities of science. The flaws (cracks) in the dam are indicative of the fallibility of science. The dam with its crack must needs be broken - thematically; or will break-inevitably. Either way man's search for newer experience, newer possibilities, and fresh new vistas of life are unmistakably intuited.

The dam interferes with the flow of the river. It is not as much the construction of "the Machine" that is evil and reprehensible, as much as it is the feelings of strength, pride and arrogance it gives to the builders of the Machine (Uttarakut) when the flow of the stream is dammed with purpose but without meaning, lit is bound to be broken.

It takes the reader to a deeper level of response that man's desires, aspirations and struggles cannot be satiated, either with the construction of the dam or with its destruction. It is always something beyond this making or breaking. It is in the flow of the stream, the spirit.

It takes the reader to a deeper level of response that man's desires, aspirations and

struggles cannot be satiated, either with the construction of the dam or with its destruction. It is always something beyond this making or breaking. It is in the flow of the stream, the spirit.

Mukta-dhara is a quiet flow in the best of the times. She is dynamic movement, suggestive of the life potential when flowing from the hill down. She irrigates the plains and thus actualizes that potential in life - sustaining crops.

When she ceases to flow there is famine, starvation and death. When her flow is dammed with the evil intent of bringing suffering, it augurs ill for all Uttarakut. For the river must flow. It flows from one country to another. It is not anyone's exclusive possession but belongs to the common wealth. The breaking of the dam brings home the message that all men are created equal and that they are equally deserving of the means available.

The means are the bounty of Nature, the realization of which brings harmony in life. Science brings advantages. But those advantages must be had without upsetting the harmony in life. A clash of interests may manifest itself into political, religious, ideological and cultural conflicts.

Politically it brings nations to war; set off by the jingoism of the patriots whose vision is always lopsided and which ignores the interests of the other country. On the religious front it brings the age - old customs and practices to a head. It brings two factions to war set off by sectarianism of the devotees who are impatient about the values espoused by others.

Conflict of the war brings destruction. But conflict and war happen in the hope that that which survives will usher in peace, hope and freedom. Till man understands real freedom he will look for it in the temple of Bhairava, in the possibilities of science, in the love for his country or in the numerous choices that promise him road to freedom.

There are other metaphorical extensions to the constructions and destruction of the dam. There is a Mukta-dhara in every individual and there is a thirst for Mukta-dhara which every nation strives to quench. The construction of the dam may be seen as the

curbing of this freedom. And the freedom of one country can be curbed only with brutal force. But sustained repression only causes cracks in the body politic and soon the thirst of a country long suppressed, bursts forth in a Mukta-dhara of freedom and renewal of life. In the play the blood of Abhijit mingles with the waters of Mukta-dhara in a life-giving stream. It is celebration in Shiv-tarai.

In Mukta-dhara Tagore was prophetic about the present day disputes between the states over the sharing of river waters and the construction of dams- Editor.

AND YET

O.P. Arora

Banks, bankrupt, break the back
Subprime scandal, the immediate hack
demolishes the structures, foundations too
currencies tumble, leaders bundle
laid-off workers starve in millions
not-yet laid-off eat in panic
recession's trumpet blows off the strongest
how to salvage the savage situation, mull the
richest,
Big questions the courageous explore
the age is dumb, minds numb, formulas galore.

Hunger and despair bulgen
Qs for water and sugar lengthen
Drought menaces the hungry looks
the farmer devises the suicidal hooks

gloom and depression rule
façade apart, insecurity haunts the cool.

And yet
they are busy.....
the parasites, the suckers, the hounds.....
unconcerned with the plight of the people
fighting the fictitious battles.....
who was secular
or
who was responsible for partition.
Sixty years of independence.....
their bulging bellies and black coffers are full
or
they too should have talked of
roti and the prices
or the unaffordable rents or houses.

Professor New Delhi

TARA - 'THE SHINING STAR'

Radha Murthy

In the epic Ramayana, the character, Tara appears for the first time and utters many priceless words in Kishkindha Kanda. She is the wife of mighty Vanara king Vali and the daughter of another Vanara king Sushena. There is an old enmity between Vali and his younger brother Sugreeva. Vali banishes Sugreeva from his kingdom and takes away his wife Ruma. As directed by the demon, Kabhanda, Rama and Lakshmana come to meet Sugreeva, make a friendship pact with him. According to the pact, Rama will kill Vali, and in return Sugreeva with the help of Great Vanara Army, will organize a search for Sita, and restore her to Rama.

Encouraged by Rama's promise and support, Sugreeva challenges Vali for a duel. Vali accepts the challenge, fights Sugreeva and defeats him. Hurt, humiliated and feeling let down by Rama, Sugreeva comes back and asks him why he did not kill Vali. Rama tells him that since Vali and Sugreeva, look so alike, he could not identify who is who, so he did not release the arrow for fear of killing Sugreeva.

Rama consoles Sugreeva, makes him wear a floral garland for proper identification, gives him confidence, and persuades him to invite Vali for a second round of duel. Feeling confident with Rama's assurance, Sugreeva

goes and challenges Vali for the second time. Enraged by Sugreeva's insolence, Vali comes out of his inner chambers, stamping the ground with a thunderous sound.

At this moment, Tara enters the scene, embraces Vali and talks to him gently. By embracing Vali, Tara tries to calm him down, shows her concern towards him and tells him that she is with him in these difficult situations. She addresses him 'Sadhu' meaning "Oh, Good Man." Only good people listen to good words. She requests him to leave his anger, which is flowing from him like a powerful stream of a river. Tara feels that anger is a useless emotion, and one should discard it as a floral garland worn the previous night. By next morning, it is withered and is of no use.

Tara says to Vali, "Oh, valiant one, at this juncture, I do not like you to fight with Sugreeva. I will also tell you the reasons: A few moments back, you defeated and sent Sugreeva back with severe wounds. Now with his wounds still raw, he has come to challenge you for another duel. This raises a suspicion in my mind that there is somebody more powerful than you behind him. Sugreeva is a very intelligent, shrewd and calculative person. That somebody must have agreed to help your brother. Without testing and estimating that somebody's strength, Sugreeva would never have made friends with him." By saying these words, Tara shows her sharp intellect, and observing powers, and in a subtle manner she

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tries to sober down Vali, who is excited, angry and arrogant. She is indirectly suggesting Vali not to underestimate the enemy's strength and get into difficulties. She continues:

"Oh, mighty warrior, before this incident, our son Angad got information through spies, that two princes who are also brothers, Rama and Lakshmana, have come into our territory recently. They are the sons of the Ikshwaku King Dasaratha, and are believed to be very powerful and invincible. Elder brother Rama is famed to be a righteous and kind man, who always helps those who come to his refuge."

Tara with her intelligence guessed that Sugreeva might definitely have approached Rama for help, and if it be so, Rama will definitely help him. However she does not know about the friendship pact between Rama and Sugreeva.

She advises Vali, thus: "Oh, dear Lord, Rama's power I believe is such that it is not easy to conquer him. It is not wise to make an enemy of him. Sugreeva is your brother, and he deserves your affection and a bit of pampering. Call him and announce that he would be your successor. If you want to do any good to me, if you believe that I always wish well for you, please consider my suggestion. I am not trying to force you but only soliciting you. Under the circumstances, this appears to be the only way open for you."

Though Tara very skillfully tries to dissuade him from accepting Sugreeva's challenge by her earnest appeal, Vali decides to accept the challenge, walks out of the palace instructing Tara not to follow him. Left

with no other option, Tara goes around Vali, chanting victory Mantras for him, leaves crying softly followed by her maids of honour.

Here, Valmiki praises Tara's worthy qualities. He calls her Dakshini (skillful), Priyavadini (one who speaks sweet words); she had tact, a skilful way of calming Vali down, warning him of Rama's anger and Sugreeva's shrewdness. He depicted her as a cool headed, mature, intelligent lady, with a discerning capacity for right and wrong, capable of giving correct advice after analysing situations with an insight into human psychology, coming to logical conclusions.

At the first instance itself, Tara shines brilliantly in the galaxy of Ramayana. Her name is always taken with respect, and is included in the list of 'Pancha Kanyas', the other four being Ahalya, Sita, Mandodari and Draupadi. The Sashtas say that the mere taking the names of these five ladies will rid one of 'Pancha Maha Pathakas' (five major sins).

Vali goes, fights Sugreeva, even manages to bash him, but is hit by Rama's arrow and gets wounded fatally. This news reaches Tara and she comes rushing out of the palace to have a last darshan of Vali. She is stopped and advised by Vali's ministers to run away with Angad to save her and her son's life. She goes ahead saying that she is not worried about herself and her son Angad, but will meet Vali.

Vali, after handing over the responsibility of looking after Tara and Angad to Rama and Sugreeva, breathes his last. Tara cries bitterly, but doesn't say a word against either Rama or Sugreeva. In fact, she accepts

the fact that Rama did justice, by fulfilling his promise to Sugreeva. Rama consoles Tara, advises that Sugreeva be made the Vanara king.

After his coronation, Sugreeva gets immersed in worldly pleasures, and delays the search for Sita. Rama is furious and sends Lakshmana to remind Sugreeva of his promise. Observing Rama's sad state, Lakshmana is beside himself with rage, though restrained by Rama, goes to meet Sugreeva in that angry mood to pull him out of his drunken stupor. No one except Angad dares to meet Lakshmana, and take him into the palace to meet Sugreeva. But Sugreeva gets cold feet after hearing about Lakshmana's anger, requests Tara to meet him as he is confident that she will be able to handle Lakshmana.

Tara approaches Lakshmana, talks to him in an affectionate manner and wants to know the reason for his outburst. Lakshmana demands to know why Sugreeva is not making any effort to organize the search for Sita. He even warns of losing Rama's friendly support, if proper measures are not taken.

Tara, more mellowed down, and mature, after Vali's death, starts talking softly to Lakshmana to temper him down, "Oh, Prince, this is not the proper occasion for you to get angry. Sugreeva is your brother. Is it good to get angry with your own brother? You are a noble prince, whereas Sugreeva is a vanara and is no match to you. You are not expected to lose your cool like this. We all know of the help rendered to us. We know that there is a delay in fulfilling the promise made to Rama. Dear Lakshmana, I also know

the power of cupid. Sugreeva is now in the company of beautiful women who are adept at enticing. I know their powers of enticing and also how difficult it is to overcome carnal desires."

As she is older, she addresses him as 'son' "Son, all cannot be like you, who can resist temptations. Sugreeva is besotted with his wife to the extent of shamelessness. He was separated from his wife Ruma, for many years and never had a settled and comfortable life, as Vali was chasing him. All of a sudden he got everything, wife, kingdom, power and wealth. So he is not able to contain himself. Are we not aware of rishis who are supposed to have control over their senses, waver sometime? If rishis can succumb to temptations, what to talk of a vanara! In fact, you should be surprised if he has not fallen a prey to the temptations."

Having said this much, Tara notices Lakshmana's anger slowly subsiding. First to cool him down, she pictures Sugreeva as a fickle minded vanara, who is also shameless. But the next moment, she surprises Lakshmana by justifying Sugreeva's weakness, saying he was away from comforts for too long. By praising Lakshmana's capacity to overcome temptations, she manages to melt his heart a little. She further tells him: "Though Sugreeva is preoccupied with desires, he has not forgotten his promise to Rama. He has already passed strict orders to all vanara kings to come and assemble here with their army. Come my son, why you are standing here like a stranger. Come in to the inner chambers."

With these loving words,

Lakshmana's anger abates a little, and he walks in to meet Sugreeva with a cheerful disposition. But as soon as he sees Sugreeva surrounded by beautiful women, Lakshmana's anger comes back like a bursting volcano. He starts reprimanding Sugreeva for his slackness and warns him, if he does not hasten with his preparations, he may have to face Rama's wrath and he may even be sent to meet his brother Vali.

Sugreeva's mouth goes dry with this warning. Again, Tara intervenes and scolds Lakshmana mildly. She tells him, "Lakshmana, it is not proper to chide Sugreeva like this. He is neither ungrateful, unscrupulous, nor an untruthful person. Rama has done a great favour to him and he has not forgotten that. The only lapse on his part is he got immersed in all the worldly pleasures, and he is not able to get out of them. A sage like Viswamitra spent ten thousand years with the celestial beauty Menaka like one day. What can we say about Sugreeva, who was denied all comforts for a long time? He lost all sense of time. I cannot deny the fact that Sugreeva will set aside his comforts, Ruma, Angad, me and even his kingdom, to kill Ravana and restore Sita to Rama if the need be so."

"But, I heard from Vali that there are crores of rakshasas in Lanka. Without killing

them, it is not possible to kill Ravana. Without help, even Rama will not be able to kill Ravana. That is why, Sugreeva is collecting vanaras in large numbers. A huge vanara army is already on the way. Since Sugreeva is awaiting the force, he is not meeting Rama. So please, discard your anger, all the women folk here are scared that their king Sugreeva may meet the same fate, as his brother Vali due to your anger."

Here, Tara once more shines brilliantly, because of her political acumen, her logic, the knack of putting things in proper perspective. Her shrewdness is exhibited when she brings about Vishwamitra's episode to light. Vishwamitra is the revered guru of Rama and Lakshmana. There is also valid thrust that without the help of Sugriva with his huge army of vanaras, it would be difficult for Rama to defeat Ravana.

Tara's characterization is totally at a different level, compared to other female characters of Ramayana. Valmiki portrayed Tara in a glorious manner, due to which she shines in the sky of 'Ramayana' like a bright 'Tara.' Because of Valmiki's capacity to depict each character in a unique style, 'Ramayana' became the magnum opus, and Valmiki the Adi Kavi, or the first poet who is widely respected and worshipped.

THE FARMER'S SUICIDE

Bina Pani Biswas

"Father, have you gone leaving us for ever..." Wailed the son as his dumb struck, decrepit, wrinkly grandfather looked at the body of his only son, now wrapped in 'Pancha' awaiting cremation.

"You have left us alone and forlorn?" Beating her breast Bangamma questioned her dead husband and the younger son looked up to her, dumbfound, with tear filled eyes. Her daughter handed over a glass of water to the grandfather while helping him to stand up on his trembling, spindly feet. The villagers, neighbours stood silently witnessing the death-stricken family coming to terms with the sole bread winner's suicide.

The black, sun-baked, wizened soil with wide, gaping crevices, the dried up barren cotton plants in the field, a plough, a few starved children and a huge burdensome loan were all that Appanna could manage in his thirteen years of career as a cotton farmer.

"Anna, this time if the yield is good, I'll definitely pay back the amount. My daughter also has to be married. Please, have mercy, spare me a few rupees, Anna. Have mercy Annaya...." Appanna had begged of the village-money lender, a huge, pot-bellied, ferocious looking man, just the day before.

"Then you also have to look after my needs, Thamru. Every time I can't be munificent and part with my money. Do you understand what I mean?" said Suryarao

quizzically. Hearing this Appanna got up on his own feet and started to go.

"Remember, your daughter should gain some experience with me before you get her married. After all no husband likes an amateur wife as a bed partner. Suryarao's henchmen who were till now enjoying the whole scene went near the poor debt ridden farmer to boo him away.

The scarce rains, spurious cottonseeds, undeterred corruption of the office bearers coupled with heavy debts pulled down heavily on the cotton farmers of the area. They did not know where to go and whom to trust for help. The loud and false promises made before the elections by the democratic and undemocratic parties, biting down each other on 'the suicide' issues emptied the trust in the minds of the gullible and ignorant poor farmers and each time the cotton crop failing they were forced to knock on the doors of the money lenders like Suryarao and there was no mechanism, as such, to monitor the progress and implementation of Government's special packages and as a result the distress deaths grew during the last few years.

"Madam is coming, madam is coming. Make way. She herself is coming to inspect this time," announced the man clad in white Khadi payjama-kurta and made haste amidst the crowd, which had gathered, outside Appanna's house.

"Keep the dead body in the front. Vodhinigaru, please, move away a bit.

Principal, Sainik School, Vizianagar Dist

You, come here and sit down near your father and stop wailing!" The busy party worker started arranging for the show. The widow moved a bit and pulled the younger son to her lap, waved at her daughter as she dabbed her son's eyes with the end of her sari.

In no time there gathered a huge crowd. Party president was coming down herself to a poor man's house to attend a poor man's funeral. That was news! Reporters, TV men showed up in no time. The villagers stood wonderstruck as the live reporting with live anchors started covering the live show!

The old man robbed of his last hope, puzzled by the ongoing drama, preferred to sit on a cot at one corner of the house and tired to think about the uncertainties that lay ahead of them. Widowed Bangaramma looked up to the worker in his eyes and muttered, "How long will it take? Is she really coming? The cremation has to be over before the sunset."

"Don't worry madam. Once President madam comes, your problems will be solved in no time. You have seen her on TV, now you can see her yourself with your own eyes", said the enthused worker unable to decipher the pain, fear and uncertainty that devoured all the mortal senses of that family.

The dead body of Appanna kept on a bed of hay, started turning blue from the poisonous Triazophos that he guzzled down in a bout of depression. The careless autopsy done on the body started giving away. A yellowish discharge oozed from the stiches and the white dhoti with which he was wrapped started getting soiled from it slowly. Onlookers waited endlessly for the president madam but there was no trace. The party

workers busied themselves with the publicity work as the widow kept on checking when would the funeral would start.

The entire western horizon started turning grey. The sun dipped behind the forked tamarind tree. The daylight plummeted the hopes in the threatened heart of Bangaramma. The younger son dozed off in his mother's lap; the starved old man was given to eat some morsels of food by some generous neighbour as the older son tried to arrange for the firewood.

Darkness started settling down slowly till the contours of the hills merged completely in the western horizon. The party workers kept checking with their leaders about the arrival on their cell phones as the tired TV anchors reassured the viewers to stay tuned as any moment the leader would arrive.

"What did he drink? From where did he get the poison? You should have been more careful since everyone knows that farmers are prone to commit suicide," went on the Panchanama officer of the area. He blamed the wife for her carelessness and confiscated the bottles of the insecticides and moved on.

The uniform-clad and plain dressed cops patrolled the area and the maddening siren from their jeeps deafened the ears and senses of the bereaved and beleaguered family who now wanted to somehow do away with the body. The ooze invited flies.

The village health workers sprayed disinfectants. Still it became almost difficult to contain the smell that the dead body emanated.

Suddenly the noise picked up high pitch. The party workers started shouting

slogans about the 'Devima' who had just arrived on the scene to give the family her blessings. The reporters ran amuck. The duty-bound policemen barricaded the onlookers from approaching the leader as she got off the car with her commandoes. She hurried her steps towards the area where Appanna's dead body lay waiting for the final judgment.

The harried family was talked to politely and patted on their backs. The old man was assured of every possible grant as they posed for group photographs along with the leader handing over an envelope containing a few thousand rupees as ex-gratia. The family looked enchanted by the fairy that just descended from heaven to bless them. The mediaprint, visual, electronic all made sure that nothing was left uncaptured.

The dead body did not take much time to burn. They kept it on the pyre and the elder son lighted it with a kerosene torch. Everything went up in flames "The body burned nicely. Sometimes it will remain half-burnt and then again one has to assemble the scattered remains and throw in the fire. Difficult task. Your Naanagaru was a nice man and so he burned nicely," said the local priest praising Appanna's combustible properties.

The glow of a late winter sunrise covered the entire village. The smoke from the hearths coiled upwards. The smog made the entire horizon disappear. The birds chirped noisily unaware of the human sufferings. The old man was seated on the veranda as the younger son, with splotchy skin sat on his lap; he felt a gush of pity for the fatherless child. Two, three women moved around in the house aimlessly. The daughter bent down near the earthen oven outside trying to light the moist firewood. The widow sat helpless with her

elder son on a bamboo spreading.

"Bodhini, Appanna promised to pay back the loan that he took from me. Since the poor man is no more why don't you try and pay off? That will appease the soul of your dead husband!" said Suryarao who came on hearing the news about the 'envelope'.

Bangaramma looked at this demon. Her heavy, swollen eyelids made her face look angelic. For a farmer's wife Bangaramma was extraordinarily beautiful. The perpetual hollow feeling inside her belly, the brown mud that layered on her once supple skin, the unkempt hair, the starved caved in stomach could attract nobody now but Suryarao with his penetrating eyes measured something and then started to leave saying, "I'm not at all an ugly man as you people think. I've a father's heart too. OK, if you cannot pay now, leave it, no problem. Pay me when you've enough. Where's the hurry? You are not running away."

Bangaramma could fathom the implied meaning and tried to cover her body with the end of her sari. She did not utter a single word of protest against this muscled and powerful man, as she knew well now that their lives were threatened. More so for her young daughter.

In desperation, she stood up in folded her hands and made polite request, "Anna. Once we get the full amount, we'll definitely pay back. Now please leave us alone."

"Don't worry. I did not come to ask for money. Anything, any help you need, don't hesitate to come to my house. I'm always there to help. More so after my wife's death. I've become a saint." Saying this and reassuring his self-conferred sainthood, he trudged along towards the exit.

The social workers from a local NGO came and asked about the details of the loans that dead Appanna could have possibly taken, advised them not to part with the money at any cost without their notice. The world was full of corruption and the moment such accidents occurred the ravens would come flying to eat up the remains. They had to be extra careful now. They would be trying to get her relief from the Prime Minister's Relief Package. Their NGO had done a great job in the past and taken up the case with the NHRC for employment of the wards of the families of the deceased in Government offices. They were not going to sit idly this time also. After about a few minutes of basking in their glorious achievements and activities, they left.

The village's uncensored, unpolitical, kind-hearted Bujjianna entered and handed over a few live birds to the ladies and as they moved away behind the hut for cutting and cleaning the birds, the old man stood up with

folded hands and murmured, "Anna, your poor brother went away. Now who is going to help us in distress except you? Look at these children and have mercy."

The man who was a favorite with every villager and fondly called the "Big brother" by everybody, stood there silently. He could not gather words and courage to look in the eyes of the old man and speak lies. He hurried out of the door to arrange for the lunch that had to be prepared for the people who stayed awake the whole night and cremated Appanna.

The noise and clamor in the house subsiding, the villagers and relatives eating their stomachful left, the elders of the village blessed the family wholeheartedly as the old man with his daughter-in-law, in tow with her children stood with perpetually folded hands near the exit gate.

A FARMER'S PRAYER TO GOD

N.Appalaswamy

O! What a catastrophe has befallen!
Parched fields and hearts broken.
Perhaps nature has frowned in rage
For the ills and sins of rulers' ravage.
O God! bless us with your compassion
We are the victims of brutal contraption.
Monsoon turned its face far away
Making tyrannous and cruel its sway.

Scarce became water to quench the thirst
Crops dried up belying our trust
O God! bless us with rains torrential
Lest we may face extinction sequential.
Our lands are grabbed and robbed
With malicious deceptions webbed
O God! you are our only refuge
Bless us with rain timely and profuse
We offer our devout and reverential
homage!

M.G.R. Buildings, Giripuram, Tirupathi

CHILDREN'S CHARACTERS IN R.K.NARAYAN'S FICTION

G.R.K. Murthy

Among the Indo-Anglian novelists R.K. Narayan is the most prolific writer. It is undoubtedly true that Narayan's most significant contributions are his humour and irony. What is equally significant is his portrayal of children and the depiction of childhood. Mark Twain says "If any man draws 50 characters, they are all himself, 50 shades and moods of his own characters." Like wordsworth, Narayan is at his best when he recalls childhood and boyhood scenes. The boyhood scenes of Narayan had left so vivid impressions on his mind that mere recollection of them is enough to produce masterpieces of authenticity.

Another thing to be pondered over is that he was influenced by Dickens who was a gifted story teller .In his early age he read "Oliver Twist" and was inspired by Dickens and then he read the novels of Dickens voraciously .Besides enjoying his own childhood, Narayan closely watched the childhood of his daughter as he took care of her after his wife's death.

Narayan's first novel shows that he was a writer of promise, unpretentious, simple and direct like the school boys them-selves .In his novels and short stories one can read about the playing, giggling, mischief -making children . Swaminathan, Babu in "The Man eater of Malgudi" , Raju as a child in "The Guide

"are the best examples. We see ourselves nostalgically in his characters .Narayan with his characteristic sympathy puts himself into their personalities, understands them fully, and delineates them exquisitely.

The child's mind is a devil's workshop. It is this kind of imagination which makes the adult to be considered. When it is concretized it takes the form of fun, pranks, mischief and childish game activities. The best example is Swami. Swami mews like a cat and Mani barks like a dog.

The children in R.K.Narayan's fiction are intelligent and witty in everything except in their studies. Raju {The Guide} shows his unwillingness to go to school. Whenever he goes to school he whiles away his time in fun and frolic. Often he plays truant. When he is asked to manage a shop at the railway station, he accepts gladly and he learns various things from various sources .After reading his fiction one gets the doubt that probably Narayan projected his own natural aversion to academic education in his child characters.

If we observe the short-stories,we find that they are as distinguished as his novels. By its nature, a short story demands great discipline and clarity on the part of the writer. Narayan presents situations in a convincing manner so that the characters emerge naturally. His emphasis is always on making characters, life-like His focus is all on character. If his personality comes alive the rest is easy for him. The study of the character assumes

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paramount significance. His convincing narration gives no scope to the reader to doubt the veracity of the events as he is giving his own responses and the reader would believe it. With this the theme gets strength.

If we come to the discipline of conventional short story, it demands a definite beginning, a definite middle and a definite end. The theme should be only one. Even though many writers follow this convention R.K. Narayan follows it strictly in all short stories is an example in an exemplary manner.

In these short- stories he talks about the education of Iswaran at the beginning and the story ends with his death. The death also occurs due to education only. It is his skill in holding the attention of the reader within a very limited span of the story that makes it interesting. The setting and the characters have to be delineated through explicit information as well as deeper level of meaning .We can see all these characteristics in R.K.Narayan's short-stories. He creates an entire world by specifying the details. His child character are the best example of this ability. For example Dodu's" behaviour is fasinatong.

Dodu was an eight years old boy. He was badly in need of money. Since he was only eight no body took his financial worries seriously. He wanted money for getting a good stock of Chinese crackers for the coming Diwali. No elder was giving him money. Dodu's office was his wooden box with its lid open. Whenever he wanted to do a bit of serious thinking, he would open the lid and squat in his box amidst its contents. All discarded things of the household were kept in it .Dodu sat in his box and wondered what

he could do to raise money. He remembered one of his brother's friends who took a Palmyra leaf with some writing on it to a library and was paid for it. Dodu himself writes his name on a Palmyra leaf and takes it to the Archeological Department. The Director wonders after seeing this small boy and gives a small coin to him for his courage and imagination. Like this Narayan creates the world of children. Children's world is the miniature world. It is here that Wordsworth's concept of the child being the father of man finds expression in their daily activities. On the eve of his examination Swaminathan draws up a list of his needs as if it were some kind of a heavy monthly or annual budget.

1. Unruled white papers - 20 sheets
2. Ruled white papers - 10 sheets
3. Black ink - 1 Bottle
4. Pins - 12
5. Clips - 12

Instead of dreaming of a bungalow, a car, a motorbike or a scooter like an adult, Swami passionately longs for a simple ex-cycle wheel with out spokes or tire.

The above examples show that Narayan knows the psychology of the children perfectly well. The world of children is also the world of fears, the fear of ghosts and evil spirits, the parents, the police, the teachers etc., for example, Dodu's fear of his father.

Swami {a hero} is afraid of ghosts and evil spirits. In the short -story "A Shadow" Sambu expresses his fear after seeing his mother faint. He expresses a doubt and questions, "Is she also dead?" The brief sentence gives a deeper meaning. This shows

his affection towards his mother and at the same time it shows the fear of death. In "Leela's Friend" Leela cries for her friend Sidda. She poses many questions to her mother. It is a natural characteristic of a child.

Generally a short-story has only peaks no valleys. We can observe this fact in Narayan's short-stories especially in Iswaran. Narayan depicted this character in an ironical way. In this story he talks about the education of Iswaran.

Iswaran has failed. Every body in Malgudi knows his result. So, no one worries about his result. "you are the greatest optimist in India at the moment but for this obstinate hope you would never have appeared for the same examinations every year. "Once Narayan tells in an interview to Mehta. "It is very truthful-autobiographical you know it concerns a student, myself, who fails in so many examinations."

R.K.Narayan creates the necessary Indian atmosphere in his fiction. For example in "Swami and his Friends" the small boy wants to have money. He asks every one in the house but in vain. He thinks God only could help him. So he keeps a cardboard box before

God and prays to God.

Swaminathan stands before God and with great piety, informs the gods of the box and its contents {pebbles} how he expected them to be converted into two three-pie coins and why he needed money so urgently. He promises that if God helped, he would give up biting his thumb. He closes his eyes and mutters "Oh, Sri Ram you have slain Ravana though he had ten heads, "can't you give me six pies?".

One day Swami makes a paper boat and puts the boat in water. The boat moves on the water. Then he gets an idea that the boat should have passengers. So he catches an ant and puts it into the boat. While he was doing this the ant dies. Immediately the boy feels very sorry and keeps a pinch of sand on that ant. In his imagination he has cremated the ant. In this way even in the mind of the small boy also we find belief of God and religion.

The most fascinating thing about Narayan's young characters is that they are true to life. Their behaviour is natural. None can raise a finger against his depiction of the children who are not only realistic but universal in nature. They have come out of real earth.

The Secret of Life

Dr. C. Jacob

Hoard not gold with greed, breed not thieves,
A mass no wealth, create no enemies,

*Dist. Sessions Judge (Retd.), Barrenvari street,
Narsapur*

Feast no, before a starving face,
If no pride - no fall, no disgrace,
You are the maker of your foes,
Great is he who this secret knows.

MICHAEL JACKSON

SPECTACULAR MUSIC, SPECTACULAR WRECK

T.J.S. George

Death, we know, is a great leveller. What we do not realize is that it is also a great revealer. It strips off many masks we wear in life and reveals many truths we hope to hide. How glittering were the masks Michael Jackson sported! And how ugly the truths behind them!

The fans of course are uninterested in the ugliness. They remain dazzled by the magic of the Pop Emperor's music. It was indeed superior music. It may have lacked the intellectual vigour of the Beatles, but it resounded with a throbbing, palpating rhythm of electrical energy. It was thunderclap set to foot-thumping tempo. It was spectacular. It was music to watch.

Music to watch? Time was when the best way to enjoy music was to close one's eyes and lose oneself in the uplifting pleasure of listening. Music was a function of sound. But the 1950s and 1960s changed all that. While the Hippy culture was content with turning the abnormal into normal, Pop emerged as a conscious effort to tap the commercial potential of music. It envisaged the modern mass audience as frenzied consumers. Elvis Presley marked himself with bejeweled high-collar jackets and a provocative movement of the hips that earned him the title Elvis the Pelvis.

It was left to Michael Jackson to realize the full potential of the pelvis. Like a man inspired, he sent his hips into an erectile orbit that taunted an astonished world. His swirls and gyrations, his jigs and shrugs, his defiant gestures became his music. His "Thriller" thrilled millions of buyers. His "Bad" was adjudged good by millions more.

Even in showmanship, Jackson outperformed Presley. Presenting a trans-sexual image, he decked himself up in gaudy tunics with kinglike epaulets and sequined gloves. Small wonder that he made the music video an art form in itself, establishing once and for all that music was meant as much for the cameras as for the recording micro phones. Clearly Jackson was a virtuoso. Whether he was a genius is open to question, but he certainly was a prodigy. He was a celebrity from the age of 11.

Was this his undoing? To cope with Big Frame and Big Money, you need a Big Mind which does not come easily. Education can sometimes help. So can family background. The company one keeps can matter too. And the way one spends one's spare time. Which of these would be accessible to a Black family with nine children growing up in the American inner state of Indiana? Chances get even dimmer when one becomes rich and famous too early in life. Unable to grasp the opportunities provided by celebrity status, unable to absorb the

A well known writer and scholar

pressures as well as the pleasures of superstardom, unable to simply to cope, Jackson withdrew into himself. He became not just a recluse, but a dangerously eccentric recluse.

Marriages and divorces, children from hired wombs, plastic surgeries one after another, chemical treatments to make his black skin white, sleeping in coffins, dangling a baby from the balcony-the man was a psychological wreck. And the drugs. They've calculated that

he was taking drugs worth 24 lakh rupees every month. There was no food intake. What the post-mortem revealed was a skeleton sustained by narcotics. And an accumulated debt of nearly 3000 crore rupees.

What is the use of fame? What is the life worth if it gives you the whole world, but not one day's peace of mind? The biggest truth revealed by Michael Jackson's death is a truth all of us know but few of us accept: Money cannot buy happiness.

DEATH

Prof. R.K. Singh

We do not know
who cares for us
live or dead

nor do we know
our end
now or ever

which meeting with whom
is the last
we do not know

when darkness gushes
in front of the breach
sky sinks down

as stranger we come
as stranger
we pass

like withered grass
uncelebrated
unmourned, unknown

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NATARAJA RAMAKRISHNA, MAESTRO OF DANCE

G. Krishna Mohan

Dr. Nataraja Rama Krishna can be called synonym for dance. He has mastered all the branches in art namely Kuchipudi, Bharatha Natyam, Andhra Natyam, Folk etc.

He hails from a Hindu respectable family from Bali Island in Indonesia, born in 1933. later on he migrated to India and did his graduation in Nagpur, Madhya Pradesh. From the inception he had a profound inclination for the art of dance. He had his training from Maestros, Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai in Bharatha Natyam, Vedantham Lakshminarayana Sastry in Kuchipudi, Smt. Nayudupeta Rajamma, Smt. Pendyala Sathyabhama in various Temple dance systems. He very soon became an adept in dance and abhinaya. One Dr. Sonak, the medical adviser of Bhandara Estate in Nagpur witnessed Dr. Nataraja Rama Krishna's performance and was fascinated. At once he introduced Ramakrishna to the prince of the Estate Raja Ganapathi Rao Pandya who gave him an opportunity to perform dance before the elite of Nagpur. This performance fetched him laurels and encomium from the elite. He became the talk of the town and an expert in his art. Ramakrishna became the Asthana Vidwan in Bhandara Estate. He had produced several innovative items of dance which poured panegeries on him. He learnt many languages and music. The Raja of Bhandara conferred on Rama Krishna who was only 18 at that time, the title "Nataraja". He was

encouraged by Bhonsleys of Maharashtra to go to Tanjore, to the Saraswati Library for a deeper study of the art. He was surprised to learn that the script of the ancient Talapur Grandhas was the original Telugu. Great men are born with a purpose.

The aims of Ramakrishna are five-fold.

1. To uphold the dignity of dance.
2. To uplift the down trodden in this art and resurrect the folk arts of yester years. To improve the living conditions of the old, ignored artistes in this art.
3. To bring out the hidden knowledge of this art by writing books.
4. To bring to lime light New Themes through dance ballets.
5. To bring out the forlorn glory of the Ancient Temples dance which he named as Andhra Natyam.

With the above aims he started in 1955 his 'Nritya Niketan' at Hyderabad. He has conducted research in all branches of dance belonging to Andhra Pradesh. He visited the remotest parts in the state. And met the ancient dance connoisseurs such as Smt. Saridey Manikyamma, an exponent of Adhyatma Ramayana Keerthanas, and learnt a lot from her. He has become an adept in Satwikabhinaya. He gave several demonstration-discourses in several seminars. To his credit Dr. Ramakrishna has 3000 disciples spread all over the globe. Seven of his disciples obtained doctorates under his supervision from Central University.

writer, Hyderabad

Dr. Ramakrishna has renovated 'PERINI' belonging to Kakatheeya dynasty in the name of 'Perini' Sivathandavam, the ancient devotional dances called 'Agama Narthanas' and the temple dance 'Natarajanardhana Parijatham'. He has propagated the efficacy of 'Abhinaya' which is the soul of dance.

Dr. Nataraja Ramakrishna has conducted many seminars and dance festivals on Kuchipudi and brought state recognition to it while he was the Chairman of Andhra Pradesh Dance Academy. He has conducted dance festivals in various towns and cities in Andhra Pradesh while he was the Chairman of Dance Academy and brought to lime light the forlorn folk arts of Andhra Pradesh namely "Chindu Yakshaganamu", "Veera Natyam", "Tappeta Gullu", "Urumulu", "Guravayyalu", "Tholu Bommalu", "Oggu Kadhalu" etc.

He has provided succour to several artists and got pensions to old artistes. He has thus resuscitated several old artists.

He prepared the syllabus for Andhra Natyam and Perini for certificate as well as diploma courses in Telugu University. He has also renovated the ancient Devadasi Tradition of dances. In 1972 he organized a seminar on Devadasi dances at Rajahmundry, as a result this traditional dance also was included in the Andhra Natyam Curriculum. Similarly "Thoorpu Bhagavatam" was also included. Thus the ancient forgotten traditional arts have been brought to lime light. The folk arts were exhibited in State, National and International festivals, conducted by State and Central Governments. During his Chairmanship of A.P. Dance Academy "Chindu Yakshaganams" of Telangana, "Tappeta Gullu", of Srikakulam

and Vijayanagaram districts, "Veera Natyam" and "Garagalu" of East and West Godavari, "Dommari Natyam", "Guravayyalu" "Urumulu" and "Tholubommalu" of remotest villages, "Veedhi Bhagavatulu" of Rayalseema (Chitoor District) were brought to lime light. Dr. RamaKrishna contends that Andhra Natyam belongs to Andhras, having its origin from the ancient Temple dances of Devadasis.

Dr. Nataraja Rama Krishna has written nearly 50 books on Andhra Natyam, Perini, Alaya Nruthyams and Asthana Nruthyams of Devadasi Tradition, Agama Nartanams and Navajanardhana Parijatam. His other books are Narthana Balam Narthana Bhoomi, Narthana Kadha. His articles on dance both in English and Telugu published in various dailies created a movement towards the new innovative traditions of dance. His "Nrutyanjali" serial published in Andhra Prabha was very popular. Now he is bringing out 'Andhra Natyam' in four volumes.

BALLETS:-

Dr. Nataraja Rama Krishna has choreographed ballets on Lord Venkateshwara. He is the fore runner of the ballet movement. At Ujjaini he had displayed two Sanskrit ballets of Kalidasa namely Kumara Sambhavam and Meghasandesam which have won for him laurels as well as awards. Kalidasa Nrutya Samrate is a prestigious congregation and accreditation and it is indeed a worthy achievement.

He has toured extensively from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari in propagation of his art. Dr. Ramakrishna says dedication, devotion, discipline, dignity, are required for achieving success in any art.

AWARDS:-

Dr. RamaKrishna is the recipient of several prestigious awards from the central and state Governments together with other awards from various Educational and Art institutions. In 1968 the A.P. Sangeetha Nataka Academy conferred the title of "Bharathakala Prapoorna". In 1969 the West Godavri Artists Association gave him the title "Bharata Kala Savyasachi". In 1980 Andhra University had conferred the title "Kala Prapoorna".

In 1984 the Central Sangeeta Nataka Academy conferred on him, "the Best Natyacharya in South India".

He was made the Asthana Vidwan for dance by Andhra Pradesh in 1980.

L.V.R. Trust gave him the best Research Scholar Award in 1984.

He was honoured at Kakinada with a Gold Crown. Several institutions have also honoured him for the remarkable services he has rendered to dance.

At present he is conducting research work on the traditional dance systems prevailing in Golconda during the regime of Abdullah Kutubsha and the honours conferred by the Mohammadon ruler on Taramati and Premavati. This is aimed at the Unity of Hindus and Muslims.

Some live for themselves and some live for others, Dr. Nataraja Ramaakrishna belongs to the latter category.

Summer

Dr. M.S. Kidwai

Such is the comfort
In the Summer's day
The searching of needle in
The dry hay

The sun is rising
at his peak
There is no way
for the cold to leak

The feeling of thrust
is all around
like the condition of a prey
before a dog hound

With his mouth open
moving to and fro
in search of fog.

Like the factories watchman at the gate
Asking everyone his fate

Everyone is searching comfort
like the drop of water
in desert.

Sweating in their test
All the day long
with no rest
As a good Athlete
in an alround fete

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CLIMATE CHANGE AND CHILD HEALTH.

*Based on a presentation at an International conference on
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November 13-15m2008.*

Prof. E. Nageshwara Rao

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children which is the most ratified treaty in the world states:

"Article 6: Children have the right to live. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily."

"Article 24: Children have the right to good quality health care- the basic healthcare possible-to safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay healthy. Rich countries should help poor countries achieve this goal."

In spite of the world community's commitment to the protection and preservation of children's health, the children all over the world are exposed to the multiple hazards of climate change. Different international organizations have given alarming estimates of the impact of climate change on child health. The World Health Organization says that five million children die annually due to air pollution. The reasons are that they breathe more rapidly than adults, that they play outdoors quite a lot, and they are exposed to pollutants much more. Ann M. Veneman, Executive Director of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), states that ten million children die every year of preventable

diseases. In its report for 2008, "Our Climate, Our Children, Our Responsibility," the UNICEF in the United Kingdom predicts that 60,000 child deaths would occur due to climate change in Saharan Africa and South Asia every year. Dr. Sheridan Bartlett estimates that 175 million children will be affected by climate change by 2010. Children are the least able to adapt to climate change, but are the most affected by it.

Climate change manifests itself in several ways. It could pollute the air we breathe; it could cause wide fluctuations in temperature; it could trigger weather disorders such as floods, cyclones, and drought; it could produce long-term ecological changes.

The consequences of climate change are manifold. Air pollution, for instance causes respiratory diseases like asthma. In the African American population in U.S., asthma registered the greatest rise in the last fifteen years. Air pollution can also cause cancer. Thermal extremes cause sunburn, melanoma, rash, cramps, dehydration, exhaustion, stroke, and ultra-violet radiation. The tender skin of children is easily susceptible to sunburn. Floods which are an annual occurrence in many parts of the world cause drowning, destruction of food crops, water-borne diseases, and malnutrition. It is estimated that three million children die annually due to gastro-intestinal diseases. The havoc caused by cyclones is

Retired Professor of English, Hyderabad

even worse: they destroy food crops, homes, schools, and health centers. Droughts induced by climate change also reduce food production and dehydration of the soil. While these are the direct effects of climate change, there are quite a few long-lasting indirect effects on children's health. Reduced food production and supply, and changes in productivity patterns lead to malnutrition and retardation of growth. Reduced availability of water causes sanitary and hygienic problems. Floods, cyclones, and drought force migration of people which, in turn, causes trauma, depression, anxiety, and stress. When large numbers of people live in camps, social tensions arise and these aggravate their physical and psychological problems. It is estimated that malnutrition due to insufficient food availability is responsible for 50% of the under five child deaths in India.

Climate change affects some of the most fundamental pre-requisites of good health, particularly for children. Clean air and safe water become scarce; food supply is insufficient; shelter becomes inadequate; there is greater exposure to diseases. To cap all these miseries, peace of mind is eroded.

There are two ways to combat the onslaught of climate change. The first is mitigation of the effects of climate change. The UNICEF has been making efforts to intensify the existing programmes such as childhood

immunization; it is helping in upgrading the infrastructure for water sanitation; it is progressively expanding public health messaging and environmental education. The second method to face the adverse effects of climate change is adaptation to it. Children should learn and speak out on climate change; they should become agents of change.

Climate change is worrying scientists, governments, and people all over the world for several decades. The Kyoto Protocol to reduce the Green House gases which are mainly responsible for climate change was adopted on 11 December 1997, it came into force on 16 February 2005, it was ratified by 182 countries by June 2008. However, it does not mention child health in the context of climate change.

To safeguard the health of children, people all over the world should strengthen the efforts of UNICEF. They should work for the inclusion of child's health issues in the agenda of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change meeting in Copenhagen in December 2009. Schools should conduct awareness programmes. The media should educate people on the impending dangers of climate change. Children should be involved in devising solutions to mitigate and manage climate change. They must be given access to the knowledge and tools necessary to protect themselves against the harmful effects of climate change.

CRISIS IN PARENT CHILDREN RELATIONS

C.V.G. Krishna Murthy

Nature dictates that parents should love their children and children should reciprocate their love to the parents. Now a days, there seems to be a generation gap not only in children but also in parents. When the family size was not restricted in the past, the parents showed sufficient interest in the educational progress and well being of their children.

At present, due to the limited number of children in the family, the concern of the parents towards their educational progress grows almost out of proportion. The parents thrust their ideas of selecting the particular professional courses for their children. They do not properly assess the comprehension and ability of the children to choose the proper academic or professional channels.

Where the parents failed to achieve their educational and professional goals, they perhaps get sinister satisfaction in their children. As per the Sanskrit saying, "Puthrudi chetulo Paraajayam", any parent welcomes to be defeated by children in respect of academic and professional standards.

Is it interesting to note some observations of children about their parents in a group discussion sponsored by a T.V. Channel. The children complained that without assessing their ability, the parents try to force their ideas on them. Many times the

parents say that they are spending lot of money beyond their capacity so that children get the best rank. Sometimes, the high expectations of the parents about their children which causes frustration in them, leads to tragic psychological effects by losing mental balance.

A proper time management, concentration and discipline in study are essential for getting good results. These aspects may be impressed by the parents upon their children. Very often, the parents make a contrast of merit to their children of the same class. This has to be scrupulously avoided as comprehension, ability and performance may vary from child to child.

The duty of the parents should be to provide a good atmosphere for sustained study without harping much about the weakness of their children. The children require rest or change for sometime to escape from the monotony of the brain-racking heavy syllabus. The children may be encouraged to spend sometime either in sports or games or for a glimpse of the interesting good cultural and literary programmes.

The breakdown of the joint family system has brought with it many disadvantages to the younger generation. When both the parents are employees, they cannot devote sometime to watch the progress of study of their children and the frequent changes of their behaviour due to the unwholesome impact of the society. The 'teen-age' complex problems also may contribute to the estrangement of

Retired Principal, Secunderabad

the children from the parents. The parents should give up their authoritarian attitude and they should treat the children as their friends at the teen-age.

Tension generally mounts up when one prepares for the selection of competitive examinations. The parents should not get upset if their children cannot get expected ranks.

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavadgita exhorts all human beings to do duty and leave the results to Him. The 'Rank-craze' of the parents regarding their children is exploited and encashed by corporate schools and colleges. The duty of the parents is to exhort their children not to get disappointed or frustrated, thus putting an end to the present 'Crisis in Parent Children Relations'.

Claim

G. Ramakrishna Rao

While holding a duck, you call it a swan
While taking a dip in pond, you call it as sea,
Are you sleepy or arrogant-
While climbing a hillock, you call it Himalaya,
While covering a mile, you claim it your goal.

Enlightened on

He who knows the mind, is an enlightened one
He who knows himself is a Philosopher
Where are the limits for perfect knowledge?
He who disclaims knowledge whatsoever, is a sage
He who claims complete knowledge, is a trifler.

True repute

Which runs after you like shadow is a true repute
Which humbles the embrace of Death is an everlasting repute
Do not care for the acclaim which drums the money get for you
Clean repute is that which blossoms out of deep mud
Pure repute is that which emerges out of fire.

Scholar and Translator, Hyderabad
Telugu original from Prapancha poosulu by Dr.C.Narayana Reddy

POINT TO PONDER

C.A.Reddi

The Buddha, one day was in deep thought about the wordly activities and the ways of instilling goodness in the human beings. The following is the text of conversation between him and his disciple.

One of his disciples approached him and said humbly "Oh my teacher! While you are so much concerned about the world and others, why don't you look into the welfare and needs of your own disciples also?"

Buddha: "Tell me how I can help you."

Disciple: "Master! My attire is worn out and is beyond decency to wear the same. Can I get a new one, please?"

Buddha found the robe indeed in a bad condition, which needed replacement. He asked the storekeeper to give the disciple a new robe to wear. The disciple thanked the Buddha and retired to his room. Though he met his disciple's requirement, Buddha was not at all that content on his decision. He realized he missed out some point. After a while he realized what he should have asked his disciple. He went to his disciple's place and asked him "Is your new attire comfortable? Do you need anything more?"

Disciple: "Thank you my Master, The attire is indeed very comfortable. I need nothing more."

Buddha: "Having got the new one, what did you do with your old attire?"

Disciple: "I am using it as my bed spread."

Buddha: "Then, hope you have disposed off your old bed spread."

Buddha: "What about your old curtain?"

Disciple: "It is being used to handle hot utensils in the kitchen."

Buddha: " Oh, I see. Can you tell what they did with the old cloth they used in the kitchen?"

Disciple: "That is being used to wash the floor."

Buddha: "Then, the old rug being used to wash the floor?"

Disciple: " Master, since it was torn off so much, we couldn't find any better use but to use it as a wick in the oil lamp, which is right now lit in your study room."

Buddha smiled in contentment and left for his room.

If not to this degree of utilization, can we at least attempt to find the best of all our resources- at home and at the office?

Treat the earth well. . . .It was not given to you by your parents, it is loaned to you by your children. We did not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrowed it from our children..

Scholar and writer, Madras

The Magnificence of Angkor Wat

N. Meera R.Rao

I had always dreamt of seeing Angkor Wat in Thailand which appears to draw tourists from all over the world for its sheer size and intricate architectural beauty.

My husband and I set out at 3 p.m. the same day we landed in Siem Reap to visit the largest Hindu Temple in the world.

I was struck at the magnificence and old world charm Angkor Wat presented from a distance. If you look straight ahead the end of the causeway (built by sand stone blocks) over the moat, only three gopuras among the five of varying heights are visible. "The moat is to protect the temple from invaders, who are bad people" informed our guide Chi. I was amused to see Chi clearly classifying people as good and bad, there were no shades of grey or him.

Angkor Wat ,which means " the city which is temple" (Wat is a Thai name for temple) was built in the first half of the 12th.century (1113 and 1150) for God Vishnu during the reign of Suryavarman 11, who was a Hindu king. Some believe Angkor Wat was designed by Divakarapandita, the chief advisor and minister of the king, who was a Brahmin with divine dispensation. The Khmers attribute the monument to the divine architect Visvakarman.

(Chi's information: 30000 people,

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5000 carvers and 4000 elephants were involved in building the temple. It was built as a tomb to bury Suryavarman 11 who was a good king. A King was believed to be the incarnation of God).

We entered through the western entrance gopura which is also the main entrance, for the temple faces west. Once inside, we realized the complicated structure of the architectural plan with a series of elevated towers, covered galleries, chambers, porches and courtyards on different levels, linked by stairways. A slight detour to the right took us to the shrine under the southern tower and there was an idol of Vishnu, tall and majestic with eight arms standing under a saffron colored umbrella made of shining silk. The head gear was shaped differently from that adorning deities in South India. A few flowers were placed at the feet and a middle aged lady with tear filled eyes was sitting and praying there. We felt there was an aura about the whole atmosphere. There is just enough space to prostrate one self before the deity and to circumambulate. We looked around for His consort, Goddess Lakshmi and were literally taken aback at the sight of a headless figure nearby! When I expressed my shock and disappointment, Chi observed " the bad people caused all the destruction".

A word about the architecture of Angkor Wat and its symbolism. Suryavarman 11 (reigned 1113-50) had a long reign in which he was besieged by invasions from neighboring enemies -the Champs in South

Vietnam and the Siamese (the Thais today) in Thailand. Despite waging wars with these two kingdoms, he built Angkor Wat, the greatest architectural achievement of the Khmers. The height of the temple is 213 metres (699 ft.) with three rectangular or square levels. Each one is progressively smaller and higher from the one below starting from the outer limits of the temple. Covered galleries with columns define the boundaries of the first and second levels.

The third level supports five towers - four in the corners and one in the middle which are the most prominent features of Angkor Wat. Graduated tiers, one rising above the other, give the towers a conical shape and, near the top, rows of lotuses taper to a point which makes the overall profile look like a lotus bud. The ingenious plan of the temple is quite deceptive from the entrance which appears like a colossal mass with one level and you get to see all the five towers only from a certain angle.

Symbolism: Angkor Wat is a microcosm of the Hindu Universe in stone and represents an earthly model of the cosmic world. The moat represents the mythical oceans surrounding the earth and the succession of concentric galleries represent the mountain ranges that surround Mount Meru, the home of the Gods. The towers represent the mountain's peaks and the experience of the ascent, to the central shrine is, may be intentionally, a fairly convincing imitation of climbing a real mountain. We were amply convinced after reaching the top puffing and panting, drenched in sweat, but with a great deal of satisfaction of having made it to "Mount Kailash" as Chi compared it to the

ultimate experience of reaching God "which was not easy," he said.

Gallery of bas-reliefs: One of the most famous creations in Khmer art, cover the exterior walls of Angkor Wat's third enclosure, just above ground level. Except for two panels which depict the Historic procession of Suryavarman II and the Heavens and Hells, the source for themes for bas-reliefs is mainly our Hindu epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. We were fascinated by the detailed presentation of the battle of Kurukshetra along the south half of the western gallery and the churning of the sea of milk along the south half of the eastern gallery. In the north west corner pavilion a scene where Vishnu with four arms is depicted in sitting pose surrounded by a bevy of Apsaras (here Chi enlightened us about their importance in Khmer art). At the top of this scene, we see the celestial beauties floating with lissome grace and underneath, Vishnu reclining on the serpent Ananta and floating on the ocean. His upper torso rests on His shoulder and His consort Lakshmi sits near His feet.

Finally after a tour of nearly two hours, we emerged from the temple quite exhausted when Chi said it was the right time to view the sun set in all its glory. We expectantly walked towards the moat from where we could also have a view of all the five gopuras but the sun set eluded us because the sky suddenly turned cloudy. The row of shops on our way out seemed to beckon us with over sized tender coconuts displayed prominently. "One dollar each" said the young girl and it didn't appear too much of a price to pay at that moment!

LITERATURE OF INDIAN DIASPORA

Dr. E. Srinivas Rao

The word "Diaspora" is a phenomenon that has been drawing much attention in recent times. It is a history-specific term. Traditionally it refers to the dispersed Jews after Babylonian captivity. Jews subsequently fled to other lands in the wake of the Nazi holocaust. Thus "Diaspora" denotes a particular, phenomenon rooted in the 1940s. Recently, during the last two decades in particular the word 'Diaspora' has gained great connotative significance by transcending its historic specificity. Today the word 'Diaspora' is used to refer and signify people who go to alien countries and settle there. The phenomenon of diasporic movement has emerged as a result of the uneven economic distribution and the consequent financial disparity. The migration of people to alien countries is growing by leaps and bounds for a better standard of living and actualization of one's potentialities. Innumerable people are trying their best to set foot on alien soil. In fact going abroad is the aim of youngsters today in third world countries. The immediate concern of a migrant in an alien soil is to mint money, make a fortune and feel secure. But the migration involves its own hardships. The sense of uncertainty and restlessness undergone by many migrants to fulfill their immediate concern is beyond depiction. They feel panic-stricken as they feel discriminated from everyone. Though their immediate concern is fulfilled a feeling of rootlessness will haunt them. Social beings as

they are they look forward to the company of the people of their native country. Adaptation to an alien culture is not as easy as we think. A sense of nostalgia stems from their precarious position. They can neither come back to their native country nor settle there. Ultimately, they feel rootless. But the irony of the situation is that despite a feeling of rootlessness, the West is a dreamland for many. So migration to the West is a path strewn with its own obstacles.

The opinion of an Indian settled in the U.S. is quite apt with regard to diasporic condition. Kanthi, an Indian expatriate in America says, "Even though we are 10,000 miles away from India, we cannot forget our roots, our culture, our traditions and our gods. When in India, I notice all the bad. But when in America, I feel compelled to define it, feel forced to represent the cultures, views, images of South Asia, forced to deify them and hide the bad in the face of a prejudiced, largely ignorant white that seeks to denigrate the third world."

Parallel with this migration, many Indian writers have migrated to the West in search of an intellectually stimulating climate. America and England are literary homes for many Indian writers. They include Raja Rao, Kamala Markandaya, Balachandrarajan, Santha Rama Rao, Ved Mehta, Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Seth, Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahari, Chitra Benarjee Divakaruni, V.S. Naipaul and a host of others. All these are originated from India. Their

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writings are widely acclaimed all over the world. They have carved a niche for themselves abroad. In spite of an intellectually stimulating atmosphere in alien soil, they suffer from a feeling of discontent as they miss the warmth and cosiness of native country.

A brief survey of Indian diasporic writers reflects the range and depth of the theme of diaspora. They neither get adapted themselves to the alien soil nor get distanced from the native soil. Since they have ingrained native culture, it clashes with the alien one. They are haunted by a sense of nostalgia and become restless as they feel homeless. Thus an Indian diasporic writer experiences 'unhousement' and is caught in a dilemma whether to reconcile to the new situation or remain alienated. As an Indian diasporic writer is caught between two cultures, he negotiates a new literary space. A reflection of lost moments, lost opportunities and lost attachment is conspicuous in all diasporic writers. A host of Indian diasporic writers mirror the problems of displacement as faced either by them or by their characters. In one of the interviews Rushdie says: "I see England when I open the windows of my home and I see India when I close my eyes." India remains an imaginary homeland for him. So many Indian writers are endowed with dual consciousness. Though they are physically distanced from their native country, the warmth of home and protective wings of their native culture remain ever fresh in their minds.

The diasporic writers are dogged by their own existential. The stormy present life

abroad contradicts with the quiet past life of their native country. They reflect the crisis-ridden life of expatriates in their writings. As the time passes, the distance between the two lives gets widened. Their efforts to bridge this distance between prove futile. They make use of their past as an experience in the present for the future generation in their writings. They can't forsake their attachment of alien culture from the core of their writings. Diasporic consciousness in an Indian writer enables him to address his native soil properly and concretely. They think more of their homeland, India than those who live here. Their devotion and dedication for native soil enrich their mental horizon for producing a glorious fiction on their native country. Their writings deal with the intense awareness of the plight of the modern man who is laden with a feeling of alienation and rootlessness in an alien soil. They make us realize how migration chops off human relationships and concerns giving rise to personal crisis.

Holding firmly at heart to the truth of your being, play like a hero your part on the world stage, viwardly calm and detached but assuming zeal and joy with initiative. Perform outward actions appropriate to your particular role in various situations.

Nothing is impossible for a human being to achieve in this world, provided he keeps his mind, focussed upon his object and makes an earnest effort.

- YOGA VASISHTA

SURI BHAGAVANTHAM THE "COMPLETE SCIENTIST" (1909-1989)

D. Ranga Rao

The birth Centenary of Suri Bahagavantham, the eminent scientist of international reputation from Andhra was celebrated on 14th October, 2009 in the Osmania University by the scientific fraternity consisting of Bhagavantham's students, colleagues and admirers, paying him high tributes for his attainments as teacher, researcher, scientist, administrator, institution builder and man. Bhagavantham, the "complete scientist", was endowed with an extra-ordinary intellect and a keen scientific temperament tinged with humanism. A few details of his multi faced genius deserve to be remembered, recounting his pioneering scientific career which was a success story jam packed with events and achievements, no doubt involving incipient hard work and courage behind the enterprises.

Suri Bhagavantham hailed from an orthodox family of Vedic scholars. He was the second child of Suri Markandeya Sarma and Durgamba. He was born in Gudivada, a small town in Krishna District in the Andhra area of Madras Province on 14th October, 1909. As a school boy he exhibited his future eminence by passing the matriculation exam in the first rank. After few years as a young student of science he showed his mettle by securing the first rank in B.Sc., exam from the Nizam College, Hyderabad, which was then affiliated to the Madras University. The Thesis which he submitted a few years later to the Madras University for his M.Sc., degree was

of such high standard that the examiner, a foreigner, asked the University for clarification whether the dissertation was for the doctoral degree.

The rise of Bhagavantham in the world of science was meteoric. As a brilliant prize winning essayist in Physics, still in his teens, he was accepted by Prof. C.V. Raman in 1928 as a research scholar in Calcutta at the Indian Association for Cultivation of Science. The deserving sishya met his worthy guru at the right time. That was the time when science and scientific research in India was resurgent with the works of Prof. K.S. Krishnan and Prof. C.V. Raman, excited at the discovery of Raman effect. Young Bhagavantham grew silently into a mature scientist under the guidance of C.V. Raman who was highly pleased and happy with the keen intellect and the ardent devotion of his young disciple to science. Bhagavantham was closely associated with studying different aspects of the Raman Effect and his mentor admired the caliber of his student.

C. V. Raman recommended Bhagavantham to the Andhra University to be taken into the Physics Department. At 23, Bhagavantham was ready to guide Ph.D. scholars in the University. When he was 28, the Andhra University conferred on him the D.S.c. degree (Honoris Causa). He was made Professor at 28, Principal of A.U. Colleges at 32 and the Vice Chancellor of the University when he was 42 years old. C.R.Reddy and S.RadhaKrishnan admired him and encouraged him though he was much younger

Associate Editor, Triveni

than many professors who were already working in the University. Later it was the turn of Nehru and Krishna Menon to recognize his merit. When at Waltair in the A.U. Bhagavantham introduced with unerring foresight the departments of Geophysics, Meteorology and Oceanography. "Bhagavantham had talents in excess of his job requirements and reached positions far earlier than any one else". To add to this quality, he was a visionary and looked far ahead of his times on keeping the needs of India of the future times.

In 1948, Bhagavantham was invited by the Government of India to be the Scientific Liaison Officer at the Indian High Commission in London which brought him into contact with V.K. Krishna Menon. During this time scientists of the West and the European countries who had read his papers and heard of him were eager to meet and exchange notes with him. Some of them offered their advanced laboratories to him to continue his work. His London stay gave him an opportunity to renew personally his contacts with the reputed scientists of the West. He was a perfect blend of a researcher and a theoretician. When he had no laboratory and was left with only desk work, he turned his attention to theory. As Liaison Officer in London, he wrote the Book "Crystal Symmetry and Physical Property", a book acclaimed a classic by the international scientific community.

Returning to India after a year in London, Bhagavantham headed the Physical Laboratories of Osmania University as Director and later became its Vice-Chancellor in 1952. At the Osmania University he opened new research branches in Spectroscopy, Ultrasonic, Cosmic Rays, X-rays, Radio

Astronomy, Photo Elasticity and Geophysics. The Rangapur Astronomical Observatory near Hyderabad with its 48 inch telescope was his brain child. The O.U. and Sri Venkateswara Universities also conferred on him doctoral degrees. Honours and degrees were showered on him throughout his career and life.

In 1957 he went as the Director of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, which attained the status of a Deemed University because of his efforts. Bhagavantham guided and produced more than 50 doctorates from different universities and Institutes - an academic record indeed.

In the year 1962 he took over as the Scientific Advisor for the Ministry Of Defence, Government of India and retired in that capacity in 1969.

If India is designing and building its own armoured tanks, fighter aircrafts, missiles, radars now it is because of Bhagavantham's forethought in establishing many major laboratories in the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of which he was the Director General. It was he who brought applied research to cater to the defence needs of the country, realizing the growing importance of electronic communication systems, radar, solid state devices, missiles, metallurgy, nuclear medicine, etc., He was responsible for the purchase of Mig Fighters and the type of rations and clothing required for the mountain divisions.

After retirement at the Centre he was Chairman of the Committee on Science and Technology in developing Countries (COSTED), a body created by the International Council of Scientific Union and

toured the under developed regions of the world to serve the common man to mitigate his suffering by applying advanced techniques of science and technology to daily life.

As if he had not enough work, he was Chairman of Bharath Electronics, Chairman of Hindustan Aeronautics and many other Institutions including the State Bank of India on its Board for some time for a change!

Bhagavantham's three books, **Scattering of Light and Raman effect**, **Theory of Groups and its application to physical problems** and **Crystal Symmetry and Physical Properties** are hailed by the international scientific community as masterpieces of scientific thinking, research, experimentation and theorizing. The books remain as classics in those fields even today. They were reprinted in USA and were translated into Russian. He was on par with the scientists of USA, UK and Russia of his times. His scientific reputation extended far beyond his country.

It is suprising how a single person could handle with authority and precision so many assignments of different natures and manage them successfully as Bhagavantham did with ease. It speaks of his self confidence born of intuition.

After all is said and done about Bhagavantham there remains an aspect which has baffled many. Though born in an orthodox family Bhagavantham was an agnostic most of his life but in his later years he turned towards spiritualism and spent many years in the presence of Satya Sai Baba at Puttaparthi, serving Baba and his devotees as if “to realize the other dimension of human personality and see the potentialities of the third eye in man” as A.K.Gokak opined. It is said that higher

science merges into spiritualism, the demarcating line being thin at that level. Yet his spiritual sojourn and return from it remain an emigna to many as he did not reveal even to his close associates the meaning of his action.

Bhagavantham had an impressive and a commanding figure. But he appeared distant, reserved and unapproachable. As J.R.D. Tata put it "under death a forbidding front he had a soft and generous heart." He had a resonant voice and was an impressive orator though he was a man of few words. He kept his audience spell bound with his lucid style of exposition and explanation. He could enjoy a joke, crack it too and give a repartee if needed and indulged in pleasant humour with his friends and colleagues. He was a born teacher and could explain complicated and intricate theories in a language which an average student could understand. His memory was stupendous and he could recall verbatim definitions and theories. He had a good hand on the black board as well on paper. His English was simple and clear and his colleagues admit that they improved their English reading his innumerable papers and books. He was kind and generous to his students and associates. He enjoyed an ideal family life. One or two students lived in his house as members of his family on whom the guru and the gurupatni, Sita Mahalakshmi, bestowed their love and affection. The breakfast and dinner talks revolved around academic matters, on science and great physicts. He and his wife and his four sons and daughter, made ideal hosts. Bhagavantham was a scholar in Telugu and Sanskrit and composed poems in Telugu.

He passed away on February 6, 1989, after a usefully hectic life spent for the

country and its scientific development. In 1969 Prof. Herberg, a well known Physicist wrote "Prof. Bhagavantham is one of the very few people in the world today who are able to combine high administrative position with active research works" and Prof. C.V. Raman

complimented his disciple saying "he has helped to raise the status of India in the world of science".

The life and achievements of Bhagavantham, to whom work was worship, are a source of inspiration to the youth.

Traveller

Sri. P.V. Lakshmi Prasad

All arts he's the root
All progress he's is the part
Endless voyages he meets
to see glories of discoveries
undeterred yet by tinge
of failures, he's everyday traveler-
records roots, reserves deposits,
in the spiritual stones, in the books of palm
leaves
in the beauties of sculptures, in the mysteries
of universe, in the excavations of history

from rituals to machines,
from men of stone-age to men of space-
shuttles
in pursuit of oceans of knowledge
never does he stand unsolv'd puzzle
Fact-hunter at haunting hide-outs
everyday searches, researches-
his thrust of sojourns
everyday flashes of awareness
his hunger of life---untired traveler
from point to point.

Lecturer in English, Peddapalli, Karimnagar

FATHER! TEACH

Mondal Bijoy Beg

O sweet CHILD!
Kindly give me that purity,
That celestial purity,
That sublime innocence,
That cerenity of mind,
That spirit of joy,
That spirit of trust
Which you have in yourself.

I am barren to the core:
Polluted, perplexed,

Editor, Bhubaneswar

Perturbed, perverted!
Give, kindly give,
Give me a little
Of what you have, I desire:
I feel suffocated in SIN.

Be kind
Teach me I beg you
The lofty lessons of VALUES
To live a life
In nought but BLISS.

DON'T THE MASSES NEED SOME OPIATE

D.Surya Rao

One of marxist Karl Marx's often quoted remarks is - "Religion is the opiate of the masses". Some marxist scholars, such as CPI, MP for a long time Prof. Hiren Mukherjee, complain that this remark has been misconstrued and is interpreted by taking it out of its context. Marx according to them, was not such an ignoramus as to deny the constructive role of religion at the formative stage of human civilization. By formulating moral and ethical rules early religious teachers brought some sort of order and discipline in the midst of chaos and anarchy. This went a long way in developing settled societies. The 'Ten Commandments' of Moses may be cited as an important landmark in this direction.

Marx, according to them did not sweepingly condemn religion as all evil; what he condemned was the abuse of religion by turning it into an instrument of oppression and exploitation of the masses and perpetuation of the strangle-hold of vested interest.

There is no denying the fact that much bloodshed, cruelty, torture, persecution and destruction took place in human history in the name of religion. Far from fostering universal brotherhood among man kind, differences in religion produced hatred, enmity and open hospitality. We in the Indian sub-continent are the victims of the destructive power of religion. The two major religious communities here are perpetually at logger-

heads.

There are some more points on the negative side of religion. Mediaeval Catholic Christianity in Europe was openly hostile to science and reason. The infamous Inquisition cruelly persecuted, and even burnt-alive, innumerable persons for propagating thoughts and ideas that did not conform to the Christianity theology. When Copernicus said that the earth moves round the sun he was branded as heretic and order was given to cut of his tongue. Galileo in his old age was brought in chains to Rome and forced to renounce his support for the Copernican theory. He was let off after publicly burning his books. This sort of obstacle was put to other religions too. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Bengali Brahmins considered going abroad as an act of impiety. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was excommunicated by the orthodox Brahmins for his going to England.

Marx criticised the influence of religion as baneful. Nearly all the great religions propagate the belief in the immorality of the soul. Even after the physical death, the soul survives because it is eternal and imperishable. About the eternity and imperishability of the human soul Krishna says to Arjuna in the 'Baghavat Geetha' - "No weapon can cut it nor is it burnt in fire."

Belief in the after-life creates the illusory hope that sorrows and sufferings in this world may have their compensation in the

Principal (Retd.), Vijayawada

life to come. This, in some ways, blunts the spirit of revolt against injustice, cruelty and oppression of the ruling class. As opium or other intoxicants benumb the senses and make one forgetful of the true reality, unthinking religious belief often produces the same effect. A thorough going materialist Marx did not believe in the immortality of the soul or after life. Hence, perhaps he considered religion as the "opiate of the masses".

Religion in its true essence is not harmful. On the contrary, it draws out the finest and the noblest feelings and emotions in man; such as love, compassion, the spirit of service and sacrifice. We must not forget that persons like Buddha, Christ, St. Francis d' Assisi and Mother Teresa were the products of religion. They dedicated their whole life to the good of mankind, bringing hope and faith to the sick and dying and succour to the deprived and the down trodden. Material help may be important, but mental life in sorrow and grief is no less important. It has been rightly said that man cannot live by bread alone. While condemning religion as harmful opiate one must not forget the beneficial aspects of religion in providing mental balm in sorrow and grief.

Even a diehard Marxist has sometimes to admit this truth. Once Dr.D.P.Chatterjee, throughbred Marxist atheist, was giving a lecture on the value of cultivating atheism, which he claimed to be based on science and reason, and therefore infallible. A lady from among the audience stood up and said-"My only child, a son, died last year in a fatal accident. I was completely broken down by inconsolable grief. Now, I find some relief in prayer and meditation. Would you like me to give up, my religious

belief for your atheism?" "No", said Chatterjee, "Why should I force you to come to my view? If you find solace and comfort in religious practice I'll be the last man to prevent you from doing so".

True and sincere religious belief, and not the hypocritical one, takes one of the paths of righteous conduct. An old Muslim peasant could not be coerced or cajoled to give false evidence in favors of a rich and powerful man, because he believed that all knowing Allah, would keep watch on his conduct and he could not hide anything from him. If all people followed his example and refrained from doing evil on moral consideration, the world would have become a much better place. No atheist ideology has yet been able to influence man's mind as deeply as the 'Opiate', religion; even if some of its rituals are more numbo jumbo, to keep the populace on good humour.

After the Second World War, Poland became a Marxist state due to the power and influence of the Soviet Union. Attempts were made to throw religion, Catholic Christianity in this case, into the limbo and propagate atheistic culture. But the moment a Pole, John Paul II, became the Pope of Rome there was Universal jubilation in Poland. The Pope played no small part in retrieving Poland from the clutches of the Marxist.

There is an interesting story, may be apocryphal, about the use of 'the opiate of the masses', religion. When the Nazis surrounded Moscow and were about to overrun it, Stalin himself is said to have ordered to open the closed Churches and pray to God or saving Holy Russia. There was no other means to boost up the sagging morale

to defeat the enemy.

Whether religion is really the opiate of the masses is a matter of opinion. One thing, however, is certain, the masses do really need some opiate to endure the oppressive realities to existence. Those who make the exaggerated claim for Marxism of its being panacea for all ills, quite unwittingly make it an 'opiate'. In theory it may be all right. In practice it shows all the pitfalls of the traditional bourgeois state, plagued by corruption, bribery, nepotism and a variety of other evils. Nowhere in the world it has proved to be a panacea. Those who run such states show the same greed for power and pelf as is to be seen elsewhere.

The powers that be use the powerful mass media; the television, the radio, the newspaper, the magazines, to produce some 'opiate' for consumption of the masses to make them forgetful of the oppressive reality of poverty, squalor, malnutrition, disease and hunger. The method is much more sophisticated than the nineteenth century attempts of the European Imperialist powers to thrust opium through the mouths of Chinese at gun point. Some of the 'opiates' of the present time are sports and the cinema. They could be used as sources of healthy entertainment and recreation. But through media publicity, raised to a high pitch, they have become a craze, a sort of addiction like alcohol.

One example is the cricket hysteria created from time to time, by media hype in third world countries that were former British Colonies, like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh et al. Cricket was originally the game of the English aristocratic class that had enough

money and leisure to indulge in the game lasting for days together to decide victory or defeat in a match. This is particularly true of Test Matches which are still regarded as the standard for measuring prowess. Kenya has yet to get Test Match status in spite of success in one day matches.

One reason why cricket has not got universal acceptance like soccer is the long duration of the game and intricacy of its rules. It is still played in only a few countries and is excluded from Olympics.

Yet delirium is produced in this country by media hype during all cricketing events anywhere in the world. It is as if our life and death depended upon winning or losing a cricket match. Newspapers give banner headlines on the performance of cricketers, supported by their multicolored pictures. Cricket pundits write lengthy commentaries and exclusive interviews. Everything is subordinated to the reporting of a cricket match on T.V and Radio. When people meet they talk of nothing but cricket. This Dionysiac release is necessary to divert the attention from real problems.

Present day cricket at bottom is not a game but a money making industry like the manufacture of Coca-Cola which often sponsors big cricketing events. It is tainted as much by shady deals as Harshad Mehta's manipulation of the Indian Share Market. Many celebrities of the cricketing world had to be punished for getting involved in malpractice. Cricket in its present form is an opiate per se, having the same baneful effects as those of drugs and alcohol.

The cinema in India acts very much like an opiate to the vast majority of the cinegoers. The pot-pourri of love, romance, sex and violence churned out from Bollywood gives a means of escape to the common people who in real life find little delight and enjoyment. This is particularly true of the urban poor. For a few hours they are transported into a make-believe world of fabulous wealth, dazzling glamour, exotic beauty and romance. This is necessary to make them forget the dinginess, squalor and grinding poverty of their real life.

A survey some years ago on those who got to the movies regularly, revealed

some startling truth. A domestic help, a woman, saw, a Bachchan film seven times. When asked why she had seen the film so many times, she candidly confessed that it gave her relief from the hard reality of her daily existence. She worked at five houses to maintain a family of four, her husband, two kids and herself. Her day began at half-past four, to catch a suburban train to come to the city and ended at half-past five, with a short break at mid day. She could not endure the hard reality of her life without occasional relief. She sought relief in the make-believe world of the film.

HOW I WANT MY CHILDREN TO BE

Dr. Emmadi. Pullaiah

I want my children to launch
Their tumultous epic journey in life
Ever wedded to perennial virtues
Even in the clutches of inescapable
jeopardies
In the cosy bed of love they dwell
The crown of all our bliss and
An ocean of emotions
Touching the hearts of the people,
Building the heaven of peace.

They want to be ever good as it can be
Doing greatest good to the greatest number
Conceiving there is no evil in the world
They treat friend and foes alike
With broad-minded gesture, a honey to
humanity

They are ever conscious of time,
A subtle thief that steals life-span
Sans any concrete output,
They pay no heed to momentary pleasures
Putting a tight reign on limitless desires

They perceive human life, a boon
And the best of all creations,
accepting everything in life
no matter what happens good or bad

This is how I want my children
To be ideal and play disciplined role in life
With human and ethical values
Which makes a meaning out of life.

Retd. Principal, Warangal.

Most people are other people. Their thoughts are some one else's opinions. Their lives a mimiery and their passions a quotation. -OSCAR WILDE

BOOK REVIEWS

LETTER TO AN IMAGINARY PEN FRIEND, Pages:128, Price: 295, Author: **Kmarendra Mallick**.

This collection of poems is in six sections: (1) Spiritual and Philosophical (2) Romance and Love (3) Nostalgia (4) Nature (5) War and Place (6) Themes Never end. It is an interesting and anthology containing the thoughts and experiences of the scientist-poet on life and Nature.

Poems like 'The unseen painter', 'Face to Face', 'Grant Me Lord' and 'where Do I come from' show the author's profound philosophical thinking and spiritual hankerings based upon our Indian Upanishads and scriptures.

'Who has seen God' reminds one of Vivekananda's reinterpretation of the Vedanta, as a bridge builder between spirituality and humanitarian work. Service to man is service to God.

The poet's imagination and vivid description make the verses eminently readable. 'TREE' is a beautiful poem in which he says "you stand still like a prophet welcoming all with equal warmth." The poet is capable of making poetry of common subjects like cricket, Battle of Plassey and 157 muting. All things considered, the book deserves to be in all libraries.

**-S.Srikant
Hyderabad**

GLIDING RIPPLES (A Collection of Poems), Pages:94, Price:\$16/-, Author & Publisher: **T.Vasudeva Reddy, U.S.A**, Baltimore, America Publication 2008.

Gliding Ripples is the sixth collection of 57 poems and 100 haikus by T.Vasudeva Reddy, one of the renowned poets in Indian English. The book, published in the USA, is a collection of appealing and thought-provoking poems whose thematic spectrum ranges from the basic village life to national and international levels. The stream of his poetry begins with When Grief Rains, passes through Broken Rhythms with Fleeting Bubbles and advances with Melting Melodies through Pensive Memories and reaches the mellowed stage of Gliding Ripples with musical charm reflecting his social awareness and leading to the perception of reality as well as inner vision.

The book opens with the poem 'Erase the Borders' which reveals the poet's universal outlook, relevance as in the backdrop of terrorist activities. Such as the exploding of the famous Twin Towers in New York and the Mumbai attacks in 2008 just before which this book was published. Lines, expressed with force and intensity, move with natural flow and felicity:

Boundaries exist only in mind
whipped up by theories blind;
let us not race for winning runs,
in one voice wipe out killing guns;
emotions rise high in cricket mall,
but let not a pawn or a wicket fall.

'Mortuary of Books' is indeed a sizziling satirical piece with biting humour realistically presenting books in the libraries, mostly College and University libraries poor untoucables:

Books fail to seduce cold eunuchs,
sigh and lie undisturbed in Yogic sleep
like innocent babes in engraved cradles.

'Idols for the Idle' is an excellent poem, a satire of high order on the present depraved political as well as social scenario. He says great men of the bygone ages such as Asoka, Akbar, Sivaji, Tilak, Ghandhi, Subhash Bose and Patel have become forgotten figures and are confined to the hard-bound pages of history.

Alas! Old idols lost their light and
luster,.....
Crazy idle brains worship false gods
And install in the sanctum matinee idols;
Hypocrites, gangsters, scamsters and
criminals
Are now in line for the covetous claim.

While 'Our Bureaucrat' is a true picture of our totally corrupt and morally depraved officials from top to bottom, the short poem 'Our Leader' is more than a photographic sketch of our greedy leaders, who are outright self-seekers:

The volume as a whole reveals T.V.Reddy as a mature and highly talented poet who expresses his ideas with full force and poetic intensity. His social awareness is of a high degree and many of his poems present an essential lyricism which is his signal contribution to Indo-English poetry and they reveal the breath and depth of Reddy's poetic vision. His poems also express his deep concern for the common man, for the country as a whole and humanity in general.

**Prof. K.R.P.Madhav
Nellore**

TRUTH

*Truth is strengthening
Truth is purity
Truth is all-knowledge
Truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening, must be invigorating.*

-SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Readers' Mail

I liked it from cover to cover. As usual 'Triple Stream' is enlightening but the mess that Indian polity is making because of covetousness has led only to the rampant corruption which has trickled down above. Until the politicians mend themselves it is not going to end. Cleaning should begin from the top and the bottom. Ego has led to the shattering of parties like BJP, as seen in the present turmoil. This bedims the efforts of honesty, commitment and dedication.

What I liked most in the present issue is 'Academic Underworld: Heading Towards Mediocrity' by Sanjay Kumar. How true he is in his observation! Would that our Gurus in the Universites, the highest seats of learning, behaved like the Gurus of Past dispassionately and respected intelligence! Honesty and intelligence both are being stifled to death in this country.

I would love to publish this in POETCRIT also. Will it be possible for you to write the date of its publication in the Hindu?

Excuse me for the expression of my anguish. My heart bleeds at this spectacle and knowledge of my dear motherland.....

D.C. Chambial
Editor, POETCRIT, Maranda,
Himachalpradesh

A blades of grass is always a blade of grass, whether in one country or another. Men and women are my subjects of enquiry; let us see how these differ from those we have left behind.

-Samuel Johnson

In "TRIPLE STREAM", while concluding Prof. I. V. Chalapati Rao garu rightly observed that Government and opposition united efforts in a spirit of accommodation should make India occupy he pride of place in the comity of nations.

Thanks for publishing it in July. - Sept. 2009 TRIVENI.

Siluveru Sudharshan
Hyderabad

I have read your editorial on the proposed reforms in higher education. While tracing the entire back ground and pointing out how government and pointing out how government did not implement the reforms suggested by the previous commissions and committees, you have drawn the attention of the government to the need to monitor the implementation of the charges. At present there is no effective mechanism, whenever there is a new government comes, new changes are being introduced.

Dr. G. Lakshmipathi
Hyderabad

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