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Gurazada Venkata Apparao was a noted Telugu playwright, dramatist, poet, writer, social reformer and a patriot.

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## TRIPLE STREAM

### "THE PLAY IS THE THING . . . ."

**D. Ranga Rao\***

Literature reflects life. It entertains and enlightens. It exposes human weaknesses and probes human minds. It suggests remedies to improve the lot of people through its three main components poetry, prose and drama. Drama, the most wide ranging of all arts, is the earliest of all imitative arts. It tells a tale by imitating human behavior holding the mirror to nature and life. Poetry is for the few, prose for the many and drama is for all.

It is language that makes literature and it is the vehicle of social expression. The spoken language is the living language. The educated use the written mode to gain knowledge and express themselves while the illiterates ardently seek the spoken mode. The intellectuals, the intelligentsia and the illiterates appreciate drama in equal measure.

The partial quote from Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* making the title of this write-up comes handy to discuss briefly the life and work of the Telugu genius, Gurazada Venkata Appa Rao, writer, scholar, poet, dramatist, social reformer and patriot.

Gurazada Venkata Appa Rao, popularly known as Gurazada, was born on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1862, in a Brahmin family to

Gurazada Venkata Ramadas and Kausalyamma in Rayavaram village of Visakhapatnam District. His father was a Sanskrit scholar. At that time the British held control over India in queen Victoria's reign. The three universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were flourishing and pupils in high schools and colleges were familiar with English literature and Shakespeare's plays. Appa Rao received his B.A. degree in 1886 with English philosophy and Sanskrit. He was a brilliant student and wrote poems and plays in English and Telugu published in prominent journals of his time. Recognizing his merit he was offered a lecturer's post in Maharaja's College in Vizianagaram. He held other posts too in his career including the Fellowship in Madras University.

Thin and weak physically he was sharp and astute mentally. He was a polyglot well versed in English, Sanskrit, Bengali, Tamil and Telugu and attracted the attention of the Maharaja of Vizianagaram, Ananda Gajapathi Raju, himself a man of parts and learning. Gurazada the relentless seeker of knowledge and a restless intellectual, developed contacts with noted writers and scholars of his day through personal meeting and correspondence in India and abroad. He made himself familiar

with the literary trends in world literature, especially drama.

During his time nationalistic ideas were being championed by the Indian National Congress and staunch social reformers were speaking and writing with force against the sordid social practices of the small Brahmin community. Children aged 4 to 6 and even unborn children carried a price called *Kanyasulkam* in the marriage market and were married off to very old men. As a result of child marriages with old men, young girls ended up as child widows. To add to this state of affairs, the society was steeped in superstitions of all kinds and prostitution was the order of the day.

Gurazada was deeply pained at the prevailing condition and as a social reformer took upon himself the task of reforming the society in a more effective manner through literature, using the dramatic mode and spoken Telugu as his tools unlike the other reformers. He said ". . . .Such a scandalous state of things is a disgrace to society and literature cannot have a high function than to show up such practices and give currency to high standards of moral ideas until reading habits prevail among masses and must look only to the stage to exert such healthy influence."

Before Gurazada appeared on the scene there were only road shows and poetic presentations in the conventional style. Plays like *Chintamani*, a pouranic play and *Prataparudriyam*, a historical play and some Hindi plays were being enacted as also

translations of *Abignanashakuntalam* with grand settings, flashy costumes, loud music, dances and fights, using highly artificial literary language. Gurazada had this to say, "If it is intended to make Telugu literary dialect a great civilizing medium, it must be divested of its superfluous, obsolete and Sanskrit elements and brought closer to the spoken dialect". After deep thought and extensive study he brought out his play *Kanyasulkam* in 1897 drawing the theme from actual and contemporary life, writing the play boldly in spoken Telugu. The revised version appeared in 1909.

The play in brief: Agnihotravadhanlu decides to perform the marriage of his second daughter, Subbi, aged 7, with an old man Lubdhavadhanlu who is in his sixties for five hundred rupees. His first young daughter Buchamma is already a widow. In spite of his wife's protests, he goes ahead with the marriage proposal. His wife tries to commit suicide by jumping into a well and is rescued. But the intended marriage is not called off. The child bride's maternal uncle Karataka Sastry contrives to abort the proceedings successfully. In the meanwhile, Buchamma, the widowed first daughter, runs off with Girisham, a talented but selfish and self-styled reformer of empty words, falling a prey to his deception. After many twists and turns the play ends happily. Among the characters Girisham and Madhuravani, the intelligent and lively prostitute, steal the limelight.

*Kanyasulkam* the comedy, humourous and satirical, came as a breath of



fresh air in the suffocating atmosphere of conventional drama. The play was an instant success and was performed hundreds of times in those days and is still a popular drama today, after more than hundred years of its first performance. The intended message was conveyed with telling effect. Not just the common people but the elite and literary critics of Gurazada's days witnessed the performance and were elated at the perfection of the play. The content, the plot, characterization, language, dialogues, incidents and the construction of the play were commended. Though the play dealt with the traditions of a small community it became universal in its appeal in the hands of the able dramatist.

*Kanyasulkam* takes its place among the famous dramas of the world. With this play "Gurazada heralded a new era in Telugu literature, the era of colloquialism". The appreciation of the play was so great that the dramatist was called Gurazada Valmiki.

For all his intellect and reformist zeal Guazada suffered from poor health and passed away on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1915.

*Abhignanashakuntalam* of Kalidas is considered the greatest drama of the world and Shakespeare the greatest dramatist. The play *Kanyasulkam* places Gurazada in the company of the above dramatists making drama the most enjoyable literary form.

*Kavyeshu natakam ramyam.*

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## AN EMPTY PHOTOFRAME

**Dr. Manas Bakshi\***

An empty photoframe  
On the dampish wall  
Gathering dust for years;

Whose photo was there?  
Someone who has ceased to exist.  
Someone whose smiling face  
In her frame of mind  
Makes his presence still felt

Occasional touch  
Of an emaciated hand

Knowing well  
He will not comeback again .....  
No resurrection's possible  
No miracle will happen!  
The man living in her heart  
She believes, invigorates her skeletal existence

The shabby frame  
She preserves with care  
Makes often vent her  
Cherished, last desire  
To be happy  
Even after death  
If it's burnt along with her deadbody.

---

\* Poet, Kolkata, dr.manasbakshi@gmail.com



## HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAY AND SRI AUROBINDO

### The Dynamics Of A Guru-Sishya Relationship

**Dr. Dilip Kumar Chatterjee\***

"That poets are born, no sensible person will deny, but it all depends on where they are born and when - in what period of history, into what family, what class, what society. And to say that they are not made is far from truth of the evolution of a poet who has at all mattered in literary history'. This quote is from an incomplete autobiography of Harindranath, *Life and Myself*, first published by Nalanda Publications, Bombay, 1948. This is written in a fictional style with a consciousness of history." The quoted lines are from the chapter, "Poets are made not born." Here Harindranath admits the fact that he is made a poet out of his association and interactions with outstanding personalities; Sri Aurobindo is certainly one of them.

Harindranath Chattopadhyay, one of the most versatile and vigorous literary personalities of modern India, was born on 2 April 1898 in Hyderabad. He was the youngest son of an eminent Indian, Agahornath Chattopadhyay, a D.Sc. from Edinburg, and brother of Sarojini Naidu. His contribution in diverse fields, such as poetry, drama, films, music, painting and even politics made him one of India's fascinating literary and culture

personalities. He is often far more prolific than his sister Sarojini and his writings in diverse fields using different genres spread over more than half a century. He died in June 1990. His eventful creative life and multifaceted works, his direct involvement in all the significant social, political, cultural movements in pre-independent and post-independent India made him a unique figure in contemporary Indian English literature.

Harindranath is one of those few poets who had the privilege of interacting with Sri Aurobindo in the Pondicherry Ashram. It was his great fortune that the seer reviewed Harindranath's first poetical work *The Feast of Youth* (1918). His aesthetic and spiritual interaction with Sri Aurobindo is an interesting field of research. Harindranath needs a reappraisal in two ways: first by replacing speculating and sensationalism about his bohemian life with scholarly research, and second by establishing his works as deserving of critical attention. Critics often dismiss Harindranath's short stay in the Ashram but these were the most formative years of Harindranath to grow as a unique Indian English poet.

In fact, Dilip Kumar was quite instrumental in bringing his poet-friend

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Harindranath Chattopadhyay to Pondicherry Ashram right from Cambridge where both of them first met and became close friends. Harindranath and Dilip Kumar both went to Cambridge in the 1920s to do their higher studies and research and, both being bohemian in nature, leaving their studies incomplete finally returned to India to join the Sri Aurobindo Ashram intending a "divinization" of their life and art.

In Pondicherry Ashram Sri Aurobindo's objectives in regard to guidance of these young perceptive minds were quite clear. He called them *sadhaka* and he said in his book *On Himself*: Each *sadhaka* has to be dealt with according to his nature, his capacities, his real needs (not his claims or desires) and according to what is best for his spiritual welfare.

Sri Aurobindo eschews the path of a conventional spiritual guidance and instead of engaging the *sadhakas* with his long religious discourses, inspires them to write poetry. He believes that writing poetry is as good as making a voyage of self-discovery and a poet's mind should help him to see his "undiscovered self." It is this dimension of depth psychology or the Gestalt that justifies Sri Aurobindo's encouragement of his *sadhakas* to write poetry.

His real objective in the Ashram is thus to make Harindranath and his young batchmates aware of the hidden Truth and deepest law of their own being. He believes that it is poetry which helps this opening the

door of their "in world and the over world." He assigns this practice to Harindranath to help him opening his inner vision.

Sri Aurobindo as a practitioner of "overhead aesthetic" admits that there is no incompatibility between the "inner self-development and the growth of poetic power." He says: The expression in poetry and other forms must be, for the *yogi*, a flowing out from a growing self and the poetic power will grow with it.

As regards himself and his own practice Sri Aurobindo says in his *Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art*, "I myself never gave up poetry or other creative human activities out of *tapasya*." He assigns this practice to Harindranath to help him opening his inner vision.

The spiritual joy of existence, of its primal colour and symbolic subtleties, a fusion of the Vedantic and the Sufi mentality in the lyrics of the *Feast of Youth* impressed Sri Aurobindo so much that he wrote in the review, "here perhaps is the beginning of supreme utterance of the Indian soul in the rhythms of the English tongue".

He appreciated Harindranath's poems that he wrote during his stay in the Ashram. Harindranath by way of gratitude (*gurudaksina*) dedicated his new poems to Sri Aurobindo. The book was published under the significant title *Crossroads* on a significant date 15 August, 1934, Sri Aurobindo's birthday. Here Harindranath addressed Sri

Aurobindo as the "God-man" whom he needed most in his moment of crisis and loss of inspiration. In the very title poem Harindranath expresses his yearning for his "Master of the Vision,"

'O Master of the vision Come.  
Shatter me, Lord, on every side -  
My little love, my human pride,  
My empty dreams, poor plan on plan,  
And all that makes me erring man.  
O let thy strokes be swift and sure  
Which would the glories that endure.'

Harindranath's candid confession of being an "erring man," having his common human failings and his total surrender to his Master for a transformation bear the mark of his sincerity. The poems that Harindranath wrote in his successive volumes, *The Strange Journey* (1936), *The Edge Way and the Saint* (1947) and *The Divine Vagabond* (1950), all bear the direct influence of Sri Aurobindo.

Pondicherry period under Sri Aurobindo's spiritual guidance and training thus bore fruits in Harindranath's life and career.

The poetry of Harindranath, like the poetry of Sri Aurobindo and Tagore, raises some fundamental questions pertaining to the relationship between poetry and philosophy. Take, for instance, the following lines he wrote long after he left Pondicherry.

Do you seek liberation  
Then come free of the unconscious  
The underlying sleeves of consciousness,

which  
Because of its yearning off and on  
Gets blurred and fails in clarity.  
Once we come clear of this sad captivity,  
We become a central glow  
From which daybreak draws its colours  
Irradiated by the centre.

Harindranath, being one of the aspirants under Sri Aurobindo's guidance, wanted to be "irradiated by the centre." Being an "erring man" he cannot raise his yearning to a higher plane; it "gets blurred" and "fails in clarity." He attempts sincerely to get rid of the "unconscious" and unfortunately fails to be free from it. A lifelong yearning and a gaze fixed on the beyond sound intensely in his poetry.

Harindranath who considers himself an "erring man" having his "human pride" or ego failed to transcend mental barriers. "With the transforming pressure that Sri Aurobindo was putting on all his sadhakas for a radical change of consciousness," said K.D. Sethna, "something in Harindranath proved too rigid and he rose in revolt and went away from the luminous fount of inspiration and was caught up in the currents of the common life of the external world." No other explanation is being provided by K.D. Sethna than this vague statement just quoted here. Harindranath's persona seemed to have been split into non-cohesive selves. His untold story of direct personal interaction with Sri Aurobindo persuades researchers not to be unduly unkind to him though the so-called ashramites transformed him into a *bête noire*. Sri Aurobindo did not approve this unkind

attitude of the ashramites to Harindranath.

Harindranath left the Ashram in 1936. Some said that he went berserk. Some said that he was a creative mind and preferred to remain bohemian; the ashramites argued that he was impervious to the disciplined life in the Ashram. He was, however, left to follow his bent. His sudden and silent departure from the Ashram caused a ripple of criticism in certain sections of the ashramites and this made Sri Aurobindo as well as Dilip Kumar quite unhappy.

Sri Aurobindo in one of his letters to Dilip Kumar written on 26 October 1934, Volume II, said something significant about this unhappy incident. Here we are consistently reminded of the great seer's wisdom, his advocacy of moderation and acceptance while imparting spiritual guidance to his *sadhakas*. Sri Aurobindo says: I have protected Harindranath for the most part by silence; it is only to you and one or two others that I have written about him and in your case my only attempt was to assuage in each the feelings that were rising against the other.

As regards Harin, I am concerned not with defending or condemning him but only with ensuring so far as I can do it his spiritual welfare as with my other *sadhaka*. To lay stress on the good side, on the hopeful things, to abstain from public condemnation, to stress with all my force the inner growth and development and to work silently, and patiently and persistently for elimination of all that stands on the way is a course I have followed not only with many of the *sadhakas*, but with

most, though not with all.

Thus, insistently Sri Aurobindo does with his integral approach, press home the thought that it is not enough either to condemn or admonish an erring or a truant mind like Harindranath's but to stress only on "the good side, the hopeful things" which are inherent in him.

Sri Aurobindo also emphasizes on the guide's drive to encourage and to push on towards a greater and richer expression of his *sadhakas*. But in this teaching-learning process he uses a categorical imperative that the guides must not be "insincere in their praise" of *sadhakas*. He said:

I have praised but there was nothing insincere in my praise.

What matters is the truth of inspiration and the power of what it utters.

Here Sri Aurobindo does speak all about the responsibility of the guide of the *sadhaka*. He wrote to Dilip Kumar Roy that the guide has to work "silently, patiently, persistently" for the *sadhaka's* spiritual welfare.

Sri Aurobindo's letter to Dilip Kumar as well as his remarks on Harindranath just quoted above, help us to highlight the nature of his spiritual and aesthetic guidance. In his teaching and practice he allows individual volition or will, and Harindranath quite naturally is left to follow his bent. He had his poetic mode differently channeled, and Sri Aurobindo had no objection to it. The goal of his spiritual and aesthetic guidance was based

on tolerance, love, sympathy and understanding. His was a desire to help and guide and not to treat harshly the delinquent. Sri Aurobindo knew that these were more potent constructive forces than punishment, intimidation, domination and subjection. Sri

Aurobindo's words as quoted from the letter to Dilip Kumar are still relevant today and serve as a message to our understanding of the dynamics of relationship between a guru and his *sadhaka* - between a preceptor and his pupil.

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## NO FALCON ONLY DRONES

Naqui Ahmad John\*

No Falcon Only Drones  
Circle the murky mien  
Of torn fields and parched throats

The warlords wield innocents  
While bombers whiz past  
The dawn brings ariel strikes  
The hazy sun smirks

Birds have flown away  
Mourning greets the day  
Spilt blood is celebrated  
Conferences and channels  
All abuzz until

Warlords post a clip  
Claiming survival swearing-

To avenge, Hazy sun wavers  
Birds have flown away

The sorry president  
Promises peace  
The UN sends aid  
But the birds keep away

Bleeding tearless children  
Stand akimbo  
See soldiers as ideals  
Wielding rifles  
Kicking dust, creating haze

The power of love  
Love for pen and toys  
Buried under debris  
Of bombed schools

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Children and birds  
Have flown away  
No Falcon Only Drones.

## HOW NOBLE WAS THE NOBEL COMMITTEE?

**Dr. Chaganti Nagaraja Rao\***

The award of 2016 Nobel Prize for literature to Bob Dylan, a movie song writer, reiterates the debate as to what constitutes good literature and the standards by which the Nobel Committee recognises it. There is an immense literary output in India in almost all languages which is rich in depth and thought, socially vibrant, politically sensitising, innovative in form in a language which provides enriching reading experience. But it could not invite the attention of the Nobel Committee. Why all this? Irving Wallace writes: "Since Dr. Sven Hedin was a judge for the literature award, I asked him whether James Joyce's name had ever come up as a contender for the Nobel Prize. Dr. Hedin said to me, "James Joyce? Joyce? Who is he?" (The Writer's Hand Book, Boston, ed. Sylvia K. Burack, p.69). That clearly discloses that the Nobel Committee has something else in their minds other than what the founder of the prize aimed at.

Alfred Frederick Nobel, the inventor of dynamite instituted a Prize called the Nobel Prize, which is considered as the highest recognition of meritorious work in the entire

world in the fields of literature, physics, chemistry, biological sciences or medicine, economics and peace. The will of Alfred Nobel specified that the awards should annually be made "to those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind." As one observes the background and contribution of certain Nobel laureates one would be surprised whether Alfred Nobel's idea was really fulfilled.

Rabindranath Tagore received the Prize in 1913 and the academy specifically mentioned his *Gitanjali* (Song Offering) as the single collected poems for the award. Tagore's *Gitanjali* had become popular through W.B. Yeats' translation. Tagore didn't convey anything new or something that was so far unknown to mankind. It is simply an ideal already expressed by several others in a different sense. The Prize alone made it popular outside Tagore's home state. The greatest poem in this collection is "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high....let my country awake!" It is simply a prayer to God to let his country awake into a realm of freedom which is an ideal society where knowledge is free and reasoning is perfect. Did Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* (Song Offering) confer such a benefit on mankind that the founder of Nobel Prize

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expected? Tagore has no doubt produced a tremendous output of literature, and his songs are most melodious and meaningful which will attract the attention of aesthetes even outside Bengal. But what is its impact on mankind at large is a question to be answered. *Gitanjali* is only a sheaf of devotional songs. But the benefit he conferred was limited to a small section of Bengali society only. It is not even an appeal to the society or mankind to do anything innovative like Telugu poet Sri Sri did in his *Mahaprasthanam*.

Compare it with any poem of the Telugu revolutionary poet, Srirangam Srinivasa Rao's, for example his *Mahaprasthanam* (The Great Journey). *Mahaprasthanam* evokes the emotion of working class and suppressed classes and awakes them to their aspirations to march ahead with spirit, courage, commitment and dedication against the existing social order that suppressed the hard working labour. Certainly this original contribution richly deserves the prize, if the prize is meant for a writer who wrote in an ideal direction. *Mahaprasthanam* did confer great benefit on a large section of the society in that it rejuvenates their spirit. When Tagore won the prize for repeating something already said several times why couldn't Sri Sri get it? Perhaps there were none to nominate his name. Expression of philosophical ideas through dialogues is fiction or literature; generalisation of fictitious views is philosophy. Therefore, a philosopher can be awarded the prize in literature. Historians like Sir Winston Churchill and philosophers like Bertrand Russell were awarded the prize in literature although they

have not made any outstanding contribution to literature, while Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a globally reputed philosopher, who astounded the whole world with his erudite scholarship, brilliant and crystal clear exposition of the tenets of Hindu religion and philosophy with remarkable fluency of expression, was denied the prize although his name was nominated continuously for five years, as he deserved it on the same lines as Churchill and Russell. Even Bertrand Russell said in his message on Radhakrishnan's becoming the President of India, fulfilling Plato's dream of philosopher-ruler that "Dr. Radhakrishnan has brought precision and high intelligence to the problems of our times and is one of those who serve to make the culture of India one of the glories of human achievement." Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan deserved the prize not only because of his outstanding contribution to Indian philosophy but, through his 45 scholarly works published on Indian and Western thought, he contributed in a magnificent manner to the cultural thought of the world. Didn't Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan confer the greatest benefit on mankind by building a bridge of understanding between the East and the West by interpreting the spiritual wisdom of the east to the materialistic civilization of the west? Didn't he deserve the prize? It remains forever debatable as on what grounds he was denied the prize.

World famous philosophers like Will Durant, C.E.M. Joad, et al have not won the Prize. Bertrand Russell, though won the Nobel Prize in 1950, is more popular as a far going agnostic, a brilliant thinker and logician and



author of about 50 scholarly works spanning all branches of human knowledge which invited the attention of every thinking man in the world, than as a Nobel laureate. In fact the Prize was privileged that Russell accepted it. But still he was not a litterateur. Winston Churchill was not even a philosopher but a historian whose contribution does not contain any literary value. He was awarded the prize putting the world to astonishment.

The literary contribution of most of the laureates was not of everlasting value. Seamus Heaney's (1995) poetry was inspired by the political and social events of Ireland during 1968-74. Quite naturally it has not had the permanent value like Oliver Goldsmith's *The Village Preacher*, John Keats *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, or Walter Scott's *Patriot* and the like.

It cannot be concluded with cent per cent accuracy or firmness that every laureate received the world's highest award for his remarkable poetic imagination and linguistic artistry. The moment one thinks of English fiction the first name that strikes an avid reader's mind is that of W.Somerset Maugham, undisputedly the greatest novelist of the twentieth century England. His novels are characterised by a shrewd understanding of human nature. But he couldn't win the prize while Pearl S. Buck, who was not up to his mark, could win it for her novels, the most famous of them being *The Good Earth*, which cannot be a match to Maugham's novels like *Of Human Bondage*, *The Painted Veil*, *The Razor's Edge*, *Moon and Six Pence*, *Cakes*

and *Ale* etc. and his short stories like *The Verger*, *The Facts of Life* etc. that excel the works of most of the prize winners. In fact the prize awarded to Pearl (Comfort Sydenstricker) Buck in 1938 "stirred controversy, especially among critics who believed that although Buck was a capable popular novelist, she lacked the stature the Nobel Prize was intended to confirm." (*Nobel Prize Winners*, edited by Tyler Wasson, New York, 1987, p.163). Alfred Nobel willed to award the Prize for those who make outstanding contribution but Buck's contribution was not outstanding compared to that of W.Somerset Maugham.

While winning Nobel Prize is a happy surprise to most of the winners, the fact that certain deserving ones have been ignored by the Swedish committee for the award is a surprise and astonishment for the whole world. Though Maugham was not awarded the Nobel Prize, the niche he carved for himself in the world of English fiction with his marvellous pieces of fiction will remain intact for ever.

Imre Kertesz (winner of 2002 Nobel Prize for literature) admits that a writer writes for himself. It has been proved correct in case of most Indian writers. He was flabbergasted by the Swedish Academy's choosing his novel, *Fateless*, for the highest honour. Kawabata Yesunari, the Japanese writer and winner of 1968 prize admits that "My works have been described as works of emptiness." Then how could such a writer expect the world's highest recognition? The prize winning work of

Seamus Heaney was his first collection of poetry entitled, *Death of Nationalist* (1966). How popular it has been all over the world is beyond anyone's guess. A writer while writing about one's personal experiences like one's rise and fall at situations, vicissitudes in life, hope and disappointments, one should cloth them with general significance so that they will be of universal value. How far Derek Walcott could achieve this in exposing his feelings of personal isolation, caught between his Europe-Caribbean cultures is for the readers to evaluate. This author did not open Kenzaburo Oe's novel *Death by Water*, in his book shelf until he came to know that the novel won the Nobel Prize.

Most of the Nobel laureates are not known outside their homeland. Even their writings selected for the highest honour cannot be accepted by the world at large as masterpieces of world literature. It is, therefore, interesting to know what kind of fiction or poetry that the Nobel Committee expects from writers to choose them for the highest honour. Six Nobel Laureates in literature are the members of the Swedish Academy who select Laureates for the Prize. Does it not disclose beyond doubt that the Academy members selected their own names for the highest honour? Even service clubs in India like the Rotary club and the Lions' club, when conducting any contests, clearly indicate that the members of the families of the club

members are not eligible to participate in the contests whereas the members of the Academy that selects laureates for the highest honour of the world didn't object to it.

While winning the Prize is no doubt a unique privilege, non-receipt of the Prize does not undermine the greatness of an invaluable contribution. Even Earnest Hemingway, the Prize winner of 1954 says in his Prize acceptance speech that "No writer who knows the great writers who did not receive the Prize can accept it other than with humility." However great may be a laureate's literary contribution it remains useless unless it reaches a large readership. In fact an eminent litterateur must be honoured with the award after the reading public at large read his contribution and are benefited by it. But contrary to this idea and ideal, the award of the Prize popularized their work. This might not be the idea of Alfred Frederick Nobel in instituting the Prize.

The disappointed aspirants to the prize, therefore, should not get disheartened for not winning the prize since merit alone is not the criteria for awarding the prize. The value of a literary piece is judged only by the impact it has created in the minds of the discerning readers. Their popularity and importance will not diminish by not winning the prize. They had better ensure a larger readership rather than dream for the prize.

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## KAZUO ISHIGURO'S NOVEL "THE REMAINS OF THE DAY"

Dr. P. Satyanarayana\*

The Nobel prize in literature for 2017 has been awarded to British novelist and screen writer Kazuo Ishiguro. He was born in 1957 in Nagasaki, Japan. He was the son of an Oceanographer. Later his family moved to Surrey, UK, when he was 5. He attended the grammar school. He studied English and philosophy at Kent University and creative writing at university of East Anglia. His literary style has sublime and lyrical prose. He has deftly handled multiple genres-science fiction, history, surrealism and realism. His themes mostly revolve around dystopia, memory, time, alienation and self-delusion. His novels are about discovery and revelation. Ishiguro is best known for his third novel, "*The Remains of the Day*" (1989). It was awarded the Man Booker prize for fiction in 1989 and was later made into a memorable film in 1993. As in Ishiguro's two previous novels, the story is told from a first person point of view. The narrator, Stevens, a butler, recalls his life in the form of a diary while the action progresses through past to present. Much of the novel is concerned with Stevens' professional and above all, personal relationship with a former colleague, the housekeeper, Miss. Kenton.

*The Remains of the Day* tells the story of Stevens, an English butler who has dedicated his life to the loyal service of Lord Darlington. The novel begins with Stevens receiving a letter from a former colleague, the housekeeper, Miss Kenton, describing her married life, which he believes hints at an unhappy marriage. Stevens' receipt of the letter coincides with his opportunity to re-visit this once-cherished relationship, if only under the guise of investigating the possibility of her re-employment. Stevens' new employer, a wealthy American named Mr. Farrady, encourages Stevens to borrow his car to take a well-earned break, a 'motoring trip', and Stevens takes the opportunity to arrange to meet with Miss. Kenton, now Mrs. Benn, in Devon, where she now lives.

As Stevens sets out, he has the opportunity to reflect on his unshakable loyalty to Lord Darlington, who had hosted lavish meetings between German sympathizers and English aristocrats in an effort to influence international affairs in the years leading up to world war II; on the meaning of the term 'Dignity'. Stevens' life is his dignity as an English butler. He constantly maintains an inward and outward sense of dignity to preserve his own identity. He dedicated his whole life to Lord Darlington.

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As the novel progresses, increasing evidence of Miss Kenton's and Stevens' past mutual attraction is revealed. They worked together during the years leading to the Second World War. But they failed to admit their true feelings towards each other. Their recalled conversations showed a professional friendship, which, at times, came close to crossing the line into romance, but never dared to do so. Stevens in particular never yielded, even when Miss Kenton tried to draw closer to him. It is only within their final encounter that Stevens tragically becomes aware of the lost potential of his life with Miss Kenton. Moreover, the social rules at the time were a major constraint. Servants who wish to marry and have children immediately find themselves without a job, as married life is seen as incompatible with total devotion to their master. A truly 'great butler' does not abandon his (Stevens) profession.

Finally Stevens meets Kenton (now Mrs. Benn) and they reminisce about their past

twenty years. Kenton declines Stevens' offer to return to Darlington Hall, wishing instead to remain near her pregnant daughter. After the meeting, Kenton is emotional, while Stevens is still unable to demonstrate any feeling. Stevens later muses over lost opportunities, both with Miss. Kenton and regarding his decades of selfless service to Lord Darlington who may not have been worthy of his unquestioning loyalty. At the end of the novel Stevens instead focuses on the "remains of (his) day", referring to his future service with Mr. Farrady and what is left of his own life.

Ishiguro uses the structural devices of memory and perspective within this novel. Past events are presented as fragments from the view point of the main protagonist, the ageing Stevens. Thus Ishiguro had written the most moving, witty, ironic, and British book of its time. His fluid command of Stevens' idiom never faltered.

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- Knowledge will give you power, but character respect.
- If you truly love life, don't waste time; because time is what life is made of.
- To hell with circumstances; I create opportunities.
- Notice that stiffest tree is most easily cracked, while the bamboo or willow survives by bending with the wind.
- As you think, so shall you become

Bruce Lee

## MATSUO BASHO'S CREATIVE HAIBUN: STATE OF THE ART

Aju Mukhopadhyay\*

In an article titled, *Make Haibun New through the Chinese Poetic Past: Basho's Transformation of Haikai Prose* Chen ou Liu suggested, "In my view, maybe it is time for anyone who is interested in writing haibun to re-think Basho's poetic ideal of 'the unchanging and the ever-changing' situated in one's own socio-historic-cultural contexts, and to make haibun anew through the poetic past of one's own literary legacy and shared ones from the rest of the world."

Here is a point to ponder over. Though short verses were available aplenty in many literary societies the creative genre called haibun was perhaps rare; it was a Japanese speciality, a gift from Matsuo Basho (1644-94). Even haiku is known world over as a Japanese genre of short verse. Poets writing haiku and related poems usually relate to the original creations adapted to their respective tongues adhering to the Japanese style and content, to the extent possible. It may not be based on one's own literary tradition. Regarding the use of past in poems Haruo Shirane wrote, "Basho believed that the poet had to work along both axes. To work only in the present would result in poetry that was fleeting. To work just in the past, on the other

hand, would be to fall out of touch with the fundamental nature of haikai, which was rooted in the everyday world. Haikai was, by definition, anti-traditional, anti-classical, anti-establishment, but that did not mean that it rejected the past. Rather, it depended upon the past and on earlier texts and associations for its richness." So past and present both are to be utilised which includes culture of countries but in such creations the Japanese creative force has to be utilised even in the modern context.

Basho was the key figure who elevated haikai from an entertaining pastime to a respected poetic form. He had developed a set of related poetic ideals widely utilised by his disciples, fellow poets, and successive followers since the mid-1680s. It looked to the past for inspiration and authority and yet rejected it. It parodied the classical (and Chinese) tradition even as they sought to become part of it. It paid homage to the 'ancients' and yet stressed newness. The haikai Basho created was marked by its freshness though it was not delinked from the Japanese and Chinese past.

It was after his return from a journey to Oku that Basho became more focused on developing a different style of prose which was infused with a haikai spirit. Around 1690, in a letter to Kyorai, he named this new haikai

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prose haibun which was characterized by the "prominent inclusion of haikai words (haigon), particularly a combination of vernacular Japanese (zokugo) and Chinese words (kango)."

Though Basho re-established and refined a mixed genre of verse and prose called haibun (haikai prose), leaning on the Chinese past, as exemplified in *The Narrow Road to the Interior*, it has been opined that haibun had been developed before Basho and written in the form of short essays, such as *Kigin's Mountain Well* (1648). But its prose style resembled that of classical prose. So though akin to it, it was not considered as haibun proper. After the publication of the first anthology of the new haibun, entitled *Prose Collection of Japan*, Basho was recognized as the first creator of such a model.

Basho's haibun are allusive, figurative and are infused with parallel phrases and contrastive words; all of them are used to enhance literary effects and add aesthetic-historical depth to the poems. To have direct experience of his haibun and haiku two quotes are given below from Matsuo Basho's *Oku no Hosomichi* in English translation:

"The months and days are the wayfarers of the centuries and as yet another year comes round, it, too, turns traveler. Sailors whose lives float away as they labor on boats, horsemen who encounter old age as they draw the horse around once more by the bit, they also spend their days in travel and make their home in wayfaring . . . As the

sky of the new year filled with the haze of spring, I thought of going beyond the Shirakawa Barrier, and so possessed was I by some peripatetic urge that I thought I had an invitation from the god of travelers himself and so became unable to settle down to anything. I mended my underpants, re-corded my rain hat, and took three bits of moxa cautery. I could not put from my mind how lovely the moon must be at Matsushima. I disposed of my property and moved to Sampu's villa.

My old grasshut

Lived in now by another generation

Is decked out with dolls"

(Translated by Earl Miner from *The Narrow Road Through the Provinces*, in Japanese Poetic Diaries, 1969) And

"The passing days and months are eternal travellers in time. The years that come and go are travellers too. Life itself is a journey; and as for those who spend their days upon the waters in ships and those who grow old leading horses, their very home is the open road. . . .

I sold my home and moved into Sampu's guest house, but before I left my cottage I composed a verse and inscribed it on a poem strip which I hung upon a pillar:

This rude hermit cell

Will be different now, knowing Dolls'

Festival as well"

(Translated by Dorothy Britton (A Haiku Journey *Bashô's Narrow Road to a Far Province*, 1980)



Example from another travel book by Basho is here:

"In his introduction to *Narrow Road* (18), Hiroaki Sato translates a passage from Basho's *Knapsack Notebook*, the *Oi no Kobumi*:

"Heels torn, I am the same as Saigyō, and I think of him at the Tenryū ferry. Renting a horse, I conjure up in my mind the sage who became furious. In the beautiful spectacles of the mountains, field, ocean and coast, I see the achievement of the creation. Or I follow the trails left by those who, completely unattached, pursued the Way, or I try to fathom the truth expressed by those with poetic sensibility."

Basho understood his journeys through a genre he developed from old travel genres. He refurbished it through his understanding of haiku. In his study of Basho, Makoto Ueda noted the artistic quality of Basho's prose and opined that Basho's haibun could be called haiku prose, written in the spirit of haiku. David L Barnhill called them prose poems. But Jamie Edgecombe aptly thought that the complex structure of haiku should keep the poem from being dissolved in the haiku prose. So it may be said that the haikuesque prose remains with the haiku making the whole a comprehensive poetry.

Basho says, "Learn about pines from the pine, and about bamboo from the bamboo."

"The is-ness of a thing is not to be gained through attention to the thing alone. Indeed, is-ness is not the same as the 'thingness' of a 'thing'", opined Jamie Edgecombe in his *Basho's Journey: A Rumination* as referred above.

Basho journeys or voyages run into the multiple fields of past and present, of persons bygone and existing. He follows their becoming as he exists; he physically journeys across time-space while simultaneously journeying into his existence and the nature of these journey-voyages become a creative process. He follows and returns to *zoka*, the creative heart of the real. He inhabits travel. Travel becomes a symbol of time and space. In the two haibun referred from *Oku no Hosomichi* we find that the selling of his hut and its impact is present in both the haiku referred. The works are repetitive and imaginative to some extent. He is concerned about the poetic sensibility and artistic quality, travel being at the height of things in his life. Basho pays little attention to the present, past occupying a greater portion but the past is not mere memory. It is nostalgic, it is mystic. Past contains the future in it as in "Doll's Festival" or in the mere mention of the dolls. Learning about the pine and bamboo from pine and bamboo refers to the idea of becoming one with them by concentration. The idea of catching the is-ness, thing-ness and I-ness lie in the spiritual sphere to be found in ancient Chinese and Indian sources, specially in Taoism, Buddhism and Vedic ideas. Here I refer to one of The Mother's (A spiritual personality; co-founder of Sri Aurobindo



Ashram. Pondicherry, India) diary entry to know the process of her identification with the plants and flowers; her spiritual journey into the thing-ness of the flowers. Let's look at her diary entry of 7 April 1917: "A deep concentration seized on me, and I perceived that I was identifying myself with a single cherry-blossom, then through it with all cherry-blossoms, and as I descended deeper in the consciousness, following a stream of bluish force, I became suddenly the cherry tree itself, stretching towards the sky like so many arms its innumerable branches laden with their sacrifice of flowers."

Basho the main architect of haiku expanded his poetic self into haibun as he was a real poet-philosopher, an explorer of consciousness; far above writing few lines of light bodied haiku with technical fitness.

In contrast to the above, if we refer to the submission guidelines of modern haiku and some haibun magazines or e-zines we shall have different notions about the poetic genres depending on the ideas of their editors and others governing them. As large numbers of haiku and even haibun have been written, they seem to search for the new and exotic varieties of poems to avoid boredom, to be tuned according to their choices which are often idiosyncratic. Asking for changes in others' poems is never a norm usual with the mainstream poetry magazines. One may reject poems or take them but demanding changes regularly in poetic creations are beyond expectations, beyond the usual. In spite of all fastidiousness when the issue is published one

may easily find similar kinds of works strewn throughout the pages of the magazines which often ends with a touch of personal memory or a piece of story at the end of the haibun. A tiny story linked with memory is the most popular example of such works. Short Stories have their own science. Mini stories following the Short Story pattern could be created as a genre but they already exist. Haiku, dangling at the end of the prose in a haibun as the end product, not related to the prose many times, are often noticed.

Calling up memory and telling stories; most of the haibun and tanka prose here make up with stories of writer's personal life. *The Sutra* is good because of its reminiscent story but it is the same technique. Story is the mainstay in *Kathy's Mum*; here haiku has link with the very short prose but is not quite related to Nature. Nature is used to tell a small story. I don't think that stories only make good haibun.

Among these haibun a tanka prose the one titled *Presence* keeps to the promise of a good haibun. The tanka and the prose are so natural with the surroundings, drenched in beautiful Nature, that it seems there could be nothing else. The prose is poetry fitting with the tanka; added with haiku it could be haibun, though there is some subtle difference, as the experts would claim.

Though change with time is always the norm for any type of literary work, such things have to be in tune with the basic ideas behind the creation of a genre. Here Basho and some

of his distinguished contemporary poets remain the ideals, still now. High poetic and creative zeal is the requirement for creation of haibun. For both haibun and haiku the ideal background should be pastoral. Beauty of Nature is an additional qualification in them. No quizzical trick or idiosyncratic insistence is the ideal to be imitated. The poetry should be natural expression coming out of the being

of the poet; original and evocative, following the traits of the genre.

A comparative study of the latest volume of such journals as mentioned, shows that through the changes incorporated into such poetic works the poets have shifted from the original base of such poems as Basho had initiated, followed by the poets close to his time and thereafter.

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## A FORGOTTEN DOVE

Supratik Sen\*

Light  
with my wings  
winsome and white  
harbinger of peace  
with love  
I fly above  
like a forgotten dove

chirping, I soar  
I rise above countries  
all boundaries, in sight no more  
underneath I see  
lovely lands  
warm waters  
mighty mountains

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\* Poet, Editor of Your Space, Kolkata

beckoning me  
beautiful people  
waving at me  
wanting me to come down  
they are singing  
enough, we have had enough  
to each other  
we have been more  
than cruel and tough  
come down come down  
we'd not cage you anymore  
you will live in our work, in our chore  
come down come down  
from north to south  
west to east  
your seat  
is our crown  
come down come down

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## LEADERS AND LEISURE

**R.R.Gandikota\***

Leaders, petty or pretty big, are sure to acquire a tummy. It is directly proportional to the position one holds. Leaders not in power become couch potatoes with no work to do, and those in power find no time for leisure, relaxation, or exercise. Thus both the categories get 'pot-bellied'. They give up their earlier tight pants, T shirts, tuck ups and take up to dhotis, pajamas, and kurtas, or even better long coats, covering their curves and pouches.

Leaders can ill afford becoming fatty and thereby invite inevitable sugar and blood pressure, a threat to long life and losing power. They should invariably strive to preserve themselves for the good of the nation, of course more for their good, too.

Presidents and Prime Ministers resort to enjoying long holidays, an exercise for recuperation of their health. If they go to holiday resorts, they grow more fat and the purpose will be defeated. As such they have to take up some hobby like gardening, farming, mountaineering, horse riding, etc., which burn the fat they earned so far and make them fit for further growth.

Of late our L I P s, (Leaders-in-power), and L O P s (Leaders-in-opposition), are taking up 'padayatras'. These spasmodic peripatetic exercises are double benefit schemes. They help gaining popularity and losing fat. Going on long 'sabbaticals', is another way of enjoying leisure, having no work to do either at the office or at home.

Our beloved father of the nation, the Mahatma, and the saint Vinoba, of Bhudan, were renowned walkers, who brought dignity to walking and the walkers. They walked more and talked less, which our leaders should imbibe. Leaders should take up daily walking or at least go dog-walking, to be fit in public life. It is said our 'Rajarshi', C.R.(Chakravartula Rajagopalachari), used to go for a morning walk every day for an hour and on way back took an 'open bath', near the municipal tap, at the street corner, and at that time anyone could freely approach him and appeal for redress of any grievance, in the then Madras state.

The legendary 'N.T.R' of Andhra Pradesh, Advani ji and Modi ji took up 'Ratha Yatras', which were most successful in reading the pulse of the people and coming to power.

The Britishers are well known 'jolly-walkers'. Gladstone never missed his daily

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\* Principal (Retd.) MSN College, Kakinada

walk; shine or rain. In his seventies, he took up 32 miles walk, along with his friend in Norway. Balfour did not allow a single day in his life slip under his feet, without a fairly long walk. The great Irish leader Sexton was so meticulous and punctual in his walking schedule, people in Dublin, used to correct their watches, watching him walk.

Our most beloved first Prime-Minister of India, Cha-Cha Nehru too was very strict in his daily schedule. It is a wonder how Pt. Nehru could find time from "Standing On His Head" (*Seershaasana*) in the very early hours of the day to burning mid night oil. He never sacrificed a single item on the day's crowded schedule. During Indo-China war, a senior journalist was sanctioned an appointment for

an exclusive interview on the war, at 4 a.m. The journalist who knew about Pandit ji's punctuality went by 3.50 a.m. He was ushered into the P.M's presence at 4 a.m. sharp. Lo-and-behold! Nehru ji was standing on his head and finished the interview in 10 minutes. Later on when asked how he could find time for 'yogaasanaas' too, even during the war days with 18 to 20 hours work schedule, he quipped, "A busy man finds time in things he is really interested in".

Our Modi ji is extraordinarily exceptional. For over a decade he never took leave for even a day for relaxation. What a wonder! An ideal leader to be idolized in the golden history of India.

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## NAKED COUPLETS (Unrhymed)

**Dr V V B Rama Rao\***

Writing is silly  
Publication is stupidity'

'Greed is limitless  
News is nonsense'

'Reading has no meaning  
Teaching is for lucre'

Degrees are for employment  
Industry is for profit'

'Actuality is not cynicism  
Asceticism is impossibility'

Epistle this is to aspirants  
Understanding is helpful.

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\* ELT Professional, NTPC Col. Hotagi Station, MP

(Punctuation sensitive)

## M. CHALAPATI RAU - AN EMINENT AUTHOR - JOURNALIST

T. Sivarama Krishna\*

M. Chalapati Rau was a link in the unbroken chain of famous galaxy of Andhra editors and journalists of great tradition and character that won rich laurels in national and international spheres.

M. Chalapati Rau was an eminent author-journalist, a brilliant leader writer, an outstanding editor, a man of letters and a humanist. It was reported that two great men made a vast and wide reading dangerously in their earlier years, in Bangalore. They were Winston Churchill and M. Chalapati Rau.

M Chalapati Rau was full well steeped in the classics. He wrote his works in a hurry. He believed in the Manchester Guardian School of journalism and swore by the Scott-Montague tradition. Among British editors he preferred Spender to Gardiner and the former's self-discipline to the latter's vivacity.

Chalapati Rao was born in Visakhapatnam in 1908. After an early education in Visakhapatnam, he joined the Madras Presidency College from which he took his M.A. degree in English Language and Literature in 1929. After that he took his Law Degree from the Law College, Madras. After

an apprenticeship in the chambers of Pappu Somsundaram, a leader of the Madras Bar, M.C. enrolled himself as an advocate for sometime in 1932. Then he shifted his scene of activity to Visakhapatnam, where he practiced law there for some time. Then there along with some like-minded friends he organized a Literary, Cultural Association known as the *Athenaeum* of which Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was President and Chalapati Rau was the Secretary. But his interest lay in Literature and Journalism. During the period he was a frequent contributor to *Triveni*.

Kolavennu Rama Koteswara Rao discovered M.C. Later K. Iswara Dutt took him under his wing. K. Iswara Dutt launched *Twentieth Century* the journal and M.C. among journalists. Then M.C. joined the crew of *People's Voice* (Pithapuram's Voice). Thereafter Iswara Dutt persuaded M.C. to accompany him to Allahabad. There he was the Chief Associate of Iswara Dutt at *The Weekend* and *Twentieth Century*. It was a notable event in the annals of journalism. K. Iswara Dutt always used to say that M. C. (to pun on his initials) had that Magnetizing, Magnificent Capacity and ability to attract readers.

M.C.'s association with *National Herald* began since its inception in 1938 -

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\* Lecturer in English (Retd.) & Writer, Kakinada

under another outstanding Editor - K. Rama Rao. He was a disciple of K. Rama Rao also. When the British Govt. forced the *National Herald* to close down in 1942, M.C. moved to the *Hindustan Times* and worked for it for four years until the restart of the *National Herald*. Besides writing editorials he was contributing a weekly column with the caption, *Off the Record*, under the pseudonym, Magnus. As a leader-writer he created a sensation by his articles on War - the best in India since the days of the late S. Rangaswamy. As a columnist he gave Delhi and Shimla the shivers. On the revival of *National Herald* in 1945, M. C. returned to Lucknow as Joint Editor and became its Editor the next year. Thus he was at the helm of affairs of the *National Herald* for an unbroken period of 32 years till 1978. He had a superb command of English. It was said that there were not many in India who had that mastery. His articles on war became columns of liquid gold in his hands. K. Rama Rao used to say that his knowledge of foreign politics would suffice half-a-dozen chancelleries. As an outstanding editor he did it with honour and distinction.

Since his retirement from the *Herald*, M. C. did a lot of freelancing. He was busy with a number of books, literary and journalistic assignment. He was Chief Editor of a new non-political monthly - *Meridian International*. He could be rightly considered as the founding father of the Indian Federation of Working Journalists (1950-55). As a man of character, tact, wisdom, resourcefulness, he led it from strength to strength and put it on

a secure foundation. He set up the first Press Commission. He was the leader of the Indian Press Delegation which accompanied Nehru on his historic 1955 tour of the USSR, Poland and Yugoslavia. He was a member of the Indian Government's Good Will Mission to China in 1952. He was a member of the UNESCO Press Experts Committee and also worked on various UNESCO commissions. He was Indian representative to the UN General Assembly (1958) and also a member of the Initiating Committee of the International Press Institute. Thus whatever he touched he adorned with grace and charm.

M.C. was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1968, and returned the award a year later, rightly saying that journalists should not seek or accept recognition of a kind which might encroach on their freedom.

M.C. was a prolific author. As a close associate of Jawaharlal Nehru he was on the editorial board which was responsible for bringing out a series of books on Nehru's life and work. He was closely associated with the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and the Nehru Foundation for the International Awards for Peace and Friendship. He edited selected works of Nehru. He also wrote biographies of Gandhi, Nehru, Pant and Gurazada Appa Rao. Some of his books are *Fragments of a Revolution*, *Journalism and Politics*, *Magnus and Muses*, *The Press in India*, *The Indian Dream*, *All in all (Profiles and Skits)* and *Twenty Five Years of Indian Independence*.

M.C. died on 25th March 1983 in Delhi - full of years and honors. M.C. had that journalistic eminence, intellectual incandescence, moral earnestness and fervour - that brought to Journalism, a strength of purpose.

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## WONDERS VERSUS BLUNDERS

Dr K Sandhya\*

Who said only seven wonders?  
Architectural marvels abound boundless.  
Man's excellence multi-faceted,  
revealing a face  
Every new day broadening human brain;  
Minute folds and grooves groping  
for ever fresh.

Smarts and apps and apples of manifold,  
Techie talents create gadgets hiding in a palm.  
Portable and pocketable ...dire needs to  
luxuries.  
Intellectual giant is a man, a genie, procuring  
The incredible with indelible inputs.

Medicine witnessed the best; super specialities,  
Micro surgeries with precision and less  
invasion:  
Incurable illnesses and undiagnosed diseases  
Found an answer. Longevity stretched and  
mortality  
Shrunk; avenues of joy and pleasure grew by  
leaps and bounds.

Poets sprouting fresh spreading the social web  
Whole globe shares voices in page sole  
Nations many, cultures vary, religions poly,  
In unison crying for peace, love, oneness...  
Let's live in harmony minus harm any.

Yet... where's the joy? Bliss too?  
Kidnapping the infants in incubators, trapping  
School kids to trade, rape, love blackmails,  
acid attacks,  
Torture of wives, cutting their throats with  
deadly knives....  
Why do we drown in to blunders from  
wonders, brothers?

Earthly sojourn destined to be set and short,  
Sacred life with mission bestowed  
but not wasted.  
Pause and think a while to confess  
the done guilt  
Regress from the path where  
the ugly hood raised in hate.  
Choose the route to grow into roots humane.

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\* Poet-Writer-Academic, Vijayawada



## ON PRAYER

**T. Padmanabhan\***

As good a beginning as any for a brief consideration of this matter is the significant remark: 'God honours no drafts where there are no deposits.' In this matter, no net income is necessary for finding resources for deposits. Deep inside everyone of us are the resources - spiritual inclination, devotion born of strong awareness of a power beyond us, of a presiding deity over human affairs, readiness to submit to a will above ours, the keen awareness, and acknowledgement born of such awareness, of the pitiable inadequacy of our own resources and so on. Born of these resources is prayer, the deposit. It is a rewarding subject of study in these days of the compelling paradox of the simultaneous existence of wavering and weakening faith, the compelling evidence of increase in faith, the ever-increasing resort to violence as a means of enlarging the ranks of the 'faithful' and reducing those of persons considered to be lacking in faith, treating faith no longer as a purely personal matter but viewing it as a matter of public concern, where the over-eager faithful are determined to administer to society the corrective of their brand of belief. Of inexhaustible interest and relevance is this theme, and for that very reason it lends itself to study from ever so many angles, usual and unusual.

Tennyson is held to have observed that 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.' The knowledge of such things will of course be limited to the experiential universe of each individual except where he chooses to share his experience with others.

'Life is fragile; handle with care,' is the advice tendered. This is applicable to life alike in physical terms and in spiritual terms. In both zones of existence, the fragility of life is for an undeniable fact. And in both, prayer comes in handy. As a tool, where the fragility is a bit remediable; as a salve, where it is not. If people are ready to realize, that life can never be lived on terms of one's own determination, there will be a better state of preparedness for making of prayer a part of the preferred way of life. Prayer is a means of undeniable efficacy for those - strong-willed and weak-willed alike - who, while realizing that 'it ought not to mean that we stop trying to help ourselves,' find in it 'the prelude to peace, the preface to purpose and the pathway to perfection,' and also 'the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of our recollection, the sea of our meditation, the rest of our cares, the calm of our tempest.' It is an observation demanding unqualified acceptance, that 'the tragedy of our day is not unanswered prayer but unoffered prayer.'

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Where man is proud in fancied 'self-sufficiency;' where he scoffs at the very idea of turning for succour to something invisible, to something which seemingly defies reason but which reason has still to concede as its own extension, i.e. Faith, as a reality which reason with its own puny devices will be unable to disestablish as a repeatedly experienced fact of life; where he deludes himself into a make-believe that he has complete independence of decision and action, he may be in no mood for resort to prayer, thus giving rise to the tragedy of unoffered prayer. If we go by the evidence of our own eyes, the millions who keep thronging temples and other places of worship have to be taken to be proof enough of reinforcements to the ranks of those who take to prayer in times of stress, distress and pleasure alike. By and large, the view that 'they never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright,' seems to have hundreds of thousands of subscribers thereto. 'In the book of fate, it is given to any to read at best one page, the prescribed page i.e. today.' Today, 'the prescribed page' may hold nothing but unpleasantness or downright misery for a person. It may hold little promise of anything better for the morrow. The outcome will be a frame of mind ready for trustfulness of Providence:

'God will grant you strength to journey and see all your heartaches through.' The resort to prayer naturally follows. With Taylor we should hold: 'No man can hinder our private addresses to god; every man can build a chapel in his breast, himself the priest, his heart the sacrifice, and the earth he treads on,

the altar.' It comes naturally to everyone to experience 'a sally of the soul into the unfound infinite,' 'to seek an audience with God.'

The trouble is with and about the content of prayer. There are a few interesting and humorous views about it. One is: 'What men usually ask for when they pray to God is that two and two may not make four.' Another is contained in the comic verse:

'There is a heaven, I am sure, for my heart yearns that way;  
There is a hell, I doubt not, for where else will my neighbours go?' A third is also presented in rhyme:

'Jones, beset by stress and strife,  
Begged this single boon of life;  
'Give me half a chance!' Know what?  
Half a chance was all he got.' There is a fourth:  
'To gods both false and true I'll humbly pray,  
If only they will give me my own way.'  
There are some who hold that man's prayers are a disease of the will!

A more serious view is to be found in the Buddha's observation: 'The greatest prayer is patience.' True, while labouring on in one's own limited sphere of duties, possessing one's soul in patience and humbly awaiting God's grace to be experienced in and through what He wills should be his lot is in a sense a most refined form of prayer, a highly refined content of prayer. Then there is the view that the very moanings, groans and sighings of the heart constitute prayer when the heart outstrips the tongue; 'every good and holy desire,

though they lack the form, hath in itself the substance and force of a prayer with God.' It is said that there are in the lives of many, moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees. Perhaps that is just when the body is ready for meeting the heaviest demands on it, ready for the most daring ventures. True prayer is sure ever to be a 'native and deep-seated impulse of the soul of man.' It is also for a fact that 'a hope begun in doubt and darkness' is helped on its way to fruition by prayer. All this merely confirms that prayer to be truly prayer should take its origin in the very core of one's being, forming a veritable gush from the heart, based on awareness that 'Heaven is never deaf but when man's heart is dumb.' By and large, the upsurge of the heart yearning its way to the divine feet may find in silence the best mode of prayer. 'Earnestness and not eloquence' may in the case of the ordinary run of human beings be the key-note of prayer.

When do people take to prayer? There is a moving story about a child who on being told by the surgeon about to take the risk of a major operation on her body that he was going to put her to sleep, asked leave to pray and prayed thus:

'Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep,  
'If I should die before I wake,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take.'

We have the surgeon's own word for it that that night he prayed for the first time in thirty years! With saints it is almost ever the

case that their lives through, they seek through prayer in a rarefied spiritual atmosphere communion with God. In effect, they convert their lives into prayer.

There are views that work is worship, work is prayer; that service is prayer. Those who glory in the doctrine of violence as the earnest of strength of faith will take to prayer through 'apostolic knocks.' There will be those who hope that heaven's decrees can be turned aside by prayer. There may be people who through prayer seek to lay low a bulwark on the evil side. In the case of many the very cry of distress may be 'an involuntary appeal to that invisible Power whose aid their souls would invoke.' It is equally true that not in every case 'where human life is a constant want will it be a constant prayer.' But how many will be there in a state of mind to acknowledge that 'they could find profit by losing their prayers?' How many, prepared to concede that it could be that through their own prayer, at their own request, they could be seeking their ruin? How few of us know what will be for our own good? Questions aplenty are there to drive us into deeper and ever deeper thinking about prayer as a means of shortening the distance between ourselves and our Creator.

The one truth to which we should stand committed is that prayer is 'the key that opens to us the treasure of God's mercies and blessings.' The allied truth is that 'the peace that follows prayer will invite comparison to the hum outliving the hushed bell.'

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## S. T. GNANANANDA - A POET TO REMEMBER

Tuttagunta Viswerawara Rao\*

As a colossus among contemporary Telugu Poets, Dr. S. T. Gnanananda, popularly known in literacy circles and in generality as "Gnanananda Kavi", was a poet of rare eminence with recognition of his services to the cause of literature. Suragali Timoti Gnananandam was born of Paapamma and Yellayya in a poor Harijan-Christian family, belonging to the lowest strata of society at Pedakanki, a village in the Bobbili Taluk of the present Vizianagaram District on the 16th July, 1922 and was nestled in his boyhood in the bosom of Nature. He faced iron realities of life and was recollecting with pride how he used to work as a boy for a paltry sum of two annas a day going with his father and how thus they eked out and scraped their living by hard work as labourers. Thus, he was born in acute penury and grew in a climate of pernicious communal distinctions.

While his father toiled on farms, the child Gnanananda, imbibing the pure influence of Nature, learnt the rudiments of education at the village school, observing the boys of his age group going to school, and in his twelfth year began to lisp in numbers, for numbers came easily to him. And he began to find out ways and means of getting his ambition and

urge fulfilled. Nourishing his inborn gift of writing Telugu poetry with indefatigable pursuit of literary excellence, all by his own efforts, he left his home and went to Vizianagaram and Vijayawada. Despite many odds and hurdles in the way, he went forward undaunted with patience and perseverance and sincerity and tenacity, which made him a literate but a literateur as well. He worked as a teacher at an elementary school at Vijayawada. Two great persons there, late Padma Bhushan Dr. Ayyadevara Kaleswara Rao Pantulu and Kavi Samrat Viswanatha Satyanarayana stood by him with paternal affection through thick and thin, the former financially helping him persecute his studies and the latter by taking him as a disciple and teaching rudiments of literature, though his formal education had been wayward and irregular.

He passed the entrance test of the Vidvan course and based upon a Government order, issued uniquely in his case, he got appointed without a degree as a Telugu Pandit for the McLaurin High School, Kakinada, which institution he served with distinction for over three and half a decades till his retirement. He was nominated by the Government of Andhra Pradesh as a Member of the Official Language Commission, headed

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\* Professor (Retd.) Rajamahendravaram

by Dr. C. Narayana Reddy. As Member of Sahitya Academy of Andhra Pradesh and Member on the Red Cross committee and other organisations, he rendered yeomen service.

A prolific poet, Gnanananda wrote about thirty volumes of poetry and prose, with poetry written with adherence to the age old traditions and metrical way of writing, without dilution and decadence, taking upon himself the responsibility of reforming society. He wrote poetic pieces and books in classical poetic style. He showed precocious penchant for Telugu literature with no added advantage of hereditary scholarship, he being a poet of a very humble origin.

His worthy works, *Golconda*, *Akshara Pooja*, *Pillana Grovi*, *Paanchajanyamu*, *Christu Prabandhanamu*, revealing his intense faith in God and taking Christ as a protagonist, and others bear testimony to his poetic imagination and scholarly knowledge. His work, entitled in the name of a disciple of Gautama Buddha, as *Aamrapaali*, an iridescent piece, which reveals his intimacy with Buddhism, brought him much prominence and recognition and also an award from Andhra Pradesh Sahitya Academy. It was prescribed in the syllabus for B.Sc. course by the Andhra University in 1974. He dedicated many of his books to various literary bigwigs and great politicians. He invariably participated in Kavi Sammelanas, conducted by A. I. R. Stations and in public meetings. His life has proved that progressive human values need not be

clothed with the modern uniform of free verse, but can equally shine through championship of disciplined form of classical prosody.

Gnanananda was a great poet with unique ability in the field of composing *Seesa* verses in an appealing way in Telugu, reflecting the chaste Telugu idiom and dignity. In him a blend of compassionate fervour and humanistic idealism is found castigating the inhumanity of man to the flora and the fauna of nature on the lines of Jandhyala. He sounded the conch for a vibrant upsurge with his vision of an egalitarian society. He had the good fortune of coming under the profound influence of the peerless bard of humanism, Gurram Joshuva, whose poetic virtues, he had surely inherited and who left an indelible impress on his mind and heart.

He was honoured at several places throughout the state and also outside and the titles of Kavi Kokila, Kaviloka Vibhusahana, Sahiti Vallabha, etc., were conferred upon him by men of letters. The Andhra University conferred in 1974 the prestigious honorary doctorate of Kala Prapurna. He was also honoured with *Kanaka Abhisheka*, *Ganda Penderam*, etc. by literary agencies.

Plain and outspoken, frank and fearless Gnanananda had a very sensitive and tender nature. He was typically dressed in spotless white 'Dhoti' and a full hands 'Lalchi' with a fine matching shawl, either linen or woollen, hanging over his shoulders, giving his exterior, a magnificent appearance. He set up 'Joshuva Saahitya (literary) Peetham' in

Kakinada and served it with dedication. He was acclaimed as 'Abhinava Joshuva', having reached the summits of glory with his gate crashing into the domain.

S.T. Gnanananda expired at a private Nursing Home in Kakinada on the night of Thursday, the 6th January, 2011 at the age of about eighty seven years, leaving two sons and two daughters behind him.

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## UBUNTU - I AM BECAUSE WE ARE

An anthropologist who had been studying the Xhosa people of Africa, was leaving to return home when he had a revealing experience, which he narrated.

While waiting for his ride, he decided to play a game with the little children who milled around him. He placed some sweets in a basket, and tied the basket under a tree a small distance away. He asked the children to play a game and run a race. Upon his signal the children were to run to the tree and collect the sweets. Winner was to take all.

When he said "Go!" the kids ran towards each other and held hands, and together they ran off towards the tree. They untied the basket and happily shared the sweets amongst themselves.

The Anthropologist was pleasantly surprised. He asked the children to explain what they did and why?

A young girl simply replied: "How can one of us be happy if all the others are sad?"

The anthropologist was dumbfounded! For months and months he'd been studying the tribe, yet it was only now that he really understood their true essence...

"Africans have a belief called Ubuntu (oo-boon-too, n.) which means, "I am because we are." The individual is a part of the whole universe, a part of other people and all living things, and they cannot be treated separately.

For centuries, many people have considered the people of Africa backward. When one witnesses such great wisdom and humanity, it makes one wonder who really is backward.

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

**Courtesy : Internet**



## THE INWARD LIGHT

L. Dayanand Kumar\*

Needless to say that darkness is dispelled by Light, a naked truth. The burning problem in the present world is that a human being is now an antihuman due to lack of humanness which causes a terrific destruction to human life. Haplessly people are reluctant to spend at least a few minutes a day to meditate on the *Inward Light* (*Anthahkarana*) which is indeed the root cause of humanity. A person who contemplates on the ignited light within, only is fit to be called a right human being. As a result of complete lack of this practice, knowingly or unknowingly we forget ethics and lead a miserable life indeed. Today's man is an example not for spiritual transcendence but for worldly transcendence and he has neither compassion nor self control but a great passion for being recognized as a great man in the society and he always longs to be extolled by many without doing worthy deeds. The inward light or the *Anthahkarana* directs us towards *Dharma*. When man fails to recognize the inward light, he unconsciously travels from truth to ignorance.

In the words of Eliot from *The Waste Land* (What the thunder said in section V)

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*Datta, Dayadhvam, Damayata*  
*Shantih Shantih Shantih*

*Datta* means "To give" ----- charity  
*Dayadhvam* means "To sympathise" ----- mercy  
*Damayata* means "To control self"

A human being should have these three precious and priceless attributes but unfortunately we lack them because we don't contemplate on "The Inward" which is the indispensable wish of the-Prajapathi-Omniscient. 'He' instills the power of discrimination between a real world and an imagined world in us. Yet man foolishly abandons the Light and embraces the Dark representing pride, greed, sloth and lust which are responsible for human destruction.

A human being's life is immensely enticed by the materialistic world as it appears fashionable and comfortable to him. He longs for gold and pelf and consciously forgets 'self' and continues his pursuit of riches which is ephemeral.

Missing the Guru in one's life, the sense of the inward light is lost thereby life becomes puzzling, tormenting and haphazard. A Guru shows the righteous path and his grace makes the disciple's life blissful. The process



of mechanical life is transparent but its transient nature is realized by a few.

The Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore says "Example is better than precept." Lecturing on spirituality is easier than practicing spirituality. Becoming spiritual is the greatest inward journey of man. In India, a few attained this stage *Brahmananda* (perfect happiness) which is called Real Moksha.

For instance, Sidhdharda though born in a noble family, privileged as prince and who had royal pleasures, relinquished them and turned inward and became a sage. After seeing the old, the sick and the deceased, he asked himself, 'Must we all become old, fall sick and die?' He started pondering the meaning of life which made him to renounce everything and he cast away everything like a blade of grass, got enlightened and attained the highest levels of concentration under the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya and became Buddha, the light of Asia. His *Anthakharana* (conscience) paved him the way to Moksha. After having got enlightened, he first set foot in Samath and found five disciples who listened to his gospel with great humility. He first taught five ascetics- the path that liberates one from all sufferings. He expounded on real human life, his actions, liberation and taught wisdom, how to lead life on earth and also how to achieve the state of permanence to peoples of the world. Buddha breathed spirituality and philanthropy and instructed his disciples to go and spread the fragrance of wisdom to all. Buddha moved towards Uruvila and met a large number of fire worshipping ascetics led

by a chief priest called Kasyapa and appealed to them that he might stay in a room for a night where they kept sacred fire. But Kasyapa said that the serpent was living inside and nobody dared to go in, yet Buddha requested Kasyapa and went into the room.

The next morning Kasyapa was astonished to see Buddha who came out with consummate virtue and Buddha said 'the fire had been conquered by my fire', the real power within.

Mother Sarada Devi, a personification of devotion, was an epitome of sacredness and an example for the glory of womanhood, meditated on *Anthakharana* (the conscience) for hours every day during her life time. Mother emphasised on the importance of *Japa* and Meditation and earnestly suggested that one should meditate on one's chosen Deity as one goes on performing *Japa*.' One who does this sadhana regularly can have peace and tranquility and recognize the Deity which is called 'The Inward', what Mother strongly believed and practiced in her whole life. The Mother firmly supposed that one gets everything when the mind becomes steady. When a person is steady in meditation, he will clearly see the lord in his heart and hear his voice. The Mother's constant prayer could make her understand the universe created by God. She enjoyed celestial bliss and lived in a state of tranquility. Before Mother left the world physically, she gave the last message to the world. ...." If you want peace of mind, don't find fault with others rather see your own

faults and learn to make the whole world your own"

Guru's grace is the most powerful and travels mighty fast beyond continents which is very evident in Naren's life. Narendranath Dutta who later became Vivekananda was blessed by Guru Sri Ramakrishna. His constant meditation on "The Inward" since he was born and the grace of Sri Ramakrishna made him a great saint whose teachings captured lakhs of people in India and abroad. His unflinching determination of recognizing The Light within made him sit in Meditation for years and he became the backbone of

Indian Youth. Vivekananda sincerely advised the Indian Youth to be lions and diligent to realize and follow the inward light.

Tagore says "In the Sanskrit language the bird is described as 'twice born'- once in its limited shell and then finally in the freedom of the unbounded sky." This inherited instinct of freedom dwells in the realm of inner realization-the inward light- which is only possible with the grace of a Guru.

"When a human consciously recognizes the divine ignited lamp within then truly he will become God."

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## EDUCATION @MVGR

**A.Mahesh Kumar\***

Where the learner is fearless and overcomes all his inhibitions  
Where learning becomes everyday joy  
Where the classroom has not been treated as a cage by the enthusiastic young learner  
Where ideas are illuminated from the free spirit of expression

Where holistic learning leads its joy towards innovation  
Where the creative blend of mind has not lost its way into the parroting process of meaningless education system  
Where the young mind is tuned forward to enter into the world of problems with solutions  
Into that Paradise of learning-My Father...Let all learners at MVGR flourish.

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[MVGR- Maharaj Vijayaram Gajapathi Raj College of Engineering is one of the premier institutions of MANSAS located at Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.]

## DALIT LITERATURE: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Mallesh Gajjala\*

In modern India, Dalit literature has emerged as a collective voice after the late 1960s, beginning with Marathi, and later appeared in Hindi, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil literatures through self-narratives in the form of poems, short stories, plays, novels, biographies and most importantly, autobiographies. The dalit literature is known for its realism and its contribution to Dalit identity and politics. Dalit literature has sprung out of a progressive movement called "Little Magazine". It was a kind of rebellious manifestation of the educated Dalit youth of those days against the establishment in Maharashtra. They derived inspiration from the Black Panther Movement of blacks in North America. The literature of the blacks became the role model for them. This rebelliousness acquired its first expression in the form of a new literature called "Dalit Literature" during 1960s. The writers such as Baburao Bagul, Bandhu Madhav, Shankarao Kharat have already dealt with the problems of Dalits. The chief concern of Dalit literature is the emancipation of Dalits. Baburao Bagul's *Jehva Mee Jaat Chorli Hoti* (When it had Concealed My Caste), a collection of short stories created a revolutionary rhythm in the world of Marathi literature. Many critics have

compared it to the 'jazz music of the Blacks.' It has given a new direction and creative rendition to the experiences and feelings of the new educated Dalit youth. Many other Dalit writers such as Omprakash Valmiki, M.D. Namishray, Bandhumadav etc., have produced significant literary works identifying themselves with pride for being Dalit. With gradual passage of time, they have influenced all walks of life demonstrating their magnificence.

The word 'Dalit' has acquired a different connotation in the recent past by shunning the inferior and humiliating wound around it. They have brought about a revolution by connecting their life with struggle, protest and liberation movement. Thus, it has acquired a new meaning of change, reformation and revolution. In a letter addressed to Eleanor Zelliot, Gangadhar Pantawane, Professor of Marathi, underlines this changing scenario of Dalit literature as follows:

To me, Dalit is not the caste. He is man exploited by the social and economic traditions of this country. He does not believe in God, rebirth, soul, holy books teaching separatism, fate and heaven because they have made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution. (quoted in Zelliot 267).

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The legacy of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Bharata Ratna Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is the primary source for Dalit literature in the current times. The revolutionary work of Dr. Ambedkar had started in 1927. His message and call to the Dalits to 'educate, organize and agitate' aroused tremendous self-respect among the Dalits who were deprived of knowledge down from the centuries. He established Siddhartha College in Mumbai in 1947, Milind Mahavidyalaya in Aurangabad in 1949 and many schools and colleges in later period. Thousands of Dalit boys and girls, who used to carry brooms and buckets in their hands, went to schools with slates in their hands. The educated youth understood that the mainstream literature was not dealing with their life problems. The knowledge and consciousness, self-respect and dignity generated in them by Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar led them to initiate a revolt against the mainstream literature. Having started in Maharashtra, it has been spread to all corners of the country giving impetus to the Dalit writers. Though Dalit literature is published in all genres that include short stories, novels, plays, critical essays, biographies, autobiographies, translations, pamphlets, etc., providing useful insights on the question of Dalit identity, it is the poetry in which the most of the Dalit literature is produced. The consciousness that was created by the literature and movements has enabled the Dalit communities to shun their servile status inflicted on them by the Hindu social order, found a new path by flocking together with the notion of unity, and asserted their identity. It has

challenged the hegemony of Brahminical ideology in literature and conscientized Dalits to assert their identity in the society. Commenting on the nature of Dalit literature, C. Pradgna and P.D. Satyapal underline:

Dalit literature reveals a pattern in it from that of accepting the identity given by the dominant groups and growing on it to the stage of generating their own identity and redefining their cultural position in such a way as to sever links with the so-called Brahminical mainstream culture and develop a parallel one. The claim of Dalit poets is that identity is the basis of not only one's existence but also a synoptic vision of life, as a blueprint for action. The writer acts as a sensor and mouthpiece to the emerging systems and the writings are reflections to the socio-cultural movement.

Dalit literature demands proper implementation of the constitutional rights to the Dalits so that they can progress on a par with other privileged communities of the society. They question the rights and opportunities of the dominant groups hitherto who enjoyed, demands equal rights and opportunities as a matter of right/claim but not as a matter of charity. In a wider perspective, it is a counter movement, an anti-thesis to fight against philosophical and theological aspects of the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and Tantras including Buddhism and Jainism. It supports the rationalistic and scientific approach in literature. It is a source for the oppressed society to assert their survival. In the words of Jamnes Massey, "The Dalit School of literature represents a new level of

pride, military and sophisticated creativity. It is essentially a lable to help the Dailts to achieve a sense of cultural identity. 'Dalitness' is a source of confrontation and is a matter of appreciating the probability of one's total being." (1997)

The important feature of Dalit literature lies in the fact that for the first time in history, Dalits were able to ventilate their grievances and suffering to sensitize the members of the society driving home their point that their cause is not simply that of caste, but that of basic humanity and human rights. It questions the literary theories and ideology of the caste Hindus, and explores the lives of the neglected subaltern communities. It is based on the life experiences of the Dalits, hence, authenticity and reality are the important characteristics of the Dalit literature. Explaining the distinctiveness of the Dali literature J.K. Lele and R. Singh point out:

The distinctiveness of dalit literature lies in its authentic unity of dalit language and content. In it, the disillusionment and disgust of young dalits, often accompanied by desire of revenge, come alive. It revives the memory of the pain and suffering of past generations.

It confronts centuries of hypocrisy, deceit and violence sustained in the name of tradition. (Quoted in Adapa Satyanarayana 79)

Making use of the language of the depressed, the Dalit writers portray the humiliation, anger, grief and unflinching hope of the future. Commenting on the indomitable spirit of Dalit literature, Jugal Kishore Mishra says:

Dalit literature questioned the mainstream literary theories and upper caste ideologies and explored the neglected aspects of life. Dalit literature is experience - based. This *anubhava* (experience) takes precedence over *anumana* (speculation). Thus to Dalit writers, history is not illusionary or unreal as Hindu metaphysical theory may make one to believe. That is why authenticity and liveliness have become hallmarks of Dalit literature. These writers make use of the language of the out-castes and under-privileged in Indian society. Shame, anger, sorrow and indomitable hope are the stuff of Dalit literature. Because of the anger against the age-old oppression, the expressions of the Dalit writers have become sharp.

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Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow know what you truly want to become.

**Steve Jobs**

## PATRIOT REBORN

**K. S. Koteswara Rao\***

That was the office of the U N Security Council. Kevin was a member of it. He belonged to Britain. He came to the office in the early hours of the morning, placed the laptop on his lap and was ready to check his mail. The first mail he saw gave him great delight. That was an offer from the Indian Prime Minister to attend the International Summit on World Peace. Scarcely had he finished reading the mail, the intercom phone on his table rang. It was from his Secretary who informed him that the Prime Minister of India was on the line to speak to him. Kevin was all the more surprised. After an inane inquiry the Prime Minister formally invited Kevin to participate in the Summit. Kevin told him that he was just then looking into the mail and expressed his willingness to attend. As he replaced the receiver on the cradle, his Secretary entered his cabin with a neat and beautiful cover. The cover was from the Indian Prime Minister inviting him to attend the summit meet. Kevin was surprised and delighted at the series of incidents of that morning. He thanked his stars for giving him the opportunity of visiting India at least now. Kevin was longing to visit India for a very long time. Each time his desire was bridled in the form of some hurdle or other. He felt destiny decided otherwise. However he consoled

himself that what would happen would happen. Now fortune knocked at this door. He asked his Secretary to make arrangements for his travel.

That Kevin had a strong desire to visit India is not without any significance or substance. He was dreaming often that he was roaming in the villages and cities of India with an Indian flag on his shoulders. It seemed to him that there was some inexplicable and unknown bond of love and affection towards India. On visiting a Psychiatric he received a humorous reply addressing him as 'You Indian'.

Kevin was counting his days for his departure. As the days were nearing, he was overwhelmed by enthusiasm. He was busy in acquiring information regarding the places to visit in India.

The day of departure dawned at last. As the plane touched the Indian soil, he got down and set his foot on Indian soil. Effortlessly, he bent on his knee to salute 'Bharata Mata'. Tears in his eyes welled up and ran into rills. The Government of India gave him a red carpet welcome.

"India is the cradle for peace and non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi brought independence to India following the above

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\* Writer, Translator, Hyderabad



twin principles. India must be proud of giving birth to such a towering personality and a true patriot. Now the circumstances changed to worse in all the countries of the world. Peace has no place, violence is ubiquitous. Now it is time for everyone to follow the twin principles of peace and non-violence, thereby enriching enlightenment in an individual, leading to the happiness of the families, countries and the World". Thus spoke Kevin volubly, sincerely and passionately. His adulation of India was striking in his speech.

The summit came to a close. Kevin expressed a strong desire to see Jallianwala Bagh. The officials under the instructions of the Prime Minister immediately made all arrangements. As he was nearing Jallianwala Bagh, he experienced inexpressible and inexplicable emotions. He came to the place where the Jallianwalabagh tragedy took place. Kevin was engulfed in a reverie.

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Those were the days when the national movement was at its peak in India. It was a small village in a remote corner of South India. There lived a teacher by name Jagannadham and his wife Kasturi in that hamlet. Both of them were passionate patriots. They were deeply involved in the movement headed by Gandhiji. They were instilled and inspired by his teachings and preachings. They imparted patriotism in the people by conducting meetings, processions and singing patriotic songs. Kasturi might be unlettered but she was an embodiment of wisdom. She was a true Gandhian. Bharat was the son of such a patriotic couple. It needs no stress to

say that Bharat, like Abhimanyu acquired patriotism even while he was in his mother's womb. That he was named Bharat was apropos. It was worthy to note that in his 'alphabetic ceremony' he was initiated to learn to write 'Vandemataram'. He too participated in everything in which his parents were involved. He used to give expression to the patriotic songs of his mother. With his donning of Khadi and a Gandhi cap he became the cynosure of the audience. Once Gandhi himself was attracted by him. He lifted him bodily and implanted a kiss on his cheeks. From that day Bharat was loved more by all. It so happened that Bharat followed his parents to a meeting in Jallianwalabagh.

Carrying the flag of independence on his little shoulder Bharat, a tender boy of seven summers, singing songs of patriotic fervour, leading hundreds and thousands of people, arrived at Jallianwalabagh. It was a speciality that the father of Bharat was one of the speakers at the meeting. As the meeting began suddenly shots were heard and then people ran berserk. In the merciless firing a shot pierced through Bharat's tender heart. The boy fell down to the ground crying 'Vandemataram...Vandemataram', along with the flag which he tightly gripped.

Witnessing the fall of their lovely lad from a far off distance the parents of Bharat stood transfixed to the ground. Though immense grief flooded over them, they took solace on seeing their son sacrificing his life at a tender age for the sake of his country.

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Kevin slowly stepped into reality. The reminiscences of his previous birth made him to identify with Bharat. He now felt the reason for his abundant love and affection towards India.

During the remaining fourdays, he made a whirlwind tour almost all of India with zeal, zest and passion. As the date of departure was approaching some unknown disorder gripped him. On the last day of his stay, he sat before Bapuji's 'Samadhi' in New Delhi. He prayed "Bapuji! The world today is in a pitiable and chaotic condition. Anarchy and violence are rampant in the world. One

country always tries to dominate the other. Politicians are stooping down to any level of meanness for capturing power. You gave up your life for eradicating racial conflicts and for achieving independence of India. Even in India, supposed to be the cradle of peace of non-violence we find agitations and violence. If there is rebirth, I wish to be born along with you to establish peace and non-violence in all countries." With this humble and sincere prayers Kevin stood still in silence.

[Translated from the Telugu Story "Desabhakti" of K. S. N. Murty]

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## FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT THROUGH YOGA

M.G. Narasimha Murthy\*

When body and mind are in tune,  
Flowers of joy and peace in silence bloom.  
Relax for a while and look inward,  
Dive into the dark depths  
Of the sea of consciousness.  
Explore the concealed layers  
From the surface, ever active and restless;  
Slowly sink into the sub-conscious  
And the more powerful unconscious mind  
That runs the vital functions, day and night.

Move deeper until you reach the source  
And find life's perennial spring  
Flowing in your innermost being  
And touch the boundless universe,

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\* Poet, Hyderabad.

Beyond the confines of the sensuous mind.  
When this inward journey, spiritual,  
Brings insight into the subtle working  
Of the hidden mind, you emerge wiser  
And stronger than ever before  
To weather the storms of life, ephemeral,  
And realise man's fervent prayer -  
"Thamasoma jyothirgamaya,"  
Lead us from darkness to Light,  
The ultimate aim of this mankind.

[In order to achieve this, one should strive to discipline one's body, mind and intellect and attain tranquility and poise. All religions suggest practical methods. In Indian philosophy, Patanjali's 'Ashtaanga Yoga' and meditation are well-known]

## CHARACTERS OF ARUNDHATI ROY'S NOVELS

Unnikrishnan Atiyodi, PM\*

Arundhati Roy's linguistic inventiveness was eulogized in the Booker citation of her novel *God of Small Things*. She said that her book is not about history despite the fact that so many historical facts are narrated sarcastically in her books. She could attract the serious audience as well as the non-serious ones. Critics cite non-senses in her novels: "...beyond the shadow the light was flat and gentle", "The sea black, the spume vomit green", "She had half-moons under her eyes and a team of trolls on her horizon" etc. etc. She might have accepted Joyce or Marquez as her favourites. Are her novels acceptable to common readers? Her concept, her theories, her style.... There is confusion regarding the whole hearted welcome. She has admitted that she doesn't sweat the language and she doesn't rewrite. She has a rural and urban reach which she makes use of profusely in *God of Small Things* and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Extramarital relationship, incest, stylistic exuberance, liberties in coining words as well as sentence construction, satire and banter, profuse quoting from contemporary history, translation from Malayalam nonsensical rhymes, strip-cartoon style etc.

are some of the traits that make her writings unique. My intention here is to draw her characters from her two novels. She was influenced by the metro stream of the eighties. She herself was an unprotected child and this insecurity we see in Ammu and Tilo. Consistency is not important here, the beginning and end are entwined. Linguistic liberties too are claimed as a matter of right. Terror of being unloved becomes the main problem of her children in the novel. She tells us the story of Kunti who forsook her son Karna. Ammu was forsaken, Tilo too was ostracized. Anarchy always gets eulogized.

Velutha and Musa :- Night after night, Velutha rowed across the river with Ammu and returned at dawn. Vellya Paapan, his father was loyal enough to dislike such a behavior from his son. A 'paravan' has no entry to Ayemenem though they were ardent in their faith in communism. Velutha of Arundhati Roy was an example of racial prejudice, he was a nuisance or a 'wrinkle' in the local Marxist leaders' political domain. Caste discrimination, as depicted by the novelist, is not so conspicuous in the communists in Kerala. Yet he became a martyr with a dalit stamp. He was a suspected Naxalite who was murdered blatantly despite his sincere allegiance to communism. He was cruelly tortured by the police as a vengeance

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for his relationship with Ammu under the specific instruction by the upper-caste section in the society. The easiest way to exterminate an individual was to label him as an extremist and as an antisocial element. Velutha's attachment to Ammu was profane, it was an encroachment into the domain (forbidden) of upper castes. Dalits cannot be idealized even in the jargon of communist philosophy.

Perhaps he is the fittest or the fairest of all to adorn the garb of a hero in the novel. An excellent carpenter and a good mechanic like him with the ardent faith in communism cannot make the required quality to be on par with upper castes. He was a black man with the name Velutha (white) and his services were essential everywhere. A card holder like him was brutally murdered after torturing him inch by inch, all for loving a woman belonging to upper-caste. His sincerity as a good cadre was altogether ignored. The novelist asserts the beauty of the black. A birthmark on the neck would bring monsoon on time every year. Black has a strange beauty, it is elemental.

The boat-episode expedited his ruin. He entertained the twins who had been denied the pleasures of childhood. He never attempted to rape Ammu, it was a consensual heart-to-heart relationship of a man and a woman. Yet he was hunted by the police and tortured to death. The offence becomes serious as it happened in a communist regime, that too with the connivance of the government. Velutha became a tragic hero. His skull was fractured in three places, his nose and cheek were smashed. His upper lip was split open,

his ribs were splintered, his abdomen was ruptured. His spine was damaged and his knee caps were broken. How brutal! Baby Kochamma had met Inspector Thomas Mathew and lodged a wrong complaint that Velutha had tried to force himself on her niece. A divorcee with two children was thus threatened. A card holder Velutha did not have the patronage of the Communist party. VellyaPaapan told Mammachi the story of the boat. Night after night a woman and man were seen in the moonlight skin to skin. That reveals the loyalty of the parayan!

"How could she stand the smell? Haven't you noticed? They have a particular smell, these Paravans." said Baby Kochamma.

In *the Ministry*, Musa too was filthy because he did not wash himself for months. Musa's wife and child Miss Jebeen were buried and he was withdrawn and distressed. He was arrested after the funeral. Tilo and Musa were intimate, mentally and physically. He believed that Kashmir was theirs. Musa showed Tilo a photograph of Miss Jebeen and Arif whom he loved. Musa's fight was for dignity!

Extramarital relationship seems to be the pet theme of the novelist. ACP Pinky and Major Amrik Singh too had such a relationship.

Naga was constrained to remain a recluse. He had resigned from his paper. Amrik Singh killed himself. What was the

dream of Musa? "One day Kashmir will make India self-destruct in the same way", Musa believed. Musa wanted to be an integral part of Kashmir. Musa had lived in Jannat Guest House. He had arrived like a delivery man. Tilo grieved when Musa died.

S. Tilottama, Musa and many other characters are a presence and an absence.

Post-traumatic stress disorder reigns everywhere! Musa was a potentially worthy antagonist to Amrik Singh, says the novelist. Sophie Mol died in *God of Small Things*. Many children die in *The Ministry*.

### **Taboo-breaking**

Hijra-cult is depicted in *The Ministry* to explain the lack of identity. A different psychology prevailed in trans-gender ego. The severe thirst to remain a woman persisted in many of them. Heroism and courage were usually attributed to men, but here hijra community too shows enough boldness. Some of them willingly showed the desire to appear as beautiful women. Jannat Guest House is a hub for Hijras where a new pattern of life, contrary to the prevalent social life, was being shaped. People preferred to stay here. Jannat Guest House functions as a funeral parlour. Aftab was a hermaphrodite (female with male characteristics). Khwabagh residents too accommodated hijras. Hijras were God's experiment. They were incapable of happiness. Aftab learned the rules of Hijras and lived among them. Anjem became Delhi's most famous Hijra. She pierced her nose and

made it stone studded. Her eyes were outlined with Kohl. She had false hair. It was an outrageous kind of femininity. Anjum left to make her own establishment at the age of forty. The novelist calls a transperson as cis-man, F to M, M to F, Hijra etc. Anjum's motherly instinct is explicit when she looks after Zainab and Jebeen well. Tilo's birth too was the result of forbidden relationship. The duality in Anjum as a male and female too is a matter to be noticed. Police atrocities, cruelty of the armed force in Kashmir etc are other controversial subjects.

While insurgency is rampant, there is also the amour of man and woman. The rulers were severely criticized, Gandhiji was ridiculed. Even Saddam Hussain has a duplicate. Tilo smoked and challenged the routine life of an Indian woman. May be because her family disowned her ( her father happened to be a Paraya.)

In *God of Small Things*, Ammu broke all taboos. Her love to Velutha crossed all boundaries. She was in agony when he was brutally killed by Kottayam police. Roy herself was an unprotected child.

Anjum found Zainaba alone on the steps of Jama Masjid. Nobody came to retrieve her. Zainaba called her mummy. Mulaqat Ali's old collection of books was brought for Zainab's learning. She was admitted to KGB. Her official parents were Saqib and his wife. Zainab was dressed like a boy After completing her polytechnic, she married Saddam Hussain whom she loved.

They made a Noah's Ark of injured animals like old cows, peacocks etc. Saeeda's permission was legally needed for the marriage. Naresh Kumar, Saddam's friend who was a chauffeur, arrived at the grave yard to pick up the wedding party in his master's Mercedes Benz. And Zainab chanted the *Gayatri Mantra*!

### **Tilottama and Ammu**

Ammu's marriage was a failure, so was Tilo's. Ammu was infatuated with Velutha, Tilo's relationship with Musa was heart to heart. Both the ladies belonged to Syrian Catholic family rather forsaken by their near and dear. Velutha was a Dalit, while Musa was a Kashmiri Muslim. Velutha and Musa faced brutality in custody. Tilo's father was a Paraya and was abandoned by her mother. (She looked after her mother during the last days of her life). Tilo was brought up in a Christian Orphanage because her family disowned her. She undertook many assignments in her life, as a draughtsman, as a

KG teacher etc. Tilo was found desolate after her marriage with Nagaraj. She smoked Ganesh Beedi and obstinately chose her own path. Nagaraj was on deputation to the Ministry of Defence. He was the son of late Ambassador Shivashankar Hariharan. His mother advised him to let Tilo go. Naga chose the profession of a fearless journalist.

Rahel and Estha were the twin children of Ammu. Her husband was a Bengali. Ammu's intimacy with a low-caste man, Tilottama's attachment with Musa and many other relationships have masochist dimensions. The Kottayam police and the Kashmir police are not different in their modus operandi

Arundhati Roy is an iconoclast who fearlessly taunts the existing values in life. The rebel in her questions indiscriminately every one, and she has no compunction in criticizing our social life.

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The Dalai Lama, when asked what surprised him most about humanity, answered "Man. Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health. And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as if he is never going to die, and then dies having never really lived".

## ARAVIND ADIGA'S "THE WHITE TIGER" AS A G. S. T. OF INDIA

C. Vijayalakshmi\*

Indian Novel in English is a river that flows rhythmically and thematically. This river passes through many known and unknown places marking some significant landscapes right from Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864) to the present scenario - Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth and Amitav Ghosh. As it moves on, it attracts the world's attention towards the famous fertile lands which appear in the novels of Aravind Adiga and Chetan Bhagat. Here, I deal with Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* as a general, simple and a tale of (G.S.T) India. This novel won the 2008 Booker Prize. He is the fourth Indian born- writer to win the prize after Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai. It deals on Indian life. It is hailed as the masterpiece for its fascinating narration of two Indias. It brings to contrast the disparity between progressive Indian cities and regressive Indian villages. The title *The White Tiger* is significant because it is the rarest of the animals. The protagonist of the novel Balram Halwai is the white tiger because he is intelligent, sharp and different from other persons. The novel is written in the form of letters written by the protagonist, Balram to

Wen Jiabao, the premier of China, on the eve of his visit to India. It is a seven - part letter. It is set in present day India.

### Aravind Adiga's Life and Career:

Aravind Adiga was born in Madras (now Chennai) on 23 October, 1974 to Dr.K. Madhava Adiga and Usha Adiga, both of whom hailed from Mangalore. He grew up in Mangalore and studied at Canara High School where he completed his SSLC in 1990. After immigrating to Sidney with his family, Aravind studied at James Ruse Agricultural High school. He later studied English literature at Columbia College of Columbia University. He also studied at Magdalen College, Oxford. He began his journalistic career as a financial journalist, interning at the *Financial Times*. Later, he worked in *Time* for three years as South Asian correspondent before going freelance. During this freelance period, he wrote *The White Tiger*. He currently lives in Mumbai.

### Plot and Story of the Novel:

*The White Tiger* is the debut novel by Aravind Adiga. The plot of the novel is simple without any twist. It runs smoothly backward and forward. It moves backward

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when the central character, Balram recalls his past through the stream of consciousness technique. It moves forward when the story progresses further in the straightway. The novel provides a dark humorous perspective of India's class struggle in a globalized world as told through a retrospective narration from Balram Halwai. In this letter, Raham explains how he, the son of a rickshaw puller, escaped a life of servitude to become a successful business man describing himself as an entrepreneur.

Balram was born in the rural village of Laxmangarh when he lived with his grandmother, parents, brother and extended family. His caste was Halwai, a caste that designates sweet-maker. Balram's father was a besieged rickshaw driver and his mother died when he was young. He was initially referred to simply as "Munna", meaning "boy" since his family had not bothered to name him. The boy demonstrated himself intelligent and talented, and was praised one day as a rare "White Tiger" by a visiting school inspector. He was a smart child but was forced to leave school in order to help pay for his cousin's dowry and began to work in a tea shop with his brother, Kishan in Dhanbad. While working there he began to learn about India's government and economy from the customer's conversations. Balram described himself as a bad servant but a good listener and decided to become a driver. He was constantly on the lookout of opportunities that could alleviate his poverty. Upto this phase, he belonged to the 'darkness', that is village Laxmangarh.

After learning how to drive, Balram found a job of driving at Ashok, the son of one of Laxmangarh's landlords. Later, he took over the job of the main driver, from a small car to a heavy luxury described Honda city. He stopped sending money back to his family and disrespected his grandmother during a trip back to his village. Balram moved to New Delhi with Ashok and his wife, Pinky Madam. In Delhi, Balram learned the ways of the urban society. He attempted to show that he was devoted to his master and mistress like 'Hanuman'. Mr. Ashok was his 'Ram' and Pinky Madam was his 'Sita'. He had learnt much from his master and mistress about the way of life in India and America from their conversation. Throughout his time in Delhi, Balram was exposed to extensive corruption, especially in the government.

But as a true driver, Balram took the responsibility of the car accident which was actually done by Pinky Madam. He had to sign the paper of confession that he was himself responsible for the accident and no one except him was in the car. It generally happened with the driver. The jails of Delhi were full of drivers who were there not because of the crime they committed but because the crime was committed by their master. Later, he also felt relief when Pinky Madam felt guilty of her mistake.

Delhi corrupted Balram, once he found Mr. Ashok with a Nepali girl. It changed his mind. All at once the tiger vanished. Ashok became increasingly involved in bribing government officials for the benefit of the family



coal business. Balram then decided that killing Ashok would be the only way to escape India's Rooster Coop. So he robbed and murdered his employer and ran away to Bangalore with his loot and started his own business then. He became Ashok Sharma, North Indian entrepreneur and settled in Bangalore. He did not have any friends because he thought that a white tiger needed no friend. He treated his employees as employees. His philosophy was, "Let animals live like animals; let humans live like humans". Balram was sharp and thought that his own family was almost certainly killed by Ashok's relatives as retribution for his murder. By resisting the life of darkness and by killing Ashok, Balram now led a life in which he could choose his own fate. The difference between "this India", Laxmangarh and "that India", Bangalore, is that in "this India". Thus Balram rationalized his actions at the end of the novel.

Balram thought of starting an English school for poor children who would not be taught about God or Gandhiji but simply facts of life. This would be a school "Full of White Tigers". With these white tigers, he wanted to be the boss of Bangalore. He was not afraid of being caught. He did not mind if he was thrown into jail and taken to the hangman's noose, but he was sure of one thing that he did not do a mistake when he cut his master's throat. He knew what it was meant to be a freeman years later, Balram was seen as an influential member of the Bangalore Power

circle successfully steering his career from one height to another.

### Critique:

Balram Halwai is a sound character in the novel who is not as such as he is in the beginning. With the passage of time, he becomes callous and deceitful. What strikes to the readers in his character is that he confesses everything while narrating his life story. Adiga's novel *The White Tiger* shifts from Laxmangarh to Bangalore via Dhanbad and Delhi. Adiga uses the technique of contrast when he puts the rich and the poor side by side. The novel may be shocking for the west but it entertains the Indian reader. It is a general, simple and a tale (G.S.T) of two Indias: India of Darkness and India of Light. The language of the novel is raw. The humour is black. To some critics, this commentary of the novel seems to be inauthentic and lacking the truth. However, *The White Tiger* should make every right thinking citizen to lead the signs of the times and be socially conscious of the rights and duties of each one, irrespective of caste, creed or economic states, to prevent and create the types of Ashok and Balram in our society. Americanization in India has played its role in the plot, since it provides an outlet for Balram to alter his caste. Globalization has assisted in the creation of an American atmosphere in India. This is the general small tale (G.S.T) of Aravind Adiga's *White Tiger*.

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## VETANA SARMA

Narasimha Sarma Rachakonda\*

Once upon a time long ago a Maharaja by name Sundarasena was ruling the kingdom of Magadha. (It is one thing to call rulers as Rajas and another thing to say only Rajas should be the rulers). He received only 1/10 of crop as tax from the farmers. He protected the caste system. He established Gods among the people and provided for their maintenance. He went on ruling the country in his own way yet justly enough. After deducting administrative and military expenses from his income, he spent some money for building hospitals, choultries etc. With the money left over he spent some towards maintaining the queen's palaces and some for other luxuries. He also set aside some money towards capital fund and conducted business profitably. Furthermore, he lent money at low interest to his descendents, relatives, friends and other henchmen-thereby helping their business.

And with the help thus received from the king, his relatives, friends and henchmen were doing business profitably on a large scale. The King in turn benefited from the profits thus acquired by them. They built temples and choultries and thereby encouraging devotion to God and rule of justice in a small measure. In this way they went on living happily, peacefully, in joyful recreation.

When businesses did not bring much profit or ended in losses, the King had no choice except to increase the taxes to make up for his losses. The King who was taking only 10% of crop as tax had to increase it to 25%. The King usually prays God for their needs. God in turn would ask the King to go back to the people to meet all those needs.

In the kingdom of Magadha illiteracy was wide spread as it is in India now. As more and more profits were realized by the King and his friends, relatives and their dependents, their thirst for profits became insatiable. As they began to realize that more capital fund would reap more profits, the tax burden on the people began to increase. This heavy tax burden proved to be unbearable and back breaking for the people at large. Although the well-to-do could bear the load to some extent, the lower classes started to break down. The plight of the small farmers was much worse. The condition of labour class was beyond description.

But in those days, as in the present times there were a few educated people. Some officials had to run the administration in those days as it is in the present day. Amongst such officers, *Karanams* played an important role. They would collect taxes from the farmers, maintain and preserve records, secure the collection of revenues and send

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\* Retired Physician, Visakhapatnam

them to the King through his servants. Thus the *Karanams* played a central role in the administrative machinery. However they used to receive very meagre salaries.

During King Sundarasena's regime, a famine occurred once due to prolonged drought. A lot of poor folk dropped dead like birds. Unjust practices and crimes were on the increase. The King's relatives thrived well. There was in those days, an eminent sage named Markandeya who happened to notice that the King of Magadha and his followers harassed and robbed the people. The sage realised that unless the King and his followers were driven out, and the people themselves became the rulers, their condition could never get better. The sage started to teach the people: "You should be the ruler of your kingdom. Drive away the King and his followers. This is the will of God" As result the people revolted against the King. The *Karanams* who were unable to live on their meagre salaries also joined the rebels.

Unable to face the eloquence of the sage Markandeya and stem the tide of the rebellion, King Sundarasena consulted his men and contrived a scheme. Under the direction of the King, false charges were brought against Markandeya. the King charged that Markandeya was not a sage though he pretended to be one and that he had yielded to base sexual passions by molesting and raping the young sister of the queen's servant. The King induced the alleged victim to make false accusation against the sage, framed charges, declared the sage as

guilty, subjected him to torture and ultimately killed him.

Thereafter King Sundarasena issued orders to his army to torture and kill the rebels without any legal process. The army began to hunt down and kill the rebels as well as non-rebels whom the soldiers did not like or for any other reason. They began to openly and freely molest and rape the rebel's women folk. Even children were killed mercilessly. The earth was stained with blood all over. The sky was rent with agonizing cries for help. Even God, it seemed, was afraid of the King's sword. The sky remained a helpless spectator. As we learned before the *Karanams* also joined the revolt started by sage Markandeya. Didn't we? A fellow called Vetana Sarma used to be the leader of *Karanams*. After the King had the sage killed and after the King's army trampled upon the people, the army started hunting down the *Karanams*. Being aware that the *Karanams* belonged to an educated class and in the belief that punishing the "educated asses" would teach a lesson to uneducated masses, the king became more violent and preceded to inflict even greater violence /nay torture on the *Karanams* themselves.

Under these circumstances, Vetana Sarma, the leader of the *Karanams* sat down day and night, did some soul searching and questioned himself "who am I?" He came to the clear conclusion that he was a *Karanam* and *Karanam* only, came up with a firm decision, called his followers and told them: "Makandeya might have been a good fellow-

but for a man- life comes first and goodness afterwards. We should have nothing to do with a goodness which does not permit us to live. Is n't it so? And if so, what is it Markandeya has to say?" - VetanaSarma questioned his followers squarely. The *Karanams* looked at each other with blank faces. No answer could be detected on any face. Vetana Sarma then told them the truth about Markandeya's theory. "This is what Markandeya tells us - 'the people are separate from the King and his followers. The latter are living by exploiting and robbing the former. These robbers should be driven away or crushed or killed by rebellion of the people whose condition will be thereby improved. There is no other way of bettering their condition'. This is what Markandeya told us. Is it not so?" Vetana Sarma questioned his followers again and again.

The *Karanams* were delighted to hear VetanaSarma explaining the theory of Markandeya with crystal clarity. The Karanam folks agreed that he had correctly explained the message of sage Markandeya. Vetana Sarma, the doyen of *Karanam* community, then proceeded to say: "When Markandeya convinced the people of the rightness of his theory, the people rebelled against the King and his followers. We have been helping the people to some extent up till now. But we have witnessed with our own eyes how the King and his men have mercilessly, cruelly and horribly crushed and killed the rebel group without any trial. Under these circumstances, we have to sit down in one corner or other and reflect about one important matter."

Even before the Karanam folks could ask him just what "they should sit in a corner and think about", Vetana Sarma went on to state:

"In what way would this robbery cause any loss to us? In what way are we benefitted if the robbery were to cease? By looking at this subject from both angles it seems to me that robbery can take place only if there is something to be robbed. It is the farmers and labourers who grow the crops and create wealth. If there is something to be robbed it would be with them. But to what class do we belong? What is our job? We are *Karanams*. We are helping the King in the process of robbing. The robbery has been taking place in our presence. What is it that the King gives us in return? Salary! For helping the King to rob his subjects through our jobs of collecting the money and maintaining the accounts, the King is giving us salary. But then why did we pay heed to Markandeya's words and join him. Because, the King was not giving us proper salaries. If our salaries were to increase in the regime of this King, would we have any trouble? If the King were to raise our salaries we should not have any problem." The *Karanam* folks agreed unanimously.

Vetana Sarma then continued with his profound speech. "We have learnt that if we were to obtain an increase in our salaries and some additional facilities, we will not have any problems in the present state of rule by the King. But suppose we imagine for a while that this so-called robbers' rule is replaced by the people's rule, what do we gain? Salaries may

increase and facilities may be obtained. But that is all we can obtain. If that is all we can obtain, why should we join the rebellion for that small benefit? Why submit to this torture? And why in the end should we lose our property, wife and children and have our head separated from our neck? Any man or society has to understand his/its needs and behave accordingly. What we need are salaries and facilities. Our lives will certainly improve if these were available. There are many others whose lives will not improve unless there is radical change in the society. They bring about revolutions and are not afraid to die. Do we belong to that group? No certainly not. There are chances for our improvement even in this present state of society. Therefore, there is no need for us to join in this revolt and court our death. The King would not agree if we want to change the setup and its constitution. The Kings have courageous army at their disposal, concentration of wealth and everything else they need. True! But remember, all this is possible only with our cooperation. What then would they lose if they were to throw at us a few copper coins? Let them keep the gold. They are now giving us a hand full of rice. Let us ask for four more handfuls, may be then they will give us half a handful more. Rulers do not have to be changed if our wages were to increase. Nor does the constitution has to be changed. I believe that the rulers will trust us if we would tell them that "we won't let you down if you would look after our growth." Moreover in this time of revolution when the rulers are facing the question of life and death, let us tell them clearly "we are concerned with our salaries

but not the revolution." They will be delighted at our words and they will surely give us not only a half handful but may be one more handful. This is my strong belief. Therefore if all of you would support me, I shall approach the rulers and discuss with them about your welfare. What do you say?" Thus Vetana Sarma concluded his speech with these words.

After hearing Vetana Sarma's lecture, *Karanam* folks' eyes sparkled with the light of his wisdom and were filled with tears of joy. When Vetana Sarma explained to them clearly about their needs, about their place in society and about the goals they should achieve in their lives, they were really thrilled. Eventually the *Karanams* gave their blessings to Vetana Sarma and sent him to discuss their problems with the King.

Vetana Sarma's negotiations with the King and his team was successful. The salaries were increased although only by a small amount. The tax collectors and the village servants and a few others obtained small pieces of lands. Another important thing! It was recognized from that day that the government employees were permitted to receiving gifts from people in addition to receiving salaries from the King.

So then what happened to the revolution started by Markandeya? How far was it crushed by the rulers' swords? The revolution was clearly wounded by the stabbing on the back by Vetana Sarma. Recovering after rest for a while the remnants

of revolution hid itself in the depths of the forest to flare up at a later date.

Sastry published in Andhra Jyothi Weekly Magazine on 25th May, 1971]

[Telugu original by Rachakonda Viswanatha

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## MOTHER LOVES YOU

**Dr Sunaina Jain\***

Drooping eyelids, wilted hopes!  
She slouches on a mangy rug  
Her frail back leaned against the earthen wall  
The chipped wooden window half-open day and night.

Her son left her alone a couple of years ago  
Like a bird leaves its cozy nest  
Only for a small flight  
Before being gunned down  
By the 'hunters.'  
He left armed with a rugged, heavy backpack  
Which made him stoop low.  
His bare necessities were light.  
Then what was heavy inside?

The last time she held his bony hands  
To transfer motherly love through

---

\* Poet-Writer-Academic, Chandigarh

The touch of hands!  
The last time he broke free from  
Her tightened clasp!

A game of tug of war:  
She lost him to innumerable faceless, nameless rivals;  
She knew she lost the cynosure  
Of her eyes that day for good...  
But a mother is a Mother  
She sits brooding  
The last defilement of her nurturing blood  
As he leaves the threshold of home and humanity  
Robbing her of a mishmash of hopes.

She still awaits him or his body,  
Who knows?  
May you die in peace, son!  
For Mother loves you...

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Golden Article reprinted from *Triveni*, July -August 1929

## RABINDRANATH'S 'RED OLEANDERS'

P. Guha-Thakurta, M.A., Ph.D.

*Rakta Karabi* (Red Oleanders) represents, more than any of his plays of the symbolical type, Rabindranath Tagore's dramatic genius in its fullest maturity. It has all the lyrical beauty of the earlier plays and dramatic sketches and also the spiritual depth of his developed thought. It has for its main theme the conflict between the true spirit of man and a materialistic and mechanical order of society. It is only natural that a play with such an avowed purpose by a man who has always held very independent ideas on most things, social or political, and has frequently expressed himself strongly on the problems of modern civilisation, should have a genuine present-day interest.

Let us first see how the play is presented to an audience. It opens in front of a royal palace in Yaksha-Puri where the bulk of the population slaves in the gold mines. The King is hidden from public gaze behind a net-work screen, before which the whole action of the play takes place. The affairs of the town are administered by his officials and he himself never appears among his people but busies himself in piling up the gold-nuggets that are being dug from the mines. None of the workmen can escape from their bondage except by death. They remind one of the

Robots of Karel Capek's play 'R.U.R', mere machines, with numbers instead of names, completely under the mercy of a greedy super-capitalist. There is a Professor who also lives behind a net-work of scholarship and pedantry. He discusses philosophy and aesthetics with Nandini, the heroine of the play—a woman so beautiful that even the King is enamoured of her. Nandini has a lover, Ranjan by name, whom she adores and loves and waits for his coming to liberate the people. Ranjan calls her his 'Red Oleander' because the colour of his love is red like the oleanders she wears on her neck, on her breast, and on her arms. The red of the oleanders is intended to suggest not only beauty and love but a foreboding of the strange and fearful things that are about to happen. Kisor, a boy-slave, worships Nandini and brings her red oleanders even at the risk of his own life. Nandini goes to have an audience with the King but she can only speak to a voice that comes from behind the net-work curtain. She bids him come out of his seclusion and tells him, however much she may admire his strength, he ought to be ashamed of his cruelty to the workers and of his greed in grabbing at the dead wealth which they dig up for him out of the bowels of the earth. The King says he is weary of his strength and covets her love. But she cannot give him



love in return, for she loves Ranjan and is eagerly awaiting his coming to Yaksha-Puri. Workers, some of them in rebellious mood, pass before the palace, discussing their sorry plight and trying in vain to devise ways of escape from this hell of slavery. Bisu, a vagrant wanderer whom the Government had wanted to use as a spy, is the real friend of the workman. Bisu is an enigmatical character who sings songs and really serves as a mouthpiece of the author's gentle satire upon the false political economy of Yaksha-Puri. He mocks the tyranny of the machine-made institutions of the place and expresses a passion for a world entirely free from ugliness and cruelty and greedy, acquisitive passion. Nandini is his idol and the symbol of all his noblest aspirations. But the wives of the workmen tell him that someday "that girl with her noose of red oleanders will drag him to perdition". Later in the play, Nandini tells Bisu that she does not fear the King any more, for she has seen him face to face. He is hungry for love and wants desperately to live; for when she told him that she could give up her life for the love of Ranjan, he got frightfully angry and drove her away. Bisu becomes a little apprehensive for her safety. In a third interview between Nandini and the King, the King threatens to kill Ranjan, if he ever gets hold of him. Nandini says: "Those whom you have scared all along, will one day feel ashamed to be afraid. If my Ranjan were here, he would have snapped his fingers in your face and not been afraid even if he died for it." She goes off and waits for Ranjan by the wayside. Meanwhile, Bisu has been arrested on a charge of inciting the workmen to insubordination. Ranjan comes

at last, evading the watchfulness of the King's officials, but he is not seen upon the stage until he has been killed by the King himself, because he had challenged him to fight. The King does not know whom he has killed, and when he learns that it is Ranjan, he cries out - "I have killed youth. Yes, I have, indeed, killed youth-all these years, with all my strength. The curse of youth, dead, is upon me." He realises that all his life has been a mistake and calls on Nandini to help him to destroy the system that has been built up around him:

Nandini: What would you have me do?

King: To fight against me, but with your hand in mine.

That fight has already begun. There is my flag. First I break the flag staff-thus: Next it's for you to tear its banner. Let your hand unite with mine to kill me, utterly kill me. That will be my emancipation.

Guards:(rushing up)

What are you doing, Your Majesty?

You dare break the flag-staff, the holiest symbol of our divinity-the flag-staff which has its one point piercing the heart of the earth and the other that of heaven; What a terrible sin-on the very day of the flag-worship:

Comrades, let us go and inform our Governor. (They run off)

King: A great deal of breaking still remains to be done. You will come with me, Nandini?

Nandini: I will.

All that we hear now is that Nandini has "dyed her garland the colour of oleanders with her heart's blood" and "gone in advance of us all to the last freedom"; the King has just gone off to his death, hearing Nandini's call and, according to the Professor, "has at last had tidings of the secret of life". Ranjan has left behind "in death his conquering call-he will live again and cannot die"; the workmen have broken into the prison and released Bisu, and the net-work before the palace has been torn to shreds. Bisu comes out and calls on his comrades to come on to the fight and as we hear the shouts of Victory to Nandini!" the curtain falls. A song dies away in the distance:

'Hark it's autumn calling-  
Come, O come away!'

The rather severe satire in the play on the tyranny of a materialistic order of society with all its ugliness and inhumanity is, however, relieved by an exquisitely delicate sensibility and imaginative beauty. If the author has lashed materialism and worldly greed, it is with a silken whip. If he has rebuked tyranny, cruelty and falsehood, it is with a gentle and benevolent kindness. His satire does not sting-it only awakens pity and understanding. The character of Nandini stands out very clearly as a type of the grandeur and pathos of love, which runs as a red thread through the tapestry of human bondage and slavery. She has "for her mantle", as the Professor says in one place in the play, "the green joy of the earth-That is our Nandini-In this Yaksha town, there are governors, foremen, headmen, tunnel diggers, scholars like myself: there are policemen,

executioners, undertakers-and they all fit in perfectly into the scheme of the place. She alone seems out of place, here. "Midst the clamour of the market-place she is like a lute in perfect tune". The author has used his extremest skill and imagination in the painting of the portrait of this lovely, warm hearted and brave woman, and we cannot help feeling sad when she passes out of our sight like a bird of passage, like a figure made, as it were, of pure abstraction, passing out into nothingness, leaving nothing behind but her bracelet of red oleanders. The *denouement* exactly suits the Poet's temperament. It seems strange that she who had made so vivid an impression upon us as a human being, as a physical reality, should come to such an end. As Rabindranath himself explains: "She is not an abstraction, but is pursued by an abstraction, like one tormented by a ghost. Nandini is a real woman who knows that wealth and power are maya and that the highest expression of life is in love which she manifests in the play in her love for Ranjan. But love-ties are ruthlessly molested by a megalomaniac ambition, while an acquisitive intellect plies its psychological curiosity, probing into the elusive mystery of love through vivisection. I have a stronger faith in the simple personality of man than in the prolific brood of machinery that wants to crowd it out. This personality-the divine essence of the infinite in the vessel of the finite, has its last treasure-house in woman's heart. The joy of this faith has inspired me to pour all my heart into painting against the background of black shadows, the portrait of Nandini as the saviour of the message of reality, the saviour through death."

It will be quite evident that what the Poet has attempted in this play is not the exposition of a new idea but the clothing of his most vital thought on the problems of life and religion in a new outward attire. We have the same fruitlessness of idle curiosity and covetousness as in *Raja* (The King of the Dark Chamber), we have the self-same futility of a machine-made order of life as in *Achalayatan* (The Immovable Sanctuary), we have the same redeeming potency of love as a restorative as in *Prakrtir Pratisodh* (Nature's Revenge), we have also the same note of the eternal craving of the human spirit for the distant and the unknown as in *Dak Ghar* (Post Office) and *Phalguni* (The Cycle of Spring), only in a slightly different dress. All these ideas again form coherent parts of the leading idea -the cruelty and stupidity of a mechanical and soul-less civilisation. This idea is also closely bound up with the Poet's favourite doctrine that each individual is enslaved or freed by something within himself and that if he breaks the outward chains of authority, this is only the revelation of the freedom which he has achieved within himself. There is no need to hide the fact that by means of a dramatic parable Rabindranath quite frankly attempts a criticism of the political machinery of modern times and of the consequences of the commercialised civilisation of the present-day. In a recent article in the 'Visvabharati Quarterly' the Poet has said that the purpose of the play is to show what a menace to humanity is contained in the 'organised avarice' which has captured the imagination of the western races and threatens to "trample down life's true harvest" throughout

the world. He says of this 'grim apparition': "It is intensely real; its hot breath is upon us; its touch is all over our shrinking souls. It is the principal hero today in the drama of human history; and I trust I have the right to invoke it in my own play, not in the spirit of a politician but of a poet, possibly a lyrical poet."

There is a vast amount of abstract truth expressed through the different personages of the drama and wrought into a richness of imagery and delicacy of rhetoric and metaphor by a master of beautiful words. The individuals of the play have not perhaps come to life exactly in the way we might have expected, but they are much more than mere types. They are entities, and one and all succeed in conveying the Poet's thought and feeling and have an universal appeal to human emotion. There could never be a mathematical measure of art, for all art in its essence must be universal. By universality we do not mean that all people will share an author's ideas or feelings; in point of fact, they will not. Rabindranath's true universality of emotional appeal in this play consists in his exquisite rendering of the subtle beauty of human life and nature, in giving everlasting vitality to a flashing moment of joy or pain, and thus widening our sphere of understanding and sympathy. He enables us to grasp reality, not so much through a process of reasoning, as through feeling and this end he achieves again and again with unmistakable success. Herein lies perhaps the real greatness of his art in rhyme or prose.

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## BOOK REVIEW

***Transfigurations*, Author: Dr D Ramakrishna, Sarup Book Publishers New Delhi, 2016), pp 158, Price Rs.400/-**

Another creative book, *Transfigurations*, appears from a scholar extraordinary, Dr D Ramakrishna, after his first novel, *Pregrinators* (2013). We find continuity of tradition in this three dimensional work. It presents changes for a modern world under the impact of cultural evolution from the ancient times to the modern. Amalgamation of tradition and modernity enhances the results of transfigurations and changes the face of our living style in the present century.

Prasanth and friends relive their times when they visit their alma mater where they did schooling five decades ago. They study the historical remnants of the Fort of the Province Eloora of the Vengi Empire of East Chalukyas from the third century to the twelfth century. During their subsequent visit to the nearby Vengipuram, the capital of the Empire, they recount the cultural history of those times. We find graphic accounts of Buddhism of Jeelakarragudem and Hinduism of Dwaraka Thirumala and Helapuri nearby besides several Hindu customs and traditions in the region coming down the ages.

Prasanth, a software engineer in NY, and his wife, Padma, return to their hometown, Helapuri, along with their son, Srikanth, after

three decades of stay in the USA. Inspired by the ideals of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, Prasanth embarks on a mission to better the lives of the youth in his and seven surrounding villages by using IT services. Four of his former classmates, Vishwanath, Parasuram, Gopal and Srinivas, take voluntary retirement from their services in India and join him to strengthen his hands of service.

The team establishes Helapuri Cybernetics, a software and hardware company with material and technical support from America. As business picks up, the director and the staff of twenty young men and women undertake weekend social service to impart soft skills free of cost to the selected unemployed youth in seven villages around Helapuri. They participate in "Clean India" (similar to the present "Swach Bharath" and the past "Janma Bhoorni" for "Clean and Green") programme creating awareness about health hazards due to pollution of air, dirty surroundings with open defecation and contamination of water.

When Naresh and his men of Naresh Computers come in the way of functioning of Helapuri Cybernetics out of jealousy and lure the staff away, there is a spontaneous revolt against them by the youth benefitted by generous Prashant

After training from Helapuri Cybernetics for two years, some village youth use their knowledge of IT to devise innovative methods of self employment and to assist the agriculturists to go for profitable crops and online bidding, thus eliminating middlemen. The novelist has foreseen the online bidding of agriculture produce envisaged by the present government.

The social service by Prashant and his team is appreciated by public and wins recognition of the Government with financial aid and certificate of appreciation. Like the present government, the authorities expect him to implement the Gandhian experiment to be continued indefinitely covering many other rural and urban areas.

One is reminded of T.S.Eliot, when Parasuram says, 'The past continues to be relevant to the present and the future' (36). In Viswhwath's observation we find an answer to the atheists: 'Divine succour can be experienced by the believer in the unexpected turn of events favouring him, thwarting the attempts of the evil doers' (62). His reference to 'evolution of culture' (40) is diachronic whereas change of culture is synchronic and temporary.

The novel graphically conveys the message: Transfiguration of the small is possible only with change in the mindset of the citizens ..... It requires a sense of dedication and determination to make the small town more livable ..... In the course of transformation of small town, no consistent

efforts seem to have been made for development. But the natives, wherever they might be, would fondly hope for transfigurations of the small town, making more livable and loveable (21).

We cannot hope to have healthy 'transfigurations' unless the entire nation cooperates. Fortunately, the vision of the novelist is being materialized now. The novel should reach all types of readers and find a place in all libraries.

**Prof. G. Damodar**

***Missing Woods* by Dr. J. Bhagyalakshmi, Published by Yash Publications, 1/10753, Street No. 3, Subhash Park, Naveen Shahdara, New Delhi, Pages 79, Price Rs.450/-.**

Poets are a class by themselves. They react to what they see, hear and imagine with super sensitiveness. They see visions and hear voices. They fathom the depths of the inner life of man and journey across human worlds on 'viewless wings of poesy'. They moralize and philosophize, chide and applaud by turns. They feel the pulse of man and nature, gloat and grieve at life, now appreciating and now cautioning, now being earthly, now ethereal, extending a helping hand to pull people out of despondency.

*Missing Woods*, Dr. Bhagyalakshmi's book of poems, makes the reader to go through the poems seeking to find why the woods are missing. The reader finds that

nothing is missing. The woods, dark and bright, are there thick with trees aplenty, the living examples of life experiences and thought experiences, described and defined in plain and simple words in a friendly chat.

To touch upon one of her mind pictures. The poet is clear about the creation and the parts the creator and the created play. The poet says that leading a life is like riding a tiger. We have to be cautious as the tiger is a tiger. As for herself she lives and lets others live without trampling on their toes. Yet she is disillusioned. The life she witnesses is not real. It is just a shadow. She wonders why the journey of life began, where it would end and asks what for was the life begun.

The poet philosophises. In the words of the poet our entry and exit in life in this world are not in our hands. It is the Director's prerogative. We are only the Director's actors and should remember that we are not the Director. The stage front is not important, The behind is - the Omnipotent. He writes the script with a firm hand.

What then? We should live life to the full, to the brim not with a grim face and a knitted brow. When we are in midstream we have to drift along as we can do nothing else. We have to face life because it is Hobson's choice for us. Only the Almighty knows what is right and wrong. Get detached, she says, and everything runs after you. Play the game, she says, the pleasure is in playing not so much in scoring.

The poet offers palliatives for the problems and burdens of life. "A little introspection, a bit of analysis and a brief dialogue with self" makes our journey of life comfortable.

As one goes through her woods, they reveal more and more truths of life. It is for the reader to explore the woods for the wealth of thought they present. The poet's woods are filled with beautiful little thoughts, pearly white, shining forth with insight and wisdom, plain and friendly. The poet's verses come very near to the harmony of prose.

*Missing Woods* is a book of thought-provoking verses, a delight to read and reflect.

**D. Ranga Rao**  
Editor, Triveni

**Sampaadaka Silpi Padmasri Dr. A.S. Raman by Dr. Avadhanam Nagaraja Rao, published by Print India Process, Industrial Town, Rajaji Nagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka, 2013. Pages 170. Price Rs.120/-**

This book in Telugu by Dr. A Nagaraja Rao gives details about A.S. Raman, the famous journalist about whom very little is known to the present day general public. The author has taken pains to present authentic information about Raman's life and achievements. Going by the name A. S. Raman one may mistake him to be a Tamilian but Raman was a Telugu, Avadhanam Sriramachandrudu. The young



Sriramachandrudu changed his name as A.S. Raman after C.V. Raman, the Nobel Prize winner scientist for whom the Telugu Raman had great respect and admiration.

A.S. Raman was born in Kadapa, A.P. in 1919. An honours graduate in Economics from the Andhra University, he was selected for ICS (Indian Civil Services) but chose journalism as his profession. As a young man he was fair and handsome and looked like a European. He was a fluent speaker in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, English and was proficient in French.

He was the first Indian Editor of the Illustrated Weekly of India and raised the journal's status to the national level making it a standard, popular literary and cultural journal which enjoyed great reputation. He wrote enlightening articles in elegant and charming English which won the respect and appreciation of Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Radhakrishnan and others who were themselves noted for their fluent and beautiful English. The editorials and writings of Raman have the exquisite qualities of a perfectly chiseled sculpture. Raman was a fearless writer who cared for ethics in journalism. He was a poet, dramatist and a noted art critic. He was honoured with

Padmasri late in his life. He passed away in 2001.

Dr. Nagaraja Rao, the author, includes in the book some of Raman's literary pieces in English and Telugu as well as extracts from the famous "Chiaroscuro" column of Raman from the Weekly. The interviews with Jawaharlal Nehru, the Paramacharya Sri Shankaracharya, Sri Satya Sai Baba as well as an account of the great Telugu artist and painter, P.S. Ramarao unknown in India but famous abroad. These writings stand as Raman's brilliant expositions in chaste English. Photographs of Raman's family with the VIPs with whom Raman interacted and also his horoscope included in the book bring the reputed editor nearer and close to us.

Dr. Nagaraja Rao has done great service to the memory of A.S. Raman who stands on par with luminaries of journalism like Khasa Subba Rao, M. Chalapathi Rau, Kotamraju Rama Rao and Eswara Dutt of his times by bringing out this book.

The book deserves a place in every library as it helps as reference material to enthusiasts of journalism.

**D. Ranga Rao**  
Editor, Triveni



## READERS' MAIL

I have enjoyed reading your TRIPLE STREAM Editorial in TRIVENI on C.Narayana Reddy.

**Ramakrishna Devarakonda,  
Hyderabad**

It is really heartening to see the successive issues creating and disseminating the light of knowledge and wisdom.

Mr. D. Ranga Rao's "The Making of a Poet" gives new insights into an art as subtle as poetry. It eludes all attempts towards defining but Mr Rao captures quite much of it in his article. It is also tribute to a stalwart. "Man Mind and

Spirituality" is yet another incisive write-up. Dr A.Venkat Yadava's piece on Walt Whitman talks about the American Wordsworth threadbare.

C.Vijayalakshmi's assessment of Nadine Gordimer is critically convincing. Prof.S.Latha and S. Ramesh's investigation into Tagore's "Gora" with the lense of humanism is very analytical. Role of Technology in Teaching English stretches the scope of the journal.

The poems dotting the pages are highly readable.

**Naqui Ahmad , Patna**

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Telugu translation of the award winning book *Wings to Freedom* by Yogiraj Satgurunath Siddhanath translated into Telugu by Bandepalli Sudhakar.

An enlightening journey along with Yogiraj on his travels in the Himalayas and meeting with Mahavatar Shiv Goraksha Babaji. Also containing information on the Nath Yogis and the Avadhoot/Avatar doctrine. It also provides an introduction to the Nath tradition, and a primer on Nath philosophy. An important read for those interested in meditation and spirituality.

Other details can be had from Sri T. Kamal Kumar  
Ph.No.9177093000 Advt.

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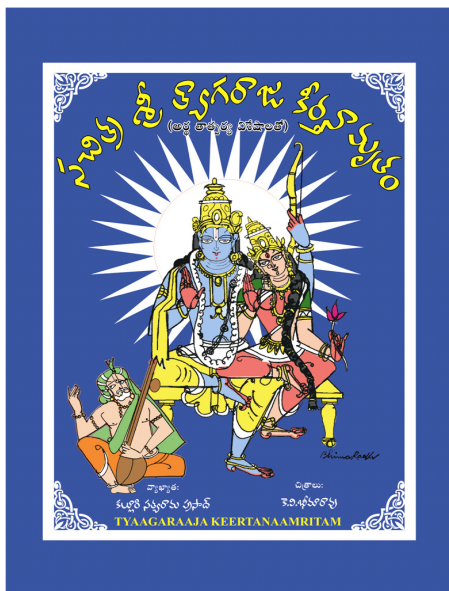
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