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TRIPLE STREAM

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA - 150th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

I.V. Chalapati Rao*



In commemoration of Vivekananda's 150th birth anniversary 'Vivekananda Rath Yatra' was launched in Rama Krishna Math, Hyderabad on 3-year odyssey (2012-2014). The people of the twin cities cherish the memory of his visit and speech in Mahbub College, Secunderabad before he embarked for the U.S. where he delivered his gospel of universal religion at the Chicago 'World Conference of Religions' on September 11, 1983.

Vivekananda was a humanist, educationist, thinker, democrat and an intrepid fighter for a bright future not only for his countrymen but for all mankind.

He was the morning star of Indian Independence. Long before Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lazpat Rai and Gandhiji came upon the political scene, he created national consciousness and love of freedom among the people. He gave a trumpet call to the people and roused their patriotism with his speeches. 'Stand up, be bold, accept your responsibilities on your shoulders, all the help and succour that you expect is in yourselves and know that you are the creator of your own destiny. Make your own future. Strength is life. Weakness is death'. With his patriotic speeches he powered their minds and charged their batteries. About his role Rajagopalachary said: "He saved Hinduism and saved India. But for him we would have

lost our religion and would not have gained our Independence." Even Gandhiji said: 'After meeting Vivekananda my patriotism increased thousand fold.' Rabindranath Tagore said: 'If you want to know about India you must read his speeches and writings'. Jawaharlal Nehru said: 'Rooted in the past and full of pride in India's prestige, he was modern in his approach to life's problems and he was a bridge between the past of India and her present'. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose said: 'He was a rare personality in this world of ours . . . If he were alive, I would have been at his feet'

His views on education are of all-time applicability and of special relevance today. The defects and shortcomings pointed out by Vivekananda in our education system are still persisting after so many decades. He said 'Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain, lying there idle all your life undigested . . . If information is education, encyclopedias are our gurus and libraries are our rishis. It is better to assimilate four ideas than to memorize a whole library of books'. We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, intellect has expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet and say 'Yes, I can do'. Addressing a meeting in the Madras University, he put a question 'What have your universities done during these fifty years? Have they produced at least one student who could think independently?' True

education is training the mind to think and refining the heart but not stuffing the brain with unwanted data. If information alone is education and culture, computer is our Guru. 150 years after Vivekananda the same defects in our education system are pointed out by all the commissions on education. But no action was taken.

According to him the best education system for India is a combination of science and technology linked to Indian cultural heritage and values.

Vivekananda stressed the importance of integrated personality development. He simplified the Upanishadic teaching and Advaita philosophy and redefined the Gita concept of Loka Sangraha (working for the welfare of the people) to strengthen the potential the humans have to become their own masters. He called this the philosophy of 'man making'. He wanted to achieve nation-building through man making. It is another name for personality development. Its basics and essentials according to him are:

1. Pride in one's cultural heritage
2. Self-confidence
3. Commitment to the pursuit of values and
4. Belief in the oneness of humanity

Swamy Tatagananda and Swamy Prabhananda mention the following facts: Federico Mayor, Director General of the UNESCO on 1993 October 8 addressed a meeting of the diplomats and dignitaries of the world. He praised Vivekananda and specially mentioned three similarities between the message of Vivekananda expressed in the goals of the constitution of Ramakrishna

Mission (1897) and the constitution of the UNESCO (drafted in 1945). They are:

1. Commitment to Universalism and tolerance. In fact he wanted acceptance of all Religions, not mere tolerance.
2. Support for the poor and the destitute - working to reduce poverty and to eliminate social discrimination - uplift of the women and awakening of the masses.
3. Top priority attention to human development through education, science and culture. Both the constitutions recognize the co-existence of multiple cultures and societies as an important aspect of common heritage and the need for mutual understanding. Human being is at the centre. 'Man is the Tajmahal of all temples', as said by Vivekananda

Vivekananda was committed to remove the want and misery of the poor people and liberate them from social injustice and colonial exploitation. Thus he was the precursor of Indian Independence by planting the seeds for the growth of the freedom movement in India. He created a silent revolution through his speeches and writings. In one of his speeches he said: 'As long as a single man lives in poverty and ignorance I hold every man a traitor' He reprimanded the Sanyasis 'What have several millions of sanyasis been doing for the masses? Teaching them metaphysics?. It is all madness. It is mockery to offer religion to a starving man'. Vivekananda shifted personal concern for salvation to human concern without interfering with tradition.

According to him the poor and the suffering are entitled to our worship. His new slogan was 'Daridra Devo Bhava, Rogi Devo

Bhava, Moorkha Devo Bhava' (The poor man, the sick man, the illiterate man are our gods). It was he that coined the word 'Daridranarayana' which Gandhi picked up. Vivekananda was the most travelled man, India's first global citizen who travelled to foreign countries to spread India's cultural heritage. His practical Vedanta is expressed in his mahavakya 'Each man is potentially divine'. Spirituality is not the monopoly of any country. In the Parliament of Religions in Chicago where he stunned the world by preaching his gospel of universal religion, he said 'Holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any Church in the world and every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. Help and not fight, assimilation, not destruction, peace and not dissension should be the order of the world. Sectarianism, bigotry and its descendent fanaticism have long possessed this land and drenched it with blood'.

Vivekananda demystified, rationalized and simplified religion and spirituality. 'Divinity is already in man. The goal is to manifest the divine by controlling nature, external and

internal. Do this by work or worship or by mind control or by philosophy. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details. Renunciation must go along with service to fellowmen'. Thus he defined true religion and spirituality. However he welcomed 'toned down materialism' for India. 'We talk foolishly against material civilization. Material civilization is necessary to create work for the poor. I do not believe in a god who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven . . .' 'We may convert every house into charity asylum, we may fill the land with hospitals but the misery of man will still continue until man's character changes'. He says 'I do not believe in religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or stop the orphan's wails; even if a dog goes hungry in my country, my religion will be to find food for that dog'. He was the great awakener of India's soul.

His clarion call is:

*He alone lives who lives for others. The rest are as good as dead
Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached.*

RAMANUJAN! MATHEMATICAL WONDER

Genius can flower in most unlikely places

This poverty stricken youth wrote on slates because he could not afford paper. He traveled 3rd class with tickets bought by friends. He lived on a handful of rice and rasam offered in charity. He went to Madras in search of 4th grade clerk's post. He met various scholars with a note book crammed with mathematics that they could not understand. He arrived with that historical letter at Cambridge that completely changed his life with his meeting Prof. Hardy. Their finding each other was the greatest coincidence. Ramanujan turned science upside down.

NATIVISM IN UNNAVA'S MALAPALLI

Dr. V.V.B.Rama Rao*

Nativism is related to the broad concept of Nationalism, not to the aberrant narrow parochialism, regionalism or localism. As deseeyata it has come to be an important attitude in literary compositions. As a concept it came out from writers in Marathi, mainly Balachandra Nemade. It has come to be a literary category in Indian literary aesthetic. The emergence of this is a part of large-hearted and open-minded rationalism. Regionalism subsists in Nationalism for the regional variations are special variants of behavior, custom, tradition and social ethos in different regions or in the specific aspects in the different states in our country. Regional novels are unique in the way they depict lives of characters and incidents in the regions or states of our nation. In our regions or states there is a depiction of social, economic and socio-cultural facets. The sad and disturbing condition of women, the restrictions and constraints that are imposed on them as per the social behaviour in different classes, castes and the hierarchy in caste are given prominence in our regional language fiction. These are provocative as well as realistic in the works of our regional writers. The literary translators of these have to have a complete understanding of these aspects while translating vernacular language writing.

Unnava wrote *Malapalli* while serving a jail sentence as convict 6657 during 1920-21 in two parts. In 1935 two more

parts were added. This work, considered a mega epic in Telugu, was later abridged by Maruvuri Kodandaramayya and published by Sahitya Akademi. The present text under study is the abridged version.

Unnava had the Mahabharat in his mind and he called the parts cantos. Part one centres on Sangadas, Ramadas's son. With his death the second part Ramanaidu begins. The third part is named after Takkela Jaggadu, the assumed name of Venkatadas, Ramadas's other son. He dies at the end and the fourth part is named after the central character Ramadas.

Ramadas has three sons and one daughter, the youngest child being the infant son. He is humble, coming from the dalit caste of mala dasaris, wandering minstrels of the fifth caste. Ramadas is devout and contented, always thinking of the higher things of life and seeking the company and enlightenment from mystics like Tungadurti Buchayyagaru. In his monologue Ramadas tells himself : "... 'the worldly' is only a step to the 'other-worldly'. It all depends on how one uses the step. A ladder can be used either to reach heaven or to go down into hell." He thinks that his son, though virtuous has not found stability. Sangadas is a close friend of the landlord Choudarayya's son, Ramanaidu. They are progressive. They attend the Aadiandhra Convention at Bezwada and are seen eating "untouchable food". Sangadas is devout like his father and he believes in justice and wishes

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to fight injustice. He has his own dialectic. He has a long dialogue with the president, Venkata Reddy, of the convention before the meeting. "It is my opinion that the entire Hindu society has to be reconstructed... Though we cannot work for the welfare of all, the measures we adopt for the welfare of the child should not be detrimental to the welfare of the mother. Besides this, if everyone were to attempt to work for the welfare of small societies the larger one might suffer as its problems get pushed into the background and are neglected... Efforts that are not directed towards the welfare of society as a whole, soon come to nothing..." He reiterates to the president what he had said earlier to his friend Ramanaidu: "Dharma the sacred law always demands sacrifice. Socrates drank poison to carry out the sacred law. Jesus Christ was put on the cross. Prahlada had to go through many trials. Harischandra sacrificed everything he had. Amara was beheaded. A disciple of Ramanuja went blind... Tilak the great was imprisoned for life. There is no sacred fire without the killing of a sacrificial animal and of all the animals for sacrifice it is the selfish one." By the time Ramanaidu and Sangadas returned to their village, the labour trouble with the farmhands demanding a rise in their wages intensified. Choudarayya kills Sangadas when he organizes a strike of the farm-hands at the time of harvesting his crop. Sangadas dies with the last words "We will win."

Moneybags, caste power, corrupt and inept judicial system and an alien rule brought misery to the poor untouchables. Beastly power leads to violent rule. Violence forges ahead. But, among the thinking, a realization dawns, that hard work must be paid just wages.

The Hindu Dharma, the Hindu way of life and the Hindu faith would make the world a happier place to live in. The novel progressively leads us to realize this. There are episodes in this novel that present vivid contrasts. In matters of love, there are two pairs Jyothi and Appadas and Mohanrao and Kamala. While the former sacrifice themselves, in sublime love that transcends the physical, the latter drive themselves to unforgivable sin. Towards the end, however, Kamala realizes her folly and in expiation dies serving her own son and husband as a domestic help. Mohanrao, a totally transformed man, gives away all his money to the Vijaya College.

Jaggadu in the third part is none other than Venkatadas, Ramadas's son. He does not believe the story of Prahlada. He does not feel that dacoity is wrong. Disgusted with the heartlessness of the rich he comes up with dialectic and a model of bringing in equality by robbing the rich and feeding the poor. He calls his burglaries dharma kannaalu, just burglaries. "Burglary in the house of anyone, who accumulates more than what he needs, and hoards it without it being useful to others, or anyone who is spending money on wrong things is lawful burglar. This kind of service to the world is called the service of Thirumangaiyyalwar according to the elders and the learned ones... I am the theorist. Garimella Ganharaju is our guru. Ours is Thirumangaiyya gothram. Our Rishis are Thirumangaiyya, Kancharla Gopanna and Sarva Papadu... People are getting enlightened. The tyrant's power can not go on. Perhaps your god wants this tyrant to continue for he builds temples and celebrates in praise of your god. Your god teaches that one should follow the

law without expecting any reward. Instead he rewards as per the deeds of the past births. If it is so who is greater, you or your god? Your gods must be rid of the vampires of the wealth." Jaggadu's vision is no ideal vision because of the violence involved in it. His is only passion. In contrast, his father has a vision, drawn from the tenets of our Dharma. The Sanatan army raised by Jaggadu kills one of the British officers and creates a lot of trouble for the officers. In spite of Jaggadu's commitment to his cause, he could not escape the law. In the court he tells the judge about his concept of justice. When the judge asks him if he is a philosopher he tells him that, if a philosopher is one who tries to put an end to the belief in Vedas, he is one. He ends with a peroration "At the beginning of the creation there was nothing like right or ownership...Everyone had to work...Everyone was rich and there was no poverty. There was a heaven on earth. Then Eswar came. He said the whole world was his. ... With a large number becoming poor, some have become rich. Riches for the rich and poverty for the poor has come to be taken for granted. ... The rule that comes in handy to the rich is the law. Everything else is crime. ..This sweat and blood of the poor man is the rich man's wealth, this, the Drama of the current era... It has been my very sincere attempt to establish the empire of the gods again on this earth. ... If the rich do not change their behaviour, the poor will change the very laws and establish heaven on earth. To make this law, this Dharma win, we will accept compassion, truth and cleanliness as our means."

Badly wounded and almost towards the end of his life, Jaggadu is allowed to see

his father. He asks his old father as to how he played his part in the play that is coming to a close. And Ramadas tells him: "Yours is a new play. The rules of the play are yours too. You have trodden a new path. I'm the one who has taken the much trodden, ordinary path. I cannot say that yours is not a correct path - It remains to be seen where it leads if everyone were to follow it. Even your way is bound by principles. Where principles are sublime many people wonder whether it could not be difficult to put them into practice." It is no wonder that those tribals, sanatans, who have been targets of cruelty and misrule believed in Jaggadu as a saviour.

Wickedness and villainy are present even among the rulers. The henchmen of the Christian missionaries coerce the poor untouchables making use of the Criminal Tribes act. We learn through Kannappa, the jail mate of Ramadas, about the pathetic condition of our people under the system of justice as administered by the Whiteman in those days.

Ramdas of the fourth part is the ultimate winner in the win that his son predicts in the moment of his death. With the money that Jaggadu has stored, a college comes up. Balance is restored. In the struggle between the good and the evil, good could withstand tribulation. The just always would emerge victorious.

As in Parsa, *Malapalli* also has a tolerant, understanding and a joyful view of life drawn from the ethos of the native to our land. A societal awareness and a humanistic approach tempered with realism firmly rooted in our ancient native wisdom are the common

points in Ramadas, as well as the eponymous Parsa. Both approximate to the condition and stature of a *Sthitaprajna*.

Writers in the advanced West have been dallying with anti-heroes, trying to glorify weakness and human frailty to which the spirit of the times is no small contributing factor. The electrifying power of our sustaining meta-narratives is thoughtfully harnessed by Unnava in making his principal characters all of a piece with our classical heroes with unswerving, unfaltering commitment to dharma and karma, thus elevating themselves to the highest peak of personality achievement envisaged by the Oriental mind. Samadrishti leads an aspirant to become a sthitaprajna. Ramadas has in them the celebrated positive qualities of our traditional nayaka: dhironaatta. What matters is being a dhira. The capacity to come out of

the encircling gloom of fading values comes only out of a self-acquired equanimity.

The highest literature anywhere in the world has carried the message of truth and goodness in its myriad hues and variations. The noblest minds down the ages have been conveying the same message, in our Mahabharata, Ramayana and so on. Saints and sants bless us to endeavour just to be justly human. Unnava's *Malapalli* initially had to face rough weather under the alien rule but that proved to be for the good of both the novel and the novelist. All is well that ends well. We have the first epic scale novel in Telugu in *Malapalli*. Universal has always been the appeal of the literature of the highest order and one of the universals of literature produced anywhere is the primacy of the regional richness, Nativism.

THE FINAL ACT

Mohan Patnaik *

Why does the final act of life look so comical
Before the last curtain is drawn ?
Where goes one's pomp and opulence
Pride and arrogance that once seasoned
Life to vain hope of immortality.

With hanging cheeks shrunken eyes
Wrinkled skin and tumbling hands

Crying for a support
What final words life wants to deliver
To the world at large ?

Does it warn of the abysmal end of all vanity
Or shows the final transition
Of the inscrutable Maya from life
To its own death ?

* Poet, Barahmapur, Odisha.

*Michael Phelps, 8 Olympic gold medals winner, said 'Any one can do anything'.
Finnish runner Poolo Nurma, 9 Olympic medals winner said, 'I compete with myself'.*

A LITERARY RAINBOW

Potturi Venkateswara Rao *

"A living legend", "a literary colossus" and "an epic personality" are but a few of the eulogistic epithets that "Viswanatha", the commemorative volume compiled and edited by Dr. Kondala Rao Velchala, displays in portraying the poet "*Kavi Samrat*" Viswantha Satyanarayana. None of these is extravagant expression. Each one is apt and justified, The 762-page volume is a collection of articles and poems written by eminent literary personalities of the past and present, in English, highlighting the creative genius of the glorious contributions of the first recipient of the *Jnan Pith* Award in Andhra Pradesh. That the volume was brought out thirty six years after the great author left his mortal coil itself is a great tribute to him. Viswantha Satyanarayana was more than a poet. There is not a single genre in literature that he has not tried and mastered. Every work of his, an epic, a lyric, a novel or any literary creation, exemplifies his eloquence of expression. Presenting such a personality by contemporary and succeeding writers with divergent perspectives produces a literary rainbow and the beauty of the compilation is exactly the same. In its content and production values it has no parallel at least in Telugu. Perhaps no other literary personality in India with an exception of the Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore had this honour of being remembered by the production of a qualitative commemoration volume decades after his demise. Some of the great poet's writings,

including poems have been translated from Telugu by eminent academics with utmost care and they have enriched the literary fare of the volume. None of the books of Viswanatha Satyanarayana was published in such high quality production values as this commemorative volume. The soul of the poet must be lamenting that he could not produce such a book of any of his writings in his own time.

The readers of the book, including those who have read all the works of the literary colossus would learn many interesting things which were little known when the poet was alive. The *Kavi Samrat* himself did not record such anecdotes, to the best of my knowledge, in his diaries or other notes. Suffice if one such instance is quoted here. As his elder son Sri Achyuta Devarayalu recorded in his article Viswantha Satyanarayana's memory was photographic. Photographic in all its scope. He can read very fast. Otherwise he could not have read so many books in a small period of 40 years. He remembered every page of every book for life! It is unbelievable. Since I saw with my own eyes and I have to believe. S. Radhakrishnan, the veteran philosopher, was surprised when Viswanatha Satyanarayana, told him in one of his conversations, that he had studied books on Buddhism available only in national libraries of Holland and Germany. Surprise was because Viswanatha never visited those countries! Dr. Radhakrishnan was under the impression that he alone read

* A well known senior editor, a great scholar and social activist, Hyderabad

those books when he visited those countries. Dr. Radhakrishnan, was further surprised when he was told by Sri Viswantha Satyanarayana that he read those books by borrowing them with the help of the National Library in Calcutta (now Kolkata)! Many do not know that a facility for borrowing books from other countries through our national libraries exists.

Viswanatha was a man of vision. The observations he made, in the course of his narrations, in stories and novels are as valid today as they were during his time. One such observation: is worth recalling in the twelfth year of the new millennium. A short story titled "Three Beggars" (translated by Dr. C. Vijayasree) has this conversational quote "... *I committed several terrible crimes. Why all that now? I had to go to jail on sex, _on seven occasions. Since I had plenty of money, I could easily buy my release...* "

One more quote from the same short story is worth recalling. "... comfort is not in begging but in beggar's life. A householder may abuse a beggar and dismiss him rudely. But if the householder thinks he is superior, the beggar too has his own sense of superiority. If hundred out of thousand give something, that is enough. Let that be. Here are so many beggars in this country. You ask anyone of them to work for you for free food and twenty five rupees. Not one will agree to the proposal. A beggar does not think that he is begging. Everyone thinks highly of what he is

doing. Look at those who beg for votes. Do they think, 'Chi, Why should we ask these people?' In the hope of becoming rulers at a later date they don't see the lowness in begging for votes. Moreover from their point of view it becomes a respectable thing to do". Note the beauty of the Telugu expression 'Chi'. It is not a word but an expression typical of some of the Indian languages. It has no equivalent in English! It is the twenty-second letter of the Greek alphabet and pronounced as '*kahy*'. The translator has done well in taking it in its spontaneous form.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's quotation crowns the front cover of the book. "Gowtham, you say he is a 'Kavi', a 'poet'. But I consider him a *Rishi*, a Saint". Gowtham is Sri Juvvadi Gowtham Rao, one of the dearest and closest friends of Viswanatha Satyanarayana. True, he must be a *Rishi*, for a *Rishi* alone can create the great *Kaavya* "*Ramayana Kalpavriksham*". By the way, Sri Gowthama Rao is one in whose vocal cords Viswantha Satyanarayana continues to live. Those who listen to Sri Gowthama Rao's recitations of the stanzas from the epic in Telugu would think that it is the poet's own voice. The picture of the back cover needs a special mention. My good friend Sri Neelamraju Muralidhar, a veteran journalist, took it when he was working as a staff photographer of the Indian Express at Vijayawada. It was very much appreciated by the Editors of the Express group at that time. Sri Muralidhara passed away a few years ago.

We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far.

Swami Vivekananda

TWO MOST CELEBRATED ARTISTES OF OUR TIMES: A TRIBUTE

Dr. I Satyasree *

A glorious era in Andhra Pradesh witnessed two great souls, one from the world of classical music and the other from the field of Kuchipudi dance. They are none other than the two legendary personalities, **Dr. Sripada Pinakapani and Sri Vempati Chinna Satyam**. They are much celebrated icons in their respective fields, who took the realms of Indian classical music and dance, cutting across the national borders to other frontiers. The former is a centenarian and the latter was recalled to his divine abode.

Dr. Pinakapani, who was known as the 'singing doctor' was steeped in classically. He is a musicologist par excellence and is truly a Vyasa, who has passed on a treasure trove which is regarded as the theory of carnatic music. Fondly called Dr. Paani by the music fraternity, he rendered the school/style that has been practised in south India under the banner of Tanjavur '*baani*'. He took great pride in producing stalwarts such as Padmabhushan Nookala Chinna Satyanaraya, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Nedunuri Krishna Murthy, Sri Voleti Venkateswarulu, Srirangam Gopalaratnam and others.

Nedunuri Krishnamurthy reverentially describes him as a *sangeetha paramacharya, taponidhi and gyana brahma*. In the words of this ardent disciple, Dr. Paani was like a

jeevan mukta. Nedunuri reminisces his long association with his guru, who neither had any fixed time for teaching music nor the inclination to end it at a particular hour. He would get into a mood to teach even at midnight and the class would go on into the wee hours. They both used to continue the teaching-learning session till 3.00 a.m. and when they heard the Secunderabad-Dornakal express hoot, would be jolted out of their music marathon and then would decide to call it a day. Dr. Paani had a keen eye for analysis and could sing, teach and create with equal felicity. Nedunuri says that 'Paani's *baani*' is unique, where the raga swept like a mighty ocean. He says that he owes his *Sangeetha Kalanidhi* title to his most revered guru.

Dr. Paani's sole aim was to see to it that music is learnt and sung in its purest form. Devotion in classical music should not be at the cost of losing out on the traditions of grammar and syntax that make music. He left a rich body of work for the posterity that could be used as a reference guide by music lovers. His name will be permanently etched in the minds of classical music lovers for years to come and it is near to impossible to fill the gap.

Sri Vempati Chinna Satyam is acclaimed as a *yuga purusha* by his disciples. The illustrious guru did not want to produce another Chinna Satyam, rather he wished that his pupils make a mark of their own in the

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field of Kuchipudi dance. They hold him in high esteem for chastising them till they 'got it right'. He adopted this age-old practice of the school of traditionalists. Nevertheless, he was very progressive in his thoughts as he strongly believed that tradition changes with time and that we have to reinterpret it to suit the changes that occur in the society. Earlier, in the traditional set-up of dance, only men played female roles. But his own guru, Sri Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry, broke the custom and made women take up solo performances. Chinna Satyam, however, went a step ahead and made women take up even male roles in his dance ballets. He rendered subtlety to

Kuchipudi dance form and contributed substantially to the repertoire of Kuchipudi solo numbers and has nearly 180 solo choreographies to his credit. Sobha Naidu, his devoted disciple, avers that the entire credit goes to Vempati Chinna Satyam for refining Kuchipudi dance and for lending it a touch of finesse that is quite appealing to the urbane. She recalls that he would never compromise on quality and pursued dance like yoga. To many other such dedicated students, he is a rare phenomenon, *na bhootho, na bhavishyati*, and his legacy will live for centuries to come.

BLOOD-SUCKERS IN WHITE ROBES

Premananda Panda *

The blood-suckers in white robes
Are there with their sharp shining
knuckle-dusters
That run deep into the skinny throats
Of millions of the poor who toil and sweat
In the sun and the rains to keep their
hearth burn

The babus in white feast and fret
Gamble and bet licking streaming salty blood
Making a lower middle class one
The skeleton of a laboratory cupboard.

The beggars and the have-nots
dwelling in slums
Have hardly a hope of life fed on leftovers
in garbage

They are paid some respect and become much
sought after.

When elections come and netas knock at
Their doors with folded hands and
handful of promises
After elections are over
There are more rag-pickers and
leftover eaters.

Little knows a labourer or a daily wager
Who rules there and what goes on beyond
Their remote villages;
They only know tilling the land
And building the pucca buildings of the rich
And breathe their last leaving their
Half clad children follow their step.

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GITANJALI: BHAKTI LYRICS FOR HUMANISTIC AND REALISTIC APPROACHES

Dr. K. Rajamouly *

Gitanjali, the most popular English work (1913) of Viswakavi Rabindranath Tagore, achieved the Nobel Prize for literature as a mark of distinction in the Indian tradition. Its popularity as the best translation of his Bengali original (1909) is unrivalled to have won international acclaim. It excels for its kaleidoscopic themes: Bhakthi or the adoration for the Divine, the love for nature and man, the concept of work, etc. For him, God manifests in all natural elements. He proclaims his ardent love for the Divine and seeks the communion of God and man. He firmly believes that the Divine inspires him to compose songs in praise of God, and deeply feels that they are his true and befitting offering to Him. They are his devotional songs with musical undertones reflecting his *Bhakthi*, fervent adoration and ardent devotion to God. There is a clear-cut influence of the Vishnava *Bhakti* poets and the *Brahmasamaj* on him apart from his understanding of humanistic approaches to compose *Bhakti* lyrics. His poetry reflects the echoes of Jayadeva, Vidyapathi and Chandidas. He imbibed the concepts of humanity, fraternity; humility, equality and equanimity from the knowledge of different religions to the core for his humanistic and pragmatic approach to life.

Tagore has immanent will and inherent zeal to bring enlightenment to man to have humanistic and idealistic approaches for

realistic and pragmatic goals in the well-being of his fellow being through the *Bhakti* lyrics or hymns of *Gitanjali*. His life-long dream is to give message directly to man or indirectly through God and his vital and pivotal concept and concern is man and his welfare. He firmly believes that the poet in him is God and his poetry is the most becoming and befitting gift to be offered to Him. His *Bhakti* lyrics focus on '*the ways of God to man*' in the welfare of man. In the poem, Leave this chanting and other poems, he makes it clear. Vague idealism, false ritualism, seeming worship, fancy road show, etc do not help man witness divinity. Work, with a vision and devotion to quenching the thirst and satiating the hunger of man like rivers and trees, is real and ideal worship. God is ever evident and present in man and his achievements and accomplishments in sharing duties but not in shirking responsibilities. He must be a committed worshipper and devoted priest in the temple of work for the welfare of man to win the sense of deliverance:

Deliverance?

Where is this deliverance to be found?

Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bond of creation;

he is bound with all forever

(Poem: 11)

The divine message is that He is with man forever when he is for human welfare. God is omnipotent and all powerful. He is solely and wholly responsible for the creation

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of man and the universe. As a part of His obligation, He ever safeguards the universe created by Him. God is all: the fountain of life, the origin of light and the source for bliss and the life of life.

Man is to be away from prejudices and hypocrisies and follow humanistic approaches for human welfare like the flower to sweeten the atmosphere, the river to flow through fields and hamlets, the poem to enlighten its readers, etc. Man with insight, intuition and illumination has obligations to fulfill, promises to keep and duties to perform. It is his utmost and foremost responsibility as man with virtues and values. Man should cross the hurdles of materialism and commercialism and ordeals of hypocrisy and falsehood and be in practice of the ideals of God.

Tagore is the creator of the animate and the inanimate: men with insight, all the creatures with instinct and all the other objects of nature. He is present everywhere in every object of nature. Man's body, mind and heart manifest His presence. Life is 'God centered' but not 'Self-centered'. The soul aims at the Supreme soul for its communion. All objects of His creation will ultimately culminate in God as they are true offering to Him.

There is nothing which makes one high and the other low. There is no discrimination and difference between one and the other. According to him there is '*only one language of the heart*'; *there is only one religion of love*'; *there is 'only one caste of humanity' and there is 'only one God- who is omnipresent.'*

Tagore makes clear his humanistic and

pragmatic approaches in his poem, *Where the Mind is without Fear* He as a child asks his countrymen in particular and men in general to break the manacles of bondage.

As an ardent devotee of God, Tagore firmly believes that He is infinite and complete. To add to or to subtract from Him is a vain hope and utter flop. He is manifest in his infinite creations that are the objects of nature.

*THY gifts to us mortals fulfill all our needs
And yet run back to thee undiminished.*
(Poem: 75)

*From the words of the poet men take
what meanings please them; yet their last
meaning points to thee.*
Poem: 75)

*The light of thy music illumines the world.
The life breath of thy music
runs from sky to sky.
The holy stream of thy music breaks through
all strong obstacles and rushes on.
My heart longs to join in thy song.
But vainly struggles for a voice.*
(Poem: 3)

Tagore is a mystic but his mystical overtones are different from those of others like Yeats, Eliot and Whitman for their theological dogmas and conceptual thoughts. He marks a clear-cut difference from other mystics, for he loves the joys of life and the beauties of nature. He lays emphasis on the soul to purify itself, freeing from materialism and commercialism, pride and hypocrisy.

*I shall ever try to keep my body pure,
knowing that thy living touch is upon*

*all my limbs.
I shall ever try to keep all untruths out
from my thoughts,
knowing that thou art thou truth which
has kindled the light of reason in my
mind.*

(Poem: 4)

His true adoration for Him grows deeper and deeper and his deep devotion makes him think of himself imaginatively to be His beloved, await His arrival and see Him like Radha for Lord Krishna. He adores Him as a devotee, a beloved, a disciple, a beggar maid, a friend or a child.

Tagore delineates human love and adoration for God as well as the relationship between man and God as the nucleus of his poetry. He presents his religion as the religion of man and his love as the love of man. His

reflections focus on the universal love for man through Gitanjali under the influence of Upanishads and Vaishnava Bhakti philosophy.

Gitanjali reflects Tagore's message that to serve man is to serve the Divine. His philosophy of life is to have humanistic approach for the welfare of mankind. Mere chanting of mantras, counting beads and offering incense are not an indication of true worship. Work is worship. The song, *Leave this chanting* makes his vision and mission clear.

He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil.

(Poem: 11)

THE APPARENT AND THE REAL

Dr. Suresh Chandra Pande*

I have heard physicists
Experimenting with spectrum
Have seen shades in Kaleidoscope
But never did I come
Alive the rainbow
Against the backdrop
Of azure sky
Rising fantastically
From yonder valleys
Skipping over
Now the house-tops
Then the horizon
Fading afar...!

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Nainital

Illusion sans allusion
The shadow of the light
By the night on the lake
And the daylong fog
An awning to landscape
The chinar trees

Across the Mail
Sliding swiftly
To appear then disappear
By the night
Teeming down
The lamp posts
A perennial recreation
The apparent or the real

TRAVAILS OF A TRANSLATOR

D.Ranga Rao *

"Hello! Mr. Ranga Rao! How are you? The other day Mr. T.M. Rao telephoned to me. He wants the help of a translator. I suggested your name. If he calls, decide on the merit of the matter to be translated and take it up according to your convenience."

It was my mentor and well-wisher, a pleasant, brief and business-like person in his dealings with men and matters.

The call from Mr. T.M. Rao did come. He was a writer, a critic, a poet and a translator. He was running a literary journal of national importance and was its Chief Editor. He was my boss when I was in service two decades ago. My mentor was Mr. Rao's boss when they were in service more than a decade earlier. I think, dear reader, the link is clear to you. I could not say 'no' to Mr. Rao.

Next day I met Mr. Rao in his office. A critical appraisal of the works of a great modern Telugu poet, tall in stature as well as in intellectual attainments, a *Kavi Samrat and a Gnana Peeth* awardee, an innovative traditionalist held in great esteem, was to be translated into English for publication as part of a book. The translation should be ready within a week. The appraisal, a lecture, ran into 40 pages in small print. It was a privilege to be associated with a work of this nature. It was hard work but was desirable. On looking

at the script, I suggested that I would take the help of a friend, good at translation, as the time was short and the script long. Mr. Rao agreed.

On my way back, I glanced at the 'lecture' in the auto. It was scholarly literary criticism made in an equally scholarly language and was in two parts dealing with the poetry and novels of the great poet in question. I realized that the translation cannot be done by a single hand in such a short time and the first part dealing with the poetic talents of the poet was beyond me. If necessary, I could cope with the second part, running into twenty pages, discussing the novels, as I had translated thousands of pages of modern Telugu prose in recent years.

I stopped at the residence of the Telugu scholar whom I had in my mind for the job. She was not in town and would return only after two days. I was worried.

After I went home I had a telephone call from my sister-in-law from Gangavathi, Karnataka. The marriage of my elder brother's grand-daughter was advanced and would take place the next day. I had not met my brother for some time. He is 96 and ailing. I must attend the marriage and meet him also. Train journey was out of question. I could secure a seat in *Raja Hamsa* (Royal Swan) of the Karnataka Road Transport with difficulty. The bus would reach Gangavathi at six in the morning leaving here at nine thirty in

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the night. The wedding *muhurtham* (the auspicious time) was at 10 a.m. After the wedding dinner, I left for Koppal, a distance of two hours from Gangavathi, where my brother was residing. I spent a day with him and left the next day by the same *Royal Swan* that night. I was dead tired.

My co-translator had arrived the previous night. I met her personally and told her the purpose of my visit. She was enthusiastic and willing to take up the work provided I spent some time with her everyday to help her with English. She told me proudly that her husband, a retired bank official, was also strong at English as well as her daughter, a software engineer. She said that she would translate direct on her note book laptop so that time would be saved. I was happy.

She was a house-maker and busy with many activities-- recording radio talks, taking part in T.V. seminars, giving literary discourses in the evenings, calling on friends and relatives, telephone calls, viewing the Telugu-Hindi serial without missing a single episode and most important of all, attending on her little grandson. Three days had passed without starting the translation work.

Three more days passed and she could translate only three pages with difficulty. I found her distraught and completely lost. The passages were tough, eating away into her brain. The prose passages of the criticism were more difficult to translate than the poems discussed. Six days had been lost. I thought it best to start translating the novel part so that the assignment could be completed at least by another week. I made a list of difficult words and expressions (which grew longer and

longer) not found in the dictionaries to take help from my co-translator.

I too faced the same problem with the critical jargon and the poetic prose of the critic, his prose running into parenthetical clauses and paragraph sentences. I left blanks wherever I faced difficulties to be filled later and this method helped me to progress fast enough.

My colleague in distress, who was herself hard pressed for time, would ask me to meet her at all odd hours to go through her translation. She would keep her note book laptop in her lap and type letter by letter by bending down on it. She would ask me to read what she had typed. Sometimes she would read it out herself. While we were busy at work, her husband would sit in his rocking chair and watch the T.V. from a distance keeping the volume high. Sometimes he would stand before us, his legs apart, holding the bulky Oxford Dictionary, ready to help us with the meanings of words. On occasions I would meet my colleague in the evenings on her request and our work would go on till ten or ten thirty in the night. Her husband would sleep off on the terrace foregoing his food as the hearth was not lighted. I would be receiving calls on my mobile from my wife saying that food was getting cold. Yet I was happy at the satisfactory progress of the translation work.

In the part of the 'lecture' I was doing, there were references to Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti with their *slokas* or stanzas followed by the poems of the mighty poet we were dealing with. These passages of the classical poets were short and brief but vital in the context of the translation. My co-

sufferer had no time to deal with this part to help me. I had to take the help of others. It was midsummer and the sun was at his hottest best. It was the season for marriages. Holidays for children and students. Parents were out of station on pilgrimages and were not readily available. Yet I succeeded in contacting a retired Principal who was a Ph.D. in Telugu of the old times and explained to her my predicament. She was willing to help me but said she had undergone a major operation and was recouping. I was in dire need of immediate help and so I went to her and showed the passages. She took some time to decipher the thoughts of the critic and said that much can be said on both sides as the possible interpretation and advised that I should use my discretion, taking the context into account. As she was feeling exhausted, I told her that I would meet her again and left, thanking her.

Time was running out and the classic poets were holding up my work. Some years ago I had made acquaintance with a retired Principal of an Oriental College, a Ph.D. in Sanskrit, now eighty six. He was the right person to catch the mind of the classic poets and complete my assignment. I telephoned to him introducing myself and briefly explained my mission. He was happy that I was doing commendable work and asked me to meet him the next day at eight in the morning. Another day lost. He was waiting for me when I went to him. I gave him the script I had taken with me. He walked to the door with the script in hand for better light. He removed the glasses, and tried to read squinting his eyes and put the glasses on again. The print was too small, the lines too close and his eyes too weak. My attempt to read the Sanskrit stanzas to help the situation made matters worse. Then

I suggested that I would get the script enlarged and come back. To my dismay he said in a low voice, "meet me tomorrow at eight in the morning." Another day lost. Next day he was happy with the enlarged version of the script, read the prose and the stanzas in Sanskrit and explained what the great poets meant and how the scholar critic synthesized beautifully the ideas etc. in his assessment. I felt pleased.

My co-translator had in the mean while gone through the same passages and scribbled what she could make out of that part of the 'lecture' and gave the pieces of paper containing the half sentences she had written and meanings of some words. Now my job was to synthesise the three versions I had and write out a sensible translation of the original passages utilising the rich knowledge and experience I gained by discussing the passages with the scholar teachers.

When I started translating this part of the 'lecture' discussed above, my P.C. began to behave queer. Dear reader, I forgot to tell you that I too started translating direct into the P.C. to save time. The system went on printing red letters, nothing but red letters. I knew only to type but not the technology of the P.C. I called in my daughter to rectify the defect. She tried her hand and gave up. I had to wait till the night when my son-in-law would return home from office. He too tried in vain but cleverly created another file and the P.C. behaved itself. Yet another day lost.

My co-translator completed her part and e-mailed it to Mr. Rao on the tenth day in the night at eleven thirty. I lagged behind. I gave finishing touches to my translation by reading it over and over again. The next day

the printer got stuck and I could not take the print outs. My daughter e-mailed it to Mr. T.M.R. at noon.

A week passed uneventfully. I was settling down to eat my lunch. It was 1 p.m. Mr. T.M.R. called me. He congratulated me on the translation and said it made a very impressive reading. Then he said, "I want your passport size photograph immediately. Send it by e-mail within half an hour," and put the receiver down.

It was a Sunday. I had no photograph ready with me. Even if I had it, my daughter was not at home to send it. Will the photo studios be open on Sundays, that too at noon time? I put on my shirt to go out and my wife glared at me as angrily as the sun that was beating down

white hot outside. The c.c. road and the concrete jungle around were radiating heat merrily in the hot winds blowing over the city from the Rajasthan desert, the temperature recording 43 degrees Celsius. I had to buy a CD. to send the photograph by e-mail and I bought it at a Marwadi shop nearby. I found a digital studio open at a distance to my joy. The photographer clicked even before I could smile and fed the CD into the system. But the system rejected the CD. It wanted a DVD. I had to go out again and buy a DVD at the shop and the process ended successfully at last. My daughter, who had returned home by then, sent the photograph by e-mail as desired by Mr. T.M.R. at 2 p.m. providing a happy ending to this midsummer translation saga.

FREQUENT FLYERS

Dr. Kumarendra Mallick*

Criss-cross the sky,
the trails of the smoke
the sky doesn't treasure -
nothing is left for a forlorn brother...

The sailors in high sea
ride waves and rough tides,
anchor from shore to shore,
but the blue print of their routes
the sea has not kept in safety locker..
The invaders, often cruel though brave,
did not know what is fear

and entered other's territories
with soldiers, arms and ammunitions.
They plundered the land and looted the poor,
yet history has not glorified their
misadventure...

But the one
who sat in silence
under a lone tree
without soldiers, weapons,
war planes and ammunitions
has ruled the three worlds.
He sits on the throne
in each man's golden heart!

* Poet, Hyderabad

THE LEGACY OF TAGORE

Dr. J. Ravindranath*

Rabindranath Tagore who won the Nobel prize in 1913 is an enduring symbol of nationalism as well as Internationalism. He was a cosmopolitan who did not forget his national roots. He combined in him the mosaic of arts such as painting, singing, writing, philosophy and social reform. His creativity bloomed outside the school and inside the lap of nature. His nature was a happy combination of solitude and public service. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan writes that Tagore's works "speak of the vicissitudes of friendship, the beauty of love, the pain of desolation, laughter and tears, terror and delight, the vanity of human wishes, the pains and heartaches of unfulfilled desires, the horror of moral obliquity, the shame of infamous conduct."

His legacy certainly shows us the way out of the labyrinth in which we find ourselves in. His ideas on education, nationalism, and internationalism are relevant even today after his death seventy years ago. If Tagore were alive today, what would he say regarding our education system that encourages cut-throat competition, materialistic pursuits, intellectual parasitism, disappearance of local languages and unbridled aggressiveness of the lone super power?

Tagore never liked the rigid school system that stifled the creativity of the individual. He liked to look at the waves of

the river Padma or slanting sunlight on a particular day that awakened his creativity. Tagore's father didn't scold his son or impose his ideas on him but asked the boy to accompany him to see the beautiful Himalayas. Our present system of education forces children to get things by heart and hanker after marks. But Tagore wanted education not as a means to materialistic advancement but as individual enrichment. He would have felt repelled by the term 'personality development' which in these days means corporate personality development. He would have rejected the violence embedded in present system of education which has become merely a tool to the vagaries of world economy prone to crisis after crisis-political or economic. To Tagore, Education is a permanent part of the exploration of adventure of life and not a treatment to cure students of the disease of ignorance but a function of health, the natural expression of their mind's vitality.

In his work *Reminiscences*, he refers to an incident in which three pilots of the British planes bombarding the tribal hamlets were captured by tribal people. But these pilots were not harmed but given hospitality by their captors. Tagore questions, who are more civilized-those who came to bombard innocent villagers or those who looked after those people who came to kill them?

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Tagore was for altruism.' He gave up his entire prize money to build Santi Niketan.

Though he came from the family of landlords, he was uncomfortable like Tolstoy. To raise more money to realize his goal, he had toured the western countries. Like Vivekananda, Tagore agonized and acted to build his nation into a formidable one. Radhakrishnan writes that for Gandhi, the measure of man's greatness is not his material possession, but the truth in him which is universal.

Tagore was not a conformist and wanted to see, observe and come to conclusions through his personal experience and observation. When everyone was spreading rumours against Russia, he went there to observe the new experiment going on there and praised what was great. He wrote "Letters from Russia" in which he praised the proletariat but also expressed concern that the working class might have thought that one day they need not labour at all which is not possible. He called the workers as pillars carrying the lamp of the new civilization.

Tagore's independence of mind was also revealed when he gave up the title 'Sir' in protest against Jallianwallabagh Massacre. He also did not completely support the boycott of schools and colleges by the young and the negative feelings inherent in the non-cooperation movement. The legacy of Tagore wants our intellectuals to raise their voice against the trampling of the rights of tribals in the name of mining and the embracing of the nuclear weapons as solutions to our problems or threats of war. Tagore alive would not support the rejection of negotiation in favour of violence and counter violence either by the State or by the non-state actors or groups. In Tagore's heartland rested mercy but not

hatred for the Muslims or the British. He believed in change through common sense and love. Radhakrishnan, our former President points out that like Gandhi, Tagore had contributed to the awakening of the nationalistic spirit and stood against the cowardice of the weak and arrogance of the strong.

Nowadays many languages are dying every day under the influence of English language. Tagore wanted Indians to learn modernization not just from the British but also other cultures --- the French, Germans, Japanese etc. If Tagore were alive today, he would have certainly felt bad at the gradual death of the rich and diverse languages in the world. He would have advised us to strive for true cosmopolitan culture that fuses the elements of African, Latin American and Asian cultures along with the virtues of western values such as respect towards the public good, acknowledgement of others' achievements, accountability, dignity of labour, intellectual independence etc.

Nirad Chaudhuri in his article on Tagore mentions that Tagore refused to excuse those pundits who criticized him prior to winning the Nobel Prize but came to greet him with sweets and flowers after he became the Nobelite. Nirad C. Chaudhuri also points out the deep anguish felt by Tagore due to the negative feelings of some of his compatriots to the extent that he wanted not to be born again in this land. But his soul would rejoice when it finds how we Indians are cherishing his legacy long after his death.

Tagore's Gitanjali certainly deserves the Prize for its beauty of feelings, free

expression, and powerful appeal to realize eternal truth. He prays to God to strike at the root of penury in his heart, to make his head hold high amidst difficulties and doesn't want to send death empty handed when it visits him. His love for life was matched by his fearlessness towards death. Radhakrishnan remarks "His religion is based on vision, experience rather than on Knowledge." To him religion means the purification of the soul and extinction of the ego. Many critics criticize that today it doesn't appeal much in changed conditions. Yeats and the West might have found new fashions to praise but we find Tagore's legacy more relevant today than yesterday. Some remarked that Tagore's waning popularity was due to hasty translation of his Bengali poems by the poet himself under pressure from publishers.

In his stories like Post office, Kabuliwallah we find great humanism. In his Home and the World, we find how quiet strength is more powerful than violent revolution. In his *Chitra*,

one finds beauty unsurpassable and in his novel *Gora*, one finds the futility of the divide between the East and the West. His books such as *Sadhana, Personality, Man* reveal his probing into the secret chamber of human heart. His work on Nationalism is a collection of articles which reveals the limitations of nationalism.

Tagore writes, "There is only one history, the history of man. All nations are merely chapters in the larger one. And we are content in India to suffer for such a great cause." Tagore's legacy is not for Globalization that gobbles up freedom of small nations and justifies inequality and Big Brother attitude but a blend of the best elements of the East and the West and gives a fitting reply to Kipling's vain hope. He and his works herald a new civilization based on peace and unity. Radhakrishnan aptly remarks that "Tagore's voice was the conscience of our age. He became a spokesman and guide for his generation. He bequeathed to his country and the world a life which had no littleness about it."

HE CAME BACK

O.P. Arora*

He was crying
bitterly, childishly...
I went up to him
wanted to ask him
what had pierced his heart
what had caused the rupture. . .
Instead, looked around

there was sadness in the air
everything, everybody looked pierced...
The Question looked absurd.
I sat with him, patted him, wiped his tears...
He came back, gradually
looked at me sheepishly, longingly...
He came back
and moved on
like everybody does, though pierced.

* Poet, New Delhi

MULTICULTURALISM IN AUSTRALIA

D.Ramakrishna*

As Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra say, "Australia was founded on a double gate: the dispossession of the Aboriginal people and the excessive punishment of large numbers of British and Irish people mainly from the poorer classes, for crimes against the property of the ruling class." While several convicts were massacred in Tasmania, several others escaped to the mainland. They were used by the White British and European settlers as labour to build Australia. In course of time many convicts acquired respectability as new citizens, rearing future families. With waves of new migrants from all over the world joining after discovery of gold at Ballarat and Bendigo, Australia has evolved into a modern nation on democratic principles, although without being a Republic, still owing allegiance to the British Crown.

After arrival of the British and European migrants to the new continent in the 19th century, there was mass destruction of the Native Aborigines like the destruction of native Americans in America. Now the Aboriginal people constitute only a small proportion of the Australian population. But in art and literature, the Aboriginal creativity is being recognized in recent times as a significant aspect of Australian cultural production. In fact, the indigenous Australian Culture is unique. All other things are borrowed from foreign cultures.

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The Irish refugees were among the earliest migrants coming to Australia from 1841. The Irish Catholics were not allowed by the English settlers into the schools, churches and other institutions established by them. But the Scottish and Welsh Protestants fleeing from trouble at home could feel more at home on the new continent as settlers.

The Irish were followed by migrants from the other parts of the world around 1851 during the gold rush. The Victorian gold fields at Bendigo and Ballarat, particularly the latter, were the richest in Australia perhaps more than the gold fields in California in America. More than half a million people from Italy, France, Poland, Germany, America, China and the British Isles came to Melbourne city.

There were anti-Chinese riots when the Chinese came to the gold fields, but later there was large scale Chinese immigration. State and national laws were enacted to keep Chinese out and discourage non-Anglo European migrants. In the second half of the twentieth century, the Irish heritage resulted in multiculturalism taking roots.

The White Australian policy got serious setback in 1959. Although the non-White ban on immigration was lifted, Europeans were preferred with a points system. However, the European migration slowed down in the 1970s due to the advent of the European Union since Europeans could migrate to any European country.

More than 6000 Asian migrants a year came to Australia by the 1960s. The new migrants established their own social and cultural organizations. By the 1970s waves of migrants came from other parts of the world due to international conflicts and civil wars in Lebanon, Cyprus and Chile. The arrival of Vietnamese refugees by boats started in 1977. Subsequently refugees from Malaysia and Sri Lanka too came. Middle-class professionals from South Asian countries like India and Sri Lanka started coming in the 1980s under skilled migration programmes. Since 2000, the Chinese and Indian migrants outnumbered those from Britain. Now China and India are treated by the Government of Australia as important market for its products.

As new waves of migrants came and Australia evolved into a modern nation, multiculturalism has been declared as its official policy. Like America, Australia also is salad bowl of cultures with Christianity as majority religion and English as the official language. One in every ten Australians is said to be a White Supremacist.

The Australia Multicultural Policy has been stated in the official website of the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. The Multicultural Policy embraces the "Australian-grown customs and heritage of indigenous Australians, early settlers, and the diverse range of migrants now coming to Australia. It supports the right of Australians to maintain and celebrate, within the law, their culture, language or religion. All Australians are expected to have an overriding loyalty to Australia and its people, and to respect the basic structures and principles underwriting

our democratic society. These are the Constitution, Parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as the national language, the rule of law, acceptance and equality". The Policy emphasizes "civic duty", "respect for each person", "recognition of difference with tolerance", "social equity", "benefits for all from productive diversity."

Nationalism is geographical conglomeration of ethnic groups living together and having an identity different from their home countries. Ethnicity derives from the common history and traditions of a specific group. The Australian "National identity" will be achieved if there is common interest among the ethnic groups while preserving their own individual cultural traditions. In fact, the migrants are happy to spend their lives mixing their family traditions with novel rituals, barbecues, footy matches, and Australian Idol live shows.

Although there is no coercive assimilation, a certain degree of homogeneity takes place among citizens in terms of living style, communication in English language and work place culture as generations pass. The Australian multiculturalism is complex, balancing separateness of the ethnic groups and cohesion of the society as a whole. Compared with the other advanced Western industrial countries, Australia is different in the relatively large volume of immigration and settlement. But the people of British descent are still a majority. Despite the presence of multiple religions of ethnic groups, the majority of over 20 million strong population are Christian. The new arrivals of settlers encouraged by multiculturalism extend beyond the country's borders to the migrants' countries of origin. Such links would contribute to the

development of strong political and economic relations. Almost one in four Australians was born overseas, one in five has an overseas parent and one in twenty is of Asian origin. And Australia is inhabited by people who speak more than 300 languages while the official language is English.

As Fiske, Hodge and Turner maintain, culture grows out of the divisions of society, not its unity. "It has no work to construct any unity that it has, rather than simply celebrate an achieved or natural harmony." In this sense multicultural societies like America, Australia and India are embattled constructions of unity in any historical moment. As Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra assert, multiculturalism is "a kind of cultural map which acknowledges diversity without losing sight of the specific histories of the multicultural project." The individual ethnic groups not only remain cohesive within an overarching society, but keep up their native cultures. They

act as bridges between the countries of their origin and the country of their settlement. According to John Frow, multiculturalism in Australia is not primarily a cultural phenomenon but framed "by a set of strategies of nation formation and by the politics of Asian regionalism." He argues that unlike the U.S., New Zealand and Canada, "Australia has substantial racial, linguistic or cultural unity." Despite "Cultural Asianness", Australia's own largely European cultural traditions continue to be present today. Ghasan Hage examines White reactions to one of the most diverse immigration programmes the world has seen. He concedes that subsequent to the emergence of multiculturalism in the mid-1970s, "Australia was a nation where various cultural groups coexisted in one big 'family'." In the present times cultural attitude is prevalent at the level of the people, belonging to various ethnic groups in terms of English as the language of communication, living style and interaction among them in day-to-day life.

SUPREME MAN

G. Narasimha Murthy *

Play a game with ferocious death
On the death of serpent's tail
Warrior only knowingly steps
Regales and plays vigorously with death

In the cradle of dragon's death
Sing sensational song hilariously
Add joy and honesty to reach destiny
Not to allow the death to cross across

Win the life back fight with death
Neither rebound nor retreat

In the fighting ring of life turn not the foot
Never surrender to defeat
Raise hot chest even at cold tomb
Stop not fight close even to bomb
Clench the reins of death
Mightily chase off beyond earth
Get ready ever, wings opens falcon
Challenges make Supreme Man

* Poet in Telugu and English

BIG AND SMALL

History speaks of big events. Biographies speak of big deeds. The newspapers headline big news. This is a big matter, be attentive; that is a small matter, do not bother: this is the usual approach.

But life is not made of big things alone. Sometimes history speaks of small things and that is interesting. A battle is lost for a shoe-nail. Biographies, when they speak of tiny matters, are not less interesting. Napoleon was affected emotionally on the battlefield at a dog's distress. A great truth of human nature is revealed in this trifling matter. The headlines of the newspapers attract the readers first, but after a few minutes, the smaller items take away more time of theirs. And when a certain matter is put before us as big that should get more attention than another, a smaller one, it may be a question of different judgments, temporary values and personal affectations.

For even this is not certain: what is big, what is small? It is the notions of quantity, size, space, time, etc., that go to determine the bigness or smallness: Whereas the Divine has bestowed the same care and energy-consciousness in the making of an ant as in the making of an elephant. Yet, living, as we do, in the habits of bigness and smallness, by habit again we give more attention to the traditionally established big things than to the similarly convention-based small things. This is one of the results of the divisive faculty of human mind. The big and small are put into separate apartments and treated differently

This leads to an anomaly most of the time. A person of big acts and behaves

differently in small matters. A leader who rises to save a nation in crisis fails to guide when the crisis is over. An able public man is not able at home. A philosopher acts with his family members and friends differently than what he has taught in his big philosophy. Why does it happen so? Because there is no integration of the personality. A student gets ready for examination time; he works hard to pass the tests and scores a top position but later he fumbles. Because he has passed his examination in a state of tension, he has regarded it as a big event and geared himself up to it with unusual care. Later he does not care for his normal studies which he considers to be a small matter.

That is the general humanity. The exceptional persons, those who take to the discipline of self-perfection, do not ignore the small acts and things at all. For them, it is not so much a question of big or small as an attitude towards life, the consciousness in which one lives. The seeker of the higher consciousness does not distinguish between the big and the small on a conventional basis, but on basis of a higher guidance which makes him choose between different works and things. The result is that whatever he does, be it big or small in ordinary human eyes, he does it with the same love, care and consciousness. Those who have seen the Mother at work, know it well.

Small is beautiful. Small is important too.

From the Editor's Desk
Courtesy :Sri Aurobindo's Action,
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UNIVERSAL CONVOCATION (SNATAKOTSAVAM)

Ramakrishna Rao Gandikota*

All the students and teachers might have attended or at least heard about the ceremonial convocations held in our umpteen universities, year after year, conferring degrees, diplomas and medals to the students coming out of the portals of learning and entering into a new phase of life.

This *Snatakotsavam* is as old as the *Upanishadic* Period. "*Vrata-ardham Snaatiti Snatakah*". One who takes a ceremonial bath in order to prepare oneself for a Vow. In Hindu Wedding too, we come across the ceremony of *Snatakam*, with which the bridegroom's role in the marital ritual starts.

In good olden days of *Upanishadic* period the learners, princes or paupers, used to go to *gurukulas*, which existed in forests far from the homely comforts. That is how Lord Krishna and Kuchela (Sudhama) became class mates in the *gurukula*. The *Guru* and the *Gurupatni* were virtual parents to all the students. In addition to various *Sastras* the true art of living peacefully was imparted to the students in those days.

After completion of the course, after about 12 years, when the guru felt that the student was competent to enter into *grihasthasram*, the ceremonial *Snatakam* was performed. In *Taittiriya Upanishad* we have a clear picture of teaching - learning process, and teacher - taught relationship.

The invocation beginning with *Samno mitrah* means "May *Mitra* (The Sun) be blissful to us... May *Varuna* be blissful to us. May *Aryan* be blissful to us. May *Vishnu*, of long strides, be blissful to us, May He protect the teacher. *Om* peace, peace, peace." This invocation is recited in order to avert the impediments to the acquisition of knowledge.

The most popular *Santipatha Sahanaa vavatu* means

May He protect us both together.
May He nourish us both together.
Let our study be brilliant.
May we not cavil at each other.
Om peace, peace, peace.

How ennobling are these sentiments! The teacher and the taught are not treated independently. The words *we* and *us* are used in the invocations.

In *Sikshavalli* of *Taittiriya - Upanishad*, the teacher gives the following advice:

Righteousness and learning and teaching are to be practiced.
Truth and learning and teaching are to be practiced.
Austerity and learning and teaching are to be resorted to
Control of the outer senses and learning and Teaching are to be practiced.
Control of the inner organs and learning and teaching are to be resorted to.

* Retd. Principal, Kakinada

Having taught the Vedas, the preceptor imparts this post - instruction to the students. *Speak the truth. Practice righteousness. Make no mistake about the study. Do not cut off the line of progeny. There should be no deviation from righteous activity. There should be no error about protection of yourself. Do not neglect propitious activities. Do not be careless about learning and teaching.*

Further the Guru advises his disciples to follow the instructions seriously.

*There should be no error in the duties towards the gods and manes (Pitrus).
Let your mother be goddess unto you.
Let your father be a god unto you.
Let your teacher be a god unto you.
The works that are not blame worthy are to be resorted to, but not the others.
Those actions of ours that are commendable are to be followed by you, but not the others.*

As a house holder when you offer something

*Offer with honour
Do not offer with dishonour,*

The offering should be according to one's prosperity.

The offering should be made with modesty.

The offering should be with awe.

The offering should be made in a friendly way.

Do we hear such ennobling words in the present day system of education, which entirely revolves round money? The one and the only purpose of education appears to be making money (not earning, please). The very begetting of children appears to be, to make them engineers, that too software engineers, to deport them to U.S. and the parents to languish alone in silence and solitude at home or stay with similar people in old age homes. No sentiments. No human values. No attachments. Just growth of career and hunt for dollars. Where is the peace?

As a parent and a teacher I blame the parents for this situation. From childhood, the boy is instructed that the only goal in life is going to US or UK or Australia and settle there and lead a luxurious life. The young generation is being alienated from our sacred land (*Karma Bhumi*), language, and cultural ethos. What a pity! Let us pray for dawn of good days.

Dasarath Manjha, a villager of Gehlot in Bihar with his hammer sickle cut a passage in the mountain which took 22 years. He had to sell his goats to buy the hammer and sickle. It cleared a distance of five kms. to reach the nearest place in the town. People laughed and ridiculed him and called him mad when he started doing this! It shows what one man can do with high motivation.

When wright brothers announced that they would invent and send an aeroplane into the sky people laughed and ridiculed. Even the New York Times wrote an editorial ridiculing them. Where the first aeroplane went into the sky at a place called kitihawk, only four people were present!

ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?

Yalamudi. K *

With a telling title "Whither India" Pandit Nehru wrote an article before independence. Those were the days of colonial rule. Naturally, the situation of the country was not in the manner, as one would love to see it. After many sacrifices, that too with a unique protest mechanism India got self-rule. A tryst with destiny was made. Aspirations soared. A great democratic experiment began with many teething problems. The basic contradiction between the massive illiteracy of the people of huge numbers, (with a mind boggling variety at that) and the successful democratic foundation was resolved. How was it achieved? There are some, who maintain that it was a miracle. It is not correct to belittle them, by dismissing it out of hand. Giving due allowance to such a belief, given the complexity of the task that was achieved, at one time or other, one has to find out, really how the leaders of those times could do it.

Yes, there was Nehru, a towering personality at the helm. Did he do it alone? He did not. If anyone attempts to attribute all the credit to him, Nehru would not have accepted it. His intellectual caliber and inner assurance of such depth that he was always a cut above others. So, unlike the present breed of leadership, he would not have demanded all the lime light for himself. He would have willingly shared the greater credit with the many leaders down the line and across the political spectrum.

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It would be unfair to assume that the entire political leadership of those times was out and out above board. For sure, there were black sheep. But, they were very few and far between. The great majority of those, who were at the helm, in the first few decades of independence, were certainly men of moral merit, with a greater political conviction and commitment. That could be one possible reason, why they carried conviction with the masses and could achieve what was seemingly impossible. The people trusted them, in such an abundant measure that they felt sure that the nation was in the safe hands. Dr.Rammanohar Lohia and Pandit Nehru, much separated them. But in terms of integrity, love for the nation, concern for the poor people and above all the healthy parliamentary traditions that they strove to establish and secure none was second to another. Not only these two, there was a galaxy of them.

When it comes to the present day reality, are we that sure that we are led by the lot that can be trusted, let alone to be followed? As an example, let us take Kapil Sibal. He is an articulate and able minister in the central cabinet, that too a legal luminary to boot. What did he say about the loss in 2G spectrum scam? He spoke more like a defense lawyer, than a responsible cabinet minister keeping the larger national interests above the partisan politics. There is always a puzzling /troubling question. Did he speak that way with the permission of the Prime Minister Dr.Singh?

At this point, one loves to out stretch one's imagination a bit and conjure up an apocryphal context. Had Pandit Nehru asked, one of his ministers to defend a case as Kapil Sibal did, did anyone oblige Nehru? One's hunch is that none would have done so. If pressed hard, one would have resigned. More than that, one is cock sure that Nehru would not have made that kind of demand in the first place. It is nobody's intention to imply that Dr. Singh did permit, much less, did encourage Kapil Sibal to do so. Given the functioning of the UPA-2, there is confusion about the command structure. Therefore, one is sure and less sure about a thing at the same time.

Expectedly, the politician's defense is, they are not the only people, whose moral fiber is brittle. In every sphere of national life, they contend, the situation is more or less same. It is an argument, which looks correct on the face of it. Therefore, it does not make sense to single out the political breed. Yes, it is true, much is amiss everywhere. But, the politicians are so pointed out because it is they who have done much to damage the system both by omissions and commissions. They have damaged the institutions of democracy, whose vibrancy speaks for itself the very quality of the polity, by abusing the power and setting bad precedents in the process. Given the top-down percolation of value system and the hegemony of the ruling cultural ethos, there is a mess all about.

This top-down model is an integral part of our social life for centuries together. The democratic experiment, which has been going on for some time past, is making the feeble attempts to promote the bottom -up approach. Still, it is not that powerful to call

the shots for umpteen reasons. As such it is the political leadership that has to take lead to turn a new leaf in the otherwise gloomy scenario. Why should they take lead? The answer is simple. In a democratic polity, any day, it is the political leadership that can decisively represent and mould the public opinion.

Is it a case of passing the buck and sitting idle on the part of others? Certainly, it is not like that. Logically speaking, the role of others is there in making the scenario, a bit worse and much more complex. So, all have an equal stake in putting the system on the proper track. It is simply a question of who should be in the front line and who should be in the rear. Hence, it goes without saying that there is an urgent need for national introspection. Already, Anna Hazare has set the ball rolling. One has to quicken the pace of it. Any attempt on the part of anyone to put spokes on the way, for any reason, is a great disservice to the national regeneration. It is in order in this context to look at the question, where do the vocal sections stand in this crucial task? The phrase "vocal sections" has been intentionally employed in the place of "intellectuals" for the simple reason that an intellectual is a double edged sword. One is not sure, how that weapon works. In the case of vocal sections, that danger is not that sharp. They too can be self-centered, but, if an idea catches on they can be banked upon to a certain extent.

A single example is enough to underscore the sorry state of affairs of the day. The "HUNgaMA" report of the Nandi Foundation, which was released a few days back, graphically, put before the nation the

gravity of malnutrition of children, that too at an age, when it should be avoided at all costs. 42% of under-fives are the worst hit. The logical consequence of it is stunted growth. So it is there in full glare among them. The sections that are vulnerable to this immense injustice are, naturally the underdog of the society, including the minorities. This reality does not trouble the powers that be to the degree warranted. There is a greater worry about the slight decrease in growth rate from 8 to 7 percent. Therefore, the Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen is naturally upset at the priorities of the policy makers. With a proper policy mix, he is sure, it is even possible to achieve more than 12% growth rate. But, it does not by itself help solve the problem of malnutrition. It requires a different approach altogether. Sadly, it is absent.

Therefore, the question which stares at us is what is to be done? Is it wise to assume that all of a sudden, akin to an epiphany, the political leadership would change and cleanse the system? As things stand today, it is a fond hope. Yet, the compulsions of democratic politics would definitely force the political class

to do what is expected of it, provided there is a strong civil society pressure. To exert that force, at personal level one has to be morally upright and legally correct. It is a tough task indeed. It is said that "charity begins at home". Keeping this in mind, Abdul Kalamji, our ex-president is very particular about this approach to dispel the gloom that has enveloped us.

Without doubt, the limitations of time and space limit the human condition. It is equally true that the structural impediments are there to reckon with. Yet, it is possible to break through the dim clouds of pessimism, if concerted and committed efforts are at play consistently from all the concerned quarters. In this context, it would be fitting to remember the classic words of Edmund Burk an English politician, with a great gift of gab. He said "All that is necessary for Evil to triumph is for Good men to do nothing". Hence, if something is started, at some point, with a positive frame of mind, there is a hope for a better tomorrow. Is it an attempt at hoping against hope? In conclusion, one hopes, it is not hope of that sort.

MAN AND MATHEMATICS

Late Sri S. Krishnamachary *

Walking, running, step by step
One, two, three, four, five,
In covering heights in leap and jump,
It's Mathematics which makes man thrive.

In purchase, sale, or transaction,
Steering, winding, speeding, in drive,
In planning and day to day interaction,
It's Mathematics which makes man thrive.

* Poet, Hyderabad

In thinking, questioning and answering;
Even for villainous acts to contrive;
For scientific progress while striving,
It's Mathematics which makes man thrive.

In athletics, sports and games,
It's geometrical shape in all forms alive;
In symphony, rhythm, symmetry in all frames,
It's Mathematics that makes man thrive.

A STUDY OF THE SYMBOLISM IN MICHAEL ONDAATJE'S THE ENGLISH PATIENT

Chitra Krishnan*

Writers employ various literary techniques to express meaning that enables their readers to understand and appreciate their works. An expert use of literary devices like imagery, metaphors, idioms, similes and symbolism gives richness and clarity to the text, and evokes emotions. The term 'symbolism' that evolved from the word 'symbol' is of French, Russian and Belgian origin and was a late nineteenth-century style used in poetry and other arts.

In literature, symbolism is used to enhance the story by bequeathing meaning to the writing beyond what is actually being described and is the ultimate 'deeper meaning' that the author is trying to convey. It is a microcosmic representation of a theme in the story. Symbols exemplify rich meanings that are diverse, complex, and frequently predicated on metaphorical associations that affirm a similarity between different contexts that normally can not be connected. They express indescribable concepts, abstract ideas, and complex emotional significations that are otherwise difficult to communicate. Like symbols, imagery too creates a vivid picture for readers and both prevail in political and religious contexts as they allow multiple understandings and appeal to a broad audience. Both imagery and symbolism are techniques to help the reader comprehend the author's message more easily.

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The concept was rapidly adopted by postmodern Diaspora writers to help the reader understand the structure of their novels from a more metaphysical aspect. Diaspora writers are people who live outside their native lands from which they are displaced and use symbolism extensively to project the formation of identities in order to communicate meaning and establish relations. In Christian faith, the fall of Satan from heaven and mankind's separation from the Garden of Eden metaphorically signify a separation from God which in itself constitutes a diasporic situation. Michael Ondaatje is a prolific Diaspora writer who uses symbols to associate his works with the scriptures and arts to indicate the higher order of spirituality. His award winning novel *The English Patient* (1992) uses meaningful symbols like the desert, the Italian villa, famous works of art and legendary artists, and several references from the bible to lend greater depth and life to the characters of the book.

This novel tells the story of four different people's experiences and how they came to live together in a small villa in Italy during World War II. It deals with the gradually revealed histories of an English accented Hungarian who is critically burned in a fiery plane crash while crossing the Sahara Desert during WWII and he is looked after by a Canadian nurse. He lives along with a Canadian-Italian thief, and an Indian sapper in the British Army who come to forge an unlikely family, and together discover the

secrets of their respective pasts, and the emotional wounds they share. The novel is replete with symbolism, is exemplary for research, and the startling inter-textual imagery, myths and works of art combine to develop and elucidate the main theme of the novel. Ondaatje masterfully uses metaphors and symbols to communicate meaning in issues such as destruction, identity, escape, unity, and love which relate to the novel. The novel opens with a man falling from a burning plane with 'his head on fire' much like John Milton's Satan, hurled "headlong from th' ethereal sky." In the novel, apocalypse is not a catastrophe awaiting humanity but an event that has already taken place and continues unabated. The wounded patient is often referred to as being a 'corpse', his body functioning as an allegorical fragment, a living emblem of catastrophe that affects mankind in different ways.

The English Patient is packed with references of not only Christianity but of other faiths as well. The omnipresent 'Fire' is an essential image of Buddhism and is associated not only with war but also with love such as the love affair between Katharine and Almsy that develops around the desert fire and between Kip and Hana. The symbol of fire is also portrayed as being destructive as seen in Almsy's passionate relationship culminating in a fiery fall when he plummets in a blaze of fire in the desert.

Recurring religious citations further enhance the symbolic import as seen in Hana comparing the lean and gaunt hips of the English patient to the thin hipbones of Christ. As she "wets a washcloth and holding it above his ankles squeezes the water onto him" it is a

reference to Christ who received similar treatment from a female 'sinner' who "stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (Luke 8:38).

The display of symbolism continues with the allusion to Christ's 'last supper' when the Italian thief Caravaggio tears off a section of bread and Hana supplies "the carafe of wine" procured from monks. Ondaatje adopts the idea of the Resurrection and its concomitant imagery using a variety of methods and characters. When Kip climbs down the well and "closed the lid over himself", it is comparable to Christ's entombment, and when "He came out of the well" it clearly depicts Resurrection. The time between the Resurrection and the Ascension is said to be forty days which is also the name of a road Almsy travels with the Bedouins. During the course of his work, when Kip flies to Naples with his twelve fellow sappers, they become "the city of twelve," 'the twelve' being a biblical expression employed by Gospel writers. Although Kip's faith is that of a Sikh, he is seen as a harbinger of the Christian apocalypse for while he does not adhere to Christianity, he is fascinated with Christian religious artwork and drawn to statues of Christian holy figures. During the daytime he imperils his life by defusing dangerous, complicated bombs and at night he takes refuge in "the coldness of a captured church and found a statue for the night to be his sentinel." Ondaatje constructs a panoramic religious framework with widespread mythical significance.

The author is also influenced by the profound biblical imagery of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* which is an extensive elaboration of Christian myth, seen when Almasy catalogues the different existing sandstorms in a scene similar to Milton's extensive identification of demons. Satan (Almasy) infects Eve's (Katherine's) dreams seen when she awakes frightened next to her husband exactly as Eve awakes with a start next to Adam. Thus, all the events in the novel are indicative of a higher order than that experienced by the inhabitants of the villa.

An important and recurring symbol in the novel is the 'Italian Villa' housing the protagonists. The Villa corresponds to the desert without boundaries where people from different nations come together seen in the convergence of the protagonists of disparate nationalities. Their lives are as dry as the arid terrain for each character is searching for the elixir of life. The villa's dilapidated condition due to the war is symbolic of death and rebirth. When Hana attempts to plant beans in one corner of the wild garden without fear of being killed by unexploded mines, it shows her newfound zeal in life, "In spite of the burned earth... light." Such an image not only mirrors the spiritual rebirth of the villa's inhabitants, but also their symbolic brotherhood in the war-ravaged world.

Ondaatje endows the 'desert' in the novel with great symbolic significance and is imperative to the development of the plot. The desert parallels with the English patient's identity for it is vast and ever changing with the wind, encompassing various aspects which cannot be easily mapped. Almasy develops his hate for nations in the desert and it becomes his favourite place since it is inhabited by a

few people making it 'nationless' for it has no boundaries and people can be free. The abundant desert imagery of the Old Testament shows that the desert was undeniably 'a place of faith' as seen in the case of the historical Israelites. When Almasy crashes in the desert sands, members of a nomadic Bedouin tribe, suggestive of the children of Israel, administer healing oils to save his life. In a time of extreme emotional stress Almasy says that "it is important to die in holy places. That was one of the secrets of the desert." The desert is thus portrayed not only as a barren place but also as a space that transforms lives. Not only the landscape, but even works of art too contribute to the play of symbolism in the novel.

The great literary and graphic works of art of Western civilization along with legendary people also help the narrative to serve as mirrors in which the characters understand themselves and their inter-relationships. Ondaatje associates Caravaggio's painting of *David with the Head of Goliath* with the Italian-Canadian thief who has the unlikely name of David Caravaggio and who had been captured and mutilated by a man named Ranuccio Tommasoni. This detail is important for it was the same name of the man for whose murder the historical Caravaggio was in hiding under a death sentence at the time he painted the famous *David with the Head of Goliath*. The walls of the upstairs bedrooms are painted with crumbling frescoes showing gardens with trees and fountains, and even the building evokes the Italian Renaissance of the Medicis. The entire novel is thus saturated with references to churches, monasteries, and nunneries.

However, Ondaatje's use of the intricate religious structure is 'imagistic,' and in *The English Patient*, symbolism is an important aspect to provide a better understanding of the issues such as destruction, identity, escape, unity, and love. Although the characters are not always Christian, their engagements of religious issues combine with the unending reproduction of Christian mythology. The recurring symbols and imagery of Fire, Desert, Water and Wind are skillfully linked to the characters to help in the understanding of the text, and are crucial

to the structure and development of the plot. The novel is thus a mesmerizing work of fiction that is simultaneously mysterious, poetic, spiritual and romantic. Postmodern fiction tends to borrow concepts and ideas, as well as icons and symbols from the Bible and other religious works and Ondaatje is a typical postmodern writer who has demonstrated this in his award winning novel. His fiction has been highly acclaimed for its spellbinding narrative inventiveness and its richness of imagery and symbolism.

THE CORPORATE CHAOS

K.V.V. Subrahmanyam*

When the great world spins forever
Down the ringing grooves of change,
To own one's errors, one will never never,
Through life's undulating sojourn and tilting
range;
Yet we have buttery and bitter things to savour.
The art of life is not static but constant change,
However much one may feign to be gullible
and clever.
The markets burst with packaged foods,
To tickle the palate, with eye catching ads,
To dump on the ignorantia readymade goods,
With slogan of 'buy one take two' and such
fads.

The small shopkeeper is given a disdainful
look,
He no longer figures in the buyer's list,
He has to retreat into a cranny and nook,
Shrouded in dust, filth and muddy mist.
The corporate world tells winners take all,
In many an air conditioned and well decked
mall,
Despite stock markets signals of rise and fall,
Thrust down the consumer's throat both bat
and ball,
For the cynic and the antiquarian, its all
wormwood and gall,
Alas! We endeavour amidst chaos to stand
firm and tall.

* I.P.S (Retd.), Former Secretary, Home Dept. Govt.
of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad

The difference between school and life? In school, you're taught a lesson and then given a test. In life, you're given a test that teaches you a lesson.

Tom Bodett

NORTHERN AFRICA AND THE MAGHRETS (from Unwinding Threads by African Women Writers.)

S.K. Mangammal Chari*

Charlette H. Bruner opines North African fiction is different in setting and so it is often ignored in the collection of African literature. 'Maghret' literally means the setting sun. This stands for Muslim dominated culture which extends from West to North Africa and East into Middle East.

Women writers in these areas are less known in Europe and America. Women's position in these countries was discussed at the United Nations Decade of Women Conference. Only recently North African women's writings have become accessible to Westerners. A few women are raising their voice through their writings, some in French and more in Arabic. In the Fifties Alber Memi of Tunisia, Mohammed Dib of Algeria and a few men from Morocco, portrayed the peasant stock, ignorant of the facts of the changes brought by war and migration. Though these men writers showed sympathy while portraying, they were mainly about individual women and local problems.

A few women settled in French speaking areas in North Africa could publish their writings in their known language while Iraqi and Algerian writers deal with conditions of women at the biological survival level; the writers from Egypt and Lebanon, were concerned with the problem of upward

socioeconomic and educational mobility. A few Egyptian women had shown their protest against the inequality of women.

In some Muslim areas in the Middle East, new constraints were imposed upon women writers. They were secluded and were silenced by the Arab World. But in Maghreb region the status of women is as narrators and singers of folklore. In spite of the men's domination women remain the transmitters of historical values and of art. Fadham Amroche based her novels on the Kabyle culture of her family background by combining French novel- Format with the traditional pattern of her North African heritage.

Southern Africa

During the 1980s it was difficult for any creative writers and artists to find an audience. The male writers were in exile. Under the apartheid threats of harassment, censorship, house arrests and imprisonment, it was impossible for them to even think of writing fiction or poems. Dennis Brutus had to write at *Robben Island - Prison* on toilet papers under pseudo names.

Limited education and malnutrition were other causes for blacks to live in separation which added to their woes. Many Black Women suffered due to subjugation in domestic service and scarcity of funds. Rarely any women wrote. But several women like

* Writer, Hubsiguda, Hyderabad

Miriam Tlale of Soweto have published poems, short stories and articles. Though Mirium's first story was banned, criticism of Amelia House appeared in print. Olive Shriener, at the beginning of the 20th century raised her voice from South Africa, impressing women in UK and USA on women's rights. Her short stories named '*dramas*' reflect her religious upbringing and stress on women's need to work, to create freely.

Doris Lessing's stories mirror the inequality of the society. The later novels known for her understanding of women's issues, got international recognition. As a critic Nadir Gardiner is an advocate for the black

writers of her society for their oppression and the inhuman treatment meted out to them.

Besie Head, in her fiction, reveals her own sufferings as a coloured South African, shunned and driven away from her country deprived of hearing but teaching and learning. Her sketches of Botswana village women became popular.

Other South African women writers gradually gained ground after facing obstacles and frustration to express their views. Their outcry is worth hearing. Finally it brought Independence to South Africa in 1994 when Mandela became the President.

A SIMPLE, EXEMPLARY CHIEF MINISTER

Manohar Palikar, Chief Minister of Goa leads a simple life. He does not like pomp of power and panoply. He likes to live like a common man. When the Chief Minister goes out there won't be convoy of cars causing inconvenience to the public. He uses one big car only because he had to travel in mining area where there will be traffic of lorries and other heavy vehicles which may cause problems to a small car. Even that car was given by government to him when he was leader of opposition.

He lives and attends to his official duties in his own house, not in imposing official

palace-like accommodation with lavish furniture and other symbols of laziness. He has no security officers. He did not do any harm to any one.

When he enters his office he will turn on the lights and fans himself. No need for the attender to do this. When he goes out he will switch off the lights and fans.

He does such things not merely to observe economy but as a way of life.

If all Ministers and officers lead a simple life and avoid luxurious living the country will progress quickly.

THE BENT HEADS

S. Ramanath*

During the reign of King Charles I of England there were a class of people/soldiers who were called the "Round Heads". They were so called because they shaved their heads round around the forehead and supported parliament during the Civil War. There were restrictions placed on them by the monarchy. There were curbs imposed on their movements and they were even supposed to retire to bed at a particular time and a bell was rung to indicate the time. They were the butt of all jokes of the royalists and were despised and hated. The word 'round head' was used as term of abuse.

I wrote this article while travelling by the Janmahoomi Express from Vizag to Hyderabad. The train is a day express and I was sitting in the A/C chair car watching and listening to the present day bent heads, i.e. the present day cell phone users. Unlike the round heads of England the present day bent heads are a loved lot; anyone who is not a bent head is considered to be an ancient. I tried to narrate in this article what I saw and my observations during the train journey.

A lady sitting in the row next to mine with a child on her lap was talking animatedly with her head bent sideways on the cell phone. An elderly gentleman in a similar posture was looking outside the window perhaps talking to his family (don't know whether he was

talking about the greenery outside or discussing his kin's marriage proposal). A person sitting behind, whom I could not see was talking loud enough to be heard at the end of the world spelling out all his health problems in a queer mixture of Hindi, English and Telugu. There were many others both young and old either with their heads bent sideways talking or bent forward sending SMS's or checking mail. Everyone of them had a cell phone glued to the ear.

The present day bent heads are not the victims of discrimination nor are they followers of any particular ideology but a product of advancement of technology and science. Their aim is to convey, converse and continue chatting through the medium of Cell phone. The users have no restrictions placed on the usage except while driving, even there the rule is followed in default since the law makers themselves are found guilty many a time. It boils down to the fact that a person like me is one whose use of the cell phone is limited to making essential and emergent calls or receiving them. One who advocates the restricted use of the cell phone is considered to be a cynic not able to appreciate and enjoy the use of the modern day gadget.

Predictably a day may come when the future generations following the use and disuse theory would be born with bent heads and a child born with normal features would be considered physically challenged.

* Chartered Accountant, Hyderabad

Lastly I saw a mother to be, talking on the cell. When the train almost reached Secunderabad, she looked up and smiled at me. I asked her whether she was expecting a boy or a girl. She replied whether it was going to be a boy or a girl she would accept it as God's gift. My only prayer to God is "Like Karna let my child be born with a cell phone clinging to its ear". Hearing this I started telling

her about the ill effects of constant use of the cell phone, and while doing this my phone rang. It was my wife asking me whether I reached Secunderabad. The mother to be who observed this, had the last say. She got down with the remark "Physician Heal thyself". Written with due apologies to all users of cellular phones.

THE INDIVIDUAL - MAN

Bhavana S. Chari *

Man is a social animal; he "who lives in isolation is either a god or a beast,"
So says the sociological dictum concerning human kind;
Which marks an individual as a unique species of his own clan!

Ever since man appeared on the face of the earth,
Procreating the species of his own genre and tribe;
Perpetuating in numbers, the human beings,
Named after "homo sapiens" who had head to use and mind to guide!

The individual, the person, the chief, the man
Who, having an instinct distinct from the rest of his kind
Procreating by huge numbers and gaining by strength
With inter-personal relationships becoming strange and redundant!

As G.B. Shaw well proclaimed
"The proper study of mankind is man."

* Poet, Satna, Madhya Pradesh

The intense capability with which he created machines,
To make life easier for him and his kind!

"Humanity," is rather the broader perspective of man;
Comprising human thought and intellect, positive
To dump his wiles and wicked guiles to undermine
Making good efforts for the betterment of mankind!

Are they not 'brothers', who toil under the hot sun?
Earning petty wages to hard labour in return;
Drowned in debt and struggling to nurture the young;
With a piece-meal a day and no matter to call his own?

Codes of conduct are fast receding;
As it is said paupers cannot be choosers
With ethics disappearing and no sense of belonging
The quotation "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride," justifying.

TAGORE'S PORTRAYAL OF A WOMAN IN 'A WIFE'S LETTER'

Tata Prasanna*

Now, 150 years since Tagore's birth, it is important to ask in what ways he is still relevant to a global audience. In the early 20th century, when Tagore achieved literary stardom, a Nobel Prize and a Knighthood (which he returned in 1919, in protest at the Amritsar massacre), it was primarily through his poetry and spiritualism. Today, it is the short stories that make him enduringly germane. In particular in Tagore's hands women are complex, misunderstood characters who fall and fail under the heavy hand of tradition. Their sensibilities are thoroughly common, even as they strain under the triple weight of poverty, patriarchy and colonialism. As India evolves from a traditional to a modern society, Indian women still face the challenges of living and working in a patriarchal system

Tagore portrayed modern women in his short stories. These women had started to fashion their individuality and to assert their independent ideas. Rabindranath understood the need for change from age-old belief systems. He contributed to the development of the 'modern women' through short stories *Nashtoneer*, *Stree Patra*, *Aparichita*, *Badnaam* and laboratory, as well as in powerful poems such as *Sabala* (The strong woman in Mahua, 1929) and *Mukti* (Freedom, in Palataka, 1918). In *Stree Patra*, (A wife's letter) Mrinal left her husband and his family to protest against the injustice they had

committed against another woman. Having left home, facing the unfamiliar world, she discovered herself and her potential. In *Aparichita*, Kalayani protested against racial humilitation and decided to decline offers of marriage. Thus Rabindranath gave women both the space and the individuality to express their considered views on love, particularly control over women, relationships between men and women within and without marriage and decision making power. He was, as it were, moving towards the creation of Mrinal of his story, *A Wife's Letter*.

A Wife's Letter is, not surprisingly, in the form of a letter from a wife, in this case a minor second wife, to her husband, addressed as "To Thine Auspicious Lotus-Feet". The wife opens the letter by saying in fifteen years of marriage she has never written a letter to her husband even though they have shared many confidences. The wife is deeply religious. She is the true representative of the new emerging class of emancipated women of the early twentieth century.

A Wife's Letter

To Thine Auspicious Lotus-Feet:

Today we have been married fifteen years, yet not until today have I written you a letter. I've always been close by your side. You've heard many things from me, and so have I from you, but we haven't had space enough to write a letter.

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Now I'm in Puri on a holy journey, and you are wrapped up in your office work. Your relationship to Calcutta is a snail's to its shell, the city is stuck fast to you, body and soul. So you didn't apply for leave. It was the Lord's desire, and so was his granting me my leave application.

I am Mejou-Bou, the second bride in your joint family. Today, fifteen years later, standing at the edge of the ocean, I understand that I also have other relationships, with the world and the world-keeper.

It is almost as if her acceptance of her role as second wife is so deep within her psyche that she almost sees her relationship with the world-keeper (an expression I like a lot) as a form of infidelity.

Her husband's first wife was considered quite plain, so plain his mother insisted that he redeem the family name by taking a beautiful second wife. Mejo-Bou is considered incredibly beautiful by all, even by the envious other women of the household. She never has any sense of her own beauty. These lines are heartbreaking:

Long ago, in my childhood days in the days when my preordained marriage to you was known only to the omniscient One who writes our fates on our foreheads, my brother and I both came down with typhoid fever. My brother died; I survived. All the neighborhood girls said, "Mrinal's a girl, that's why she lived. If she'd been a boy, she couldn't have been saved." Jom-Raj is wise in his deadly robbery: he only takes things of value.

Even death does not want a young girl.

As she writes the letter she is alone on a religious pilgrimage. Her husband is so devoted to his work that he cannot leave Calcutta. She talks about how lonely she was when she first went to the house of her husband. (She was 12, the first wife was 27 and not really happy about this new arrival!). For a long time her only friends are three cows.

The wife has a curse, she is intelligent.

But you were reminded, every step of the way that I also had intelligence. This intelligence must have lain deep within me, for it lingered in spite of the many years I spent merely keeping house for you. My mother was always very troubled by my intelligence; for a woman it's an affliction. If she, whose life is guided by boundaries, seeks a life guided by intelligence, she'll run into so many walls that she'll shatter her forehead and her future. But what could I do? The intellect that the other wives in the house lacked, the Lord in a careless moment had bestowed upon me; now whom could I return the excess to? Every day you all rebuked me; precocious, impertinent girl! A bitter remark is the consolation of the inept; I forgive all your remarks.

To quote once more, there is so much beauty and depth in this story.

My daughter was born and died. She called to me, too, to go with her. If she had lived, she would have brought all that was wonderful, all that was large, into my

life; from Mejo-Bou I would have become mother. And a mother, even confined to one narrow world is of the universe. I had the grief of becoming a mother, but not the freedom.

On one hand Tagore described the unequal social structure that oppresses women, on another he portrayed women protagonists in his works who challenge tradition to find solution or to bring revolutionary change in the society through

thought provoking realistic and idealistic ideas.

It is just not his time that was reflected in his writings; the farsighted "Prophet" gave a new shape and direction to his time. His message was that discriminatory treatment of women had existed, complacently in our society, for ages. Men must accept the responsibility for sustaining this discriminatory practice of the past. Women should become bold enough to sustain their individuality, independence and identity.

PEACE OF MIND

Once Buddha was walking from one town to another town with a few of his followers. This was in the initial days. While they were travelling, they happened to pass a lake. They stopped there and Buddha told one of his disciples, "I am thirsty. Do get me some water from that lake there."

The disciple walked up to the lake. When he reached it, he noticed that some people were washing clothes in the water and, right at that moment, a bullock cart started crossing through the lake. As a result, the water became very muddy, very turbid. The disciple thought, "How can I give this muddy water to Buddha to drink!" So he came back and told Buddha, "The water in there is very muddy. I don't think it is fit to drink."

After about half an hour, again Buddha asked the same disciple to go back to the lake and get him some water to drink. The disciple obediently went back to the lake. This time he found that the lake had absolutely clear

water in it. The mud had settled down and the water above it looked fit to be had. So he collected some water in a pot and brought it to Buddha.

Buddha looked at the water, and then he looked up at the disciple and said, "See what you did to make the water clean. You let it be ... and the mud settled down on its own – and you got clear water... Your mind is also like that. When it is disturbed, just let it be. Give it a little time. It will settle down on its own. You don't have to put in any effort to calm it down. It will happen. It is effortless."

What did Buddha emphasize here? He said, "It is effortless." Having 'peace of mind' is not a strenuous job; it is an effortless process. When there is peace inside you, that peace permeates to the outside. It spreads around you and in the environment, such that people around start feeling that peace and grace.

Source: Internet

GIRISH KARNAD'S *YAYATI* AS AN EXISTENTIAL TEXT

Dr. L.V. Padmarani Rao*

Existentialism is the most exciting movement in contemporary Philosophy that originates from the works of the Danish thinker, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), and later on appears in different forms with different emphasis in the writings of many thinkers such as Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, Jean Paul Sartre and others.

Existentialism believes in the over-emphasis on the irrational freedom and tries to find out a middle course between Idealism and Realism. The existential philosophy can be lived here and now in this world of reality. In the following words Søren Kierkegaard, in the letter to Peter Wilhelm Lund dated August 31, 1835 writes about existentialism: The thing is to understand myself, to see what God really wishes me to do: the thing is to find a truth which is true for me, to find the idea for which I can live and die. ...

Girish Karnad's *Yayati*:

As Tutun Mukherji (2008) says, 'wherever we turn in the world we find theatre'.

Girish Karnad's plays are at once both social and aesthetic. Born in 1938 in Matheron, Maharashtra, Karnad is one of India's finest creative writers, acclaimed internationally as a playwright, poet, translator and critic. Film and theatre actor-director,

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Karnad is a contemporary multifaceted creative and critical artist who combines the traditional Yakshagana with the modern theatre in his plays. His stories are from ancient Indian mythology but with a modern or rather postmodern touch.

Yayati (1960) is the first play by Karnad written in Kannada, later translated into English by the writer himself in 2008. The story of King Yayati is from the '*Adiparva*' of Mahabharata. At the prime of his life, the king is cursed with senility because of a moral transgression. Concerned only with himself, he pleads with his sons to exchange their youth with him and only the youngest son Pooru agrees. Pooru takes upon himself the curse of his father and becomes older than his father.

The play is a wonderful presentation of the existential dilemma by the use of the myth of Yayati to present the modern life. Rejecting the western Realism and the Shavian Socialism, Karnad has evolved his own idiom of combining myth and social reform and thereby used theatre as the instrument of social change. According to the mythological tale of Yayati from *Mahabharata*, Yayati was a Puranic king and the son of king Nahusha. He was a great scholar of Vedas.

The Puranic story:

Kacha was the eldest son of Brahaspathi, who was the son of Angeeras. He was an extremely handsome boy. His

father was the *Guru* (teacher) of all *Devas*. When he was a young lad, the fight between *Devas* and *Asuras* was continuing. *Devas* had a complaint that Shukra the *Guru* of *Asuras* was protecting the *Asuras* in a better way. Shukra had got the knowledge of Maha Mruthyunjaya Mantram from Lord Shiva and he was using it to bring to life all dead *Asuras*. The *Devas* also wanted to learn that *mantra*. Kacha volunteered to help them.

So the *Asuras* kill Kacha twice but each time he is brought back to life by Shukra on the pleadings of his daughter Devayani. The third time the *Asuras* kill Kacha, burn his body and mix his ashes in the alcoholic drink of their guru. This time also Shukra chants the *Mrutyunjaya Mantra* and Kacha comes back to life in his guru's stomach. Now Shukra teaches the mantra to Kacha. He comes out of his *guru's* stomach and brings back his guru to life by chanting the mantra. Later Kacha teaches the *mantra* to his people.

Sharmishta, the daughter of the *Asura* king Vrushaparva humiliates Devayani, the daughter of Shukra. Shukra threatens to leave the kingdom but would stay back if Sharmishta agrees to be his daughter's slave as desired by her. Later Devayani meets Yayati in a forest and they are married. She has a son by Yayati. Sharmishta follows Devayani as her slave to the kingdom of Yayati. Shukra warns the king not to touch Sharmishta. But Sharmishta manages to seduce Yayati and has three sons by him. The youngest is called Pooru. Shukra learns of this development from his daughter and curses Yayati to lose his youth and become old. He tells Yayati that he would get back his youth if any young man was willing to take on his old age. Pooru, his third son by Sharmishta,

agrees to do so and Yayati gets back his youth, rules the kingdom for hundred years and gives back his youth to Pooru who succeeds to his father's kingdom.

Karnad's Yayati:

In Karnad's play, Yayati is already married to Devayani and it opens to show the anticipation of Pooru's return home with his newly wed wife Chitrlekha. Karnad introduced the characters of Pooru's wife, Chitrlekha and Swarnalatha, the maid of Devayani to give a contemporary touch of existentialism to the myth. Infact Pooru was the youngest son of Sharmishta, but in the play Pooru is the son of a *Rakshsa* woman, who with the idea to take revenge on the Aryans for destroying her home and hearth, marries Yayati, so that the crown prince of the *Bharatas* had *rakshasa* blood in him and the *Aryans* would be ruled by a mongrel, a half-caste.

The play has a well-knit plot with four Acts. Whereas the first two Acts have Yayati, Devayani and Sharmishta trilogy dominating, the third and fourth Acts have Pooru, Chitrlekha and Yayati trilogy dominating. In both situations, it is Swarnalatha who remains calm and tries to support and give proper advice to all.

In spite of the fact that Swarnalatha warns Devayani about Sharmishta that she is 'Satanic and poisonous and has the ability to cut close to the bone' (08) and so should be sent away from the palace, it is Devayani who overlooks the issue by saying, 'Enough. You don't need to tell me about her. I have known her for years.'

The cause of war between Sharmishta and Devayani is the issue of class. Sharmishta is the daughter of the *Asura* king while Devayani is the daughter of the *Brahmin* Sage. Again and again, Sharmishta taunts Devayani for having married Yayati by telling the king that she was the daughter of Shukracharya, the sage with the possession of the *Sanjeevani mantra* and as the king had the ambition to become immortal, immediately married her.

With the entry of Pooru and Chitrlekha in the palace, the focus of action shifts to Pooru, who is more philosophical and spiritual for his age. He is not excited about his own marriage and tells his enthusiastic father that the marriage has been fixed for Chitrlekha with a *Bharata* prince.

'.....But it had been decided long in advance that she (Chitrlekha) would marry the Bharata prince.....Actually, they didn't need me. They needed some male figure from this palace. A door keeper's statue would have done just as well.'

Pooru's disinterest in the marriage and the state affairs is quite seen in his words, 'I just want to go somewhere where I can sit quietly and ask myself questions. Not seek answers. Ask questions myself. I should be quite content if I find the right question, just one.' One of the major reasons in Pooru's stoicism is his mongrel origin, which he himself was not aware of. When he comes to know of these facts from Yayati, Pooru is even more distressed. 'But why didn't you tell me before?..... You didn't mind destroying my life for the sake of a lie?'

This fact added to Pooru's philosophical attitude for accepting the old age of Yayati that came as a curse from Shukracharya for offending his daughter, Devayani because of the Yayati-Sharmishta marriage. Yayati wonders at the curse and cries not to have old age yet. 'Old age! Decrepitude! By night fall! And then?' This is the real existential problem of Yayati. He wanted to take the curse but after a few years for which he eagerly searches and asks every one in his country to take the old age on his behalf. This very zest for life and living is the expression of existentialism in Yayati. It is clear that Yayati of all the characters in the play exerts his will upon which the rest of the characters become puppets acting accordingly. Critics have commented upon this feature as the existential burden borne by Yayati because he exercises his choice about his course of action. That's why Yayati helplessly goes away from the room when Pooru announces to accept the old age and decrepitude of his father. It is Sharmishta who aggressively tries to stop this unnatural happening, but with no result.

Girish Karnad made the character of Chitrlekha very strong and she dominates the entire last Act. She wanted to be very close with her husband. But such bold princess who loves Pooru now could not bear to see him with decrepitude. She shouts at Pooru asking him to go out immediately. In order to reduce the pain of Chitrlekha, Swarnalatha decides to narrate her own sad story with her husband.

Karnad's Chitrlekha is very bold and decisive and so exercises her right as the daughter-in-law of *Bharata* dynasty.

It is this assertive existential question of Chitrlekha that puts Yayati in an awkward retrospection. Before he could react, Chitrlekha takes out the vial of poison and swallows the deadly poison. In this melodrama of existential emphasis of Yayati, the possessive and impulsive Devayani breaks her house in anger; the innocent and beautiful Chitrlekha dies in youth; and the humble and good maid, Swarnalatha becomes mad.

Yayati realises his predicament and cries that 'I thought there were two options- life and death. No, it is living and dying we have to choose between. And you have shown me that dying can go on for all eternity. Yayati embraces Pooru to get back his old age and decrepitude and Pooru becomes young again. Looking at the dead body of Chitrlekha, Pooru mourns for bringing her there to die.

There are a number of other questions related to the play. Did Pooru's old age bring him wisdom? What is the poetic justice in Chitrlekha's death? How did Devayani and Yayati or Sharmishta benefit?

Existentialists are concerned about man with authentic freedom with his fellow beings. In this sense, it may be said that it considers feeling as primary, especially the human feeling in solving the problems of life. This is absolutely true in the case of Yayati, Devayani, Sharmishta, Pooru and Chitrlekha. The same is true even in the minor but strong character like Swarnalatha.

Existence of God is to be grasped existentially and man's actions are in

accordance with this belief. Man is responsible only to do according to His command. Pooru's question in the end is the best example of existentialism in the Theist way. The Sartrean Atheist doctrine of freedom maintains that the human being is free in all situations. **Man is as what man makes of himself.** Through out the play, one observes that every character acts according to his/her will. The bold step of Yayati to marry Sharmishta, the depression of Devayani, the curse of Shukracharya, the acceptance of old age by Pooru, the gulping of poison by Chitrlekha and even the willing acceptance of the uneventful guilt by Swarnalatha are according to the will and decision of the respective characters.

The Yayati-Devayani relationship is not based on love but on conditions and domination of Devayani and under the fear of Shukracharya's curse. The Yayati-Sharmishta relationship is based on the intrigue plotted by Sharmishta to humiliate Devayani. The Pooru-Chitrlekha relationship is more or less a contract while Swarnalatha- charioteer (her husband) is based on suspicion and fear.

Thus in the re-writing of the Mahabharata myth of *Yayati*, Karnad's attempt was to emphasise the calm acceptance of grief and anguish. Karnad's skill as a playwright lies in the excellent picturisation of Chitrlekha. Surprisingly, all characters in the play try to evade the consequences of their actions, except Sharmishta and Chitrlekha. But all the characters in the play are victimised by the existential exercises of Yayati.

FACILITY OF PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR FACILITY OF EXPRESSION IN ENGLISH

VVLNS Prasad *

Facility as I view in the present context, is much more than mere availability; it is rather a positive maneuverability. A committed teacher of English today finds his task of arming the student with the necessary skills of communication Herculean or even daunting due to several factors. Despite my reluctance to repeat the cliché of the students hailing from social or/and rural background, I am compelled to admit this as one of them. This is something one cannot do much about, but live with. Till sometime ago, not much of motivation or incentive was found to offset the students' fear for and reluctance towards English. This affected the enthusiastic teacher to some extent. The time-worn methods of teaching exclusively to see the student come out unscathed, not necessarily enriched, coupled with ill-equipped teachers on occasions, failed to pay dividends. Even the Refresher courses for teachers, the wished for Panacea, have failed to diagnose the malady and answer it. The basic problems of the learner, in addition to the socio-economic background, are strict confinement to textbook and lack of motivation. Now that the doors are wide open for the learners for better employment opportunities, the need for revising the priorities, suitable techniques to be employed and also the handy sources to be tapped has acquired urgency.

The text, aptly felt as only a pretext, ought to be augmented with something more.

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And that can also be Print and/or Electronic media. The students, mostly the first generation learners, hailing from a background of deficiency or deprivation, may not have access to such media. However, for the genuinely enthusiastic and resourceful teacher, this should not pose any problem. As Telugu poet Sri Sri for whom the sorrow of the world is his, opines that "a pup, a matchstick or even a soap cake can be the subject matter of poetry." Likewise, anything and everything can augment and support, though not substitute the text. That anything can be anything from advertisement to editorial in Print or any programme pertaining to Electronic media.

Judicious and frequent use of such material is sure to yield results. For this, the teacher needs to be competent and innovative. I have absolutely no hesitation to say that in such case even the tongue-tied and/or the Mimosas shall definitely respond positively.

As for my own experience, I could successfully attempt teaching of two types of sentences very much useful in daily communication, Interrogative and Exclamatory, by referring to a conversation between Prakash Raj and Sunil in the Telugu movie, *Nuvvostanante Nenoddantana*. This I executed through translation method. Of course, I refuse to toe/buy the line of certain conformists, who hold translation method a taboo and refuse to touch it even with a barge pole.

It is observed that watching of programmes like Popeye show in English as well as Indian languages helped learners in learning the respective language and related skills successfully. Their learning of both phonetic and grammatical aspects of the same has been impressive. Many years ago, a senior reporter of The Indian Express, that served The Hindu subsequently, was said to have conveyed the news of "Bone-marrow transplantation," with an impressive caption, "Towards a better marrow." The impact of a caption of such depth and emphasis on the readers, is anybody's guess.

In the case of advertisements, let me quote the one pertaining to Ritz car, 'One car, many moments', wherein Deepak, the user says 'Adrenaline rush at Rohtang was my Ritz Moment.' This, for sure, would add to the learner's vocabulary with a word like Adrenaline.

As for Onida T.V., the advertisement says that it is "Neighbours' envy, Owner's pride". The pithy expression in Baconian style, has vented lots more. It is also said that the horned devil in the advertisement demands some work, driving home the idea about the quality and durability of the T.V. that rendered any repairs unthinkable, leave alone warranted. The advertisement of Siemens says, 'The world of tomorrow needs answers that last.' 'Hope begins in the dark. Be aware. Fight Lymphoma,' appears on the health supplement, Plus, available with the 25th September, 2011 issue of *The Week*. Sri Aravinda Rao, former D.G.P. of A.P., in his article titled 'The Endangered Species' under Culture Conundrum, believes that 'Ritual can hold a person so long as he is faithful, but when

a ritual or practice is questioned it is the *shastra* which comes to rescue for giving a meaningful interpretation.' While reviewing, 'Why Bureaucracy Fails' by Kalyan Ray, M.V. Kamath quotes that 'Lack of safeguards for bureaucratic independence led bureaucrats to become adjuncts to the political system, compelling them to become subservient to politicians and accepting a secondary role under them.' This speaks of the sorry state of affairs prevailing.

Even the film-reviews in either of the media have proved to help the learners acquire good skills of effective presentation. My own experience in this regard has been fruitful. Letters to the editor section of English newspapers and magazines, with letters from the ones like K. Kumarasekhar from Eluru in yesteryears, has been an excellent source for learning the nuances of English language. In the present scenario also, the role of this section in furthering the language proficiency of the learners cannot be undermined.

Sports section, both in the print and audio-visual media, has been an excellent source for learning various facets of English language and its multifold communication. Sports contributors like R. Mohan, Nirmal Sekhar, Rajan Bala, Narotham Puri, Charu Sharma, and Harsha Bhogle are only a few that have effectively contributed to the knowledge of both games and sports, and also furtively to English language skills of the audience. Usage of words like *Swashbuckling*, *Tornado*, *asinine* shall doubtless enrich the learner's repertoire. R. Mohan, while describing the performance of the Indians in the recent Republic Day cricket test against Australia at Adelaide,

expresses the Indian cricket lovers' anguish in the choicest expletives. Rahul Dravid, for him 'seems to invent ways to get bowled.' 'On the latest occasion his right elbow guiding the leather missile into the stumps to bring about the dreaded death rattle.' For the enigmatic Sehwag though, Mohan reserved 'the man with the quixotic touch in finding newer and newer ways of dalliance with the new ball.' It must have been noted that I have been selfish in confining to only Indians in my list, but I feel instead privileged to do so. However, I shall be failing in my duty if I don't refer to my favourite Sardar in this regard. It's none other than the irrepressible Navjot Singh Sidhu with his impeccable English and superb modulation. It's not for nothing that I hold him in high esteem for his remarkable one-liners that acquired the title Sidhuisms. They have even invited Pidhuisms parodising them. Let me share a few examples of his brilliance with you on this occasion:

- It is choice, not chance that determines destiny.
- It's better to prevent and prepare than to repent and repair.
- Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.
- Success is not built on success. It's built on failure. It's built on frustration. Sometimes it's built on catastrophe.
- Success is the fruit of concentration.
- Talent is nothing if it's not controlled, harnessed and disciplined.
- The best future is to create it
- To achieve, you have to believe.
- When nothing you do matters, the only thing that matters is what you do.

Another person that comes to my

mind in this connection is Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev. Without any concern to one's religious faith, I find Jaggi Vasudev an excellent communicator in English and hence I refer to a few of his expressions on electronic media.

Life is far beyond meaning, Life is beyond meaning and that's why it is so beautiful .

You can be deeply involved with everything, but still not be identified with any more anarchy.

As quoted in Sunday Hans of 15th January, 2012, Jaggi Vasudev says, 'You do not stay in a family because of duty; you stay in a family because there is a certain love connection.' He also says that 'Unless people learn to enjoy each other's differences, people cannot stay together. Depending on how fast you are growing, you will fall apart in years, months or days.'

The newspaper clippings that cover scientific or cultural news items, advertisements, cooking recipes, and horoscopes, can be used as authentic material for teaching English for learner of any level. Same can be said of different genres finding opportunity via the electronic media. **They may not serve as the basic instructional material but can be more supportive in creating a learning atmosphere.** They are neither forbiddingly costly nor beyond our reach, more so in present times of technological advancement of numerous hues. I can't help remembering John Milton's 'They also serve who only stand and wait,' when I think of those contributors, whose

contributions I could not acknowledge because of certain inescapable compulsions.

Such authentic materials quite often will be more practicable, when compared to the traditional teaching materials. Using news items in the classroom can be a getaway for the teachers as well as the taught from the traditional monotony. It also becomes a novel experience for both the teacher, who is fond of experimenting in language teaching, and the taught. In fact, the learners are very much thrilled, when the boring-one-way method is replaced with amusing as well as zealous ways of material presentation in the classroom.

On the whole, with a limited effort but serious concern for the standard of the target

group tempered with an innovative temperament, the teacher of English can obviously fulfill his mission of equipping the learner with the aspects of effective communication in English.

It is in the fitness of things for me to conclude by invoking the name of Girisham from the time-tested Telugu magnum opus, *Kanyasulkam*, which survived all vagaries for more than a century. He, bubbling with an untiring confidence, declares that talking to him is an education in itself. As a teacher, whose clan is a symbol of optimism next to only that of a farmer, I look forward to such a day for all the teachers of English, when they succeed to succeed in turning out to be 'the' and not 'a' source of education for the learners. That day cannot keep us waiting for long.

THE PRIMAL CONSCIOUSNESS

RMV Raghavendra Rao*

The sights of the world are appalling,
Defying my grasp, binding it in deadly clasps.
The best and happiest are covered
with cataract,
With layers inoperable by any surgical act.
As I open my insight into the streets,
My feet are immobilized by the men I meet,
Their faces marked with misery and woe.
As I meet automobiles on hire,
Their flat rates set me on fire.
At gas stations the sky-soaring rates,
Present a sight of faces
fearing their future fates.
At midnight the streets overflow

with "insolence and wine",
The asphalt ripped as crime's landmine.
Unshackling my primal consciousness
from this cruel convention,
I invoke the Muse of sublime invention.
And, in the coy red rose
nodding to the passing kiss of the
wayward breeze,
In the tears to instant smiles of a
just-chided child,
In the yearning mother's ecstatic embrace
Of her triumphantly returning soldier-son,
I find coy beauty, divine innocence, and
motherly love beyond all strife,
Envision in the encircling gloom
the eternal affirmation of life.

* Retd. Prof. Camp: Houston, Texas, USA

INCIDENTS TO REMEMBER

Dr. Laxman Palsikar *

I think busts and statues on high pedestals might have been seen and observed by countless persons around the world of those great who have sacrificed their lives for liberation of the country like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Veer Savarkar, but I think very few might have read and known about their history which can be called "The Other Side of the Coin". Bal Gangadhar Tilak fought for freedom, unity and integrity of the nation, similarly Veer Savarkar fought for freedom of India. Both of them left not a single stone unturned in their endeavour to free the India enslaved by the British and became successful in throwing them out of the country. This fact is known by millions but what lies in their secret life must be known by the people, because their fight for global love for mankind is unparalleled.

It is not enough if we say Tilak was a social reformer of the first rank who thundered in the British open court that "Freedom is my birth right", performing the challenging tasks like editorship of the Newspaper in Marathi spreading the love of freedom among the masses. He had a humane heart just like that of the cool pond in Ellora caves near Aurangabad. In order to understand this we have to read their biographies so that we may emulate them. Tilak was in Mandale prison where nothing could be found except deadly insects and darkness. I would like to mention an incident which reveals his greatness. Once as per the Jail practice lunch arrived and he was hungry. The jailor had his rounds as the

watchman who was also a Britisher had to watch Tilak round the clock. The watchman also was hungry but duty stood in his way. He saw Tilak who was enjoying the lunch. The very sight of that hungry watchman made Tilak to stop eating the lunch and he found that the watchman was looking at him like a hungry calf at the cow. This melted his heart and he asked him to eat his lunch or have his lunch at home. Tilak promised him that he would not run away in any case and if anything happened he would go to 'gallows' instead of him. This promise made the British watchman to have his lunch at home. On returning he found the prisoner in the prison. "What a promise!" The British watchman touched the feet of Tilak for the noble act.

Similarly Veer Savarkar was sent to Andaman Jail for life imprisonment and he was left alone on the deck to reach the deadly island where one could find poisonous snakes, foul smell and insects and nothing else. But this idea of loneliness was unbearable punishment to a convicted person who had no hope of the return journey.

One could guess the plight of the prisoner but he was smiling and singing patriotic songs on the deck praising the fathomless ocean and the blue sky with twinkling stars and the immortal Moon. Veer Savarkar's love of Nature's beauty and his poetic nature made him forget his own condition and captivity. One should read their autobiographies and letters which are full of patriotism and sacrifice.

* Former Asst. Professor, Hyderabad.

A CASE FOR FUNCTIONAL ENGLISH GRAMMAR

Dr.P.Padma¹
Dr. P. Suneetha²

There are three types of English grammar books. To the first category belong the books that are useful for students both at the secondary school and at the collegiate level. So they may have to depend on books like (1) P.C. Wren & H. Martin's High School Grammar and Composition. It may cater to the needs of High school students. There are some inaccuracies and incorrect definitions and expressions in the text. For example, 'She' is tall. Here the pronoun 'she' is qualifying the word 'woman.' As per the definition it must be correctly incorporated thus: An old 'she' is tall. J.C. Nesfield's grammar book was very useful almost seven decades ago particularly in Southern India. In most of the secondary schools, students depended on this primary text and received maximum help from it. But nowadays it is not widely used in secondary schools.

F.W. Turner's English Grammar and Composition is also a good grammar text that is popular among secondary schools and Junior colleges. Though this was written almost seven or eight decades ago, it easily caters even now to the needs of the Indian students. It can serve the needs of the students of secondary schools.

English Grammar and Composition by Bartley & Benerjee used to be the most

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popular text in India for a very long time. The unique feature of this book is that the authors discuss most of the practical aspects of grammar. For example with regard to articles, they do not choose to discuss the primary account of the definition of the article etc. But they simply give a few difficult examples. The redeeming feature about this book is that they have laid stress on 'idioms and phrases' that are used in day to day conversation. Raymond Murphy's Essential English Grammar is a prestigious book on practical English that is extensively used for secondary level students.

To the second category belong the grammar books which are useful to the teachers of English. LA Hills's book A Guide to Correct English will be of immense help to teachers. In this book some difficult examples like all together/altogether are given and illustrated. Naturally the teacher would go through the entire book and improves his efficiency in grammar and do well in the classroom. Some of the examples in this text would easily cater to the needs of brilliant students of English language. An abridged version of A University Grammar of English by Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum is an ideal text for teachers. The teacher may go through the entire text and see how some difficult examples are solved and a few new expressions are given. He naturally can update his knowledge and try some of these advanced examples in his classroom.

An Intermediate English Practice Book by Pit Corder would also be of help for teachers. The teacher may refer to some of the difficult examples given by Pit Corder and quote them in the classroom. There are many exercises in the text which the teacher may consult and motivate his students. Living English Structure by W.S. Allen is also of immense help for teachers as well as advanced students. The unique feature of this book is that the grammarian proceeds from elementary examples to the most difficult examples. In fact, this was tried in a few schools in the Gulf countries. This can be prescribed unhesitatingly even in India. First the learners are asked to answer simple questions on grammar. Later they may go to moderately difficult examples and then the most difficult examples. A Practical English Grammar by A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet would also be of enormous help to teachers who may consult the exercises in this book and receive maximum help from them. It is a laborious exercise for any teacher to go through the rules thoroughly and solve the exercises in the text. But this is going to be a rewarding experience for them as they equip themselves with the knowledge of English grammar. This is indeed an ideal book for teachers.

To the third category belong the books on grammar for researchers. Those who would like to pursue advanced research in grammar may consult A Grammar of Contemporary English (unabridged edition) by Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum into which a lot of research has gone. Naturally a researcher may go through this book carefully and would draw insights from

it and thus expand those insights and conduct thorough research on grammar. Similarly R.W. Zandvoort's book, A Handbook of English Grammar and F.R. Palmer's The English Verb would be of a great help for researchers. Various usages of the language through the ages are illustrated and as such the researcher may receive the maximum benefit from these grammar texts. L.A. Hill's Adverbials and Prepositions is also a comprehensive text on English grammar. A researcher may consult this great book on grammar and bring about the changes in the most recent grammar if any, and thus contribute to the world of research. Moreover, variations in usage would be of some help to the English language learners. Sapire and others have conducted comprehensive research on English language by writing extensively on the use of English. Any modern researcher in English language may consult these books and come out with their research findings.

The learners of English must decide whether they want to know the rules of English language or the English language itself. The rules of the language pertain to the grammar of any language. But the language itself connotes the actual samples which one may come across in day to day life. One may come across good samples of English in standard newspapers like The Hindu, The Times of India, The London Times and New York Times etc. Later they may try a few standard English stories by great authors like Somerset Maugham, E.M. Forster and others. Then they may proceed to the abridged versions of English novels and learn the English language.

GURAJADA'S SONG OF PATRIOTISM

Translation by C.B.S. Pattabhiramam

Love the country, O'brother
 What is good, nourish it brother
 Empty words, enough of them
 Think of deeds, good and great

Cultivate hard along the way
 That overflows with food and milk
 Food if had, muscle is sure, and
 Man is he who holds the muscle.

Always ailing and aching, if people be
 What way will the country prosper?
 Studying well and learning arts all
 Reinforce nation's goods and services

Enter you should countries all
 And sell thy country's goods
 For men, who don't bring money
 Neither fame nor riches accrue.

You looking back? What an exercise is it?
 Less was the goodness in the past
 Don't be lagging, step up forward
 If you fall behind, behind you will remain

Confrontation be it in studies
 And competition in commerce
 Don't aid and abet quarrels waste
 Cutthroat rivalry, burn it off

Don't boast great of yourself saying
 'Love for the country is high for me'
 Undertake any one good thing
 And to the people show it done
 It is jealousy the devil it is, that
 Sucked the country's marrow

Happening over others' happiness
 Learn the lesson of fostering unity

He who weeps over the luck of others
 For that sinner, is happiness where?
 One deems good of others as his own
 For that worthy are benefits more

Sacrificing a little of profit yours
 Stand by thy neighbour in support
 Not just a land is the country
 The country means, the people

Holding one another's hands
 The country's people all should walk
 And all races and religions
 Ought to move like brothers

Yesterday came the English
 Musclemen came the day before
 And before that you had come
 Forgetting all that, don't draw divisions

The religion is different, so what?
 If people be with one heart
 The nation will rise and grow
 And will shine well in the world

The great banyan tree the country is
 Should blossom love flowers and
 It's trunk drenched by the sweat of men
 Wealth, harvest bumper, should ripen

Humble in the leaves hidden
 The poet bird should sing
 Hearing which should germinate
 Feelings of fellowship in the country

* Journalists' Colony, Vijayawada

NATURE ENDANGERED Threat to Biodiversity

I. V. Chalapati Rao*

All creatures suckle at the breast of Mother Earth. Man is an ungrateful wretch who commits matricide. He takes pride in exterminating the wild life, axing down the trees and polluting the lakes and rivers. Science and Technology made men arrogant to think that they have moulded the environment and could conquer space and to forget that we are dependent on Nature for all our needs and that planet earth is our only home. We are waging a meaningless suicidal war against Nature, eco-systems and the biosphere without which human life cannot be sustained. Biodiversity supports all our needs - oxygen, food, medicine, fuel, energy, fertilizers etc. Each species of living beings has intrinsic value. The loss of any one of them upsets the entire eco-system.

We are the greatest marauders of Nature and the planet. We are destroying forests, animals, birds, fish, insects and every other species in spite of the high place given to them by our ancestors and our cultural heritage. The greatest danger to the survival of humanity is man's mindless exploitation of Nature and violence to mother earth for money, power and stupid ideas of economic development. Today there is perceptible but deceptive increase in the power of man over everything except over himself.

Every religion, every culture condemns what is happening today all over

* Chief Editor, Triveni

the world in the name of progress and conquest of Nature. In Rigveda there are seven reverential hymns to personified Forces of Nature and Environment. They show how imaginative were our ancestors in caring for Nature and Environment - the Sun, wind, clouds, air, rain. They were not foolish and superstitious in revering these things. "May those timber trees which god-loving, forest dwellers have firmly planted in proper places bestow upon us affluence". "O' Ye cloud bearing winds, you lift the water up from the oceans charged with the moisture, you pour down the rain". "The clouds provide the waters as if from a well". These are samples.

Paradoxically the cure for the present ills is the study of the scriptures of the past to learn the lessons. However much we shun and run away from the past, it has the habit of catching up with us dramatically in the end. Protection of trees and preservation of animals (except when they cause death and destruction) are a vital part of our cultural heritage. We had the sacred groves attached to the temples in our county. None should cut down the trees in these groves which were earmarked for the use of the holy shrines. Even today we find such protected groves in some districts of Andhra Pradesh. In the forests where the ashrams of Rishis were located hunting of animals was prohibited. Even kings respected them. These were some of the measures taken in India to preserve ecological balance and prevent extinction of valuable species of wildlife.

Our scriptures assign high place to trees, rivers and the denizens of nature. For example, Varaha Purana says "A person who grows ten fruit trees, tends ten flower plants and sinks a well to supply water to them, will never go to hell". Rudra Sukta in Yajur Veda treats vegetation and the animals as Rudra Himself (God). It addresses God "You are the trees. You are the plants!"

Germiah (Old Testament) condemns the stupid behavior of man: "And I brought you into a plentiful country to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof. But when you entered, ye defiled my land and made mine heritage an abomination." St. Francis of Assisi said "Air is my brother. Rain is my Sister". He was known for his love of birds, animals and trees. He even delivered a sermon on birds and wrote a poem on the Sun. In the article he wrote "*Our brother Sun*" he introduces to the other Brothers and Sister - the Moon, the Stars, the Wind, Air, Water, Fire and our Mother Earth.

Likewise St. Barnard said "What I know of the divine sciences and the scripture, I learned from woods and fields. I have had no other Masters than Oak trees and leeches.

Wordsworth wrote that Nature was his teacher "one impulse from the vernal wood will teach of man and moral evil more than all the sages can". Shakespeare wrote "There are tongues in trees, sermons in stones and books in running brooks".

Rabindranath Tagore said "Trees are the Earth's endless efforts to speak to the listening heaven. Unfortunately the power saw can fell a tree that took a hundred years to

grow". Walt Whitman, the American poet wrote in his *Leaves of Grass* 'A morning Glory (a creeper) at my window satisfies me more than my Metaphysics'.

Khaleel Zibran said in *Sand and Foam* 'Trees are the poems that the Earth writes upon the sky. We fell them down and turn them into paper that we may record our emptiness'.

T.S. Eliot said 'A wrong attitude to Nature implies a wrong attitude to God!'. Loaze, the Chinese philosopher, too condemned the destruction of Nature. Oscar Wilde said 'We have forgotten that the earth is our mother'.

Thoreau, the American philosopher, lived in the midst of Nature with birds, flowers, lakes etc. He wrote 'The Lake is dearer to me and more valuable than the *kohinoor diamond*'. Emerson during his morning walk used to take off his hat and bow before a rose which sat majestically on its stalk.

In Hindu mythology all gods and goddesses have different animals and birds as vehicles of transport. That is how people are taught to treat them with kindness and respect.

Today we live in ill-ventilated accommodation in concrete jungles in congested towns and cities which are lacking in green woods but lavish in fast foods. We little realize that Nature is not always benign. Nature will show her tooth and claw when we cross the limits in exploiting her. She is already causing global warming and change of climate through depletion of natural

resources and the green house effect. We should stop denudation of forests, unlimited pollution, violation of ecological balance and endangering the very biosphere without which there is no life on earth. Loss of biodiversity is the greatest threat to human life. It can be greater threat than change of climate. Both could act synergically too to accelerate human destruction.

Our Scriptures say *Prakruti Rakshati Rakshata* (Nature protects, if Nature is protected).

The U.N. General Assembly designated the decade 2011-2020 as the biodiversity decade so that people should live harmoniously with Nature and its biodiversity.

A global mega event on biodiversity, a conference of all parties will take place in Hyderabad from October 1st 2012 onwards. The slogan of the conference is *Prakruti Rakshati Rakshata*. 9000 delegates from 193 countries will participate in the discussions.

READERS' MAIL

Your article on Mirza Ghalib, the wizard of ghazals, in Apr-Jun 2012 issue, is interesting. I enjoyed reading the few samples you quoted.

T.A. Rama Rao, Nagpur

I received the July-September, 2012 issue of Triveni and after going through it, realized what I missed all these years, a feast of enlightened articles.

G. Satyanarayana Rao, Hyderabad

Editorial and article on Tagore are quite illuminating and enlightening.

T. Sivarama Krishna, Kakinada

The Editorial on 'Higher Education' is a true picture of the plight of present higher education and how it is in doldrums. It is an eye opener to the Government to endeavour for the standards in higher education to keep the image of our nation. It is a sad state of affairs that there is no single university from India among the top 100 universities of the world. I feel strong and incessant protests from the learned and the intellectuals will do some favour for radical changes in higher education.

Vaman Rao Babar, Dhanbad

What about publishing short stories in Triveni.

K. Gopala Murthy

If we receive a good one, we will publish

Editor

BOOK REVIEW

Sketches from MELBOURNE by Dr. D. Ramakrishna, Sarup Book Publishers, NewDelhi

Dr. D. Ramakrishna honorary fellow in the department of culture and communication of the UNIVERSITY of MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, visited Australia in 2009 at their invitation. As a globe trotter, he keenly observed the different cultures of America, Australia and India and made a comparative study and with his narrative skill creates interest.

This book contains fourteen items starting with History of Melbourne and ending At Home Down Under. The city of Melbourne and its historical background which the author makes out with his in-depth study, holds the breath of the reader. The city as he puts it, came in for a commendatory reference of Mark Twain, who called it Majestic Melbourne which could be compared in grandeur to 'New York City'. The scenic beauty arresting ambience and lush greenery around make it 'Garden City'.

Melbourne enchanted the author so much that he goes into ecstasy and unfurls before the reader the stately look of the city. Each story unfolds a new angle of contemporary society in Australia. The social life with multi cultural texture reveals that Australia imbibes, absorbs, accommodates and adjusts diverse cultures and different nationalities. Nowhere have malaise or rancor-racial or otherwise peeped in. Through his creative writings Dr. Ramakrishna

establishes his belief that nations have progressed by cultural and intellectual assimilations but not by isolation. Thus he acts as a connecting bridge between the cultures of different nations. He is of the opinion that multiculturalism helps mutual understanding and promotes broader outlook.

The author removes the unfounded fears of future migrants. The recent economic upheavals which are global in nature led to some stray incidents of natives reacting violently against other ethnic groups. He conveys this in "Kings In Queen's Palace".

The story "Mother India" opens another facet of Australian society. Many Australian couples seek children through fertility clinics in India. One Mr. Harry goes as a surrogate child, bred and brought up there, loses his foster parents and comes back to India in search of original mother. In the end he traces her and changes his name as Hari, and looks after her in her old age.

In matters of style, he can be bracketed with R.K. Narayan. It is deceptively simple and terse. On the whole, it can be said that the stories would appeal to the reader and would be truly enjoyable. The get-up of the book and printing are elegant.

K. Gopalakrishnamurthy, Vijayawada

We regret to announce the demise of this scholarly reviewer very recently. May his soul rest in peace.

Editor

Dasavataaras - K Usha Srinivas, Yugadi Publishers, 304, Sridurga Rajeev Residency, Vijayapuri, Tarnaka, Hyderabad- 500 017 Tel. 040-27003064, email: yugadipubli@yahoo.com. Rs. 175 \$5/-

The author has done a good job in collecting the information from various sources and publishing the same as short stories, for the benefit of many. As pointed out by Sri Kota V Subbaram in his foreword the world we live in today is different from what it was yugas ago. It is extremely unfortunate that the traditional values which are embedded in the glorious heritage and puranas of this great country are being eroded and are being forgotten. It is time to educate the public on these.

Of the Ten Avatharas.. Quite interestingly, three were only for the destruction of Jaya and Vijaya the innermost dwarapalakas of the Lord and most trusted devotees of the Lord. One important point that strikes the reader is that guilt is punished by the Lord in the Avathara and the perpetrator gets his due from the Lord for the good he has done. God does not balance the good and evil.

The subtle overlapping of the Parasurama Avatharam and Sri Rama Avatharam is well explained by the author.

When it comes to Buddha, Balarama Avatharas , whether they are incarnations of the Lord or not the discussion continues. They may be accepted as extras.

The inter-connection between the characters in the various stories about the Avatharas and their relationship with the main

story makes the reader understand the complete background, not just superficial glimpse of the Avathara.

A few anomalies could have been either avoided or given an explanation to avoid controversies.

In Rama Avatharam the much talked of Sita Swayamvaram is not in the Ramayana of Valmiki. It is just a creation of the subsequent authors. The story of Sitaswayamvaram has become a part of the Ramayanam... same is the case of Lakshmana Rekha. I feel references could have been made to these changes from Valmiki's Ramayana. Kalki Aavathar may have to be more celestial or more powerful and a real almighty to deal with and destroy the ever increasing demon-like qualities in the humans. It is a wait of over 425000 years.

The book on the whole makes it an interesting reading and would throw light on the Dasaavataaras and their meaning for children and adults alike.

The author deserves compliments for the work.

Ramakrishna Chitrapu, Secunderabad

Naa Choopu Repati Vaipu (I Look Towards Tomorrow), A Collection of Telugu Poems, Dr. C Narayana Reddy, Varenva Creations , Flat # 48, Film Nagar Colony, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad- 500033, pp168, Price Rs.150/-

The book under review is a collection of his latest Telugu poems by Jnanapith Awardee Dr C Narayana Reddy, popular as

CiNaRe. Naa Choopu Repati Vaipu (I Look Towards Tomorrow) launched on July 29, 2011 as he entered his 80th spring. It contains many poems in 'free verse', projecting his various reflections, observations and experiences in a smooth and engaging style.

Beginning with a poem on how he gets his ideas and writes poetry (1-2), this ever-green poet yearns to perceive at the same time the loftiest as well as the profoundest (3-4), as part of his vigorous and incessant intellectual activity (9-10). Leaving a task midway is like a wave that collapses without reaching the shore (35-36).

The poems brim with self-assertion, identification with facets of Nature, and optimism with an eye on - progress without a stop. Reminiscences will have a value-addition for progress if only we erase the bitter ones on the mirror of our heart and reflect.

The poet employs the technique of dialogue - dialogue between eyes and specs, between table and specs (44-46), among blood cells (63-64), and between the waves of the sea and the shore (66-68) to drive home the truth that everything has its use and place in the concatenation of things, so there should be no room to envy others and usurp their position.

CiNaRe's strange pictorials (27) offer us a feast of evocative conceits and verdant images which give us a thrill. He has more to say on the importance and vitality of green (61-62): "Leaves may wither and drop, but the tree doesn't; / It keeps standing like a disciplined soldier in attention... / If a man dies / We won't keep his corpse inside home / But carry it silently to the graveyard. / If a tree

turns leafless and dry / We won't instantly cut it down / But keep waiting for its re-sprouting moments."

What is CiNaRe's address? Here he gives it: "Where else would I be / But in the lap of progressive poesy / In the footfalls of the multitudes of masses!" (57-58). A writer can be creative and accomplish only when he comes out of ennui and indolence. "If a pen while writing begins to yawn / It amounts to the full-stop of that activity" (59-60).

To conclude, these poems flow out of a poet "who refuses to think that his warranty has expired," to borrow an expression from Prof IV Chalapati Rao's What Life Taught Me.

U Atreya Sarma, Secunderabad

**Two Books : Maa Nanna Suryaprakasa Rao and Maa Amma Saraswathamma
Author: Dr. Paturi Kusuma Kumari
For Books: Kusuma Nursing Home, 6-3-789/B, Ameerpet, Hyderabad - 500 016**

Living conditions have changed . Today relationships are not as they should be. Events like a mother killing a child, children killing parents are the order of the day. Father raping a daughter has become a matter of daily occurrence. In such an environment if someone expresses her adoration for her parents, it is really praise worthy.

Dr. Kusuma Kumari loves her parents, her mother is a "Goddess and father is a God". She presents only the best qualities in them and ignores shortfalls if any. The book has auto-biographical flavour.

When I saw the cover page, the first thing that I noticed was the proud father holding the hand of his daughter with a broad smile on his face with a feeling as if he knew it already that she was going to be an important person in life and that she would make him proud. Of course Dr. Kusuma Kumari proved that his dreams were fulfilled. Her mother caringly kept her close to her bosom to ensure that she meant everything to her. Her parents were not well educated, but they made sacrifices to make their daughter a Doctor. She remembers her parents with gratitude.

Dr. Kusuma Kumari, is from a respectable agricultural family and fairly well-to-do. When we read her Vachana Kavya we get a feeling that the place where she spent her childhood is a heaven on earth.

To write a Vachana Kavya in such simple and fluent language is really a tough job. She compares her father's qualities of valour and strength and brave heart with those of great female warriors, freedom fighters like Jhansi Laksmi Bai, Rudrama Devi and others. It is interesting. She narrated a couple of real life incidents in her father's life which showed his valour. One of the qualities of his which was aptly brought out was donating blood to save his wife. She remembers only

one instance in her life when she was reprimanded by her father for getting drenched in rain. She describes her father as Stitha Prajna. In one place she talks of his strong attachments to his near and dear.

Her love and admiration for her mother are boundless. She has depicted her mother as an orthodox typical villager with all the qualities of a true Hindu wife. The author has written at great length about the sterling qualities of her mother. She was adept in the art of running the household and building a good neighbourhood. She had aversion for the dowry system in the society. It is indeed noteworthy. She used to advise her daughter how to be a good wife.

The book should be read by every parent and child to know a lot about what is expected of them to make their family lives more rewarding and pleasant. I feel what she wrote should be taken as a guide to build a better society. At a time when family values are vanishing, this book is a wakeup call.

I am glad the doctor, who has been successful with the scalpel, is equally successful with the pen.

Ramakrishna Chitrapu, Secunderabad

Thomas Edison tried two thousand different materials in search of a filament for the light bulb. When none worked satisfactorily, his assistant complained "All our work is in vain. We have learned nothing".

Edison replied very confidently "Oh, we have come a long way and we have learned a lot. We know that there are two thousand elements which we cannot use to make a good light bulb.

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