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TRIPLE STREAM

D. Ranga Rao*

TRUTH, UNTRUTH AND POST-TRUTH

Dr. A. Raghu Kumar*

The search for truth is not just the exclusive endeavour of philosophers, scientists, religious exponents etc. Everybody is in search of truth. By the very fact that we live, we also prove that we think, and by the fact of our thinking we again prove our existence - *Cogito ergo sum*. In the pursuit of philosophy or science, the bar for 'Truth' may be elevated to a bit higher order but it's nonetheless in the other areas. The question, however, that bothers many is - "what is truth?" and "How do we assert that what we are thinking or presuming to be correct is true?" Dale Carnegie once wrote that we believe, "... because it is almost impossible not to believe what you want to believe." The question that permeates all the inquiries is - "Is our belief a sufficient guide to the truth?" Maybe! That's what the recent history of epistemology trying to demonstrate before us.

Possessing a truth with us at one point of time in our life may not ensure us that we continue to be holding the truth forever unless we subject the known truth to the scrutiny time and again. Alvin Toffler said: "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot

read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." Truth demands an alertness and continuous striving. Gotthold Lessing, the German writer and philosopher, once said: "The true value of a man is not determined by his possession, supposed or real, of Truth, but rather by his sincere exertion to get the Truth. It is not possession of the Truth, but rather the pursuit of Truth by which he extends his powers and in which his ever-growing perfectibility is to be found. Possession makes one passive, indolent and proud. If God were to hold all truth concealed in his right hand, and in his left hand only the steady and diligent drive for Truth, albeit with the proviso that I would always and forever err in the process, and offer me the choice, I would with all humility take the left hand, and say: Father, I will take this one - the pure Truth is for You alone."

Search for *Truth* or *Satya* is not alien to us - Indians, as we proclaimed with all seriousness quite long back in the timeline that *satvameva jayate* [Truth alone wins!]. Taken from *Mundaka Upanishad*, it has now become our national motto on 26 January, 1950! But an incredulous mind suffers with a seamless web of doubts: "Will *satya* really win? Wins ultimately or in the 'now,' and in the immediacy? How do I relate to a *satya* which may win at an unknown distant future?" It is said that the

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Taittiriya-samhita considers *satyam param*, i.e., 'the Truth is the Supreme of all.' There is no doubt that we have huge treasure of literature on the idea of *satya* in the ancient Indian scriptures. Is *satya* Universal and One, or has several manifestations? Upanishads also say: *Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti!* Certain philosophies like Janism, through their *syad vada* or *anekant vada* allow even the plurality of truth.

Is the word *truth* amenable for any definition? Does it have any specific patterns in its evolution [or even in devolution] over a period of about known history of written word? A kind of Truth historicism? Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, a British historian, tried to record the history of Truth in *Truth - a History*. One of the purposes of writing the book, as the author himself indicated, was: "Historians have continued to turn truth down as a subject. ... Yet we need a history of truth. We need it to test the claim that truth is just a name for opinions which suit the demands of the society or the conservative elites. ..." Outside the mythical versions of the past, the earliest reference to the doctrine of pure rationalism for an inquiry into truth was found in pre-Socrates Greek school of thought. Indian Upanishadic tradition, the contemplations of Buddha etc., also seek parity with the pure rationalism. Kautilya or Chanakya, the astute Brahmin credited with his role in the establishment of Maurya Dynasty or Magadha Kingdom was also said to have strengthened a philosophical system called *Anvikshiki*, a modern equivalent of critical inquiry.

With the powerful intervention of positivist, scientific, dialectic and materialistic methods from the 16th century onwards, the search for truth assumed new heights in natural as well as social sciences. The confidence of progressive Europe of the Victorian era made the positivist claims an absolute. But this confidence didn't remain as solid as it was at the initial stages of positivism and over a time even the definitive sciences like mathematics, physics etc., entertained certain doubts in theories viz., 'entropy', 'uncertainty', 'relativity', etc., to cite a few. In the meanwhile studies into human mind and astronomy delved into unknown realms of the noumenon and phenomenon. Armesto thus considers: "In the twentieth-century West, truth was buried in what I call 'the graveyard of certainty' - a civilization of crumbling confidence, in which it was hard to be sure of anything. Uncertainty was part of a scientific counter-revolution, which overthrew the ordered image of the universe inherited from the past and substituted the image we live with today: chaotic, contradictory, full of unobservable events, untrackable particles, untraceable causes and unpredictable effects."

The social sciences, in this milieu, have posed more problems in the project of truth. In their efforts to elevate their theories beyond questioning, some have gone to the extent of embellishing them with the trappings of 'science' or 'scientific' features even beyond science per se. Human behavior is not so easily amenable for regimentation into theories. Even then, some social sciences claimed the discovery of absolute truth, inexorable laws,

and even claimed certain avoidable predictions. "Even those who believe in truth, and distinguish it correctly, tend to warp, conceal or deny it for their own ends. The new danger is more subtle and more corrosive: liars will have nothing to prove - and defenders of truth will have no case to demand of them - if the very distinction between truth and falsehood is abandoned as a meaningless curio of a pedantic past. In a world where all utterances are of equally little value - the very world into which we are slipping - only merit is silence: joining the voiceless, reveling in illiteracy, abandoning language. No development of our times is more terrifying to those who hope to sustain truth or revive it than the breakdown of confidence in the power of language to express it. ..." Thus the subtle distinction between certainties and possibilities are got blurred in humanities.

Thus the human being is now forced to doubt the very project of truth. Armesto thus declares: "Doubt is the truth of our times ..." When Armesto published the history of truth in 1997 he had also, all through, observed the waiting 'Untruth' on the horizons of time for its turn. As long as the dialectics operate within the opposites of 'truth' and 'untruth' the universal project of the epistemology retained the hope of reaching out to truth. But by the beginnings of the new millennium it appears that we have reached a different stage - 'Post-truth,' even before the claims of truth and untruth remain unresolved. The Oxford Dictionary has announced "Post-Truth" as the word of the year 2016! What do we mean or understand by the expression "Post-Truth"?

Are we the witnesses for the death of truth? Have we definitely entered the post-Truth era? Truth and falsehood stand against each other, a known idea common to all. But post-truth transcends truth, and probably even beyond 'true-false' dichotomy. Oxford Dictionary defines post-truth as a condition "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." The Cambridge Dictionary defines it as one - "relating to a situation in which people are more likely to accept an argument based on their emotions and beliefs, rather than one based on facts." Wikipedia [<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki>] further explained the phenomenon: "Post-truth is a philosophical and political concept for "the disappearance of shared objective standards for truth" and the "circuitous slippage between facts or alt-facts, knowledge, opinion, belief, and truth." It further adds - "Post-truth discourse is often contrasted with the forms taken by scientific methods and inquiry."

Every young person of today's digital world is burdened with heavy life activity. The present age of technology doesn't even allow him to settle down at one particular level of acquisition of knowledge; they are driven continuously by the market forces, sometimes not even to advance, but to stay fit where they were. The times of pastoral leisure are not available to many. We have already seen how the human project of seamless reason has entered the stage of inescapable doubt by the mid of 20th century. Added now to the hedge of doubt the swaths of impossibility of leisurely

inquiry! Thus we see the ground well prepared for the post-truth! Daniel Levitin, a psychologist and Dean of Social Sciences at the Minerva Schools at KGI in San Francisco tried to examine this phenomenon of post-truth in his "Weaponized Lies: how to think critically in the post-truth era."

Levitin states: "A post-truth era is an era of willful irrationality, reversing all the great advances humankind has made." He quotes a Stanford University study which says "... young people's ability to reason about the information on the Internet can be summed up in one word: bleak. 'Critical thinking doesn't mean we disparage everything; it means that we try to distinguish between claims with evidence and those without.' It is easy for partisans to lie with statistics and graphs because they know that most people think it will take too much time to look under the hood and see how they work.' Modern readers are not in a position to examine the 'plausibility.'

Levitin cites a classic example for this new phenomenon in the misuse of social media in the recent past. It appears there is one website by the name MartinLutherKing.org. 'What MartinLutherKing.org contains is a shameful assortment of distortions, anti-Semitic rants, and out-of-context quotes. Who runs the site? Stormfront, a white-supremacy, neo-Nazi hate group. What better way to hide a racist agenda than by promising "the truth" about a great civil right leader?' Similar such misuse and abuse of social media is found freely employed in political arena. This phenomenon is growing in India and elsewhere.

We humans, he says, are 'the storytelling species.' We are looking only for supporting evidence for our exciting notion. Scientists call this 'cherry picking' i.e., the method of collecting the data that suits your hypothesis. 'Counter knowledge,' a term coined by the U.K. Journalist Damian Thompson, is misinformation packaged to look like fact that some uncritical mass of people believes to be true. It's not just in politics that counter knowledge propagates and examples come from science, current affairs, celebrity gossip, and pseudo-history. The difference between a false theory and a true theory is one of probability. Counter-knowledge, when it runs contrary to real knowledge, has some social currency. 'Incredulity', 'dismay', 'shock' and 'thriller' are not only some human frailties but are also the prime-movers of a story-telling activity. 'An odd feature of human cognition is that once we form a belief or accept a claim, it's very hard for us to let go, even in the face of over whelming evidence and scientific proof to the contrary.'

Epistemology, according to the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, is the study of knowledge. Epistemologists concern themselves to the nature of knowledge; that is, what does it mean to say that someone knows, or fails to know, something? Second, we must determine the extent of human knowledge; that is, how much do we, or can we, know? How can we use our reason, our senses, the testimony of others, and other resources to acquire knowledge? Should we have a legitimate worry about skepticism, the view that we do not or cannot know anything

at all? The word "knowledge" and its cognates are an expression of psychological conviction. Epistemologists typically do not focus on procedural or acquaintance knowledge, however, instead preferring to focus on propositional knowledge.

The correspondence theory in epistemology considers that what we believe or say is true if it corresponds to the way things actually are - to the facts. This idea can be seen in various forms throughout the history of philosophy. Its modern history starts with the beginnings of analytic philosophy at the turn of the 20th century, particularly in the works of G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell by their rejection of idealism. Moore and Russell hold a version of the identity theory of truth. According to the identity theory, a true proposition is identical to a fact. But the primary bearers of truth are no longer propositions, but beliefs themselves. A belief is true if and only if it corresponds to a fact. The neo-classical correspondence theory seeks to capture the intuition that truth is a content-to-world relation.

Many ideas about realism and anti-realism are closely related to ideas about truth. The relation between truth and metaphysics seen by modern realists can also be exploited by anti-realists. Many modern anti-realists see the theory of truth as the key to formulating and defending their views. But 'the probabilities of verification' or 'verificationism' is also an element in theory of truth. Truth is not, to this view, a fully objective matter, independent of our thoughts. We have entered

into a digital world or virtual world where truth and myth merge into an undistinguishable chemical compound. Now the engines of truth are no more in the hands of the individual seekers.

Foer's *World without Mind* is essentially a book about the forces in the world that have spurred confusion, conformism, and, sad to say, stupidity. Though the defeat of the higher ideal is hardly final, Foer examines how the truth is manufactured by the big-techs in a make believe world. The author hopes to persuade us that another course is still possible. The Europeans have charmingly, and correctly, lumped them together as GAFA (Google, Apple, Face book, Amazon) - says Foer. For example, Facebook can predict user's race, sexual orientation, relationship status, and drug use on the basis of their "likes" alone. 'The crowd' gets what it wants and deserves. We're in the earliest days of this revolution, of course, says Foer. The whole effort of all the neo-tech is to make human beings more predictable, to anticipate their behavior, which makes them easier to manipulate. Even the father of Capitalism, Adam Smith, didn't anticipate this manipulative market of this extent through information. Knowledge never entered deeply into Smith's thinking about trade. But now "Knowledge factories" have become a reality.

With the big tech entry we also entered a kind of 'noisy world.' It is a condition called 'Total Noise.' It's no more a stable and predictable knowledge; it is peripatetic, where a wealth of information

creates a poverty of attention. The new way of offering us information is always in the order of shock and disbelief. Everyone acquainted with 'social media' is aware of this new environment. See for example a well-known method of social media news: "9 out of 10 Americans Are Completely Wrong About This Mind-Blowing Fact." The moment you come across such news, you will invariably drawn to read it or hear it instantly. Millions of readers couldn't contain themselves and followed that link. "You Won't Believe What Happened Next." On most occasion the content would be absolutely either irrelevant or full of vanity. The news is not just news, it's always 'breaking' or 'trending.' Indians have, of late, become 'news maniacs,' and the social media is more virulent and corrupting in India than anywhere else in the world. Almost every linguistic region has more than two dozens of vernacular audio-visual media and hundreds of social media cites. News 'production' has already reached the level of 'industrial production'!

The question is - can people get the information as a fact-reporting or as a package they want, in the way they want it? Over the centuries, writing became a profession, because it demands the rigor and discipline of a serious writer - a professional? 'Writing requires revision, fruitless hours of staring at screens, painstaking research.' 'Our era is defined by polarization, and by warring ideological gangs that yield no ground.' A primary problem is conformism. Is there a way out from this *cul-de-sac*? 'If readers helped create the conditions for monopolistic

dominance, they also have the ability to reverse it.' But Foer's confidence may not be true at all times. Sometimes the structures we build around for our own security may suffocate us. However he entertains the challenge : "How can we dominate our domination?"

Doubt is the breeding ground for the authority to set in. For sometime every branch of knowledge and every known historical truth is upended. It is in this uncertainty fundamentalism sets in because it has no doubts. "Life after doubt may come to be dominated by religious fundamentalism. Societies in recoil from pluralism will demand uniformity, and sceptics and dissenters will probably be the victims of new witch-hunts and burnings." "Fundamentalism means shutting the doors on variety." We entered the new millennium with incredulities! The original dichotomy of the 'Truth' and 'Untruth' is no more holding the ground for the theory of knowledge. It has transcended this dichotomy and entered the phase of 'post-truth'. The urgent need is - how to withstand the challenge of our times - 'after-the-truth' situation? Did we really reach a point of no return, having crossed the Rubicon of epistemology back into the dark swaths of herd psychology?

We are entering into a new world order of uncertainty - a Heraclitus's world where we 'cannot step twice into the same river, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you...' Russell also cites its alternative expression - 'We step and do not step into the same rivers: we are,

and are not.' 'Flux' is good. But, we are in such a flux that its speed and intensity is increased multifold, and probably to such an extent where even Heraclitus would find it difficult to theorize. In a state where even the

science has become a tradition and where the distinction between the tradition and the science is less visible, probably, we need to stay a while in a contemplative reflection and question ourselves - "Truth! What next?".

REFLECTION ON SOME CONTEMPORARY POETS IN INDIAN ENGLISH

Rajendra Singh Baisthakur*

Art is beyond time and space. Poetry too, being an intense form of art, has no boundaries. Poetry in English is ennobled not only by those whose mother tongue is English but by people from many Commonwealth countries too, who acquired necessary skill in the use of English language and stood in the international arena by their own right as poets. Many Indians, right from Rabindranath Tagore till date have contributed significantly to English Poetry. Creativity in poetry and related genres and the volume of production made the world recognize Indian English as a standard variety of English Language and the Indian literature in English as Indo-anglian Literature. There are so many reputed poets like Arabindo, R Prthasaradhy, Dom Moraes, Kamala Das, Michal Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Meena Kandasamy and many more who are not mentioned here as this article is not intended to be an exhaustive work but an overview of modern English Writing in India. AK Ramanujan, from Mysore, writes about "A River" in Madurai, a city of Temples. The perennial river dries to a trickle in Summer bearing the 'sand ribs' and none notices it. But

when there is flood, old poets as well as new poets sing praising the beauty of it. They do not bother about the devastation the flood caused in the first half an hour by washing away three village houses, one pregnant woman and two cows named Gopi and Brinda. It is 'usual' for them. The irony is that the names of the two cows are mentioned but not the name of the pregnant woman expecting twins. Thus this humane poet highlights the insensitivity of fellow poets towards fellow human beings.

Nissim Ezekiel in his poem *Night of the Scorpion* portrays a typical Indian scene highlighting the way of life in India. A scorpion stings a woman on a rainy day and escapes. Neighbours gather around her. They believe that the movement of the scorpion outside will make the poison move in the body of the woman. They think that her present suffering is because of her evil deeds in the past or this suffering may reduce the effect of her future misdeeds. The life before death and the life after death is in accordance with the Hindu belief that soul takes multiple births. It is believed that there is a continuum of life and the result of our deeds (*Praarabdha*). So they sit with 'peace of understanding' on their faces. The so called rationalist husband tries every irrational way to mitigate the suffering of his wife including pouring paraffin on the bitten

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toe and lighting it indicating rationalism is not really a part of his mindset. When the pain subsides mother thanks God that the scorpion did not sting her children. This anti-climax changes the way the poem has to be looked at.

Jayant Mahapatra, a lecturer by Profession, is a celebrated poet from Odisha writing in Odiya as well as in English. He received the first Sahitya Academi award and many more honors. His famous poem *Hunger* is a commentary on a helpless situation in which one degrades oneself to commit uncivilized things. We find a fisherman on the shore of a sea who is ready to offer his emaciated fifteen year old daughter as a prostitute to a visitor. The visitor is surprised at the father acting as a pimp and also at his own desire to exploit the situation by paying money ('flesh was heavy on my back'). The net of the fisherman was gathering only 'froth' suggesting his poverty and hunger. The accumulated 'soot' on the walls suggests that the fisherman and his daughter are not new to this activity. Hunger for food among the fisherman and his daughter and hunger for sex in the narrator are juxtaposed very well by the poet.

Keiki Daruwala, an IPS officer, has been one of the foremost poets writing in English in India. His poem *Migrations* point out the tragedy involved in migration. People migrate because of drought, epidemics or political turmoil. Passage of time makes them strangers in their earlier places. It is something emotionally unacceptable and hurts any migrant. Thinking about the past and the place

abandoned makes one 'pensive'. Just as the grandmother whom you loved in childhood faded from memory your mother too will fade from memory in course of time, says the poet. Past is frozen and nobody can get back into the past or relive the events experienced. Time moves on and takes us along whether we like it or not. Twin planes of migration from place and migration of mind in terms of time are well depicted in this poem.

Shiv Kumar is a Professor in English from Hyderabad. As a Poet, Playwright, Novelist, Short Story Writer, Critic, Translator he excelled. In his poem *Indian Women* he describes the life of a typical village woman. She is 'triple-baked' as one living in poverty, male domination and sexual subjugation. A woman has to go a long distance and fetch water from a community well waiting there for long for her turn. She is likened to an empty 'pitcher' as if there is no heart or mind in her. Her man who is away on work has to return and she will wait for him till it gets dark. She lives in a house with mud baked walls which suggest that she lives in poverty. She has tattoo on her thighs which is a stamp (as in the case of animals) of ownership of her body. The woman is so subjugated that she has no right even to raise 'angry eyebrows'. In other words she has to live like a robot created for the service, including sexual, of man.

Jeet Thayil, from Kerala, is a poet, novelist and musician. He received many awards including Sahitya Academi Award and his writings were published by prestigious international publishers. He edited two

anthologies of Indian Poets. In his poem "Penitent" he describes how he went astray and had to speak to things in his room suggesting his estrangement from his beloved and his subsequent lifeless life. He tries to deceive himself by trying to believe that he is happy only to be vain. The poem has deep undertones and is a commentary on the present day maladjustment between wife and husband. Each one does not wish to come out of his or her shell and expects others to adjust which results in clashes. Further there is a suggestion that women are not being treated equal and with respect. The words 'honour me, honour everything' speak loud and clear about the secondary status of women in Indian society which is not acceptable to the educated and financially independent modern women. Compared to many feminists his voice is stronger in support of women.

Arundhati Subramaniam is a renowned and awarded poet, author and critic. Her books are translated into many languages. She is a non-conformist and can dwell in Keatsian 'Negative Capability' as seen in her lines 'content sometimes with the question mark'. A person needs unusual composure and spiritual stamina to remain in such uncertainties. She is content with both the known and the unknown 'a clause that leaves room for reminiscence and surprise'. For her 'leaving no footprints' is also 'a way of keeping faith'. This feeling will be there in a spiritually advanced state of mind in which a person is relieved of even the desire for God's grace. Her spiritual depth explains her association with Sadguru. In her poem *Strategist* she tells

us how we have to exercise our mind and body to prevent them from becoming sick. One needs to be on guard like a strategist by dwelling in the present to counter different negative emotions like fear, envy etc. that wait within to cripple us.

Tishani Doshi, from Chennai, is an awarded poet of distinction, a journalist and a dancer too. Her poems reflect modernist use of images and symbols effectively to express intense ideas. In the poem *Rain at Three* she describes sudden raining and the drenching of bed and pillows. She talks of 'weeds we pulled up yesterday'. Weeds here are the unpleasant experiences of the past which we try to remove from our mind. Time allows them to die but we cannot wait till then. So we act to remove them ourselves. We try to keep our body clean and live a life of no emotions, 'wooden body' in the present. But we are not wood. We turn inwards and again there are many positive things which move us. So we go 'on our knees' to gather the hibiscus petals passionately. The poet suggests that we undergo a curious cycle of desiring and undesiring when she says 'splintering first, then joining'. We want to forget the unpleasant past but along with it pleasant things of the past also get shattered. We need to gather our pleasant things (petals) again and preserve them. Spiritual progress also starts with analysis and evolves into synthesis.

Poems of **Reshma Ramesh** found place in many international magazines and anthologies and were translated into languages of many countries. In her poem *Small Hands of*

Sivakashi she writes about the children employed in preparing crackers using explosive material. She wonders how the people who use crackers during celebrations are insensitive to the fate of these children who are like birds which cannot fly though they had wings. Some of her poems express loneliness, feeling of being forlorn ('so far away that even silence cannot travel between us', 'I am a conversation halted midway') and expectation of fulfillment. In her poem on Olympos she is so enamored with everything there that she wants her heart never to return. Images like having 'a river in her palm' and 'a mountain waking up on her chest' abound all through her poems.

Annappurna Sarma is a writer to reckon with while dealing with Indian writing in English. We find a graphic description of a beggar and his life in her poem *Why Did He Stop Coming?* Sound of the beggar's stick, his tattered and sick appearance, how he lived a lonely life in misery and poverty but wished everybody to be happy are portrayed well. Feminine empathy as that of Jane Austen is seen prominently in many of her poems. She has an eye for realistic detail. She sounds romantic and wants the pines to hug her in her poem *One Day I Will Reach You*. She calls it 'embosoming'. This is sensitive and creative use of language. She portrays the feelings of a woman without children in her poem *Sounds* with vivid images of paddy cutter, dove, yogini and flies comparing them with the sounds made by an 'unborn child'.

'Mahati' (**MV Satyanarayana**) is a classical poet by his own right and published his poems

in renowned international and national magazines. He deals with Indian mythology apart from other subjects. His book *Finding the Mother* on 'Sundarakanda', a part of The Ramayana, reminds us of Miltonic 'things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme'. His style is also ornate with high sounding words suited to the ordeal. The beauty of the original in Sanskrit and its translation in Hindi by Tulasidas has been retained while describing the glorious leap of Hanuman to Lanka from Indian soil and his adventures there to find Sita, which is the theme of this long poem. In his transcreation of *Ocean Blues* by Garikapati Narasimha Rao from Telugu, he touches every subject in brief as in *Spectator Papers of Addison and Steele*. Here the narrator is a wave of the ocean. The book highlights the metrical expertise of Satyanarayana. His long poem *Hare Krishna* shows his devotion to his religion and the beautiful divine play of Sri Krishna. Another long poem of him is *The Ganges* in which the journey of the river from heaven to earth is described. Here his diction has been soft and gentle like the flow of the river or the song from Krishna's flute. He has a number of other short poems too. His poetry is enriched with intensity, depth and symbolism which are hallmarks of his poetry.

Satyanand Sarangi publishes his poems in reputed international and national magazines. In his poem *The Garden of Life* he reflects on the various stages in the course of life. Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter are not only seasons of nature but also found in the life of man as childhood, youth, middle age

and old age. The Sun brings cheer to the buds in dry May. Childhood, like Spring is a pleasant stage in spite of several odds faced. But according to the poet his place does not have Spring and Summer seasons. That is to say that there is no worth mentioning life till one reaches middle age. Dew and snowflakes, representing Autumn and Winter, form a grave for the soil beneath and even roots are frozen. Life comes to a standstill like death. Though hope, personification of man, slept on the bed of tears, hearing voice of God its heart beats to bloom in full. Once there is youthful bloom December snowy droughts will not affect it. Then life is ennobled and past remains a memory. The poet seems to suggest that we need to keep hope alive in spite of odds in life and wait for divine Grace.

Dr H Tulsi (Dr Tulsi Hanumanthu) is a poet, editor, publisher and her poems are published in many international magazines. Her work is translated into many Indian and foreign languages. Her *Metverse Muse*, a premier literary magazine, recently had its Silver jubilee Edition with 750 poems from across the world. Here is a poem *All That Glitters Need Not Be Gold* which has a message for all. There is a beautiful description of dawn at the outset. The Sun was sleeping 'with mosquito-nets of gossamer mist'. Sleep was a 'captive' in his eyes. Sky is said to be the wife of Sun who glows with his arrival. The sun is robed in 'silver bright'. Dusk too is described in the same passionate way. Sky prepares her baby in 'brightly dyed attire' to meet the father without realizing that the Sun has his own flaws. He, under the cover of darkness, goes

into Ocean's arms. In spite of glitter and shine he is unfaithful, says the poet. This is surely a different way of looking at the Sun. Her diction and metrical mastery in the poem is worth mentioning.

Poetry has been evolving with time and changes in human way of thinking. It kept itself alive to every situation in life and poets tried to voice all the beauties and complexities of modern life in their own ways. One significant deviation from poetry of 16th to 19th century is using images, symbols and expressions that are hard to crack for some of the readers. But they are a necessity to express the difference in life styles and ways of thinking of the hither to unknown modern world. Poetic diction too underwent a drastic change and readability has become more important though 'proper words at proper places' is the norm for any good writing. People prefer lucid, simple and direct expressions over bombastic, ornate and flowery style of language. Another point of significance is that many poets moved away from the chains of metrical verse. The so called free verse is also chained in a slender way and that too may disappear in future giving primacy to thought and the way it is expressed free of any binding factors.

Poetry is a beautiful boon that ennoble life. In the contemporary world which believes that time is money, more than other media, poems and cartoons are the tools to share ideas, joys and beauty to enliven our lives. Let us hope that there will be more and more of these to fill our lives and the world we live in with happiness.

RIGHTEOUSNESS VS LOYALTY

Dr.B.N.V.Parthasarathi*

In Ramayana one will find the character of Rama portrayed by Valmiki as a personification of *Dharma* (righteousness). Through the mouth of Maareecha Valmiki describes the essence of Rama's character as, *Ramo Vighrahan dharma*. As a son Prince Rama obeys his father's words and leaves the Ayodhya kingdom and goes to the forest. At the same time when his wife Sita insists that she will accompany him to the forest though initially Rama declines, when she reminds Rama about the *dharma* of a wife saying that a wife has to be with the husband always, Rama finally agrees reluctantly.

Truth is permanent but *Dharma* may change over a period of time. The reason why our *Sanatana Dhrama* is vibrant despite being one of the oldest civilisations yet continues remain as modern is- it follows the yuga *dharma*, *kala dharma* and adapts itself to meet the requirements of the people and the society over a period of time.

One can find this difference when a comparison is made between *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*. *Ramayana* occurred in

Treta Yuga whereas *Mahabharatha* occurred long after *Ramayana* in dwaparayuga. In tretayuga Prince Rama gave up kingdom and went to forest to obey his father whereas in dwaparayuga Pandavas and kouravas fought a bitter and bloody battle for the control of the kingdom. Yudhistir was against the war but was persuaded by Krishna. Even the great warrior Arjun in the battle field after seeing his kith and kin on the opponent side declines to fight the battle but Krishna gives *Gitopadesha* and convinces Arjun to fight the battle. The essence of *Gitopadesha* clearly says when *Adharma* is in vogue one has to not only resist but even wage a war against *adharma* to enforce *dharma*. Krishna says candidly in *Gita* that one has to follow his *dharma* unmindful of the consequences. Therefore the contrast between the times of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* is very clear. In *Ramayana* times people followed the *dharma* as a norm. In *Mahabharata* period people did not mind indulging in *adharma* and therefore assertion or reinforcement of *dharma* became essential even at the cost of a battle. "End justify the means" was the policy mostly followed by the people during *Mahabharata* times. However, in the end *dharma* prevails. In *Mahabharata* great warriors like- Bhishma, Drona and Karna compromised the *dharma* and went by the loyalty to the King in spite of knowing pretty

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well the King (Dhuryodhana) was on a wrong path (*Adharma*). This compelled them to fight the battle against Pandavas at the cost of their lives. Loyalty may win the favour of the King but if it is at the cost of *dharma* or righteousness then one has to pay a price for it eventually.

People often get confused between truth and dharma. Truth is eternal, permanent and universal. *Dharma* is defined by the context of time, people, place, society, culture and practices. Decision making under *dharma* also takes into account the overall impact/benefit to the people of the society.

One who follows *dharma* or righteousness will strive to do the right things rather than doing the things right. While doing the right thing one goes by the conscience, ethicality and the outcomes. Whereas when one does the things right he merely goes by the rule book adhering to the policies or procedures.

In modern days the friction between righteousness and loyalty can be related to the work situation in an organisation where the boss is wrong and the subordinate has to choose between dissenting with the boss or blindly supporting him. Many a times the subordinates toe the line of the boss in order to not only not to displease him but more importantly to also gain favours. However, we also come across some people who feel organisation's interests are more important than individual loyalties and they dissent with the boss when he is wrong and even raise a red

flag when they notice the boss's decisions are detrimental to the organisation. In management parlance such righteous people are called as thorough professionals. A professional is one who is sincere and committed to the profession. He is even prepared to clash with his boss rather than compromising with his professional principles. No doubt employees are expected to be loyal but their loyalty should be towards the institution and not the individuals (read bosses). Successful organisations require not the employees who are loyal to the bosses but only those who are loyal to the institution and committed to their jobs with high level of professionalism.

In *Mahabharata* Vidura tells Dhritrashtra, "renounce one person for the sake of the family, a family for the sake of village; village for the sake of country and even the [kingdom of] earth for one's own sake."

The correct meaning of what Vidura said as above is if in a family one person is behaving in an unacceptable manner and bringing disrepute to the entire family, then that person has to be abandoned. In the same way in an organisation if one person (even if he is the boss) is causing damage to the institution then in order to save the institution that person has to be removed. Needless to say that the organisations which follow the path of righteousness will survive in the long run as they consider institutional interests that are long term goals are more important than individual gains which are only short term benefits.

THE CULTURE OF MEMORY AND THE RETRIEVAL OF CHE GUEVARA

Alexander Raju*

Culture, in the context of cultural studies, is not a legacy of the past, but a product of the present to be sold to the consumer through proper promotion and at a fair price. Of course, the past is revived at times as part of cultures of memory for the benefit of the present. The reason may be political, say for the survival of a ruling government, or religious, say for making the people more spiritualistic or economic, say for the purpose of the promotion of tourism.

One good example from India is the construction of Sardar Vallabhai Patel's statue in Gujarat. Patel was almost marginalized like many other great Indian freedom fighters during the last seven decades in the history of India's post-independence period. Though Patel was lucky to be named as the Ironman of India, many others were ignored as they were not in the good book of the then ruling governments. Even though certain governments ignored him, all sensible Indians gave Patel a greater place in their hearts, than many other Presidents and Prime Ministers who took the reins after our independence.

The Statue of Unity of Sardar Vallabhai Patel is not simply the tallest statue with a height of 182 meters, as it is taller than many other statues in the world, like the Spring Temple Budha in China (153 meters) or Ushika Dalbutsu in Japan (120 meters) or Statue of Liberty in the USA (93 meters) or The Motherland Calls in Russia (85 meters) or Christ the Redeemer in Brazil (38 meters), but it is claimed to be an eternal tribute to the creator of united India. The Gujarat Tourism Department gave it propaganda through an advertisement on the reverse side of the Air India economy class ticket dated third March 2019.

The statue of Patel revives a sort of personal affective or sense memory among the viewers. According to Promod K Nair, "Sense memory is affective memory, and is more than just the representations of the events: it brings back into the present the very sense and emotional aspects of that event. The significance of the cultures of memory opens the doors of our imagination to a new dimension. The castles and citadels of Gondar in Ethiopia not only make the city the 'Camelot of Africa' but also have a better political purpose. Their importance in tourism is unquestionable but more than that one cannot ignore the symbolic significance lurking behind every stone in those dilapidating forts.

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The statue of Emperor Tewodros II, in the heart of the city of Gondar, may be helpful in reviving the spirit of unity and patriotism among the subjects. Or is it to evoke the melancholic memories of the restless Dark Age of the fighting Lords? It must be noted that statues of heroes, leaders and significant historical figures make icons of the dead and constitute a material mode of memory-making. Moreover, multimedia works of art depicting genocides from around the world, incorporated into teaching and textbooks also ensure the visibility needed for the targeted communities or political parties or religious organizations. The Chauri-Chaura event and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in India, the holocaust in Germany and the Hiroshima-Nagasaki disaster in Japan can be retrieved and adjusted for the present day situation.

The iconic image of Bob Marley, the Ras Tefarian Reggae musician with entangled locks, is reverently displayed on every taxicab in Ethiopia and this, perhaps, highlights the musical tradition of the country concerned. But what really is the reason behind the display of a similar iconic image of Che Guevara through stickers, medals, trophies and T-shirts in Ethiopia? Is it because the people prefer the revolutionary tactics of Che Guevara to the peaceful means of Nelson Mandela for the attainment of freedom? Of course, as memory theorists like Astrid Erll (2011) points out, memory is a construction, and involves the use of representation to capture and communicate a past experience.

A close look at Che Guevara's popular image will make us enthralled and we hold our breath

spellbound for a few moments. He appears like a model posing for a photo session, with all the made-up and elegance. The long haired model looks at us with his stern, fiery eyes and his steady gaze conveys a sort of power and spirit to the observer. His scanty beard, jacket zipped to the chin, collar up, hair uncombed, jaw set in anger, his shoulders turning one way, his face another as well as every other minute features of muscles on the face make him a unique human being. There is tension even in his pose for photographing.

Snapped in March 1960, Alberto Korda's iconic image of Ernesto Che Guevara is possibly the most copied and artistically reproduced photograph in the world. A version of it has been painted, printed, digitized, embroidered, tattooed, sculpted, sketched or embossed on nearly every surface imaginable. In every nook and corner of Ethiopia, we see Che looking at us from the transparent sticker on the front mirror of the 'cobra' minibus taxi or from the flex that cover the rear frame of the Bajaj auto-rickshaw. The image is subsequently used by publishers, artists and, pretty much, anyone with a Xerox machine. Despite all the efforts from the capitalists to tarnish and darken his luminous personality, today his image is gazing at us from T-shirts, posters, album covers, coffee mugs, key chains, beer bottles, cigarette packets and even briefly an advertisement for Smirnoff vodka. To quote Jeremy Hardy, the popular British comedian, "I feel sorry for the family of Che Guevara, people who knew him before he became part of a T-shirt."

Ernesto Che Guevara was an Argentine Marxist revolutionary politician, author, physician, military theorist and guerilla leader. He is now dead for about half a century but he is very much alive everywhere. Even kids who do not know who or what Che Guevara is proudly wear the clothes on which his image is printed. Many of his fans in Ethiopia, perhaps, think of him as one among those famous footballers including Pele and Ronaldigno. The shadows that fell on Che's mysterious activities and the complexities of his life and legacy have almost disappeared; and the man became a logo! Today the questions like Why Che? or Why this particular image? may lead us to the study of the relationship between cultures of memory and power politics, giving much scope for researchers in cultural studies.

The image of Che that we find today on a sticker or on a T-shirt has lost something of its original version; his face on a poster in 1960 is not quite the same thing as it is on a mouse-

pad 48 years later. Well, things are not going well these days; perhaps, kids don't want revolution, instead they need something different. It may be funny for the observers and critics to see rebellion or revolution turning into money.

Che Guevara or Che has become a collection of artifacts. There is even a website for Che-goods: www.chestore.com Therefore what one can do today is to relax on an armchair thinking about the industrialists and capitalists who are minting money at the cost of our great revolutionary theorists like Che Guevara, Frantz Fanon, Mahatma Gandhi and Antonio Gramsci. Yet one could not ignore the fact that memory can be hegemonic when some aspects of the past become dominant in the public mind while others are marginalized. Crucified truths will resurrect, and there will be a time for all the marginalized to come to the mainstream, perhaps at the cost of the present-day dominant figures.

AJANTA CAVES

Dr. Madhulika Ghose*

In the year 185 BCE, the Indian subcontinent, which had flourished under the able rule of exemplary Kings of the Maurya dynasty, experienced a huge upheaval. The last notable king of this dynasty, Ashoka The Great, had renounced all worldly affairs to embrace Buddhism, making way for various dissenting army officers to revolt and establish their own kingdoms. With their leader choosing non violence as his *dharma*, a large number of subjects followed suit. Amidst the confluence of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and the various different emergent political ideologies, a new era was dawning in the subcontinent. Around this time, the grey rocks of the northern gorge of the Waghur river were cut to create a series of caves. Situated in the present day Indian state of Maharashtra, these are the Ajanta caves of the first period. Several murals depicted in them are unique specimens of ancient Indian art. The second phase of construction (4th to 7th century CE) during the 'golden age' of the Guptas, produced some of the most elaborately designed caves.

The U-shaped string of caves was encroached by thick natural vegetation and hidden from

view until it was discovered accidentally by Captain John Smith in 1819 while on a hunting expedition. Amazed by the vividly coloured ancient Indian paintings and skilful artistry, the East India Company appointed the most eligible men to make copies of the paintings to preserve them for posterity. However, the first two attempts were rendered futile by fires which destroyed almost all the copies. The third attempt in 1909 by Lady Herringham culminated in the publication of a book called *Ajanta Frescoes*. She was assisted in her artistic endeavours by Sri Nandalal Bose and Sri Asit Haldar from Kolkata.

The grey-blue natural amphitheatre tucked in a ravine overlooking a stream is as awe inspiring in structure as it is in location. The basalt caves have Buddhist structures, inscriptions and paintings. It is conjectured that they served as prayer halls and also as temporary refuge for traveling monks. Cave number 10 is home to one of the oldest surviving paintings of Buddha. The pigments used, having lost most of their lustre due to unscrupulous intrusions by man and nature, still provide glimpses of the creativity and knowledge possessed by the Indians of yore. The caves have different designs, some resemble simple rooms, while others are in the style of Buddhist Chaityas, Viharas and monasteries. The paintings on the walls depict

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scenes from the 'Jataka' tales and also of daily activities. They provide invaluable glimpses into the social structure and life of the people there from 2nd century BCE to 5th century CE. The intricate carvings on the columns and arches bear testament to the artists' perseverance and appreciable skills in masonry. These caves are one of the first few examples of community sponsored structures where finances were provided not merely by the king, but also by various individuals of society.

The beauty of the caves enthralled great minds such as Sister Nivedita and Dr. Jagdish Chandra Bose. Under the guidance of her spiritual guru, Swami Vivekananda, Sister Nivedita travelled all over India and inspired many to revive glorious Indian art and culture. Sri Nandalal Bose was encouraged, almost coaxed, by her to travel to Ajanta and learn as much as possible from the art. She insisted on the importance of an Indian going there as an artist to imbibe the ancient treasures. Mesmerized by its enchanting allure she wrote about the caves in her book *The Ancient*

Abbey of Ajanta, mentioning that her favourite was caves number 4, 'vast', 'lofty' and 'unfinished'.

Even today Ajanta is not very well connected to any major railway station or airport. Reaching the caves is still a daunting task and one has to climb numerous steep steps up a slope. There are, however, 'doli' provisions, where four men carry you on a small palanquin. This obscure location, perhaps, adds to the aesthetic charm of the place which is still a pristine ravine. Too much connectivity with mainstream India would probably destroy its unique appeal. After some disastrous attempts at restoration in the 1920s, the site is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India. The Ajanta caves and all they contain are the last few vestiges of a bygone illustrious era. We Indians have so much to learn and celebrate in our relics that if we look carefully at our own glorious heritage, we need not look anywhere else for inspiration.

CREATING A MODEL VILLAGE

D. Samarender Reddy*

Nestled 100 km away from Hyderabad is Burgula, the village of the ex-Chief Minister of the then united AP, Late Burgula Ramakrishna Rao, in the Ranga Reddy District, Telangana. Like any other village in India it has its own developmental needs. In fact, 3 villages and 7 tribal areas come under Burgulagrampanchayat, where the primary means of sustenance is obviously agriculture. What is heartening to note is that Burgulagrampanchayat has been adopted for development by Dr. Alok Agrawal, a nephrologist, and his wife Dr. Sangeeta Agrawal, a gastroenterologist, based in Dayton, Ohio, USA.

Dr. Alok Agrawal is the president of Pragathi Welfare Society (www.pragathiwelfaresociety.com) which is looking to develop Burgulagrampanchayat on all fronts. In particular, they are focused on education improvement, women empowerment, youth employment, preventive healthcare and community participation. Let us take a look at what all they have been able to accomplish so far, which hopefully will serve as an inspiration for others similarly to adopt and transform a village.

Education Improvement: On the education front, Pragathi has made a lot of progress in Burgula. Their actions are inspired by Mandela who said that "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." A good education is the doorway to a good life and good society. Prior to its involvement in Burgula, there were no toilets, and not enough classrooms and desks and chairs in the schools. Some children walked barefoot 2-3 kilometers daily to school. Pragathi has concentrated its efforts on improving the education of the village school children of Burgula, Telangana, on all fronts - right from infrastructure provision to motivation of the students. The footwear and bicycles provided to the school children ensures they start off their day at school on a bright note. The classrooms and toilets constructed by Pragathi, and the desks and chairs they have provided makes sure that the students can learn in an ideal learning environment.

To get the kids to the seven area schools in the first place, Pragathi volunteers motivate the parents and students. At school, Pragathi has provided them with a science lab, computer lab and library well-stocked with books so that they can take their education to the next level. They also ensure that their mid-day meal is nutritious. A large outdoor stage and auditorium have been constructed by them

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that provide space for extra-curricular activities. Sports equipment and dresses are also provided. Some other activities of Pragathi are encouraging teachers, providing volunteer teachers, conducting supplementary classes and motivation camps for students. They hope to inspire many other rural schools. Their efforts on the education front are now extending to 99 schools in the entire Farooqnagar mandal, impacting 13,000 students.

The girl child is often a neglected lot in the family. As Dr. James Emmanuel Kwegyir-Aggrey said, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual; but, if you educate a woman, you educate a family." In addition to educating them at school, to make girls more confident and self-supporting, Pragathi regularly sends girls to BIREN and other skill training centers to learn fashion tailoring, maggam and zardosi handicraft work and skills to work in a beauty parlor as part of their 45-day residential training at BIREN. Adolescent girls are also imparted menstrual hygiene awareness through Pragathi's Swecha program.

Empowering Women : Not lagging behind is Pragathi's work in empowering the women of Burgula. Starting from January 2014 they support the existing women self-help groups and assist in deployment of strategies for village transformation, skills improvement and income generation. Special emphasis is placed on education of girls. The following has been done to empower them: (1) Trips to NIRD exhibition to interact with others from different

states of India, (2) SevaMela trips to share ideas, (3) Helped about 200 women purchase sewing machines and trained them for self employment, (4) Skill training for several women - recently seven women were trained in soap and phenyl making, (5) Encouraging entrepreneurship, and (6) Construction of a Mahila Mandal building.

After several months of deliberation and planning, Pragathi started a Tailoring Training Program in 2019, initially for 25 women of Burgula at Pragathi Rural Development Centre (PRDC) in their first batch. It is a structured 90-day program. They roped in an instructor from Shadnagar, a town close to Burgula. Their vision is to provide employment to women so that they become self-reliant. They also envisage these women becoming change agents in their communities so that they end up training other women in the same skills, either independently or under the supervision of a trainer. Thus, their Women Livelihoods Project can become sustainable. Pragathi is looking at outside sources like companies from Hyderabad to come forward and give orders to these women.

Pragathi is committed to supporting 1,00,000 rural women in one year (2019-20) across villages and tribal areas of Telangana State in and around Burgula, while deploying their highly acclaimed programs through Pragathi Rural Development Center, to alleviate poverty. Pragathi plans to empower the women with knowledge about the various programs being conducted by them: Sneha - menstrual hygiene program, SMILES -

preventive health care program, Bharat Bachpan - healthy childhood program, AMMA - pregnant women program, NCDs reduction program, Intinta Pragathi program, Anaemia reduction program, and SHG program.

Only 12% of women in India use sanitary pads, and rest use rags, leaves and even ash instead. Moreover, 23% girls drop out of school when they reach puberty. Imagine not being allowed to go to schools, offices or do routine work!! Almost 70% of households can't afford sanitary napkins at the market price. Pragathi has been promoting menstrual hygiene for the last 4 years. Given the strong taboos in place four years back, they feared a great deal of opposition from the people to Pragathi's message and mission. But, their dedicated, sustained and innovative efforts in last four years have generated a momentum that spread the message from one village to several districts, with several more people joining their efforts, and thereby impacting millions of people. With their menstrual hygiene program, Sneha, they address all the three aspects of awareness, accessibility and affordability, thereby instilling confidence in women. They have created awareness and distributed more than 2,00,000 free sanitary napkin packets in over 10 districts of Telangana, AP and Kerala, and raised awareness in about 1,00,000 women. They increased awareness in hundreds of healthcare workers, who work closely with the poor. All along they have focused on creating ambassadors who propagate the information further in their communities.

Pragathi Rural Development Center (PRDC) has been developed in Burgula as a regional hub for development, about 100 km away from the city of Hyderabad, to facilitate development in more than 500 neighboring villages. This beautiful lush-green facility houses meeting rooms and a large Conference-cum-Training Hall. The guest-house will accommodate the summer internship trainees from the US and India, and also the trainers. At the outset, this modern, environment-friendly center has sent a strong message to neighboring rural communities about rain water harvesting system, use of LED lights and mud bricks. The bricks are cheaper, stronger and avoid need for air-conditioning. Future plans include installation of solar panels and the development of computer training-cum-telecounselling center. The telecounselling center will be a game-changer, impacting education, access to healthcare, and livelihoods.

A very well structured 90-day training program in stitching has attracted women in large numbers from nearby villages so far in this center. Plans are on to add training programs in other crafts and skills gradually. This should gradually transform the employment landscape in the area.

Experts from all over the globe regularly address the villagers to increase awareness, from PRDC. Villagers are imparted practical tools for rural development in the areas of education, preventive health care, livelihoods generation, financial literacy, women empowerment etc. Medical camps are being conducted often.

Pragathi encourages other nonprofit organization partners to use the center as a base for penetrating the difficult-to-access areas. Huge impact has been made by developing PRDC to create level playing field in rural areas. More than 250 neighboring villages and 55,000 women have been directly impacted thus far. Awards are given out annually to improve education in neighboring 100 villages. More than 10,00,000 sanitary pads have been distributed out of the center and knowledge of menstrual hygiene provided. With careful planning, availability of funds and resources, Pragathi Rural Development Center intends to reach out to millions to provide support and education about best practices to alleviate poverty in the region.

Youth Employment: Additionally, Pragathi is also targeting the youth to make them more employable. Thus far, it has provided training to more than 80 youth in basic computer skills. It has provided computers to ten well-trained youth to help them improve the skills of others in the village. It also encourages youth to go for skill training, some with guaranteed jobs. About 125 youth have been trained in driving so far. Pragathi engages with the youth to channelize their energies in the right direction for the development of the community. It also counsels and provides them information about skill-training programs and employment opportunities.

Preventive Healthcare: The local conditions arising out of poverty are largely responsible

for vast majority of illnesses. Pragathi's main emphasis is on providing clean drinking water and improving sanitation. Currently, its four major programs likely to have a big impact on healthcare are: (1) Clean drinking water project, (2) Litter-free village project, (3) Improvement of drainage systems, (4) Aiding construction of 625 toilets sanctioned by the government.

Community Involvement: Pragathi believes that encouraging the community to participate and find sustainable solutions is most important. Pragathi supports the local village government's developmental efforts in every possible manner. Experts are regularly invited to interact with the villagers. Pragathi members visit and stay in the village for long periods of time to understand the local problems and encourage people to come up with solutions. Developing the village by "Empowering the Grampanchayat" and improving the existing system rather than bringing a new system in its place has been Pragathi's prime focus and it has been greatly successful in achieving this objective.

Other programs are being added regularly. About 20 village youth familiar with local conditions have been employed by Pragathi to carry on daily activities, thus providing livelihood opportunities to them. Let us hope people like Dr. Alok Agrawal inspire many more people to take up such projects for transforming their adopted villages and thereby India.

KOLAVENNU RAMA KOTESWARA RAO GEM OF AN AESTHETE

T. Siva Rama Krishna*

Kolavennu was the gem of an aesthete of purest ray serene. In his many-splendoured life, Kolavennu played many roles, each with outstanding distinction. But the crowning glory of his achievement was his founding of *Triveni* - a high class national periodical - Triple stream of Literature, History and Culture. He was its founder- editor. He left behind him best and brightest memories and memorials. Thus his monumental memorial is his periodical *Triveni*. It has reflected the spirit of our Renaissance and the noble character of its creator - for he was a practical idealist. In fact it seemed to answer his life's purpose, his scholarly disposition, sensitive refined tastes, quiet devotion and dedication to nobler things which he set his heart on. The aesthete in him was as potential as the scholar-journalist.

Kolavennu Rama Koteswara Rao was born on 22nd October, 1894 in Narasaraopeta in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. He was educated in Guntur, Machilipatnam and Madras. As a brilliant student he won the love and esteem of his teachers and fellow students. After taking his law degree, he practiced as a lawyer for three years. But, as the legal

profession did not suit his literary, artistic, temperament, he gave it up for good. And as a patriot he joined the Non-cooperation Movement and courted imprisonment.

For some time Kolavennu worked as teacher, Vice Principal, and later as Principal of the Andhra Jatiya Kalasala in Machilipatnam. As a true successor to its illustrious founder, K Hanumantha Rao, as a teacher and Principal he won golden laurels.

Later, Kolavennu started his journalistic career with *Swarajya*. There he worked along with K. Iswara Dutt, K Rama Rao, Khasa Subba Rao, G.V. Krupanidhi *et al.* There he earned name and fame as a great journalist. He worked along with Sri Katuri as Joint Editor to *Krishna Patrika*. He worked as Chief Editor of Southern Languages Book Trust and greatly developed it.

Then he sponsored *Triveni* through a saga of struggle, suffering and sacrifice. Truly, it was a memorable episode in our journalistic annals. All along *Triveni* has been an intellectual, informative and educative periodical. He was famous for his brilliant editorials. His true illustrious successive Editors - Sri Bhavaraju, eminent Litterateur, Prof. I V Chalapati Rao, Literary patriarch, National Scholar & Critic

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and author, scholar-administrator - have maintained the flag of Triveni flying gloriously.

Kolavennu had the honour to be a distinguished member of composite Madras Legislative Assembly, Andhra Sahitya Academy, Central Sahitya Academy and All India Radio and rendered great service to these institutions. As a member of the team constituted for the translation of the Indian Constitution into Telugu, he gave his invaluable counsel for improvement of the translated version. He was an erudite scholar and critic

in English and Telugu. He was a brilliant speaker and writer in English and Telugu with equal felicity and facility. He wrote brilliant books in Telugu - *Count Caver of Italy*, and *Heroes of Maharashtra*.

Thus his life was a story of purity, nobility, generosity of disposition, gentle forbearance, abounding love, strenuous pursuit of high aims and ideals. Like his illustrious confreres, he lived in high honour and died with great name and fame.

SUFI

T.N. Dhar 'Kundan'

Sufi is a term used for a sect of spiritual practitioners, which flourished in the Middle-East. They used to cover their bodies with a black woolen cloth called *Sauf* in Arabic, and thus came to be known as 'Sufis'. They believed in one God and aspired to reach the ultimate level called *Fana* or annihilation through the practice of *Zikra* or chanting and narration of the name of God, where *Zakir*, the narrator, *Zikra*, the narration and *Mazkoor*, the narrated get merged into one. A Sufi seeks *Qurb* or proximity to God and *Mahabba* or love and then retires into ecstasy. There have been many great names among these Sufis, who had their respective followers, which formed a mystical order known as *Tariqa*. According to Jamal Ahmad Khan, the Sufis were influenced by the philosophies of the East and subscribed to the theory of non-dualism. This theory went against the tenets of Islam, the religion which was prevalent in that area and, therefore, these Sufis got a rough deal. Exponents of non-dualism like Mansoor, who said *Anal Haq* (I am God) were assassinated. These mystics were impelled by the insistent desire to find a more intimate approach to and union with God than were provided by Sunni formalism which

placed man at an almost infinite distance from the Creator. It is not as if such formulations were unknown to the mankind in the West. In fact Eckhart a German Christian mystic who lived between 1260 and 1329 had said that man's goal should be *Uniomystica* meaning union of God and Man. Whether he and similar other mystics too were influenced by the philosophy of the East is a matter for further investigation and research. In fact there are some scholars and writers who hold the view that Sufism has travelled from India to Middle-East and beyond. Be that as it may.

Sufis rejected outward forms of observance in favour of a style of pietism that sought to apprehend the reality of God's unity through direct experience. Earliest Sufi Rabiya, a poet of Basra, who defied convention, ran through the streets with a torch and a jug of water (torch for heaven and water for hell) so that both veils may be taken away from those who journey towards God. Abu Hamid al Ghazali wrote *Ihya Ulurn al Din* (the revitalization of religious sciences), a powerful dose of Sufism. Hasan al Banna founded Muslim Brotherhood. Mansoor al Hallaj declared 'I am the Truth'. As stated earlier he was crucified and burned. A lot of poetry was written which was directly inspired by Sufism. It depicted images of divine love challenging the conventional religiosity. A later Sufi Ibn

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Arabi makes a distinction between God's essence which cannot be known or experienced by the mystic and the level of unity to which the mystic can aspire through the revelation of God's name. He says, 'man is somehow God, God is somehow man though also much more than that (In Hindu terminology this would be called transcendental level because it is said about God that He stays above His creation by ten measures, *Atitishthatdashangulam*) or as per Kashmir Shaiva philosophy, He pervades the universe yet remains above it, *Vishwaatmikaam tad-utteernam*.

Sufis are also called Walis- friends of God. Other prominent Sufis were Mulla Sadra of Shiraz, Suhrawardi, Naqshbandi, Chishti, Qadri etc. they all had their respective mystical order. Of the Sufi poets we had two great names Shams Tabrez and Maulana Rumi, whose poetry (particularly latter's) has brought out the essence of Sufism, non-duality and merger with the ultimate in graphic idiom. It was eventually a great Sufi named Imam Ghazali who got Sufis accepted in Islam, reportedly on the promise that Sufis would help Muslim rulers to spread Islam and get people of other faiths converted. This is exactly what some Sufis did in Kashmir where they took refuge after having been persecuted in their native land. Sufism brought into the fold of Islam *Dargah*, a shrine, *Khanqah*, a holy place as a memorial to a Sufi saint and *Urs*, the celebration of death anniversary of holy men. In the music *Qawwali* was introduced to sing in the praise of God Almighty and get into a state of spiritual ecstasy. Originally there

were four Sufi orders, *Qadri*, *Suhrawardi*, *Shadhili* and *Maulvi*. In India two more orders, *Chishti* and *Naqshbandi* were established. A seventh order was established in Morocco, called *Darqawi*. Sufis had two main formulas. First was to go from without to within, from Majaz to Haqor from exoteric to esoteric. The second was *Shahada* or attestation of the Divine unity. In other words it meant extinction of everything that is not God.

Islam came to Kashmir in early fourteenth century. Along with it came some Sufis like Shah-e-Hamadan, who were persecuted in the countries of their birth. They joined hands with invading rulers like Sikander But Shikan and helped in mass conversion. They also laid rules for dealing with Hindu population of the land. There was some influence of these Sufis on the converted populace but there was a parallel spiritual movement in Kashmir and eventually a Rishi cult developed in the valley, which was largely influenced by the teachings of Lal Ded and Nunda Rishi, both of whom were equally revered by Hindus and Muslims. These Rishis included great exponents of non-dualism like Shams Faqir, Nyama Saeb, Wahab Khar, SwacchaKral, Shah Gafoor, AsadParay, Ahad Zargar and others. These great names cannot be categorized as Sufis, the term connoting what it means actually. They can rightly be called Rishis, who had an inclusive humanitarian outlook and who believed in oneness of God and man. Outside Kashmir we had similar Rishis like Guru Nanak Dev ji, DadooDayal, Kabir, Raman Maharishi, who had a world view of humanity

and were sages in their own right. They too should not be called Sufis since they had their own specific ideologies for the good of the mankind, different from the practices and formulas of the Sufi saints. All of them, however, are venerable since they did not discriminate between various groups.

It would perhaps be in the fitness of things to quote here a Persian verse written by Shams. Says he, *Nashabamnashabparastamkihade esekhwabgoyam. Chu rafiqeaaftabam hama ze aqftabgoyam*- Neither a night am I nor a worshipper of night that I shall talk about dreams. I am related to the Sun. whatever I say shall be in relation to the Sun alone. No doubt they wrote about Sun and Sun alone, about the eternal light, the enlightenment and the means to attain these. They taught the mankind to come out of the darkness of ignorance, malice and hatred and awake in the light of awareness, love and compassion. In fact the Sufis believed that the outward appearance of a seeker is no indicator of his piety or virtue. There is a Persian couplet which says, *Tariqatbajuzkhdmatekhalq nest, ba tasbih vasajjadvalq nest* - 'There is no virtue in having a rosary dangling in your hands, or a nice mat to pray upon or even a long robe on one's body. The virtue lies in rendering service unto mankind that one should engage in'. Swami Vivekananda put the same thing slightly differently. He said that man has to rise from animality and come up to divinity. *Gita* also says that man has to shun evil tendencies, *Aasuripravritti* and adopt

divinity, *Daivipravritti*. This should be the aim of life and for this only we should strive all along.

As has been stated above, the Rishi cult developed in India as a parallel movement. There were, however, many Sufis also who followed the tradition of Sufis with some modifications adopted from the local Indian philosophy. Their holy places called Dargah are situated in various parts of the country, prominently in North. The Rishis also influenced the life and thinking of the Indian people. They attacked ostentation and artificiality and laid stress on truth, piety, service and humane conduct. They denounced discrimination between man and man on the basis of religion. Guru Nanak Dev ji gave three mantras, '*Nam japo* - chant the name of God', '*Kiratkar*o - perform noble deeds', and '*Vandkechako* - share your food with others.' He made it clear that, '*Eknoorte sab jag upjya, kaunbhalekaunmande* - The same light manifests in the whole creation, who is good and who is bad?' These savants preached love and compassion. Kabir said, '*aathpahar joleenrahe prem kahavesoi* - One who remains immersed in love all the time, he alone is a true lover.' They advocated that we should adopt the essence and give up flimsy things. '*Sar sartegahirae Thotha deyiuday*- Hold on to the real essence and give up shallow unreality.' The Indian ethos and life pattern are largely governed by these noble sayings of these noble sages. This is our tradition and needs to be preserved.

SOLZHENITSYN'S ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF IVAN DENISOVICH: STORY OF SOVIET CONCENTRATION CAMP

Aju Mukhopadhyay *

Through the imagined character of Ivan Solzhenitsyn has narrated the incidents of his life in the notorious Siberian Concentration Camp where he was sentenced for eight years for writing a derogatory remark about Stalin, the communist dictator, in one of his correspondences with his close school friend. It is the story of prisoners sentenced to ill reputed labour camp in Siberia, the coldest part of Russia. The story relates the day-to-day routine of their life; how pleasant, bitter, surprising and hellish way they had to live.

The day begins at dawn and proceeds through risky and boring routines strewn with pain, humiliation, corruption and risk. Calling prisoners to assemble and dissemble is fraught with corporeal-mental risk. Major portion of the day is spent in different types of work, mainly physical with short break for food. The routine ends at night after calling all for assembling and counting followed by all paraphernalia. All through the time severe Siberian cold chills the bone, clods the blood of all, of specially those who undergo some punishment.

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Like millions of ordinary Russians Ivan Denisovich Shukhov was caught in the vortex of Second World War and compelled to join the Soviet Army. Undergoing all hunger and deprivation he fought with the Germans for four years. Once in 1945 he and another fellow soldier were captivated by the Germans but in a few days they escaped. Instead of receiving a hero's welcome he was caught and charged for treason by Stalin's supersensitive secret Police. Sensing that he would be shot if he argued, Shukhov 'Confessed' and was sentenced to imprisonment for ten years in Siberian Concentration Camp. The book tells about one of the three thousand six hundred and twenty-two days in Ivan's prison life; one of the ordinary days, neither better nor worse than any. One plus point is that he seemed to be lucky by all points of view on that particular day and felt happy at the end.

Events of the Day: How they Tell Upon their Life : Here is how the day begins and continues to progress until it sleeps at night with men.

The roll call at dawn; a clang on the rail was hardly audible penetrating the double-paned, frost-blurred windows. Still wearing the inhuman chill all over his body Shukhov stood

up to work as usual. They are there to put hard labour to build up their country; that is why the great leader had chosen them charging them with false heinous crimes. Vdovushkin, once a University student of literature but compelled to be medical assistant when caught with charges for crime unknown to him and sentenced to serve, came and examined him. He found that Ivan had a body temperature of 99.2 degrees instead of 100 like the others and said that there was no escape from work. Doctor would find him guilty and he would be locked for further torture. Sukhov did not wish to escape. He didn't speak. Wearing the hat he went out to find the parade ground deserted. Atmospheric temperature outside was minus 17 degree whereas his body temperature was 99 plus. He started jogging around, alone. The fight was on. It was that rare moment when everyone in the camp was sleeping pretending that there wouldn't be any work that day whereas they knew that everything had already been decided. When everything was foretold prisoners indulged in self-deception by deafening themselves as if the call was a mistake.

A guard was rushing around the parade ground. He asked Tiurin how long they would have to wait for someone in his squad was late. Shukhov might be scared of him but not Tiurin. He would not wait in the cold; he led his 104th squad shuffling and squeaking for he knew how to grease the guard's hand with a pound of salt pork. Instead of his squad some other squad was punished to go the 'Socialist way of Life' in minus 17 degrees cold ground without fire and shelter.

To make the corrupt point home the writer explains, "A squad leader needs a lot of salt pork- to take to the planning department and to satisfy his own belly too. Tiurin received no parcels but he didn't go short of pork. No one in the squad who received any lost a moment in taking him some as a gift. "Otherwise you would never survive."

Then came the time when the whole parade ground became black with coats thrown in for it is the time for search; search by numbers on the jackets and hats. The numbers often faded and paled making them indistinguishable. The painters were there to touch up the numbers. Poor painters too had to respond to roll calls and had to perform the drudgery. Anybody found with indistinct numbers was confined to guard's room for further treatment.

Apart from the above minute hazards of camp life that often becomes dangerous with torture, getting the necessary fuel for life becomes delicately hazardous as it is strewn with huge corrupt practices at every point threatening to further deprivation.

The prisoners had to stand in long queue to get the pittance of food for lunch and dinner. Each had to please the superiors or sometimes a lucky colleague to get something from them to make up or satisfy the hunger. At night when Shukhov was lying near captain Tsezar, who slept by his side threw a piece of bread to him as an extra out of what plenty he got. "And he put out of his mind any idea of getting something tasty from what Tsezar had laid out.

There's nothing worse than working your belly to no purpose." There's nothing to be happy with the food package they got. "Shukhov had known cases

when before his parcel arrived a fellow would be doing odd jobs to earn a bit of extra kasha or cadging cigarette butts- just like anybody else. He has to share with guard and the squad leader-and how can he help giving a little something to the trusty in the parcels office? Why, next time the fellow may mislay your parcel and a week may go by before your name appears again in the list!". And that other fellow who kept your food "safe from friskers and pilferers."

Naming the fellows go on *ad infinitum* for sharing that tiny food packet. It's a self-pitying humility that one has to undergo just to keep fed and maintain his body in such surrounding inhuman climatic and living condition. Here is an example of drinking tea in the camp life. "Just then a captain appeared with "A pot of tea, special tea, you can bet! Two tea barrels stood in the barracks, but what sort of tea could you call it? Sewage: warm water with a touch of coloring, dishwater smelling of the barrel-of steamed wood and rot. That was tea for the workers. But the captain must have taken a pinch of real tea from Tsezar, put it in his pot and hurried to the hot water faucet."

At dawn, "As soon as they'd left the barracks with the boots the door was locked after them. When they ran back they shouted, 'Citizen chief. Let us in.'" The guards entered their quarters, did the book keeping to be assured that none was missing.

If everything went right Tsezar would come diving between the tiers of bunks on his way back. He thanked Ivan Denisovich who thanked back. Then Ivan Denisovich Shukhov shot up to his top most bunk like a squirrel. He could now finish his bread, smoke his second cigarette and sleep. He remembered that the day passed quite nicely for him as he was not punished on any count, rather he managed extra food and drinks, he felt fresh and rejuvenated so his way to sleep was laden with happiness and so, tardy. More so because Aloysha came to his bunk next to him, and at the same level. He's a very pious fellow who always reads Bible and pray. He surmonises Shukhov who's not opposed to God but doesn't find any efficacy in praying in his situation, hence the useless arguments ensue between them. At last when he's left alone, "Shukhov gazed at the ceiling in silence. Now he didn't know whether he wanted freedom or not."

At first he longed for it but freedom meant for him going home and he became sure that they would never allow his going home.

At the end when someone suggested that there won't be any second count, "'Yeah,' said Shukhov, 'We ought to write it up in coal inside the chimney. No second count.' He yawned, 'Might as well get to Sleep.'"

"And at the very moment the door bolt rattled to break the calm that now reigned in the barracks. From the corridors ran two of the prisoners who'd taken boots to the drying shed.

"'Second count,' they shouted. On their heels came a guard, 'All out to the other half.'"

And after much of talks, shuffles and movements they were shoved to the other half of the barrack. And counting started. There could be problem if anyone was found short. which meant recounting but that didn't happen. As soon as he was counted Shukhov ran back to his bunk. Tsezar also returned and Shukhov lowered his sac to him and gave a biscuit to Aloysha. He kept everyone in good humour. Everything sleepy, space of night was assured to them, they gradually fell silent.

"Shukhov went to sleep fully content. He'd had many strokes of luck that day; they hadn't put him in the cells; they hadn't put his squad to the settlement; he had swiped a bowl of kasha at dinner; the squad leader had fixed the rates well; he had built a wall and enjoyed doing it; he'd smuggled that bit of hacksaw blade through; he had earned a favor from Tsezar that evening; he'd bought that tobacco. And he hadn't fallen ill. He'd got over it.

"A day without a dark cloud. And almost a happy day. There were three thousand six hundred and fifty-three days like that in his stretch. From the first clang of the rail to the last clang of the rail. Three thousand six hundred and fifty-three days. The three extra days were for the leap years."

Time's Role in it : One day's event among thousands and hundreds of days is nothing exceptional yet it is sensational and exciting. It does not seem to be a continuous

occurrence. Time is fragmented here into pieces. At the end of the day and evening, at night, after they finally assemble and stand for being searched and counted and are allowed to occupy their allotted niche in the many tiered bunks, when they, like Ivan, recapitulate the incidents of the day, they actually string together all that happened separately occurring on the same day to find its effect in their lives. There is no flash back here. It is simply the narration; tale of prisoners' lives strewn together through the events of the day. One day but it is the face of all the days past and to come as the day ends and rolls over to the next through the night. Time passes through their lives exhausting their cruel yet exhilarating moments of existence without any guarantee to regain what they left behind. Time passes through their lives.

The Writer and his Creation : Alexander was posthumously born on 11 December 1918. He was brought up by his stenographer mother. He studied mathematics and physics before he got a chance long after to study literature for some time. "I would not have survived eight years of the camps, if as a mathematician, I had not been assigned for four years to a so-called sharashka; and in exile I was allowed to teach mathematics and physics which made life easier and gave me a chance to get down to the job of writing." (*Solzhenitsyn* 16)

Writing was his earnest dream even as a child and the hard, never to forget experiences of life set him to write one of the best works he produced which brought out the worst

examples of the practice of communism giving birth to such inhuman demons as Stalin and Mao Zedong, even as it proved the fallacy of communist theory.

The Birth Centenary of Alexander Isayevich Solzhenitsyn, the Great Russian Writer, was observed in December last year, 2018. It is still vibrant in the memory of men who knew what he experienced in his life and how the artist in him expressed them through his literature. He served in the army during the World War-II; suffered imprisonment in Siberian labour camp for eight years for a remark about Stalin, a fluke, and released after the death of Stalin in 1953 but was exiled to Central Asia and rehabilitated in 1957 after the new leader Khrushchev had denounced Stalin in 1956. Again, his citizenship was revoked and he was deported in 1974, the year he was awarded Nobel Prize. He suffered from cancer and recovered; married and had children. Defying all obstacles throughout his life he lived robustly creating history and literature at the same time. His works are reflections of his life. His first book published was *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* in 1962; the only book selected by Khrushchev to renounce Stalin and published from USSR. It was the writer's skill and courage that one communist leader used against another without much regard for the writer as such. All his other manuscripts were rejected by the regime. It is doubtful how valuable were the lives and the principles of such leaders and their dogmaticism who ignored such great writers and their reflections on life.

See the frustrated look of a writer in a communist country; how he lost all faith but recovered unbelievably after the unforeseen stroke of fate. Any writer in any other country would suffer the same and suffers in similar situation but he will have further scope and option in a country with a democratic set up.

"Throughout the years up to 1961, not only was I convinced that I would never in my life see a line of mine in print but I also did not dare read anything to most of even my close friends for fear of divulgence. Finally when I was about forty-two the secretiveness as a writer began to oppress me very much. The heaviest burden was the impossibility of having my work commented on by sophisticated literary readers. In 1961, following the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU and Tvardovsky's speech at it, I decided to reveal myself and to offer " *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

"Such self-revelation seemed to me then-not without good reason-very risky; it could lead to the destruction of all my manuscripts and me myself. But at that point things turned out happily; after extended efforts ATTvardovsky succeeded in bringing out my novella a year later. But publication of my things stopped almost immediately; my plays were held up, as was in 1964 my novel 'The First Circle,' which in 1965 was confiscated along with my archives from years back. In those months it seemed to me that it was an unforgivable mistake to have exposed my work prematurely and that I would not be able to complete it." (Solzhenitsyn 64-65)

But sheer fate restored his writing life as he confessed here, "We almost never can evaluate and through consequences immediately become fully conscious of events which have already happened to us; all the more unpredictable and surprising for us is the course of events to come." (Solzhenitsyn 65)

He became known when this *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* was published as a weapon. All his other books were published in foreign countries. Besides the slight look and volume of the book (not very thin though with a page length of 158 in paperback) the purport of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* was highly serious eye opener. He authored greater books like *The First Circle*, *The Cancer Ward* and *The Gulag Archipelago* (awarded Nobel Prize). Strong while tortured, calm while disturbed, he was robust in physical, vital and mental health; exuded serenity. Carrying the tradition of his predecessors he was one the greats among the famous Russian litterateurs.

Let us delve deep into a very serious and emotional moment of his life as he recalled later: "One pallid European February it took me from our narrow salient on the Baltic Sea, where depending on one's point of view, either we had surrounded the Germans or they had surrounded us, and it deprived me only of my familiar artillery battery and the scenes of the last three months of the war."

"The brigade commander called me to his headquarters and asked me for my pistol. I

turned it over without suspecting any evil intent, when suddenly from a tense, immobile suite of staff officers in the corner, two counter intelligence officers stepped forward hurriedly, crossed the room in a few quick bounds, their four hands grabbed simultaneously at the star of my cap, my shoulder boards, my officer's belt, my map case, and they shouted theatrically, 'You are under arrest!'. "Burning and prickling from head to toe, all I could exclaim was, 'Me, what for?' And even though there is no answer to this question, surprisingly I received one! This is worth recalling because it is so contrary to our usual custom. Hardly had the SMERSH men finished 'plucking' me and my notes on political subjects, along with my map case, and begun to push me as quickly as possible toward the exit, urged on by the German shell fire rattling the windowpanes, than I heard myself firmly addressed-yes! Across the sheer gap separating me from those left behind, the gap created by the heavy-falling word 'arrest,' across that quarantine line not even a sound dared penetrate, came the unthinkable magic words of the brigade commander: 'Solzhenitsyn. Come back here.'

"With a sharp turn I broke away from the hands of the SMERSH men and stepped back to the brigade commander. I had never known him very well! He had never condescended to run-of-the-mill conversations with me. To me his face had always conveyed an order, a command, wrath. But right now it was illuminated in a thoughtful way. Was it for shame for his own involuntary part in this dirty business? Was it

from an impulse to rise above the pitiful subordination of a whole lifetime? Ten days before, I had led my own reconnaissance battery almost intact out of the fire pocket in which the twelve heavy guns of his artillery battalion had been left, and now he had to renounce me because of a piece of paper with a seal on it? 'You have . . .' he asked weightily, 'a friend on the First Ukrainian Front?'"

"'It's forbidden! You have no right!' the captain and the major of the counterintelligence shouted at the colonel. In the corner, the suit of staff officers crowded to each other in fright, as if they feared to share the brigade commander's unbelievable rashness (the political officers among them already preparing to present materials against him). But I had already understood: I knew instantly I had been arrested because of my correspondence with a school friend and understood from what direction to expect danger."

Zakhar Georgiyevich Travkin could have stopped right there! But no! Continuing his attempt to expunge his part in this and to stand erect before his own conscience, he rose from behind his desk—he had never stood up in my presence in my former life—and reached across the quarantine line that separated us and gave me his hand, although he would never have reached out his hand to me had I remained a free man. And pressing my hand, while his whole suite stood there in mute horror, showing that warmth that may appear in an habitually severe face, he said fearlessly and precisely: 'I wish you happiness, Captain!'

"Not only was I no longer a captain, but I had been exposed as an enemy of the people (for among us every person is totally exposed from the moment of arrest). And he had wished happiness to an enemy?"

"The panes rattled. The Garman shells tore up the earth two hundred yards away, reminding one that this could not have happened back in the rear, under the ordinary circumstances of established existence, but only out here, under the breath of death, which was not only close by but in the face of which all were equal." (*The Gulag Archipelago*. Solzhenitsyn 23-26)

About this conscience of the Brigade Commander let us remember the oft repeated word of Sri Ramakrishna, the Kali worshipping sage of Dakshineswar, that he is a true man who has his man and huns meaning honour and self-consciousness. When a man realises himself as *Amritasya Putrah*, the son of immortality, ever free as part of the immortal soul; free from all bondage, he actually knows himself as a true man, the son of God. Death he fears not, cares not for an assailer. In a rare moment of revelation, a flash of consciousness, the Brigade Commander had reached that point when defying all warnings, not caring for any consequences he said and did what he felt right and true at that point of time.

Solzhenitsyn further explained the cause of his arrest precisely, "I was arrested on the basis of censored extracts from my correspondence with a school friend in 1944-

45 basically for disrespectful remarks about Stalin, although we referred to him by a pseudonym. Material complementing the 'accusation' was rough drafts of stories and reflections found in my map case. Nevertheless, this was not sufficient for a 'trial,' and in June 1945 I was 'convicted' by a procedure that was then widespread- in my absence by a decision of OSO (an NKVD Special Tribunal)-and sentenced to eight years in a labor camp (at that time it was considered a mitigated sentence). (Solzhenitsyn 20)

After the turmoil was over, the writer was all laughs when expressing his opinion on work of art; "A work of art contains its verification in itself; artificial, strained concepts do not withstand the test of being turned into images; they fall to pieces; turn out to be sickly and pale, convince no one. Works which draw on truth and present it to us in live and

concentrated form grip us, compellingly involve us, and no one ever, not even ages hence, will come forth to refute them". (Nobel lecture. Solzhenitsyn 70)

Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote what life had taught him verified in the crucible of time and experience; his writings drew on truth of what he experienced. It exposed the falsehood of all diabolic claims and whims of the poisoned heart of the dictator at the helm of the communist regime; how inhuman and horrendous was the result of the communist movement was witnessed by the world as it happened in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic. It has left an indelible mark in history recorded by such great writers as Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Mikhail Sholokhov. The images created by him are permanent as illumined by his creative words; no one is expected to refute them.

NATURE'S SOFT NURSE - SLEEP

V Muralidhar*

Sleep is temporary death and death is eternal sleep

Slowly, we sink into profound slumber, in which, undoubtedly, we get some experience after toiling and moiling in the day to day activities, different in nature in race of life in order to be free momentarily of which there is an opportunity to come out from the gloom of pal all over the mind - anxieties and worries, discontentment, dissatisfaction, disappointment and frustration, mental affliction and sometimes turbulence.

In common parlance, we put aside all these on the lap of sleep with a view to plunging and tasting blissful moments of sleep and also to avoid battle of life temporarily in as much as to seek companion, mate, and finally pally friendship with sleep, as she gives sound health and further to avoid vindictive hatred, fear, inferiority and superiority complex and other human weakness and drawbacks to have deep sleep and to express profound effusion of thanks to her the next morning.

When tiny tots and old and decrepit with age may also sink into slumber for the reason

known to all of us that mothers and life partners sing lullabies and crooning sentimental tunes to the wearied and lassitude in other words the effectiveness of the hypnotic influence may be produced and acts like falling into sleep, in consequence of the repetition of the words in the songs and also the burden of the songs, and therefore, they are drawn into the very vortex of slumber, oblivious of one's surroundings for a few hours and, at length, land in the dreamland. Both the children and the old are always alike, as they should be treated with all care, and caution, and with delicacy and love and affection should be showered, for they always feel intensely happy.

"The feeling of care is the beginning of affection. And so to have affection right through life is one of the most difficult things and without it life becomes very empty. You may have children, you may have a nice house, a car and all the rest of it, but without affection, life is like a flower that has no scent" says Jiddu Krishna Murty.

The children and the aged jump with all their youthful exuberance just as if they are with bubbling enthusiasm, and feel for it to exhibit readily their power of youth with their utter disappointment gives them a disheartening lack of confidence and faith in their attempts.

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Despite their inability physically, they leave always an unforgettable smile on their countenances while they are asleep making indelible impression to the onlookers, the riches like peace, joy, and calmness, forgetting one thing that their health may be affected for reasons and factors which can (not be) known, unless they are thoroughly examined by the doctor. It is explicitly expressed that any disease or illness may be treated with all care by all people of the concerned, as they can be brought to normalcy through sleep, which is absolutely essential and sleep will, undoubtedly, be helpful in getting cured with proper nursing, protecting and lot of patience to be extended by the near and dear, for getting relief psychologically and infuse complete faith in the patients.

Really it is said that sleep has significance and importance in human life, in as much as it is a strange thing in its true sense, for all activities of the following day may commence or start in consonance with the state of mind of which sound sleep will always help us in our activities. It is absolutely indispensable to allow the body and the mind to get refreshed in order to provide an opportunity to function the entire internal organism with all their vigour to continue their assigned duty in the human system. Further, it is to be understood that all our desires and aspirations may not have quiescence and at the same instant will not interfere with other organism, and consequently the whole system gets refreshed and undergo a total rejuvenation for the following day and hope to have this privilege the rest of the life. The beneficial results may

be more, the less interference of the organism would be allowing the mind to take all the internal organism under the control of the so called "mind" and hence, sound mind in a sound body may be really a boon to enjoy the rest of the precious life.

It is said in our epic "Ramayana", a magnum opus, that Urmila, wife of Lakshmana, went in to deep sleep for a period of fourteen years, till the exile period came to an end, as the redoubtable, Rama, Seetha and Lakshmana returned to their Kingdom, Ayodhya.

The undaunted Ravana's brother Kumbhakarna began to eat and swallow as a child, animals, humans and other things when he was born. As the brutal activity was brought to the notice of the Lord Brahma, who, in turn, gave instruction to Vagdevi / Sarsawathi to write on the tongue of the demon to sleep for a period of six months and one day relaxation was made to enjoy his delectable dishes to his heart's content.

The aforesaid two illustrations may give us to comprehend the importance of sleep can be used in accordance with the situation as a boon or a curse or punishment in order to uphold dharma in all times of need and necessity for the benefit of the humanity.

Sleep, in point of fact, has friendship and also relationship irrespective of nationality, caste, creed and colour, for she wholeheartedly invites all children, youth, old and other living beings in her arms in order to give comfortable doze, solace, nursing and protecting at all times

and on all occasions, particularly, in their convalescent period, as she does her allotted and assigned duty bestowed on her by the nature with all care, caution, and devotion, provided every individual feels his or her responsibility in cooperating with her to have deep sleep, which paves the way for healthy views of life.

It is really poignant affliction to say that many a people complain about their sleep with others in their usual conversation that they cannot have sleep even if they consume liquors and other intoxicated and inebriated drinks and with the passage of time, their health gets spoilt due to insomnia, the fact of which may be known at one point of time, for the treatment may or may not be of any result, and, therefore, ultimate result would be leading to death.

It is fervently making an appeal to all people to take care of their health, and health will take care of them.

The feeling of poignancy may be in a greater degree for those who are suffering from somnambulism too, and such people will walk in sleep and, therefore, treatment should be given to get themselves free from the disease.

As a matter of fact, we may not slip into deep sleep when there is mental agitation, distress, stress and strain and other disturbances in the mind, as well as natural propensities such as evil and perfidious designs to harm others, and as a result of it, there may not be any kind of sound sleep and, consequently, sleep is denied

to such people, make them suffer to embrace death ultimately or sooner or later. Besides this, many a people are suffering from imaginary diseases along with sleeplessness, for such people we call them as hypochondriac, the fact of which would be known after thorough examination by the expert and experience doctor.

The celebrated dramatist Shakespeare has depicted in his soliloquy taken from Henry IV with a view to bringing out the true import to ponder over this vitally important truth, how sleep plays a predominant part in human life, in as much as it is upto us as to how we view it and understand the concept as a whole.

Soliloquy on Sleep:

How many thousands of my poorest subjects
Are at this hour Asleep! O Sleep! O gentle
Sleep!

Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighten thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eye lids
down

And steep my senses in forgetfulness?

Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,

And hush'd with buzzing night flies to slumber

Then in perfum'd chambers of the great

Under the canopies of the costly state,

And lull'd with sound of sweetest melody?

Oh thou dull God! Why liest thou with the
vile

In loathsome beds, and learnst the kindly
couch

A watch - case or a common alarm bell?

Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his
 brains
 In the cradle of the rude imperious surge
 And in the visitation of the winds,
 Who takes the ruffian billows by the top,
 Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging
 them
 With deafening clamour in the slippery clouds,
 That with the hurly death itself awakes?
 Canst thou, O partial sleep! give thy repose
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude
 And in the calmest and most stillness night,
 With all appliances and mean to boot,
 Deny it to a kind? Then, happy low lie down!
 Uneasy lies the head wears a crown?

The great nature poet of the West, Wordsworth, has dealt with different themes in the form of poetry and one such theme is on "To Sleep", in which he has described in a beautiful and way to understand the concept clearly. He has asked the reader(s) to observe how sleep makes all mortals to grasp the whole essence, as this may be the experience of the poet himself in order to share with his readers and admires irrespective of place and time.

A flock of sheep which moved slowly and leisurely following one after the other in a queue, as the atmosphere and environment had been fascinating to the eyes with the sound of rain, the murmuring and humming of the bees; the fall of the river had also been making to join in the sea, and at the same time, there had been smooth field in which, the white sheets of water could be seen, as the azure

sky with all its purity made the poet all these to reflect upon one by one, for there was no sleep. He heard the melodiousness of the small birds from his own orchard trees, as the sadness and melancholy of the cuckoos gave him previous night and the following two nights' sleeplessness, and hence, sleep could not embrace him stealthily or secretly. He further feels and implores spasmodically agonized not to deny his sleep and his expressed crucifixion of feelings with poignant affliction with sleep, for the evident reason that the poet might bemoan for not being able to sleep with this expression "What was he in the mornings wealth?" The fact was that there was no barrier between day and another day to bestow on him the grace of sleep and ready to address sleep as "mother" with all her affectionate soothing words and nursing with her kind heart in order to have fresh thoughts and joy of wealth and to possess mental equilibrium with sound sleep and to lead a life of healthy way and with peace the remaining of his life.

The whole perception of this article is to make us to comprehend the healthy views of life, particularly youth, and also heterogeneous sections of society to think over this aspect with a view to cultivating the healthy habits categorically so as to enable us to avoid uninvited, unwanted, and unpleasant situations, for the youth have tremendous potentialities and capabilities to execute any onerous responsibilities in any capacity, and, hence, they should respect sleep, as the priceless gift of the soft nurse of the nature which has been given to mankind in order to derive

beneficial results and be a model for the succeeding generation. Never too old to win laurels

"Youth is not a time of life but a state of mind
You are as young as your faith and as old as doubts

You are as young as your self-confidence and as old as your fear."

- General Douglas Mac Arther

Sleep, by and large, has been serving all sections of society without any kind of reward or award or returns from the sleepers of the whole universe. Eventually, life without sleep is impossible on the surface of the earth, and, consequently, we mortals whole heartedly salute, adore and worship and show our

profound gratitude for her marvellous and untiring services to the whole creation.

As a matter of truth, sleep is every individual's fundamental right and privilege to enjoy and once again, as it is our primary duty to salute her for serving us with all our heart and soul.

Let all of us pray to have the grace of sleep as long as we are alive. We always expect the happiness every day.

"O sleep! O gentle sleep!

Sleep invites all humanity in her embrace;

She soothes and nurses with all care,

The whole creation salutes for her grace

She makes friendship with us to bear."

A TRIBUTE TO M G NARASIMHA MURTHY: A LITTERATEUR, ARTIST, ECLECTIC & PERFECT GENTLEMAN

U Atreya Sarma*

[M G Narasimha Murthy, a regular contributor to *Triveni* passed away on 31 Oct 2019. Having retired as Principal and Professor of English from the Arts & Science College, Adoni, he had settled down in Hyderabad. His association with *Triveni* was special in that his collection of poems, *The Blissful Dawn and Other Poems*, was published by the Triveni Foundation in 2014 with the Foreword by the then Chief Editor, late Prof I V Chalapati Rao. While praying for Narasimha Murthy's soul to merge into the Divine and condoling with the bereaved survivors of the family, *Triveni* presents here an article in tribute to him by U Atreya Sarma, who knew him well...Ed.]

It all started with a letter I received sometime in 2008 as Editor of *Cyberhood*, a neighbourhood weekly coming from Sainikpuri, Hyderabad. The letter praised the quality and standard of the weekly and said it was rather rare compared even to the mainstream newspapers. It was from M G Narasimha Murthy and it paved the way for

his poems to the weekly. As weeks rolled by, it led to a mutual bonhomie. I visited him a number of times at his house, and each session would go on for almost half a day, with me compulsorily becoming his guest for lunch or dinner, depending on the time of the day I would call on him. The time would be packed with stimulating and enlightening literary, intellectual and artistic *tête-à-têtes* interspersed with generous bowls of bites and cups of coffee or juices. He would open a refreshing window that looked out at a wide and verdant vista of knowledge, learning, personalities, incidents, episodes and experiences. I felt I was a lone and ardent student closeted with a lone and sagely professor in a specially earmarked university classroom.

He gifted me a number of valuable books, some of them rare, and in course of time I introduced him to *Muse India* where to I had moved over as an Editor and he contributed poems to its lively and interactive Your Space section. Then with my moving to Pune and Bengaluru owing to my son's job, the physical distance widened between Murthy and me, even as we were in occasional touch through phone or email.

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Then, on 01 Nov 2019 when I was in Bengaluru, I received a message from Raghotham, a Hyderabad-based ex-SBI colleague of mine, who happened to be Murthy's student long ago at the Adoni Arts & Science College. It broke the shocking news that M G Narasimha Murthy was no more! How I rued I couldn't visit him in the recent past! A gush of memories dashed out of my mind. How mysterious the life! So near, so far! So far, so near! The redeeming point, however, was, he had lived a full life for over 88 years (30 Aug 1931 to 31 Oct 2019). And he was there to bless his granddaughter who entered the wedlock just two weeks earlier. Now let's have a peep into his edifying life and work.

His academics: The essence of English literature studied at one of the best colleges (Maharaja's College, Mysore) and taught by great teachers flowed out of Murthy's observations, distilled with an eclectic and philosophical touch. A student of English language & literature, Murthy did his BA (Hons) at Mysore and MA from Benares Hindu University. He also did a course in 'Teaching English as a Foreign Language' from Central Institute of English, Hyderabad (now known as English and Foreign Languages University). There he had the good luck of being taught by VK Gokak, director and professor, who had earlier been the Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University.

Great teachers and celebrities: In his BA (Hons), Murthy had the privilege of being taught by eminent teachers like Kuvempu

(Jnan Pith awardee) who dealt with Comparative Studies - Poetry of Milton and Kalidasa; and Epic Poetry of Milton and Valmiki. Rallapalli Ananta Krishna Sarma, professor of Telugu was equally powerful in Kannada, besides being a good musician as well. Rallapalli's son Jayant was Murthy's classmate and Murthy was spending almost all his study hours at Rallapalli's place. It is interesting that Prof UR Ananta Murthy (Jnan Pith recipient) was a year junior to him at college. The principal was Dr BR Kumar, an Oxonian. And there were UNESCO-deputed Britishers too who were teaching English. If it was teaching a Greek drama, the professor would take four hours nonstop to complete it, to create and sustain the desired dramatic effect.

While he was at college, Murthy had the fortune of attending and listening to the talks by celebrities like the Nobel laureate CV Raman, who delivered his popular science lecture series (1948), where Murthy queried him about the nuclear aspect, in the backdrop of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing. When RK Narayan, ten years senior to Murthy, spoke on his *Malgudi Days*, Murthy asked where *Malgudi* was. With a laugh Narayan replied: "Nowhere else, but in the flight of my fancy." By the way, it's interesting to note that the fictional *Malgudi* is going to be a reality, with the South Western Railway recently deciding to rename the Arasalu station in Shivamogga district (where the TV serial of *Malgudi Days* was shot) as *Malgudi*, in recognition of its iconic impact. And it was the greatest treat of all to see and listen to Dr

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan at the World Philosophers Conference in Mysore. His was the most powerful and impressive speech that wowed even the English-speaking Western delegates. So also whiffs of intellectual breeze blew across from giants like Kattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy and Mokshagundam Visveswaraya.

Career: As soon Narasimha Murthy completed his BA (Hons), he got offer as lecturer in Mysore, Kerala, Maharashtra and Andhra. He sought the advice of Rallapalli and Subbaramappa (Asst. Professor, Telugu). Both of them said the Andhra offer was the best and he shouldn't let it go. The Andhra offer was from Besant Theosophical College, Madanapalli. It was the place, the duo insisted, where the academic fervour was at its effervescent best, with every religion being studied in depth and in comparison. While the spirit of the founder Annie Besant exuded everywhere, the occasional presence of Jiddu Krishnamurti, her protégé and world renowned philosopher, was an added bonus. So Murthy served there as a lecturer for over a decade (1952-62).

Jiddu Krishnamurti: While being a lecturer, Murthy was fortunate enough to see and interact with Jiddu Krishnamurti on several occasions during his visits to the Rishi Valley School. Jiddu never lectured as such; he always encouraged questions and answered them. A very handsome personality, his very presence cast a magnetic, quieting and reassuring spell. He encouraged seekers to think freely, openly, independently, boldly and

uninhibitedly, in Upanishadic spirit; one should cultivate an ever growing mind; you shouldn't be a blind follower of anything or anyone, even of a very great guru. You should experience for yourself first hand, and form your own impressions. Otherwise you would stagnate.

Mahesh Yogi: Maharshi Mahesh Yogi (5-6 years older than Murthy), who was in due course to go abroad and propagate the Science of Creative intelligence and Transcendental Meditation, happened to visit Madanapalli and stay there for six months (1952-53). Mahesh Yogi had a relative of his who was suffering from TB. He brought him to the sanatorium at Madanapalli for treatment. The patient was eventually cured. Mahesh was already a practising yogi; he took permission from his guru at Uttar Kashi before coming down to Madanapalli. The yogi stayed in Mysore Lodge, owned by one Subrahmanyam, a friend of Murthy. The hotelier was more a philosopher than a businessman. Both the friends had the rewarding company of Mahesh Yogi. Gifted with an extraordinary memory, Mahesh Yogi was freely, readily and extensively quoting extempore from Vedas, Upanishads and other ancient Indian lore. He would recite slokas in a very pleasant and attractive voice; he was a great speaker in Hindi, Sanskrit and English. Every evening they went out on a stroll together and discussed everything under the sun. Murthy requested Mahesh Yogi to address the faculty and the students of his college. At the college, they had proudly hung a banner which read: "No religion is greater than truth."

As he spotted it, Mahesh paused and remarked: "Religion is a path to Truth; then where is the question of the Truth being higher or lower?" How revealing!

Relocates to Adoni: Later on, Murthy moved on to Adoni and joined as the Head of the Department of English at the Arts & Science College (1962-71) and rose to be its Principal (1971-84). During his time, the strength of the college went up from a mere 140 to a phenomenal 3,400. He served as Member of various bodies like Academic Council, Sports Board, Senate and Board of Studies (English), besides being Examiner (English) and Chairman/ Chief Examiner (English) of SV University.

While being at Adoni, Murthy managed to impress upon TG Vasanta Gupta, then MD of the Rayalaseema Paper Mills to go in for an effluent treatment plant, following a public agitation. Gupta readily agreed, though it was a bit expensive. And TG Venkatesh- who was to be an industrialist, the leader of Rayalaseema Aikya Vedika, an MLA and MP (now a BJP leader)- was Murthy's student.

At college, he brought glitterati like Rukmini Devi Arundale, Dr Bezwada Gopala Reddy and Prof P Samba Moorthy (musicologist) to give their illumining addresses to this students.

His output: Despite his hectic teaching and administrative grind, Murthy gave vent to his creative abilities. His poems and articles have been published in several newspapers and magazines including Triveni, a literary and

cultural quarterly, Cyberhood weekly and the Your Space section of Muse India. While his limericks found their way into Khushwant Singh's Joke Books, some of the inputs supplied by him were included by Singh in his columns. A rare poem supplied by Murthy was quoted by Singh in the Deccan Chronicle (05 Jul 1998). It was a poem composed by Swami Vivekananda in 1898, commemorating the American Declaration of Independence.

He brought out a collection of poems, *The Blissful Dawn and Other Poems* (Apr 2004), with the Foreword by Prof I V Chalapati Rao and published by Triveni Foundation. It covered a wide gamut of themes and personalities. This book has received acknowledgments and appreciations of literati and luminaries like Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Mulkraj Anand, Khushwant Singh, Dr C Narayana Reddy and Poranki Dakshina Murthy. While Kalam considers the poems as beautiful, Dakshina Murthy sees maturity in the choice of themes, arrangement of words, imagery, and conveyance of inner meaning. In his characteristic humorous streak, Khushwant Singh acknowledges: "Needless to say, I read the poem on me first and was overcome with gratitude."

The academic books he edited included *Stories British and American* (Orient Longman, 1974/1976) - prescribed as a text book in several universities and *A Garland of Gandhiji's Thoughts* (Self-published, 1976) in an attempt to dispel the pathetic ignorance of the contemporary youth about Mahatma Gandhi.

An artist and a cricket lover: It is exhilarating that Murthy was also an accomplished artist with pencil. He had about sixty drawings/portraits/sketches to his credit. You name a renowned personality, and you had it already drawn by him. But being a man of modesty, he didn't put up any exhibition of them, though they were worthy enough. A few of them are displayed here.

Recollections in tranquillity: Born in Mysore, this Kannadiga has made Andhra his karma bhoomi and Hyderabad his home. His riches were his vast library; his compilations of thoughts, quotes and jokes; his pencil drawings; and a rare Bhagavad Gita in translation by Annie Besant. With large and

varied canvas of experience behind him, Murthy would feast on many an experience and emotion 'recollected in tranquillity.'

A real tribute: Though M G Narasimha Murthy retired 35 years ago from the Adoni College and settled down in Hyderabad, he was held in affectionate esteem by generations of students. He was invited to Adoni and feted by several alumni batches, the latest being on 12 Jan 2019 by the 1980-83 batch of BSC (BZC/ZPC). What else a teacher wants!

*Gurur-Brahmaagurur-Vishnuh | Gurur-Devo Maheswarah |
Guru-s-saakshaat Para-Brahmaa | Tasmai Sri Gurave Namah ||*

VAZIR REHMAN-A GREAT MYSTIC POET

S.M. Kompella*

Pure poetry is unmasked. A poet who lays bare his heart establishes an abiding rapport with his readers." The passions he uncovers, the memories he lets loose, the thoughts he exposes, the weaknesses he discovers and the spiritual strength he displays constitute his personality" opines Vazir Rehman. Deeply influenced by his mentor Chalam and inspired by his brother Ismail, a major modern Telugu poet of repute, Rehman blends in himself romanticism and mysticism in equal measure. An instinct for feeling, a pursuit of truth and a yearning for intellectual justice characterise his poems.

Philosophically experiential and poetically splendorous, his two anthologies *Sahasi* (Brave soul) and *Echatiki Pothav iraatri ?* (where do you go this night?) have earned him a unique place in modern Telugu literature.

A look at his vision, art and thought!

The mystery of the cyclical process of death and life mystifies him. He witnesses life quickening in myriads of forms and defying death. In his poems, the very passion for physical beauty takes in mystic character. His poem *Chivariki'* (At last) testifies to his vision.

*That's all-
Nothing lasts last
Even the tender flower of youth
That embraces and enthrals
This body into an abode of passion
And makes it drowsy
Drunk with all spells of music
Descends into the dust of dust.....*

He identifies himself with everything that is intensely human. His sensitive reaction to "the touch of tears in things mortal" is profound. He offers himself to bear their cross in his poem *Kavi*. He questions the Almighty why he has endowed him with a thinking mind and a feeling heart and then exposed him to the still sad music of humanity.

*'Why have you
O lord showed up
Those faces unmasked
Made me man
And weaned me away
From the world and my kinship with it?*

Rehman pleads with God

*If not
Be benign enough
To carve me into
A milestone
Movable never
Even by the fate..... (I don't need human
birth)*

* Retd Professor, Kakinada (AP)

Then the realisation dawns and darts like lightning

*I am the Heaven
And the Hell
The weal and the woe
I am the all
And all is from my within* (Omar Khayyam)

Tyagaraja , the saint-composer with his spiritual yearnings and divine despair in his kritis made an indelible impact upon him. While his *Atma Vicharam* prays for a shower of spiritual grace to cleanse him of his passions, his *Arunachalam* beckons him to the sea of spiritual life there. His *Sahasi'* is in fact the homage of a thinker to the "philosopher-writer" Chalam who shed his passions layer by layer at Ramanachalam.

His mystic subjective vision admits of a consciousness in physical things and gives them a subtle physical life which is not of materialistic existence.

*Me-
The crooked
Ungainly shadow
Dangling in the
Narrow dense dark"
In his " Hatya"(Murder) he explores the
world within. He queries
" Which is
The dream and which the reality
Who is
That I am
Who is that within me?*

While his *Night amidst Night* is a pure piece of introspection, the *The Serpent of Passion* makes a ruthless surgical analysis of his own passion-spun life beneath which lingers a ceaseless quest for truth. He calls the surging sensuous passion "a full-hooded cobra" hissing amidst his nerves and craves for " a calm of mind and all passion spent". In a poem titled *Nirasa* (Despair) he echoes the prayer of mortals for deliverance from the bondage of passions.

*In my
Heart of hearts
The surging roar of the sea
The mute melancholy
Of
The wailing waves
Beating their brains
Against the shore.* (Farewell)

He is all compassion for an orphaned humanity seeking a sense of belonging. In the *Red Rose*, we have a touching portrayal of a tender baby disowned and deserted in an indifferent society.

*With its eyes just open
A lonely
Crimson-red rose
Seeks
Shivering , shuddering for them*

Here is the vehement echo of human suffering. The profoundly sensuous love in his poems is expressed with singular force and fervour. "The tremor of a kind of modern eagerness, the cup of voluptuousness which nature offers is

tasted by a sensibility which finds in every drop food for thought." *Namalle'* reverberates with the echo of passionate love for a beloved throughout the aeons of human history. In his *Premavesam* he begs his unkind beloved not to cut him dead even when she is in the embrace of her paramour. He feels that all his raging passions may be quietened when the indwelling spirit soothes him.

*Perhaps
All my foolish fears
Raging ruthlessly
In this dreadful dark
Rest in my heart
To rebound for a novel dawn.*

While his poem *Hrudgrahanam* is surrealistic, *Krida* celebrates the enchanting eternal female. His *Rati* is a fervent plea for a time-arresting bliss in a time-harried world of mortals. His ardent prayer is

*When I cuddle my head
Close in your lap
And close my eyes
The bliss is
Of the one
Who tempest-tired
Reaches the shore.*

Chalam is the first crusader to fulminate against the exploitation of woman in a custom-cursed society. Rehman, his devout disciple echoes his master. Castigating the male-dominated society, he says

*What will be
Your gain
When
You gatecrash
Ruthless
Into the temple holy?*

His *Chelagaatam* raises an abstruse metaphysical question. To him, while poetry has nothing to do with fact but with truth, it is difficult to decide what "fact" and "truth" are. A genuine mystic, Rehman invites the dark dusk to dismantle his passion-bound life into anonymity.

The secret of Rehman's romanticism and mysticism is a progressive lightning up of inner horizon which extends beyond the limits of senses. A keener investigation into the realms of his poetry shows not the contagion of sentimentalism but the radiance of a soul aspiring to greater heights of beatitude. His *Letters* show this amply and rewardingly.

REFLECTIONS ON NOAM CHOMSKY'S EVOLUTIONARY THEORIES OF MODERN LINGUISTICS AND ELT

A. Mahesh Kumar*

It is essential to understand the fundamental shift of language teaching environment to creating language acquisition environment has been initiated by strong basis of Innateness theory and Universal Grammar theory, Noam Chomsky's two profound theories that shaped modern linguistics and ELT at large. The two theories have shaped two wide disciplines of knowledge i.e Modern Linguistics and English Language Teaching.

Theory of Innateness:

Noam Chomsky was the first linguist philosopher ever who encapsulated the origin of language in the light of philosophy, biology and psychology. His primary focus was on the fundamental questions like: How come every child acquires language so easily without any difference? Where is the faculty of language born?

Noam Chomsky's language acquisition theory in relation to the study of child development has laid a strong foundation to the Modern linguistics. He puts forward some unique hypothesis of the way children acquire their first language. He opines that children learn

language in the same way they learn to walk. In his own words "... biology is as much of a factor in language as it is in acquiring motor competence"

His theory of innateness explains that children have the natural ability to acquire language by themselves without any formal instruction of the rules of language. They show a natural disposition for an instinctive language. The way we view the functions of different organs like heart, lungs etc the organism that facilitates the function of language is innate and hardwired not completely depended on learning. The child's brain is designed to decode the language and interpret based on underlying principles or structures it already contained at- least at time of birth. Therefore the babies are born with an innate knowledge of various facets of language including structure, grammar and other components of language. He further claims that all languages share the same basic concepts like verb, noun etc., the inbuilt faculty of the brain or mind contributes to acquire the native language without any practice. This unconscious process of acquiring the language is possible with a unique device of mind or brain what Noam Chomsky calls as LAD (Language Acquisition Device). He also argues that no child would ever slog on comprehending the

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complex grammatical rules of the first language at a very tender age.

The main claim that supports LAD is the concept called Poverty of Stimulus (POS) coined by Noam Chomsky in his work *Rules and Representations*. POS argues that natural grammar is never learned given relatively limited data being available to children during language learning therefore the knowledge of language is supplemented by an innate mechanism within the mind or brain. A Dictionary of Linguistics and phonetics defines LAD as follows:

In early generative linguistics, the term language acquisition device (LAD) was introduced to refer to a model of language learning in which the infant is credited with an innate predisposition to acquire linguistic structure. (Crystal, David 8)

The mental process within allows the learner to quickly acquire language without direct instruction. Chomsky's metaphor LAD has thrown light on a new linguistic perspective of the time.

Theory of Universal Grammar (UG):

According to Britannica Ready Reference Encyclopedia, Grammar is Rules of a language governing its Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, and Semantics; also a written summary of such rules. The first Europeans to write grammar texts were the Greeks, notably the Alexandrians of the 1st century BC. The Romans applied the Greek grammatical system to Latin. The works of the Latin

grammarians Donatus (4th century AD) and Priscian (6th century) were widely used to teach grammar in medieval Europe. By 1700, grammars of 61 vernacular languages had been printed. These were linguists began studying languages to trace their evolution rather than to prescribe correct usage. Descriptive linguists (see Ferdinand de SAUSSURE) studied spoken language by collecting and analyzing sample sentences. Transformational grammarians (see Noam Chomsky) examined the underlying structure of language. The older approach to grammar as a body of rules needed to speak and write correctly is still the basis of primary and secondary language education. (Encyclopaedia Britannica 195)

UG is a theory proposed by Noam Chomsky which states that the child's ability of learning grammar is innate or hard-wired into the brain of a child. He claims that the linguistic ability manifests itself without direct instruction. Before Chomsky propounded the theory of Universal Grammar in the year 1960s, the school of Empiricism dominated with the idea that child's mind, at the time of birth, is like a blank slate and a child acquires language through his/her experience of social interaction. In linguistics, the famous comparison of Chomsky's Innateness theory to empiricism is as follows: "Chomsky's theory had the impact of a large rock thrown into this previously tranquil, undisturbed pond of empiricism."

The theory also proposes that if human beings are brought up in normal conditions then they

will always produce language based on genetic and social interaction. A research, in cognitive sciences, with the combination of Psychology, Linguistics and Philosophy found that infants could distinguish the phonemes of any language and seemed to have innate mechanism for processing the sounds of the human voice. Chomsky argues that there are a set of unconscious constraints that let us decide whether a sentence is grammatical or not. He gives grammatically incorrect sentence like "Robert book reads the" however the sentence is quite understandable even though the words are in wrong order. On the contrary he also cites a grammatically well structured sentence like "Colourless green ideas sleep furiously" is meaningless. When these or similar meaningless sentences (but grammatically correct sentences) used in a language, the child recognizes the meaningless sentences without any linguistic knowledge. This is not possible without an inbuilt mechanism that guides the child to respond accordingly. Further, he claims

that new born babies have the potential to speak any number of languages, depending on the birthplace or the country where he/she is born. However he/she does use appropriate language by adopting or choosing preferred innate sentence structures of the concern language. His theory says that the human brain is well equipped, with Universal Grammar, at birth and out of UG every human language developed at a later phase of his/her life.

Having analyzed the two prolific theories of Noam Chomsky it is essential to assimilate the underlying insights of teaching a language. In other words, creating language acquisition environment is the quintessence of a language classroom rather than merely dealing with the abstract concepts or rules of a language. Therefore, approaches, principles and methods of language teaching should be incorporated for a child's better linguistic development.

GANDHIJI'S ENDS AND MEANS

Madhavi Susarla*

In the traditional ethical thought the concepts of "Right" and 'Good' have been related to the problems of Ends and Means. Some thinkers stated that if the means are right, the end has to be good.

Gandhi conceived the means and ends in a similar manner. He took these concepts more seriously and they become more significant and central in his thought with important implications of truth and non-violence.

Ends and means have been intimately related to each other. He went to the extent of saying that ends and means are convertible terms in his philosophy of life. The end is the goal and the means is the way for the realization of the goal. Means cannot be separated from the end just as the way cannot be separated from the goal. Gandhi explained the relation between these two and that the means is like the seed and end is like the tree. As there is an inviolable connection established between the seed and the tree so also there is the same connection established between the means and the ends.

The problems of ends and means are "Significant" in every ethical thought. In this

context there may be some "questions" confronting the people regarding the problem of ends and means. They are:

- Does the end justify the means?
- Can we have good ends by following the means of our choice?
- Should the purity of means be an essential aspect for the realization of good end?

These are the questions drawing the attention of the people from the philosophy of ends and means of Gandhi.

The purity of means and ends is determined by his basic metaphysical conviction regarding the essential spiritual unity of everything. Spiritual unity is the ideal of life and the goal. A spiritual end has to be attained by the purity of means as the spiritual end is pure. End does not justify the means. In order to attain the good end the means to be adopted has to be as pure as end. That is the reason why Gandhi gave utmost importance to the purity of means. He said that the means are after all means. He stated further that means are after all every thing and as the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end, and the realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means.

In the philosophy of Gandhi ends and means has a direct relationship with his doctrine of

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truth and non-violence. Truth is the ideal of life. It is the goal towards which people have to strive hard. What should be the method to attain truth? Gandhi said that non-violence is the means and truth is the end. Truth cannot be attained by any other way except through non-violence.

At the period of freedom struggle Gandhi insisted on the adoption of non-violent means for the realization of Swaraj while stating that Swaraj was the end (goal) of the Indian people.

BOOK REVIEW

MELODIC MELANGE. Poet: A Annapurna Sharma. Publisher : Authorspress, 2018. ISBN : 978-93-87651-71-5. Pages : 147.

"Poetry", says Coleridge, "represents the best words in the best order."

Annapurna Sharma's book *Melodic Melange* comprises of seventy nine well woven and beautifully composed poems depicting the various facets of life...love, laughter, cheer, hope, agony, anguish, dreams. The themes scatter the prismatic hues illuminating the readers, introducing them to known and unknown meadows of life.

Melodic Melange commences with a humble offering to the Divine and progresses swiftly towards the hidden treasures of the words-soft and soothing, inspiring and motivating, even shaking and shuddering at times. Sheathing underneath the comprehensible coherent ideas are the profound philosophies of life. The book is a depiction of human relationships not only among themselves but also with nature and other beings of the cosmos. From *Reflections* to *Incubation*, the journey of the poetess whirls and swivels around several twists and turns giving birth to a perfect harmonious Melange.

Annapurna's reverence for womanhood finds reflection in *A Mother's Plea*, *Under The*

Palms, *Mothers*. A woman's journey is a struggle awaiting recognition and endearment, the expanse of her emotions being boundless...

The Chinars and the Deodars
Tulips and marigolds
The kettle of love in my heart
Wait to sizzle with your return.
 (A Mother's Plea, p19)

Annapurna has successfully struck the right chords though her poetry based upon the firm foundations laid down upon her varied and profuse experiences of life. A lover of nature and an exponent of natural beauty, she has elegantly carved out *A Misty Dusk*, *Morning Drizzles*, *Brownies*, *Silence of the Woods*.

The lone traveler
on foreign shores
yearns to be home
for the festival.
 (A Misty Dusk, p20)

Annapurna pours out her heart as she indites the worrisome and dismaying consequences of human activities, the thoughtless and inconsiderate treatment of earth and the earthlings.

Migrating to the cemented cities
Nowhere to be seen were trees or birdies

*Failed to spot the crimsoned iris Queen
But couldn't forget its harmonious sheen!
(When I Saw Her, p122)*

*Vaayu 24x7, Is It An Honour, What Price
Will You Pay* manifest as the warning to the humankind raising the alarm bells for the human race to awaken themselves, shedding off greed and ego, considering the wellbeing of nature and its inhabitants.

*No big filter could sieve, I left them impure,
deoxidized,
emission loaded air
Wake up! Do something now,
to save Vaayu for them,
Our descendants!
(Vaayu-24x7, p34)*

There is a Divine purpose behind everything, whose essence itself is love and wisdom.

*Deluged in an aura of mesmerization
Sublimed into eternity
Bestowed by His grace, I
Fused with Him!
(In Meditation, p44)*

Tagore's views find a generous expression in Annapurna's poetry: "Love is the only reality and it is not a mere sentiment. It is the ultimate truth that lies at the heart of creation". *Elements of Love, Butterfly In The Room, The Wailing Rain, Subtle Gossamer* and an array of such verses gracefully present the emotions of love, benevolence, faith in cordiality of relationships.

*To take life in sprite
To eschew fringes and frills
Douse the inferno of soul annihilation
A single rule-To live and let live!!!
(Butterfly In The Room, p114)*

The poetess voices strongly against the degradation of human values in the contemporary society. *Black Ants* and *A Rose and A Rock* take a tough stand exhibiting the exasperation and resentment.

*Leaving the sugar candy
In despair and dry ice
Waiting for justice'
Only to find none.
(Black Ants, p67)*

*Dying Embers, Mannequin, Mellifluous
Endurance* are miraculously interwoven with the courage, hope and faith of establishing a society, free from all vice and malice.

*Rise 'O' woman, Rise!
.....
No man whatsoever can
Douse the flame of womanhood
The flame of life,
Within you!
(Dying Embers, p101)*

As a nightingale, the poetess sings to cheer and enlighten the darkened alleys of humankind. Her poetry touches the strings of the readers' hearts. *The Story Of My Life, Painter Potter Poet, I Wish- Aviary and I Wish I Were* display Annapurna's poetical journey and the marvelously tread path that

has led her to becoming the prodigy of poesy. Whether it is the rhythmical exhibit of emotions in *When I Saw Her, She left, He left, Empty and Forlorn* or the free lucid verses, Annapurna has mastered the skill with flair and finesse.

*The harsh winter gale
Trees nude and pale
No birds, no nests, no chirping,
no shrieking
No flowers, no fruits,
no leaves squeaking."*
(*Empty and Forlorn*, p89)

In *Melodic Melange*, the euphonious and mellifluous medley of verses glide smoothly as the ocean waves, drizzled with muzzling showers of emotions, sprinkled with the passionate love for nature, at times spurted

with angst and anguish against the prevalent iniquity.

*A couple of letters joined hands,
Whipped up to become a word.
Numerous words trotted down the lanes
in my mind
Shaped into a sentence and lay in my lap.*
(*The Story of My Heart*, p130)

Annapurna's book reverberates the harmonious portrayal of life in its entirety presenting an insight into her compassionate, loving, benevolent heart as she reminisces and puts forth....

*The story of my heart,
For everyone to read and ruminare.*

Giti Tyagi, Ambala

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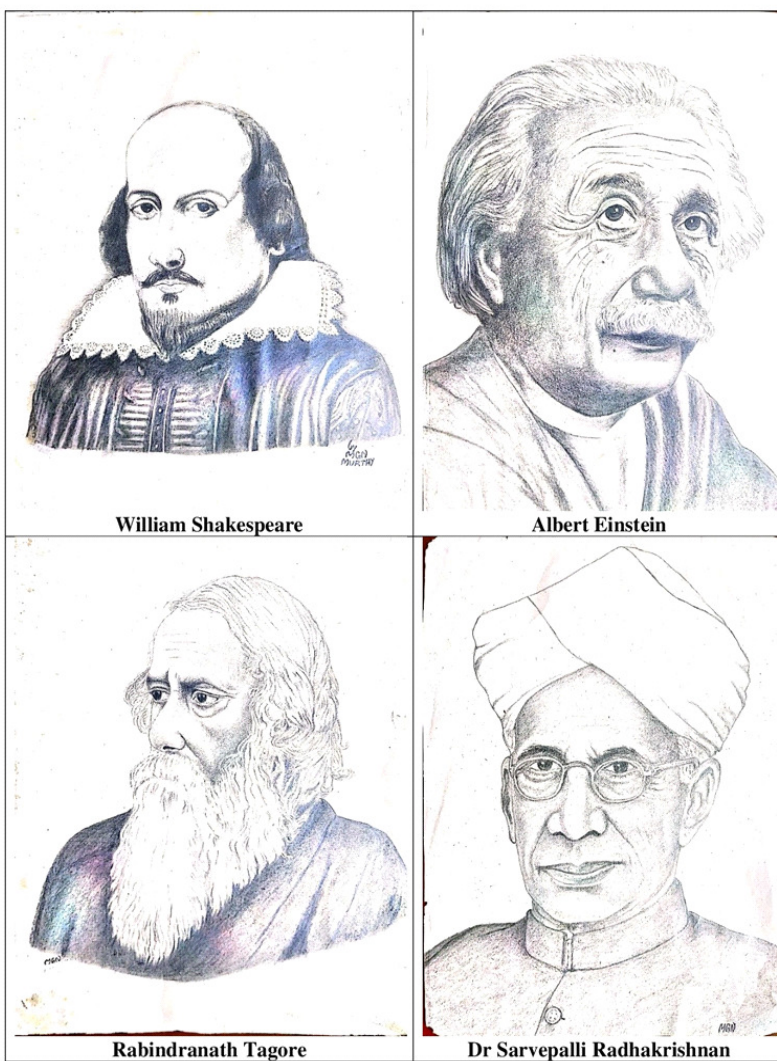
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My compliments for publishing an excellent journal. I was particularly impressed by the scholarly article on B.N. Rau and constitution making. this is very illuminating and demolishes the myth that dr. Ambedkar single handedly wrote the constitution and he is the father of Indian Constitution.

Rama Rao Kathirisetti
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Golden Article reprinted from *Triveni*, September_October, 1931

A HINDU KING

P. B. Sathe, B.A., L.L.M., *Mimamsa Bhushana*

It is many times argued and sometimes taken for granted that a Hindu king was an autocrat, that he had unfettered power to do anything and that he was responsible to none but to himself. The theme of this short essay is to show that this proposition is not correct. A Hindu king as described in the old literature of the Hindus was not an autocrat. The autocracy of the king is a subsequent development of the polity of the Hindus which slowly encouraged extensive powers of the king in the later stages of the history of Hindusthan. Before however we proceed to the subject proper, it would not be out of place here to consider the origin of the Hindu kingship. The concept of *Danda* is one of the fundamental ideas in the Hindu political theory. The problem of the origin of kingship can be considered from two points of view; one the realistic and the other rationalistic. The first looks at the question from the point of view of how kingship originally came into existence. It is mainly concerned with the facts of history. The second views it from the moral or ethical point of view. The theory of political science tells us that power and the prowess of the king and its growth is always mainly due to external pressure. When there is a danger to one State from the neighbouring States, the State in question tries to be as strong as possible and

wants to have certain discipline which would help it to remain free from foreign aggression. This discipline is maintained by a strong and powerful hand, whether it be that of a king or a dictator. In the *Aitareya Brahmana* it has been stated that the *Devas* being pressed by the unrighteousness of the *Asuras* proceeded to elect one of themselves as a king. (Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Volume II, pages 4 and 5). It is thus clear from this passage that the Vedic kings were of human origin. They cannot be otherwise when they were selected. In the *Satapatha Brahmana*, this problem is however looked at from the rationalistic point of view (*Satapatha Brahmana*, volume I, p. 514). In the Sutra period the question of the origin of kingship is not given much importance. According to the *Sutrakaras* the social structure of the Hindu society which recognized the *varnashrama* was eternal, and it was *Dharma* which guided all actions of all beings on the face of the earth. According to them, the law was expounded by the *Brahmins* and the kings simply enforced the decrees of the *Rishis*. The king according to these philosophers was not above the law but had to obey certain rules. The sanction behind these rules was of moral discipline and of penalty after death (*Vasishtha* Volume I, 39 to 41).

Kautilya does not also care to give us any idea of the origin of kingship (Sen's *Hindu Political Thought*, page 53). It appears from what he has stated that he tries to reconcile both the views of the origin of kingship i.e., that of the human origin and of the divine origin. (So also *Santiparva*, page 58, *Shlokas* 41 to 48). The king is created for the protection of the world from out of the body of five deities. Leaving aside the metaphors, it can be said that the king was a symbol of five attributes of the five deities, which rule the universe. The main theme therefore appears to be that the king was invested with these powers for the protection of the world. This does not however go to show that the king had an unfettered power. For according to Manu, the *Danda* which was above the king would surely destroy the autocratic and oppressive king (VII, p. 27). The king was to follow the rules of *Danda Niti*. He could not thus be above Law.

In the *Mahabharata* the origin of kingship appears to be divine (*Santiparva*, Section 59). According to the *Mahabharata*, God Vishnu entered the body of Prithu and hence Prithu, the ruler of the earth, became representative of God. The king was to be obeyed because he was really a portion of Vishnu on earth. Underlying all these ideas, therefore, the predominant idea appears to be that this divinity was attached not to the person of the king but to his office. The *Mahabharata* expressly shows that an unrighteous king could be slain by his subjects (*Santiparva*, Section 58, *Shloka* 41). The kingship, according to the *Mahabharata* and

according to the ancient scriptures, was not a right but a duty. The aspect of duty is very prominent in Hindu jurisprudence and in Hindu polity. The king was to observe the rules of *Raja Dharma*. It was only Narada who says that the king had an unfettered power over all things under him and that he was responsible to none (*Narada*, XVIII, p.22). With this solitary exception, Hindu philosophers did not advocate the divine right to rule. In the *Mahabharata*, the subjects are even conceded the right of tyrannicide. According to Hindu *Sastras*, the king is to be consecrated. He does not become a king till the religious ceremony of coronation is performed i.e., the God Vishnu enters his body, not when the person of the king is born, but only when he is accepted by the people as their sovereign. The king takes the coronation oath first, and then he becomes the king. The coronation oath is a sort of consideration for the kingship which the person of the king gets from his subjects. Whenever the king breaks the promises made at the time of the coronation, his right to be obeyed can be questioned by the subjects. The Hindu political philosophy, as all Hindu scriptures are, is more concerned with the religious aspect of life and it is no wonder therefore that the Hindu political philosophy accepts the principle of the divinity of the king. In the *Shukraniti*, however, a very advanced view has been propounded and the king is said to be a servant of the people. (Sen's *Hindu Political Thought*, page 61). We can thus in short say that though the Hindu Polity attached a sort of divinity to the king's person, they never recognized the divine right of the

king to rule. The sum and substance of the political thought of the Hindus therefore appears to be that the king is bound by his coronation oath and that he was responsible to the people so far as those oaths were concerned.

We shall now turn our attention to the checks against tyranny of a Hindu king. These checks can be, divided under two heads. The first head would be of preventive checks and the second would be of retributive checks. The preventive checks were those which the king himself adopted for his guidance because of his training in his youth. During the period of his studentship, the king was to follow certain rules of conduct and those rules of conduct used to be ingrained in the habits of the king, when he assumed office. His conduct was governed by moral precepts and his moral discipline was one of the most effective checks in those days when religion was the sole criterion of human conduct. This moral discipline came from within, and was thus a most effective check on the king's conduct towards his subjects. The king was to regard his office as a sacred trust and the king, who carried on his administration from this moral point of view, was called *Rajarshi*.

The second preventive check was that of the religious belief of the king. To bad kings punishments were prescribed after death. Such a religious check today would appear ridiculous, but to the minds of Hindu kings in the pre-historic period, it was a great force which kept them within bounds. According to Manu, a king who cares for his subjects gets

1/6th of their merits, while if he does not, he gets 1/6th of their demerits (*Manu*, VIII, 304.) Kautilya, who is more or less a secular philosopher, is not also free from this religious bias because according to him also a king, who rules righteously, goes to heaven (*Arthashastra* III, 7).

The political preventive checks are the laws, customs, forces of public opinion and the opinions of the ministers and the assemblies. The king was to look to the customs of the people, and the customs had great force as law just as they have got today. According to *Shukraniti*, the king was to observe *Nyaya* in the noon and *Smriti* in the morning. The king was to legislate within certain bounds, but the law was mostly interpreted by the learned Brahmins who had absolutely no interest in their personal worldly well-being. The force of public opinion was recognized by Shukra when he states that the officer who was impeached by 100 men could be dismissed (Shukr, I. p. 763). It would appear from this passage that the Hindus had an idea of what is called ministerial responsibility in these days.

The real and the most effective check was that of the advice of the ministers and the assemblies. According to Kautilya, a single wheel could not move, and therefore the king was to employ ministers and hear their opinions (*Arthashastra* I, p. 7). The king was to be enthroned in the presence of the ministers, and their presence meant their consent to the king's assuming office. The king was enthroned not only in the presence of the ministers but also

in the presence of all the people. Thus the consent of the people to his assumption of office was solicited by the king. These ministers, therefore, who could raise a prince to the throne, could under certain circumstances revolt against him. As a matter of fact an instance of how the queen of Ceylon was dethroned by her ministers is cited by Sen in his *Hindu Political Thought* on page 77.

We shall now turn to the retributive checks. In the Vedic period, we find that the ministers had power to depose a king (Sen's *Hindu Jurisprudence*, page 778). The second retributive check was a *prayopaveshana*, a form of passive resistance. The subjects, who had certain grievances, fasted before the king's palace till the grievances were redressed. There was a danger of this remedy being used for all purposes. *Prayopaveshana* is *Satyagraha* but it can amount to *Duragraha* also. In any case, the king had to look to the grievances of these people who followed the form of this sort of passive resistance. This *prayopaveshana* was a form of direct appeal to the judicial conscience of the king, and to the pity of the people. The idea of deposition is not repugnant to the Hindu mind. According to Kautilya, an unrighteous king would fall a prey to his discontented subjects (*Arthashastra*, VI, p. 1). According to *Santiparva*, a king, who is carried away by the advice of vicious ministers or who is unrighteous, deserves to be slain (*Santiparva*, Section 22). This was the greatest punishment that the dissatisfied subjects could inflict upon an unrighteous king. The right to revolt against

the king, though under very exceptional circumstances, was a great and most effective political check on the tyranny of any king. The distinction between a good king and a tyrant has been maintained by Shukra also. Shukra has quoted the historical instance of King Vena being killed by his subjects for his unrighteousness. Shukra does not encourage tyrannicide-and rightly so-but he is emphatic enough to recognize the right of the people to this extreme action. Shukra is very clear in calling the king a servant of the people.

We thus see that a Hindu king, who was born and brought up under very rigorous discipline during his student life and who was susceptible to religious influences, could not be an unrighteous king. All his training during his studentship, which formed part and parcel of his character, tended towards his being a king who cared for his subjects. A king who followed the principles of *Rajdharma* during his *Brahmacharya* period, could not be an unrighteous king. Secondly the council of his wise ministers, expounding of the laws by the most disinterested *Rishis*, and the ultimate danger of being dethroned by his own subjects, all tended to make a Hindu king a very great constitutional king indeed, that is to say, he accepted the principles of *Rajdharma*. He felt that his office was merely a duty imposed upon him by God and that he was responsible to God for his actions. Thus there is no wonder that the old Hindu idea of kingship was one of the loftiest ideas of Hindu political thought and jurisprudence. The trend of Hindu jurisprudence is towards the observance of duties and not towards the

exercise of rights. The subjects therefore did not care to know their rights as they cared to understand their duties. So also, the king did not care to know how kingship came into being but he was more conscious of his duty as a king. He was to follow the principles of *Raja-*

Dharma and aimed at being called *Rajarshi*. The Hindu king, therefore, was not, and could not be an autocrat but was merely an officer whose principal duty was to look to the welfare of his subjects.

CORONA! THOU SHALL DIE

S M Kompella*

Be not a perverse demonic pandemic
 Thou shall die
 You are the scourge and spectre
 Haunting humanity heinously
 Threatening to wreck its will
 Wreaking havoc at every corner and cranny
 Drunk with the hubris of your invincibility
 And bleeding mankind to death and
 destruction
 With your macabre menacing march

You are the distortion of His design and will
 A green eyed goblin
 Gorging on an anguished humanity
 True, Man has self-inflicted a severe suffering
 By exploiting and endangering Mother Nature
 But then a remorseful mankind now rises
 With its indomitable will and intrepid courage
 To combat this very crisis with sheer fortitude,
 compassion and empathy
 Mankind will assert its primacy of intellect
 And supremacy of service and sacrifice
 And wipe your vicious spectral spread off the
 globe
 Carona ! Thou shall die

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THE PANDEMIC

*

The pandemic is here,
And is deadlier than we fear;
The whole world is now awake,
To this virus, with their lives at stake.
The spectacle of humans scurrying for cover,
Oh! Its civilization at its darkest hour;
All the way, it is sheer terror,
Humanity encountering a chilling horror.
How shall peace reign?
When everything seems to be in vain;
Back to normalcy, man tries to scramble,

*

Amidst the agony and the economic shamble.
Will harmony and peace ever prevail?
Or is everything lost and of no avail;
Now, the consequences are unimaginable,
Foreboding, bleak and unthinkable.
Dispelling darkness, a light to grope
Is a very human glimmer of hope;
Survival instincts beam a ray of confidence,
On the discovery of a vaccine, which makes
sense?
This is what we expect to happen,
Despite our morale very badly shaken;
A recovery much beyond our imagination,
Bringing happiness and joy to many a nation.

WHERE HAVE THOSE DAYS GONE?

Dattatri Samaga*

It's a school.
And the usual scene ---
 Giggles and laughter,
 Chatters and pranks,
All absent today.
It's the Republic Day!

Silence reigns supreme!

The Flag seems unfurled
But, by whom?
It hangs its head down,
But why?
Skyscrapers all around
And no wind!

It's a school,
"The land of youth and dream"!

Why this apathy?
Why this disdain?
Why?

Where are those days when ---

The head held high
The measured march
The salute, true military style
And the National Song
Sung in high spirits
Filling the surroundings
With a resounding sound!

* Poet, Bengaluru. email:dattajja@gmail.com

Those days, those vibrant days,
Where have they gone?

COVID-19

P. Purnachandra Rao*

Whence it came from is mind boggling
Its sweep and speed is unprecedented
It has thrown its gauntlet in the global arena
Who and how many are safe begs the question!

Malthus*mortal remains if any plead for a relook
Remember, nothing fails like excess! So is greed
"All for all" remains an appeal if governance is otherwise
Need of the hour commands resolved United action

* Former Principal IIMC, Hyderabad

COVID-19 respects no territorial sovereignty/suzerainty
The chemistry of covid-19 plays truant with researchers
As the days pass by it acquires venomous virulence
Baring chest against it meets with devouring monster

Bend before an advancing tidal, you are safe,
COVID-19 is on prowl, desert the streets, block entries
Stay indoors, let your hidden talents blossom
Arrest COVID-19, with sanitized Social Distance.

*(Malthus- Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) was an English Cleric, scholar and influential economist in the fields of political economy and demography.)

ENTHRALL ME

S.L Peeran *

In the silence of my mind and soul.
In the wee hours of my life.
The past haunts me like a ghost.
Hooting like an owl,
Screeching like halting tyres.
Projecting me on the screen of life
My wickedness, my meanness
My ego, my pride, my foolishness
My self-centeredness, my bad planning.
Of how I faltered with wrong moves.
The light on the stage dimming.
Throwing dark shadows
Pouncing on me, throttling me.

Holding me by the collar.
I get the punches on my nose.
I realise that the world is slippery.
Glittering, with fragrance of a rose.
Attractive making a slave of me.
Now when the pleasures of the past
Have waned leaving me crippled,
The world makes faces at me.
Teasing me, making a fool of me.
Yet I resist its glamour and glitter.
I have realized its tricks, snares.
I watch every step in my crutches.
I pray for light to descend
And envelop me, to enthrall me.
My faith is strong. Eyes gleaming.
I yearn for Thee with all my heart.
To breath my last with Thy name on lips.

* Retd. Member-Judicial of Customs, Excise & Gold
(Control) Appellate Tribunal, Bangalore
slpeeran@gmail.com

THE FLUTTER OF WINGS

Dr. Thummuri Sharath Babu*

The Sun alone
Is the competition for them
They are unsurpassed
The hues of feathers are different
The tweets and fleets are different
They know no discrimination
Nor any disputation
A bough or branch for shelter will do
Eons change but not the needs
They never wean away the practices
Hybrid malady has not touched them
What if millions of years went by
The cuckoo has not left its lingo

What if without a ruler
Gentleness alone reigns
No boundaries, no marks
True definition of freedom are they
What if the birds are without address
A true family-life reflects in them
They share the five elements, yet
Environmental protection is the divine goal
See the way the nest is built
You'll know what self-confidence is
The guarding of its brood
Has many things to teach us
Let's be humbled
At the modesty of fluttering
Which the next bird can't hear

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[Telugu original: Sri Thummuri Rammohan Rao]

HOW BENEFICIAL THE TREES ARE!

Dr. Emmadi Pullaiah*

How unique and illustrious
you are with a status covetous
in the creation of providence,
endeavoring ever to extend
your yeoman service, embracing
all creatures as your own offspring
Everlasting and evergreen
is your treasure, a divine gift, incredible,
free access imparting to all the opulent

or the orphan. Never are you penchant
for returns of any kind with an inclination,
"pleasure is in giving not in taking".
Never are you at loggerheads with
any one despite disasters natural and human
assaults ferocious with no dissent and face
petulant developing patience Himalayan
with endurance and fortitude.
I opine your concept is, "Treat even
your bitter rivals as your sweet cronies".
Ever indebted is the total mankind to you
for your compassionate service.

* Reader (Retd.) in English, Warangal

IF YOU TOUCH THEIR HEARTS

O. P. Arora*

Where is the hurry?
Why should I grumble-
it doesn't move?
All stations are alike
all people are alike-
sad, gloomy faces

blank, hollow eyes
pain piercing their hearts...
I should talk to them
I should touch their hearts...
Maybe, I can find out
why they suffer so much
why they have gone dumb
why they can't share their sorrow
why they can't wait for morrow...

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LOCKDOWN

O. P. Arora*

Come on
Long time
No tea...
Horrendous times of lockdown!
We can't go out anywhere
but we can meet here
and talk over
Nature's Response
Nature's Reaction
Nature's Curse
or whatever...

I knew
he was lonely
he needed me...
I could
alleviate his depressing feelings
certainly lift his spirits...
Thought over
said No....

All those discussions
those long deliberations
about Death!
Thought
You were never afraid
of Death...

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LONELINESS

O. P. Arora*

Those were nice days
really!!
But they come and go
don't they?
No, not really...
When she left
she took all her things
yet
something she left behind...
Loneliness....

Here she smells everywhere
her laughs echo every corner
her liveliness dances all around
her smiles haunt me, unbound...

No, I had never known
this touch of passion.
Perhaps I had played with life
never learnt its lesson:
Life too at times plays terrible tricks
traps you in the maze
all the openings, apparently simple, lost in the
haze...

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MYSTERY SPOTS GALORE

Dr. V.V.B.Rama Rao*

There may be one or two such spots elsewhere
 Bharat - Maha Bharat the new born polity
 Has spiritual rendezvous innumerable
 Every hamlet, village, town, city
 Has a temple, an abode for the worshipful
 divine
 Our gods are innumerable; their numbers go
 on going up

Ma Shakti has Four, Eight and Fifty-one
 peethas
 Even after She was disembodied
 Every inch of land, nook and corner of land
 Even mountains, rivers and water-tables
 Are spirit blessing and blessed.
 But, why many scams, murders, atrocities
 Blood curdling rapes day in and day out?
 Surely Shakti from Her numerous peethaas
 Must have been venting Her disgust, anguish
 and wrath
 Leaving children to the mercy of glib-tongued
 multi-crorepatis.

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ONE WE I AND MINE MATTER AND SPIRIT

TSS Anjaneyulu*

Seek Ye, man happiness and peace in life
It needs you to be simple and human
Preserving ethical and family values
Living in moderation, compassion and courage.

Work hard must you
In any field of satisfying activity
Art, Science, Industry and business,
Acting with ethical concerns.

Learn, earn and enjoy life in control
Of food, sleep and sex,
Avoid unnecessary extremes
Balancing your mind and body

All life is but goodness and love
Fearless and egoless it should be
With lofty ambitions and aspirations
Accepting facts to overcome despair

All life is a tantra - yoga it is
Harmonising opposites
As they come and go. Invest in
Natures beauty, music and values

Dynamic, mobile substance, the mind is
Compounds it never to a whole

All receptive it is - sounds, touch, vision, taste
and smell

Creating for you a world around you

Immanent in your mind all matter is
It whirls around diversity
In desire, goods, greed and ego
Binds it, you, in relativity against reality

Practice righteousness in life
Trounce the negative thoughts
Surmount all unfounded fears
In love, service and sacrifice

Elemental body and mind you are
Remember, you are the imperishable spirit
Enjoy life in the world and
Seek bliss beyond

Apply breaks to your doubts
Submit to conscience in all aspects
Fear not death - all but recycling
It is A symbol of time, after all, it is

The real culprit the time is
Don't despair of the dead past
Nor the illusive future by
Living in the present.

* Hyderabad

Look into yourself
 In relaxed seclusion and meditation
 Cheat the time, the cosmic tramp
 Take the mind towards the timeless

To go beyond mind live in awareness
 of constant fleeting flow
 Draw cosmic energy constantly from environs
 Remember potentially divine, you are.

Weep not for that that does not call for grief
 Occupy the mind in silence

Develop detachment and discrimination
 Sing a hymn or say a sacred word.

Draw prana to energise yourself
 Observe your breath and
 Listen to the cosmic sound in your ear
 To enjoy peace and bliss

Be active ever must you be
 In faith and trust
 Visualise, I am not the body and
 Surrender to the Supreme.

OUR FUTURE WORLD

Leonard Dabydeen*

"In the end all men have to die. He who is born cannot escape death." ~ Mahatma Gandhi - Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi, January 15, 1948.

They who live by their own chagrin, acquire
moth that spiral in their mind without peace;
fetch hate, animosity as desire
never to see our world a happy place.

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Often times by foolish wit denigrate
our hopes and dreams far beyond squint of
eye,
they criticize and also speculate
day by day they usher grandiose lie.

Step by step we massage Gandhian thoughts
and follow in faith a path righteous
ahimsa our kindled lamp against krauts
satyagraha our stand prestigious.

Walking in Mahatma's footpath joyous
we build our future world so enormous.

PICTURE POSTCARD

Gopal Lahiri*

Everywhere the allure, the fragrance
The tiny bird inches closer in the low shrub

The clouds thinned to a veil, to a flake
A banyan tree measures its shadow

The flying leaves give gossamer smiles
Not a lesson of crying, only pure joy

Above the shining blue, clouds a bit shy

In air, voice of winds more whisper than
sound

Sunsets light up the sky in rose and pitch
The forest wrapped in whispering green

Someone you've never met.
In the mountains of another time.

Trails are redrawn, the highlands washed
Footsteps recall love and peace in silence.

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RAMZAN

Peace be unto thee

P.Purnachandra Rao*

Amidst pandemic pandemonium the crescent
Enters quelling the much hyped fear psychosi
Lo! the Saviour has emerged to take it upon
Himself
Stay home, stay safe and start praying for
Peace

Sanitise the hands not to shake with but to
serve
Quarantine the places of worship and keep
them shut

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The Saviour is comforting the suffering millions
Feel His presence in Doctors, Nurses and
Sanitary Staff
The virus has stopped the wheels of
production
Scores on the streets wailing for food and
shelter
Let the spirit of brotherhood wipe every tear
from every eye
Break the fast at Sun set to feed the hungry
and sundry.
Peace be unto the Saviour
Peace be unto the mankind

WHERE IS THE WISDOM WE HAVE LOST IN KNOWLEDGE

Giti Tyagi*

The twinkling eyes with dreams filled high,
The world's to be conquered no time to sigh.
Plunge deep, getting rid of the past,
The boundless ocean of the knowledge vast!

Focus thy mind, satisfy senses bright,
Sailing afloat, drifting, lacking insight,
No time to ponder, the incessant haste,
Reflecting contemplating meditating as if a waste!

The swift thoughtless pace as a whirlwind
devastating,
The reckless muddled efforts as the labyrinth
meandering,
Freedom of speech misused, thoughtless
words enounced,

Misleading the beings, self-love virtues no
more renounced!

Deceived deluded the humans fooled,
Futile inutile information from hither thither
pooled,
Flooding, surging, spewing out,
Disdaining belittling humans flout!

The beauty of life bestowed upon,
By the Divine on the humans showered on,
Uplift elevate raise thy self,
Entrap nor entangle life entwined!

Let not be misinformed in vain obsession,
Lose not the knowledge in the heaps of
information,
Let not the soul suffer irretrievable damage,
Lose not thy wisdom in the pursuit of
knowledge!

* Editor, panel reviewer, creative artist, a poetess
and short story writer