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Photo: PTI

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We plan to publish Jan.-Mar. 2023 *Triveni* issue as a special issue on the topic Covid 19 and its impact on economy, environment, education and society.

We propose to publish Apr.-Jun.2023 *Triveni* issue as special issue to celebrate 6th death anniversary of Sri IV Chalapati Rao, former editor of Triveni journal.

Triveni Foundation invites contributions for the above issues.

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TRIPLE STREAM

ON STATUES AND STATUES

D. Ranga Rao*

Great art has no frontiers. It represents only truth and reflects the aspirations of mankind. A sculptor or a painter is an inspired being who works with his eyes, hands and mind. Whatever medium he chooses he puts his heart and soul into his work to create an object of beauty and perfection. He works with a deep sense of love for achieving his aim and strives to give visible likeness to life.

A casual reference made to any statue takes us back to Greece, the mother of fine arts, the country which built the base of modern enlightenment. The age-old activity of sculpture came to Greeks naturally as one breathes and became part of their daily chores of life like eating and sleeping. They were aware of the beauty of the human body which was a marvel of symmetry and proportions physically and a wonder by thought, expression and action. They did not care for political ideology but stood for local pride in their art.

The early Greeks were fascinated and astonished by the technical skill of the Egyptians in making the gigantic standing figures of Pharaohs and the Sphinx with human head and the body of a lion in the lying posture, working on stone as hard as iron. The early statues of the Greeks were also colossal.

The Greek art of sculpture and architecture is closely connected with temples, gods and goddesses. Temples, east or west, are art galleries. Art and divinity go hand in hand. The Greeks, an aesthetic race, had grown refined and sensitive in their artistry over the centuries. They had begun with wood, then copper, bronze and finally with marble. Though they accepted the standing form of the Egyptian kings, they preferred to give their gods superbly proportionate human form, slightly larger in size, in the nude. However their goddesses were clothed gracefully in drapery waist down. The Venus of Milo represents “the quintessence of the women of the world”. These graceful statues stand with a hint of a smile on their faces.

With art in their soul, the Greek artists converted cold marble into living flesh. Marble was their choice as it was available to them in abundance in the mountains all round them. As for models there was no dearth as the soldiers on the open fields, the young men and girls competing as athletes in the gymnasiums, all in the nude, were available to them to watch the human body from close quarters. As time passed the artists graduated from standing posture of the statues to various other postures and angles the human body

takes in action and movements. The perfection of the human body which is not seen in real life was brought by the Greeks in their sculpture which make their art divine.

The perfect human figures sculpted by the Greeks and later by Romans as also the architectural designs of buildings with their interiors and exteriors, helped later day master artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and the great masters of the West in the use of their chisel and brush. Leonardo da Vinci in his world famous portrait of Mona Lisa introduced the smile on her cherubic lips, perhaps inspired by the Greek mode as to make critics say that Mona Lisa's face is divinely human. It occurs to me that the superbly serene faces of gods and goddesses painted by the Indian master of the brush, Raja Ravi Varma, belong to this category of divine art which makes us believe that gods look like that.

Statue making reached perfection by 2500 B.C. and the credit goes to the Greeks. The Colossus of Rhodes, and the enormous statue of Zeus the Sun God with his hair reaching his shoulders, his flowing beard and his eight pack abs sitting on the throne make an inspiring show. Both these statues are about one hundred feet high and are the wonders of the ancient world.

The art of the Greeks is so enchanting, admirable and eternal that it made the sensitive English poet John Keats exclaim in an overflow of emotion, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty / that is all ye know on earth and all ye

need to know", in his poem *The Grecian Urn* and in another context say with emphasis "a thing of beauty is a joy forever". We may note here that what the Greeks did with their chisel in depicting man, Shakespeare the dramatist did with his quill in describing man- "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how expressive! How admirable in action! How like an angel! In apprehension how like a God! The paragon of animals!" in his play *Hamlet*. The approach of Keats is emotional, that of Shakespeare intellectual in paying tribute to 'man the beautiful!'

Now to come down from the high pedestal of spiritual gratification to the mundane level. Very tall statues have been and are being erected since ancient times to date as a mark of respect, admiration and gratitude to persons of extraordinary merit, for their spiritual and intellectual superiority who enlighten mankind with their graces of mind and heart. It is evident from available records that man had been smitten with a craze since time immemorial, to create an image of himself, perhaps to satisfy his ego and proclaim himself the greatest of the great in the creation of God. This attitude resulted in erecting statues as a part of the culture of nations. In India it is said that this culture began as part of the Indus Valley civilization.

As in the ancient past, in modern times too statue making is connected with religion, god and of course social needs. Buddhism has a number of Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan and elsewhere, some of them creating records

in tallness and style. Christianity also has a share of greatness in the statues of Jesus and Mary. To talk of some of the select statues, old and new, more than hundred feet high excluding the base or the pedestal that deserve a pat:

Surprisingly it is India that breaks the record in this regard. Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, the iron man of India made in metal, stern and severe in looks, stands 597 feet tall dwarfing all other statues in the world. The statue is named *Unity Statue* as the Sardar was the architect of unifying India after gaining Independence. The Buddha statue in Spring Temple in China stands at 420 feet in grace and style. India again claims the second tallest statue in sitting posture, that of Saint Ramanuja in bronze near Hyderabad, Telangana, at 216 feet. This statue is named *Statue of Equality* based on the philosophy propounded by the saint who is stated to have lived for 120 years. The Unity Statue of the politician was envisaged by a politician and the Equality Statue of a religious head was visualized by a *sanyasi*, both seeking public donations.

The Statue of Liberty stands 151 feet high in New York, America. Kailasnath statue of Lord Shiva in Nepal is considered the highest statue of Shiva in the world 143 feet high. The statue of Hanuman stands 135 feet near Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh while the Shiva statue of Karnataka is 121 feet tall. The statue of the poet singer and devotee of Lord Venkateswara, Annamaiah, stands 108 feet tall in his native place Tallapaka in Andhra Pradesh. A statue for a poet and singer and a

devotee is an admirable proposition indeed in these days of vain glory. Christ the Redeemer with his arms outstretched sideways and looking down on his flock stands in Rio de Janeiro 98 feet tall. (Source: Internet).

One of the prominent statues in India which cannot be ignored is the Gomateswara statue in Karnataka which is 65 feet tall. Gomateswara, the Jain saint stands nude in meditation, tendrils creeping over his body. This statue has been hewn from a single sandstone rock and is more than thousand years old.

Talking of statues one cannot forget the romantic poet P.B. Shelley's poem *Ozymandias of Egypt* which reflects the futility of human pride and the possible damage the statues may face as time passes because of the ravages of nature or other disasters. As though to prove how wise and right Shelley was, the Bamiyan Buddha statues, one of them 180 feet tall, carved in the mountain cliffs of Afghanistan were disfigured and ravaged by the Talibans in their religious frenzy and hatred with cannon and gun fire a couple of decades ago to the agony and disbelief of the art lovers of the world. Most of the Greek statues are in ruins.

A passing reference to idols in Indian temples and the statues erected at road junctions in towns and cities is not out of place here. The idols of gods and goddesses are also statues but with a special aura about them. The exquisitely carved temple idols are of stone, made with great religious fervour following

strictly the principles laid down in sacred books on idol making these idols are unmatched in beauty and artistry like the temple architecture. While the achievement of Greek art in sculpture is simple and grand, the Indian idol making art is intricate and superb like its temple architecture.

After India attained independence the statues of political and national leaders made their appearance all over the country. The majority of these statues could only be recognized by the attire worn by them and not by the facial features. We should note here that it is difficult to reproduce with accuracy the facial features of known leaders, living or dead, through clay, cement, plaster of Paris, bronze, stone or any other medium with the exception of wax and silicon models. A portrait in oils on canvas achieves the three dimensional effect more satisfactorily.

In modern times statue making has become more a matter of engineering and technological excellence than an object of artistic skill perhaps to keep them safe from Nature's fury and man's anger. Today the statues weigh hundreds of tons and cost crores of rupees, where skill, art and craft take the second place. As a result the present day giant statues lack the emotional appeal or personal attachment a statue should represent compared with the statues of olden times of normal size.

It is said that lovely looking statues stand only for beauty and have nothing to do with usefulness. Yet statues in general, small or big, and the ones briefly described above, do convey a message. They represent good living, decent thinking, courage, bravery, steadfastness, intellectual honesty, love and such noble qualities that elevate man from the ordinary to the extra ordinary level if only one has the will.

Errata: The last word in the second paragraph of the Triple Stream article in the Jan-March, 2022 issue should read 'woe', not 'owe'. The error is regretted.

Editor



Venus of Milo - considered the most beloved statue in the world



Apollo- A copy of the earlier marble by Romans which reflects classic spirit in sculpture - notice the fig leaf which shows the Roman prudery



A Warrior - A study in muscular structure



Discus thrower - famous for movement and muscular action

DHARMA OR DUTY

T. N. Dhar 'Kundan'*

Dharma is a Sanskrit word also used in many other languages of our country. It has different meanings and multiple connotations. Let us try to understand this term in its varied senses. If we see its derivation we find that it has come from the Sanskrit root *dhri*, which means to adopt. So, whatever we take upon ourselves to do constitutes *dharma*. In other words, it means our duty. We shall discuss that connotation of this word later in this write up. First, let us consider why it is used as a synonym of the word religion. In our Indian tradition there was no concept of religion as such. We had what were called *Mat*, *Matantar* or different viewpoints. Later, when the foreigners came to our country either as invaders or traders or settlers and the concept of compartmentalised religions got imported, need was felt to coin a word to refer to these religions. *Dharma* was thought to be best suited for this purpose. So, we have Jew *dharma*, Christian *dharma*, Islam *dharma* etc. Our own way of life came to be known as Hindu *dharma*, which we also call *Sanatan dharma*. So, by usage *dharma* came to be referred to religious practices, beliefs, rituals and way of worshipping of different religious groups. The age-old way

of life, the rituals and the belief in this land *Bharat Varsha* came to be referred to as *Hindu Dharma*. Of course, we also know the word *Hindu* was derived from *Sindhu*, the name of the river that was the first river that these aliens came across while entering this pious land. That is how it came to be known as *Hind* or *Hindustan*, the land of the *Hindus*.

Traditionally this term connotes actions and duties that each one of us has. Our scriptures speak of *Varna-aashrama Dharma*. As is well known the life span of a human being is divided into four stages, called *Aashramas*. The first stage is the stage of celibacy called *Brahmacharya*. This stage is the period of studentship devoted to study, learning and gaining knowledge of different subjects. Naturally, therefore, the activities related to seeking knowledge of various disciplines formed the *dharma* of this stage. The second stage is that of a household called *Grihasta*. During this period, one would engage in earning a livelihood for self and family, live a married life and bring up children. The *dharma* of this stage was all activities relating to that. The third stage is known as *Vanaprastha* or the stage of retirement. During this stage one is required to pass on the mantle of running the household to the next generation. One needs to act as a guide, course

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corrector and consultant for youngsters in the family as also in the society. The younger generation will benefit from his wisdom and experience and the society will progress and prosper. The functions relating to this role will constitute his dharma at this stage. The fourth stage is called *Sanyasa* or the stage of renunciation. During this stage a person would refrain from the desire-oriented actions, engage in spiritual pursuit and confine to essential activities only. The spiritual pursuit would, naturally, constitute the *dharma* of this stage. Great men have written treatises during this stage of life about their experiences of the bygone life, considering it their *dharma* to pass on what they have experienced and learnt for the benefit of the mankind.

Now we come to another aspect of *Varna* or the caste. The society was divided into four groups, unlike in Greece where the society was divided into three groups only. The first group was called *Brahman* whose *dharma* was to acquire knowledge and impart knowledge, *Swadhyaya* and *Pravachana*. This group would also discharge the duties of a consultant, adviser and a guide to rest of the members of the society. The second group known as *Kshatriya* was a warrior class. Their *dharma* was to rule, protect, manage and ensure law and order. The third group was that of traders called *Vaisha*, whose *dharma* was to engage in farming, trade and commerce. The fourth group was called *Shudra*. Their *dharma* was to undertake the jobs of service, care and maintenance. Although this division came to be linked with the birth of a person in course of time, it was

originally decided on the basis of qualities of a person and actual work done by him. Shri Gita says, '*Chaturvarnyam maya srishtam, guna karma vibhagashah* - The four castes have been devised by me on the basis of the qualities one has and the work one actually does'. This division was very important and necessary to ensure smooth functioning of the society and proper management of the country at large. That is why another important statement has been added which says, *Shreyanswa-dharmovigunah para dharmatswanishthitat* - One should stick to one's *dharma* or duty because it is beneficial even if it be devoid of any great qualities, in comparison to another man's duty full of well-carved qualities. It is important to note that in Greek system it was the intellectuals or *Brahmins* who were asked to rule but in Indian tradition the warrior class of *Kshetreyas* only were entitled to rule while the *Brahmin* could be an adviser.

Dharma has yet another connotation when it is used as an antonym to *adharma*. *Dharma* connotes a virtuous and pious act whereas *adharma* denotes a sinful act. So, we are advised to do those acts only which are pious, noble and according to our scriptures. All others, which are bad, injurious and sinful must be refrained from. In our scriptures three types of acts have been stated as *dharma* and, therefore, desirable to be undertaken. These are *Yajna*, *Tapa* and *Dana*, acts relating to performing sacrificial fire, involving austerity and constituting charity. In all these acts of *dharma*, an attitude of selflessness and detachment is inherent. We are advised to

partake of everything and enjoy all the good things but with a sense of detachment as the *Ishavasyopanishad* says, *Tena tyakhtena bunjeethah*. Giving not taking is the *mantra* and that makes these actions a virtue as against those that are the product of desire and lust and, therefore, sinful.

Dharma refers to the natural qualities of everything. We say that the *dharma* of fire is to burn and give heat. The *dharma* of the Sun is to illumine and that of the Moon to soothe with its cool-ness. It is the *dharma* of the flowers to give fragrance and that of the wind to spread it over a vast area. Cereals, fruits and vegetables have the *dharma* to satisfy our hunger and that of water and other liquids to quench our thirst. There is an old story about a saint who was doing *pooja* on the bank of a river. Presently he saw a scorpion about to get drowned. He lifted it out of the water with his hands and the scorpion stung his hand and fell again into the water. The saint again rescued it and again it stung his hand. Again, it fell back into the river and this happened three or four times before the saint was able to save it by putting it on the dry land. A person who was a witness to all this *drama* asked the saint why he saved the creature when it stung his

hand three times over. The saint smiled and replied, 'I was doing my *dharma* and the scorpion was doing its *dharma*'.

There is a beautiful saying, '*Dharmo rakshatirakshita* - these duties protect you if you protect them'. The idea is that if all of us do our ordained duty, sincerely, honestly and with a sense of commitment, it will be beneficial for us and for others as well. This is logical. If we are sincere in performing our duties appropriate to the stage of our life and the qualities that we have inherently or have imbibed, the society will progress and prosper. If we are negligent in it and suffer from inertia and carelessness, the society shall suffer. Like all other things, Shri Gita has divided these actions also into three categories. The superior most are the *Satvika* actions, those that are performed as duty without any greed for their fruit in a detached manner. The second category are *Rajasika* actions, those that are noble no doubt but performed for name and fame. The lowest category is that of *Tamasika* actions, which are bad and sinful, performed with evil intentions. That forms *adharma* or forbidden bad deeds. So we are well advised to do our *dharma* in right earnest and prove that we are pious, pure and true human beings.

ENIGMA TO EMANCIPATION: A FEMINIST RHETORIC OF URMILA IN KAVITA KANE'S "SITA'S SISTER"

G Sathish Paul*

Kavita Kane is an assertive contemporary Indian fiction writer of the astounding genre of mythological fiction. She carved out a unique place for her subversive fictitious re-rendering of the great epics through a unique feminist perception against the conventional world view of patriarchal chauvinism and misogyny, where women's voices are muted and their aspirations subdued. She explores the large canvas of mythology to adequately reflect more on the human follies and fallacies than the supernatural manifestations of gods and to sensitise us towards humane empathy instead of prejudiced and judgemental pronouncements hitherto from the male myopic perspective. Her concern is to purposefully exploit and revalidate the evocative connotations of myths to suit the modern predicaments through bold experimentation in tone, mood, images, motifs, symbols and a host of literary devices. She denudes the gods of their divinity, awe and admiration and re-garbs them in human attributes to be on an equal pedestal with humans. In her novels, the episodes are sparse, incidents are scanty, action is internalized and discourses are elaborate.

Kavita Kane picks up such characters as have been either unnoticed or represented in biased dimensions and gives them a lofty intellectual and philosophic platform and an eloquent voice. Her female characters are always presented with choices in their lives. But what makes them stand out is their divergence from the dominant patriarchal ideology. Her subtle craftsmanship is evident in her chiseling out real raw characters in flesh and blood from the exalted or idealized prototypes in myths without deprecating the values and virtues they symbolize. Through these characters, she attempts an unprejudiced interpretation of the conventional approbations glorified in mythology towards a more humanistic and pedestrian comprehension of values from contemporary perception. Her *Sita's Sister* is a realistic re-creation of myth from the much-wronged protagonist's strong viewpoint in candid, unabashed and uninhibited articulation with subtle and sensitive feminine sensibilities through powerful feminist rhetoric, contemporary idiom, apt diction and dialogue and persuasive eloquence to make the large pattern of the belief system and practices as advocated by the myths relevant and valid to contemporary contexts.

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In the earlier versions, the identity of Urmila has largely been overshadowed and eclipsed

by the other prime characters such as Ram, Sita, Lakshman and Bharat, projected as embodiments of certain ideals and she is remembered, if at all, only as Janak's daughter and Lakshman's wife- a name without a face. Valmiki did make a passing reference to Urmila's sacrifice but just in a few verses. Devadutt Pattanaik refers to a Telugu ballad "Urmila Devi Nidra" (Sleep of Urmila), where Urmila pleads with the goddess of sleep to take away the sleep from Lakshman for fourteen years to enable him to protect Ram and Sita while in exile and instead takes it on herself to sleep on his behalf for that duration. But, Kane suggests that the fourteen years of Urmila's sleep could be just metaphoric.

By the very title *Sita's Sister*, Kavita Kane punctuates and underlines the insignificant individual identity bestowed on Urmila who has been grossly neglected and ignored in the epic, always in the shadow of her sister Sita. Worse still, she is further destined to be the 'shadow of a shadow' as the wife of Lakshman, himself a shadow of his brother due to his familial obligations and loyalty to his brother depriving him of any individual choices. The sacrifice of this estranged wife for fourteen years never received its proportionate due, while the others reap all the glory. Kane's Urmila is not a passive and mute spectator as conventionally comprehended. She is a sensitively portrayed girl of strong individuality with a sense of belonging. Initially, she had to sacrifice her coveted position as the princess of Mithila, the biological Janaki, the daughter of Janaka,

to the adopted daughter Sita. She willingly bore the brunt of disappointment and disillusionment as Sita received all attention. Her lot is to be deprived of whatever she covets. She ascertains herself, but never hurts any nor wants to be hurt. Her strained smile potentially masks her inner emotional turmoil. Contrary to the popular perception, Kane presents to us a multifaceted Urmila as a scholar, an artist, an intellectual, an administrator and primarily a pivotal woman holding all people and things together. Hers is a journey where she "triumphed tears and tragedy with dignity and strength". She gracefully adorns diverse roles of a daughter, a sister, a wife, a daughter-in-law, and an able administrator, organizer and so on with ease and composure transcending the constraints imposed on women. Her journey from Mithila to Ayodhya is treated as an allegorical and tenacious quest for an individual identity beyond being merely Sita's sister or Lakshman's wife.

Kane skillfully develops a gripping plot more around the intellectual and logical intercourses than on any sensational episodes. In the premarital discourse, Lakshman confesses to Urmila about his predicament of primary loyalty to his brother possibly deviating from his responsibilities as a husband and also of the certainty that she would just be a princess and never be a queen if she marries him. Urmila candidly informs him that her pride is hurt and still she exercises her free will when she chooses to marry him. She bravely encounters her status "But you do have a choice - either break off the wedding and leave

me to my fate or marry me, your loyalty to your brother notwithstanding. I accept you as my husband, do you?" For her, the marriage is "just a social discipline she would have to conform to".

She questions the very validity of values and the prevailing system of dharma. She lashes out at Guru Kashyap at the duality of the nature of dharma where Sita is hailed as a perfect wife in following Rama, while she is forbidden and rejected at once both by her husband and sister, the only people who matter the most to her. The loud but just outbursts neither of Urmila demanding the reason for Lakshman's decision to follow Ram and Sita into forest and exile nor of Mandavi lamenting at the similar decision of Bharat, are just cries in the wilderness. Urmila's demanding Lakshman 'either you take me ...or don't go,' and Mandavi's bemoaning "I am sick of these lofty words ... where am I? Who am I? ... I feel like a mad caged animal', are but, a few instances of the unheard voices of women. Even Guru Kashyap has no answer for Urmila's vehement barbed sarcasm that in Ayodhya "You may be the best of princes, the perfect sons, the ideal brothers, but never the good husbands." She towers over all the rest in the situation when she reconciles with a grit of determination and bids farewell to her guilt-ridden husband, "Come back, dear warrior, as you would from a war" and consoles Sita saying, "These fourteen years are going to be a test for each one of us. The pain and suffering is inevitable, but it will be valuable. It teaches us a lot in many ways." There could hardly be a nobler attitude than

this protesting the unjust treatment meted out to them, yet reconciling to reality. With her insatiable quest for knowledge, Urmila enters the male intellectual citadel and consolidates her identity as a scholar. She plunges into affairs of state and restores an effective functional system in Ayodhya which was vulnerable and insecure in the absence of Bharath and commands, "We are emotionally vulnerable right now but let us not be unprepared for war. Keep the army ready". Her barbed attack on Ram towards the close of the novel for not supporting Sita in the incident of proving her chastity chastised the dumbfounded patriarch. Thus, Kane attempts to capture the inner feelings, diverse dimensions and definitions and subtle contours of the feminine reality of this subdued and muted woman and gives her a voice to profoundly articulate and demand in staunch feminist rhetoric what is rightfully hers in a primarily male-dominated society.

Kane offers a kaleidoscopic portrayal of the multidimensional personality of Urmila in the form of diverse observations from different characters in the novel. Shatrughna acknowledges Urmila's pain and says "You saved us! All these years, Bharat and I might have looked after Ayodhya and the people, but it was you who looked after us, kept the family together and saved it from a living hell.... You made this palace a better place." Sumitra appreciates Urmila's selfless sacrifice saying, "We were blind and mute to your pain, your hopelessness. And yet you gave us your all. For years, we were being torn apart by mutual distrust and resentment but all of us

pretended that all was well, that denial was the best policy, except you. You made us face the truth." Mandavi calls her "the free thinker who doesn't believe in rituals and rites." Lakshman exclaims, 'O Urmila! Will the world ever know of your inner suffering, your divine sacrifice?' and claims her as his "warrior wife!" Despite her reservations, even Queen Kaikeyi observes her as "blood-thirsty, knife-brandishing warrior..." The queen mother Sunaina has implicit belief in Urmila and rests assured saying, "with you there to look after your sisters, I have no reason to fret... Urmila... you are their strength." Contrary to merely being Sita's shadow, Urmila had always been the veritable older sister.

Kane effectively deconstructs the myth of the enigma surrounding Urmila to emancipate and juxtapose her along with the conventional patriarchal protagonists of the mythology.

Sita's Sister is a fascinating exploration of the forgotten, unheard and unsung Urmila in a compelling feminist narrative voicing her concerns, battling and resisting the very foundations of patriarchal prejudices of her times as also the subsequent critical neglect. The frailties and follies and the fallacies and flaws of the characters with unquestionable divine aura pervading them are clinically dissected with surgical precision and critically evaluated in the context of true dharma and system of social, moral, ethical and spiritual values, taking the readers through the process of catharsis and enlightening experience. This portrayal of Urmila is a welcome variation to judiciously investigate the distinct literary definitions and contours of feminine reality in myths and mythological fiction, hitherto presented through the prejudiced patriarchal perspective.

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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MANAS BAKSHI'S POETIC CONCERNS FOR HUMAN RELATIONS: AN OVERVIEW WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PARNASSUS OF REVIVAL

Dr. K.Rajamouly*

A poet is one who has an observant eye and a sensitive heart for human concern and social relation in the welfare of man. He marks a clear-cut distinction by virtue of his distinctive features and special characteristics in the genre of poetry. No two poets are alike or same but they may be similar or dissimilar in presenting thematic treasures and poetic ideals, technical brilliance and artistic excellence. Here is a poet belonging to the class of poets par excellence in the galaxy of contemporary Indo-English poets. He is none other than Dr. Manas Bakshi who occupies a significant place in the poetic panorama by virtue of his rare merits in the contemporary era.

In the anthology of poems, entitled Parnassus of Revival Manas Bakshi deals with kaleidoscopic themes underlying life. Time with its past, present and future and man's predicament in time's reign, nature with its lovely scenes, social evils, lacking in faith in human relations, dilemmas, perplexities, confusions, conflicts, degeneration of values, degradation of standards, anarchy and so on in the current society enriched his thematic

plenty. He delineates the wide range of themes employing striking imagery, felicity of word-clusters or expressions and precise and crispy lines to exemplify his poetic dynamics. He deserves all encomiums for the merits of the anthology.

Manas Bakshi grows into a humanist by virtue of his good background or sweet disposition. He criticizes the present society for lacking in human relations and social concerns. The prevalent social distinctions and discriminations, status variations and economic depressions to cause inequalities and injustices are against his principle as a poet and man. Through the spectrum of poetry, he shares his heart-felt feelings to the readers in the most convincing and appealing way.

As a poet and man, Manas Bakshi is deeply committed to man's peaceful existence and human relations. Man to aim at man-for-man or human relation therefore becomes the focus and fulcrum of his poetry. He presents his feelings, moods, experiences, findings, happenings and so on, as he has broad mission and wide vision as a poet of human relations and concerns.

A poet of human consciousness and social

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awareness is bound to respond to all the evils confronting the society today. I quote my (Dr. Rajamouly Katta's) definition of poetry from my article in Susheel Kumar Sharma featured in Language, literature and Culture,

"Every poet lets us listen to his heart-throbs for our heart-responses. It is his primary goal and bounden responsibility to describe events, incidents, experiences, dilemmas, problems, etc that he glimpses through, and weapon and organ he fights with for the aimed reforms and desired solutions. It rises from the reality and actuality of life in the way the plant rises from the ground of truths to bloom the flowers of facts".

As a poet, Manas Bakshi believes that poetry is the expression of realities that lurk in his mind and heart. The poem, *A Poem of Untold Moments* reflects his views on poetry,

*Words not always enough to delineate
The bubble surfacing on
A purple heart's edge---
...
That is always a poem
Of untold moments
In untold words
Of metaphoric exuberance.*

As a poet, Bakshi defines a good poem as a choice, preferred to any material offer, the only option for him as unfolded in his poem, *Aesthetic Balm*. It should touch the heart by a message of consolation as a lesson for the reader's inevitable learning,

*What will you opt for
A handful of Dehradun rice
Or, a fine poem that touches a lacerated
heart,
As the winter-end breeze blowing over
The paddy field after harvest?*

Manas Bakshi's love for man is the nucleus theme of his poetry as revealed in the collection of poems. He, as a poet and man, loves the race of man and so he wishes man's world to be safe and peaceful. He exhorts every individual to grow into an ideal family and all families into society to reflect human values. His appeal to the race of man ultimately culminates in his universal wish that the earth must be safe. In the poem, *Caution*, he indirectly appeals to the race of man to live in happiness, saving the earth the world for mans' existence, averting all evil happenings

*Don't destroy me
To destroy yourself...
...
Your first succour, last resort
It's me, Mother Earth.*

The poet identifies with Mother Earth and appeals to his fellow man with profound feelings of helplessness to stop his act,

*Don't bite
To bring out
My last drop of blood...*

Humanism is the heart of Manas Bakshi's poetry for he loves family relations. In the poem, *Smile a Day* he gives full marks for

marital ties and familial relations,

*But full marks?
Sorry, I can't!
Have my wife and children
Waiting till I breathe my last.*

The poet loves conjugal life as the ideal and preferential one for it gives him solace and bliss. What man gets in marital relations is missing in extramarital relations. In the poem, *Surrealistic* he distinguishes the marital with the kiss to bestow on man bliss and the extramarital with a 'secret kiss' to be short-lived and 'half-finished',

*Halcyon days are short-lived
As a secret kiss,
Looking back often means
The surfacing of a hidden urge
To refurbish all
That is half-hearted, half-finished;*

For the poet, love is pure. It is the choicest emotion. In the poem, *Moving Leeward* he criticizes the lovers today for their non-commitment to love. They are not true lovers. It is for their temporary pleasures,

*And love---
Mere a conjunction
Dominating a secluded space
Of momentary togetherness*

Manas Bakshi's faith in humanity is comprehensive and compulsive on the part of man. In the poem, *Moving Leeward* he therefore loves humanity built with the bricks

of faith in cordial, harmonious human relations and peaceful existence of man,

*When faith is no more
A condition of living,
Marriage seldom sacred
Relations often sartorial
Down a life-line
Staid, turmoil-stained.*

Truth to reflect love in man helps man love fellow men to have unity as a sign of humanity. The poem, *Clairvoyance-like* expresses the truth, the truth of humanity,

*Truth is the moment of love
We feel united
Since birth.*

He advises his fellow beings in his poem, *What Likely the Art of Living Is* to wish for the safe existence of man, maintaining man-to-man or human relations in the age of man-created barriers,

*Only for
Raising a storm inside the orbit
Of the suffering human psyche
Mired in the textures
Of relations mechanized.*

As a poet and man, Manas Bakshi is against human suffering. He does not like inequalities and injustices, discrimination and humiliation, so on. He is upset more and more with male domination to result in gender discrimination. For him, poetry springs from pain and he expresses the idea in his poem, '*Parnassus*

of Revival. The theory of his poetry is that it begins in the pain of a girl-child and it is evident in the lines,

*Poetry beginning with pain
As a girl child
Born wretched
On the Indian soil....*

His poetry mirrors his bitter feelings and unbearable experiences in the sad incidents of humiliation meted out to women in the long past, the past and the present. He portrays his deep concern for woman in his first poem, 'Indian Woman'. The feelings related to the incidents of humiliation to women hurt him and hurt his heart deeply for he has high reverence and soft corner for women, He identifies with the woman in suffering,

*An Indian woman,
An emblem of duty to family
And love for husband,
Affection to children
And devotion the Creator,
Sustaining for a eon
The legacy, lechery and lapses
Of a male-dominated domain---*

He identifies with woman in different a eons. She faces 'the fire ordeal' to prove her chastity. How it is to see her suffering! He shares the suffering of Sita as she suffers for no fault of hers,

*Having no fault of my own
... *

*Had to face a fire ordeal---
To prove my chastity
With feminine courage.*

As a poet and man, Bakshi shares the woes and throes of the Pandavas. He feels that the action of the Kauravas as 'shameless'. He shares Draupadi's suffering, identifying with her. The suffering of women was not lost but continued as 'a stigma of yore!' to the 20th century,

*The legacy followed
Even in the 20th century
To adorn me with a crown
Of a royal devotee,
Offered forever to the deity
Of imposed myth
And imagined glory-gaiety!
Neither a Goddess
Nor a call girl
Branded Devdasi---*

He has deep anguish for the tragic fate of 'Lower caste woman in Kerala!' a hundred years ago. He expresses his vehement protest, identifying with her, Nangeli saying,

*I preferred chopping of my breast
To paying tax
To the king of Travancore
For covering up the same.*

It is shameful to think of the humiliation meted out to woman in the form of molestation and rape even in the 21st century in the so-called civilized society with the sense of equality in the democratic setup,

*I am that Manipuri girl
Baring my body in vehement protest---
Many of you
21st century civilized male
Unblushing, unfazed, remorseless
Just relax again!*

Bakshi as a fellow being feels ashamed of being a male to victimize a woman to unbearable agony and suffering. He referred to women: 'Padmini of Chittore with deep feelings. He wishes woman to be very strong to avert all the evils related to her and fight like Indian soldiers for her motherland,

*I've the fighting spirit
Of Razia Sultana,
The indomitable courage of Rani of Jhansi,
The patriotic spark of Matangini Hazra
And the undying zeal of Kalpana Chawla;*

Years glide on in time's ride but there is no change in woman's fate and existence. She becomes a victim to rape, sometimes rape and murder, stealing her money and treasures, the triple crime. There are ghastly incidents of rape of babies, girls and women of any age for the satiation of man's barbaric act in his demonic lust. He feels hurt for the pathetic and tragic plight of Nirbhaya identifying with her,

*My fate hasn't been changed---
Still I am one after another Nirbhaya
In the hands of the criminals
Gang raped and slain!*

Woman lives in the society today amidst fears confronting her all the times. She feels insecure

because of brutalities and cruelties of man's violence in various forms.

The poet feels sorry for the inhuman act of foeticide. To resort to foeticide by a woman in modern age is a sinful act. He wishes to have security for woman against prevalent insecurity in the present society,

*Sorry to say
I have neither a foeticide-free sky
Nor the deserved
Social security reign!*

Manas Bakshi as an optimist whole-heartedly wishes that the people should change the pitiable plight of woman in the present inhuman scenario,

*I will, for sure, one day
Make India worthy
Of woman's existence---*

The poet feels that a child gladdens its family by its sweet smile and strengthens the nation by its brilliant caliber and career when grown. He wishes that no foul means should spoil the child's smile. In the poem *Bugbear*, he equates 'child' that gladdens the near and dear with 'flower' that sweetens the atmosphere,

*A smiling flower
A smiling child
Bliss of Nature
Sacred and divine*

*Flower torn
Smile forgotten*

*Religious fanaticism: a knife
Flashing vengeance
From behind.*

The poet presents the portrait of man and woman living in an unwelcome situation against his wishes in the poem, *Unmasking*,

*I will make a portrait
Of man and woman
Going deep into the realm*

*Where the trite terms
Of a prosaic living entail
A nomadic shibboleth,*

*Where everyone's
Aimless wandering*

The society today is mired in numerous ill-treatments to the poor, 'Pavement dwellers and pedestrians' as the sign of marginalization. There is no way set to solve their problems. In the poem, *Live from Kolkatta Pavement*, the poet presents the city's realistic picture to reflect the pathetic plight of the poor for miserable lives,

*Marginalized as they are since birth
Groveling for survival in shady shanties,
Like the very footpath
Sheltering the alive and the dead*

The poll promises go in vain. The promises are the words wrought on the surface of water. The leaders are in fact for good governance as per democracy but not poli-tricking for poly tricking. The poet aptly compares votes to

fallen leaves to say that they have no value and power after elections. He presents the most unwelcome situation,

*Vote is over,
Torn ballot papers
Mute as the fallen leaves
Can't divulge the secrets of poli-tricking*

The poet feels sorry for the martyrs are remembered once in a year in the way the great leaders of great sacrifice are forgotten. It is done as a show but not as a mark of real respect for the departed leaders,

*Swirl around a martyr's tomb---
Martyrs initiated at the baptismal of fire
Remembered once in a year!*

The nature-lyric depicting the sun 'Saluting the Sun' making a fact that there are unwanted children and they might not know their male parents. The children grow to be unruly and violent with every possibility of turning terrorists,

*Justice? No, not the real cause,
It's all myth
Really is virgin mothers
Scream in the blind alleys of life,
And Karnas today
Often turn terrorists!*

In the poem *Aesthetic Balm* the poet feels that the worldly life is losing its glories against his wish. He concurs with time's powers as time conquers man's life,

*As worldly life loses its charm
To a sardonic smile of Time.*

The poet presents the picture of the world today in the poem, 'Introspection'. He unfurls the fact he is against absurdities and calamities,

*It's is a polarized world
Some having more than needed
Some having nothing, superseded
Some enjoying nocturnal glee
In longing eyes
Some dying in the street
After day-long pitched fight!*

The poem, *Aesthetic Balm* lends a poetic utterance to his ideas about the pathetic plight of the people in the prosaic society today,

*We're wandering in wilderness
Craving for a festival of colours
For minds and stress
For eyes away from
The wonder of a poetic landscape!*

In the poem, *Introspection*, he lets his unbearable feelings known to the readers. To all these unwanted happenings and violent incidents, God is silent. He is indifferent to human suffering,

*Nowhere to go
... ..
Better to close
The windows and the door
And feel emotional flames
Burning within
... ..*

*Silent God
At the other end
Playing Sudoku
In the secluded corner of human mind.*

The poet, on behalf of man, wishes God to avert man's suffering and hurting feelings, He is man's God to be in reign for the welfare of man. It is His responsibility as the Almighty. But God is silent. In the other poem, *Dwelling on a Stone God*, the poet expresses the indifferent attitude of God to man's resorting to violent ways,

*The stark residue of a stone-God
Showing neither anger nor smile*

The poet ironically unfolds the view that God is busy having so many schedules that He is not able to redress man's grievances. Thus, man throws the sole blame on God for His being over busy,

*For God
Always acting like a minister
Overburdened with several portfolios
Is never spared with a single blame
In human eyes full of vengeance!*

Here the poet echoes the satirical vein of Kamala Das on the life of hypocrisy in the hues of reality led by many in the society today and God is in heaven away from man with the sense of hypocrisy as presented in her poem, *Fancy-Dress Show*,

*God is in his heaven and all
Is right with this stinking world.*

The society is full of 'miseries and mistake'. In the poem *A Cyber Age Poem*, he wishes man in the society today to be 'neo-human' and all the past history not to repeat in the present,

*Cyber age; world seems within reach.
Flower, fruits and vegetables---all hybrid....
Days nearing the pinnacle of global warming
For a fresh start with neo-human seed?*

The poet loves peace from the heart of his heart in the poem, *As the Pigeons Saw It*. He expresses his love for peace by the traditional symbol of pigeons, 'Flying in a jubilant mood'. He loves India for its universal peace and communal harmony,

*Some white pigeons
Messengers of peace
... ..
Crossing the border
They felt comfortable and safe
In the peace-loving Indian territory,
Were amazed to see here
Secular majority heralding the cause
Of global peace and communal harmony
Sparing not even an inch
For terrorism to creep in---*

The poet says that the pigeons had good image about our nation as it was meant for peace and so they felt comfortable to enter it. They felt disappointed as they found all chaos and unrest in India today against their expectations in a peace loving country,

The pigeons felt sorry for

*Being driven to a wrong place,
Felt ashamed too
For being stripped off
Their hallowed image!*

The anthology mirrors the state of lacking in man-to-man, man-to-woman, man-to-nature, man-to-God relations in human society especially in the present society. It is slender but it is a good blender for blending all noble thoughts and bright ideas for their beauty in variety like the pretty flowers put together into an exquisitely beautiful garland. The beauty lying in the variety of poems of the anthology, Parnassus of Revival, bestows on the readers gaiety.

Dr. Manas Bakshi has had excellent poetic career, spanning four decades and winning encomiums from the literary firmament. Through the medium of his poetry, he marks variety by the rich use of evocative imagery, symbolic modes, thematic variety and artistic excellence for the snapshot delineation of widespread evils: injustices and prejudices, hypocrisies and jealousies, inequalities and insecurities, and so on in the current society. He is not a silent spectator but a keen observer of evils and events, he witnesses in the spectrum of society. He records all his feelings, expectations, experiences, observations, happenings and so on to fulfill his poetic objective from the social perspective. His poetry mirrors the society he lives in. It reflects the satirical vein as the nucleus to satirize the evils in the society. Thus, he proves to be a poet par excellence from the soil of the poets like Rabindranath Tagore.

NAVEEN THE EXPERIMENTAL NOVELIST

Bala Ramulu Chinnala*

Dreams Shattered (Chedirina Swapanal in Telugu) is one of the three famous novels of Dr. Naveen popularly known as Ampashayya Naveen. The other two novels include *Kalarekhalu* (Im-prints of Time) and *Bandhyavyalu* (Relationships). Naveen is a prolific novelist and short story writer in Telugu language. *Dreams Shattered* is written against the feudal backdrop of Telangana region of South India during 1950s-1970s. The region being part of the Princely State of Hyderabad under Asaf Jahi dynasty witnessed oppressive domination under the local landed gentry and Zamindars. The contradictions between caste-ridden societal values coupled with the economic inequalities and aspirations/ goals envisioned in the Constitution, on the one hand and the inability of the government to realise the dreams of people have impelled the writer to pen the novel which reflects the strong desire of the author to eradicate poverty, inequalities, superstitions and other problems to build a just and humane society.

Dreams Shattered depicts the life of protagonist Raju's (Perhaps the author

himself) childhood to full-fledged individual. It is an effort to codify the rural social customs, culture, art, literature, language, economic and political environment that prevailed in the daily life of people with convincing evidence. Raju is a young, intelligent boy who faced many hurdles in his life to pursue education and come up in life. He belongs to the farming community and his family consists of seven members- parents and five children. He is the eldest son of the family. After completion of class X, his father Narasaiah insists that he should take up a government job or join the traditional agricultural profession as he cannot support him to continue education and also manage the family due to the drought conditions. Raju, therefore, feels compelled to join the government service as a Village Level Worker. He could not, however, continue in the job due to the hard, physical agricultural work during the training period and decides to pursue higher education. His mother Radhamma supports Raju's desire for higher education despite the poor economic conditions of the family.

Raju proves himself as one of the intelligent students throughout his college education- both graduation and post-graduation. He was not only good in class room subjects but also an active participant in literary competitions winning the awards and appreciation from the

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teachers and students. In the process he develops association with the acknowledged writers such as Kaloji Narayana Rao and actively involves himself in the *Mitra Mandali* (Writers' Association) activities, becoming its Secretary. A voracious reader of popular literary books, he was influenced by the writings of Chalam, Buchhibabu, Sri Sri, Sigmund Freud and others. His story-*Vikasinchina Jeevitham* (A Life in Bloom) published in College magazine receives accolades from the teachers, students and others. Education was not, however, an easy task for Raju. His friends, particularly Purushotham, help him in paying the college fees. There were instances of selling the books he received as prizes in different literary competitions, both in the college and outside the college, to pay examination fee and repay his debts to the friends.

Raju is denied to occupy the prestigious position of Students Union President of the Arts and Science College despite securing the majority votes in the election. The Principal of the College does not announce his candidature as President due to the threat of the opposition candidate. Raju feels disappointed with the democratic process in the public institutions. He also experiences the caste-discrimination during his visit to his friend Karunakar whose parents were displeased when their son offers breakfast and snacks to Raju as he belongs to the backward castes.

Raju joins MA Economics and was exposed to various theories of economic development

and development models of different countries and other subjects. He was irregular to the classes as some of the teachers were quite uninspiring. Yet, he gets second rank in the class. Appointed as a Lecturer in Economics, Raju soon becomes popular among the students and teachers as well. He used to engage in discussions with colleagues and his brother Murali on various issues ranging from local, national to international issues, leaders and political parties. They include the role of the leaders such as Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Guljarilal Nanda, Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai in development; five years plans, devaluation of rupee, political parties and democratic-election process, Andhra and Telangana; India- China war; Indo-Pak war, etc. On many of these issues, he was unhappy and in a way his dreams of realising democratic socialism, protecting individual liberty and economic equality and building a humane society get shattered.

Raju had several friends- Goverdhan, Krishnamurthy, Purushotham, Karunakar, Vijender, Narashimachary, but he was influenced by the speeches of Narashimachary and Vijender on socialism and literature, respectively. All these changed the course of Raju's life, particularly the world-view of societal concerns.

A milestone in Raju's life is the entry of Arundathi (his maternal uncle's daughter) as his life partner. She inspires him to write a novel, as he is a popular story writer. He writes a novel, *Mulla Panupu* (Bed of Thorns) portraying the lives of university

students. But many publishers decline to publish it as the subject would not attract many readers, and, thus, do not have the marketing value. He feels disappointed. But, Arundathi encourages him and gives her gold to Raju to sell or mortgage to publish the novel. The writers and poets belonging to every school of thought-Ab-hyudaya poets, *Digambara* poets, *Paigambara* poets and many seasoned artists appreciate him for writing such a novel. Sri Sri, during his Sastipurti Celebrations held at Vizag, says: "Are you the one who wrote *Mulla Panupu*? Your novel is superb. It was not possible for me to agree earlier that an experimental novel can also unveil social progress." "Your novel is excellent," says Kodavatiganti Kutumbarao. Raju feels elated to be recognized as one of the highly acclaimed writers in Telugu literature. The novel concludes that Raju's dreams of India as an Independent nation and humane society were shattered by the end of the third five years plan, though he succeeds in his dream of becoming a writer.

As an empirical novelist, Dr. Naveen deserves appreciation for depicting the reality of life-experience of rural communities. Despite the rapid changes in the hinterlands during the past quarter century or more, the observations made by the novelist are still relevant. The realisation of Raju's dream of democratic socialism and building a humane society with individual liberty and economic equality still remains an unfinished agenda of our nation. The answers to these questions require a critical examination of India's development models over the past seven decades in order

to identify the causes for shattering the people's dreams, including those of Raju. There is a dire need for the social scientists to probe the conditions in the rural areas further from the period where Dr. Naveen left in the novel (1975-2020).

As a study of Social Sciences, the novel invokes the following questions. The Indian Constitution has promised to fulfil the desires of the people- to secure justice, liberty, equality to all citizens and promote fraternity to maintain unity and integrity of the nation. But, how do we fix the responsibility for the failure in realizing this aspiration? Is it the failure of the Constitution; or the legislature, executive and judiciary; or the unequal socio-economic structure, models of development and the insolence of the ruling class in delivering justice to the poor; or the people in exercising their rights and duties? I don't think Raju would have been disappointed had he, perhaps, assessed the rural society, economy, polity and others from these perspectives.

Prof. Indrasena Reddy Kancharla, Department of English, Kakatiya University has done commendable work in translating the Telugu novel into English. He perfectly understood the theme of the novel and author's style, syntax, idioms, meaning and other literary characteristics of the novel, as he shares the similar rural life experiences more or less contemporary to the novelist. It is, however, not an easy job to ensure complete accuracy in translation due to the native rural idiom used in the novel. Prof Reddy's translation reads well and one feels as though

he is reading the original written in English. The translation elicits the same emotional message to the reader as the text written by author in Telugu. I congratulate Professor

Inderasena Reddy on his painstaking job for inspiring me and many other readers to get exposure to the reality of rural setting.

STRATEGY OF DEATH

Elanaaga*

War is a shortcut to graveyard;
War strategy is a thoroughfare to destruction.
Enemy's weapon too is seized by
the animosity of its owner.
Bombs are preparing the town's common
graveyard.
Madmen are learning to blast
the head of peace emissary.
The broker who adds the fuel of
weaponculture
controls the time and place of war.
It is common man that pays price
in this import-export business.
All the human relations
turn to ashes in just few hours.
The smile in the album of newly- wed couple,

the doll on the bosom of a baby in the swing,
farmers removing weeds in the field,
libraries holding a sea of knowledge in
palms...
all are turned to cinders by missiles and
machineguns.
The fainting of the mother who lost her son
mingles in the siren sound.
Flag flutters, sings national anthem;
dying warrior scouts for peace amid
piles of corpses, becomes a martyr.
In the midst of graveyard-turned-war field,
dictator screams while falling
to the ground: "I've won, I've won."
But not even a single corpse bearer remains
to carry him...except a vulture in the sky.

* Dr. Surendra Nagaraju, Poet, Hyderabad

[Telugu Original: Ammangi Venugopal]

RAMA - THE PRACTITIONER OF *ADVAITHA*

KSN Murty*

The debate on existence of the God is a never ending issue. Much can be said on both sides. No specific characterization can be given for a God. God was in the form of light and had no particular shape. Later God took the shapes of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Sustainer or administrator and Shiva the Destroyer. The curse of Bhrugu Maharshi for not worshipping Brahma on this earth is given least preference.

The life of a human being is a bundle of desires. If one is satisfied the other will sprout. This cyclical process is unstoppable. The responsibility of administration is of Lord Vishnu. To get all the wishes and desires fulfilled people worship Lord Vishnu. The portfolio of giving salvation lies with Lord Shiva. Every human being enters this world with an unknown date of departure. At least to have the date of inevitability people go with a mercy petition to Lord Shiva. As per the stories of the epics, both have interchanged their duties on some occasions.

Some worship Vishnu only and some adore Lord Shiva, majority of people worship both.

A meticulous study of the characteristics and appearances of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva is as follows:

Vishnu appears to be a luxurious and stylish person and Shiva makes out a poor show. Vishnu wears a silk dhoti, where Shiva clothes the skin of an elephant which always leaks droplets of blood. The ornaments of Vishnu are made of gold and diamonds. The adornments of Shiva are snakes. Vishnu puts on a crown whereas Shiva made his long tresses of hair as his crown. In one of the manifestations Vishnu feathered his crown with a plume. Shiva decorated his weaved headdress with a crescent. The former wears gold and diamond studded necklaces whereas the latter is embellish with snakes. Vishnu adorns flowers and basil knitted garland, Shiva wears a garland made of skulls of Brahmas. Vishnu comfortably placed his two wives on his chest whereas Shiva apportioned his body to his wife and kept his other wife on his head. Vishnu applies aroma to his body and Shiva smears his body with ash. Vishnu puts tiru namam on his forehead whereas Shiva has a third eye in the shape of a namam on his forehead. The dish in which the courses Vishnu dines are made of gold and that of Shiva is a bowl of skull. The abode of Lord Vishnu is milky ocean and sleeps on soft and tender serpent coils. Shiva takes rest in a burial

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ground. The Vedas clearly state that *Shivaaya Vishnu roopaya shiva roopaya visnave....* which means Shiva will be in form of Vishnu and Vishnu will be in the form of Shiva which ultimately proves that God has no particular shape as stated above. Here lies the catch. The *tatva* of the two manifestations is to be interpreted that a man should receive and enjoy the phases of richness and poverty alike.

Here it is to be observed about *Ramatatva*. Rama was the incarnate of Lord Vishnu, who came onto the earth as a human being. He was born to Dasaratha, the emperor of Ayodhya. It is quite natural that a Prince will have the privilege of experiencing the comforts of wealth. He was offered the Crown of Ayodhya and lost the same in the fraction of seconds with the active connivance of his step mother Kaikeyi. He was neither on cloud nine when he was offered the Crown nor dispirited for depriving him to adorn the crown. He obeyed the orders of his father and went to the forest. He was down in the dumps when his wife was abducted by demon Ravana and sought the help of *vanaras*. Even though an incarnate of God he behaved like a complete human being.

The acts of Rama can be interpreted as those of the trinity. When Rama was following Rishi

Vishwamitra, the touch of his toe a stone was turned into a lady namely Ahalya, who was revoked from the curse of her husband Gautam Maharshi. This event can be considered as a creation like Brahma. After completing the exile Rama ruled this land for about 11000 years. He proved that he was an able administrator. During his reign people were healthy and led the complete life with peace and harmony. There was no evil, no war, no natural calamity, no diseases or premature deaths. Rama ruled the whole earth without using military force as all kings submitted themselves to him. This shows that the acts of Lord Vishnu were aptly and effectively performed by Rama. Last but not least, Rama obliterated the evil which was in the form of Ravana by killing him. At that time, he played the role of a destroyer Lord Shiva.

Lord Rama accepted riches and rags, comforts and discomforts, happiness and sorrow and treated them with same vigor. In Bhagavat Geeta Lord Srikrishna preached the same. The philosophy of Jagadguru Aadi Shankaracharya is monism, which means there is no duality in this world.

Succinctly, Rama lived as a complete man and stood as a role model to the human kind.

R V S SUNDARAM - THE FOLKLORE SCHOLAR

Dr V.V.B. Rama Rao*

Prof. R V S Sundaram has carved a niche for himself in the Parthenon of South Indian Studies and Scholarship. He published extensively both in Telugu and Kannada scores of books on various genres: poetry, fiction short and long, research and literary criticism, ancient literary works, folkloristics and folklore, linguistic studies, biographies, children's and neo-literate literature, more than a hundred books in all besides innumerable articles.

Folkloristics, comparatively, has been a new area of study, research and linguistic and sociological aspects in contemporary learning. Folklore and folk tales enhance knowledge acquisition. There are many languages laid down in the eighth schedule in our constitution and innumerable are the variants of those languages in our innumerable 'tongues'. Folk tales are aids to study and explore our ancient traditions and culture in distant parts of our vast nation. Talking about these it is important and useful to consider them in their motifs and types. In the South Prof R V S Sundaram did a lot of work on folkloristics. He consulted the works of Kenneth and Mary Clarke and many more experts. Folk knowledge and

wisdom have been divided into groups like General Folklore, Prose narrative, Ballad, Dance, Games, Music and verse, Drama, Custom, Festivals, Geography, Language, Art, Craft and Architecture, Food and Drink. International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences explained thus: "Folklore means (signifies) folk learning; it comprehends all knowledge that is transmitted by word of mouth and all crafts and techniques that are learnt by imitation or example as well the products of these crafts. Folklore includes folk art, folkcrafts, folk tools, folk costume, folk belief, folk medicine, folk recipes, folk music, folk dance, folk games, folk gestures, folk speech as well as those verbal forms of expression which have been called folk literature but which are better described as verbal literature."

Usually our writers classify folk literature as prose narratives, proverbs, and riddles, of poetry and songs, poems, story poems and prose narratives as epics, legends, tales in great admiration and appreciation. Sundaram appreciated the efforts of Antti Aarne (Finnish Folklorist) and Stith Thompson (Thompson believed the folktale to be an important and living art) underlying all literary narrative forms. Most of all he wanted to acquaint readers with most of the great folktales of the world, not only for their own interest as stories, but as

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elements of culture. He writes about the nature and form of the folktale, gives an account of tales from Ireland to India in his book. The Types of the Folk-Tale came out in 1928. Folk tales do not begin with a prominent action or conclude suddenly. As the two German brothers Jacob Grim and Wilhelm Grim view, Prof R V S Sundaram propounds an Indo-European theory about folk prose narratives. In that motif index and type index play a great part in the study of Janapada, folk stories. He published a book in Telugu 'Sundara Jaanapadam' which has been reviewed in this journal. There is plenty of Folk Lore in various genres in our spoken languages of the rural folk in circulation. Down the ages the tales get transformed in folk communications. Puranas are narrative tales including extra-human devatas, celestials and demons. There are many areas of folk lore, folk knowledge and folk writing and living - all of which get

conjoined in the term folkloristics. Folk are not merely villagers. Prof Sundaram quotes Alan Dundes: "The term folk can refer to any group of people what so ever who share at least one common factor. It does not matter what the linking factor is - it could be an occupation, language, or religion - but what is important is that a group formed for whatever reason will have some tradition which it calls its own."

In his latest book *Jeeviddaam* (let us all live) writing about Jiddu Krishnamrty Sundaram wrote: (I translate) "For being born as human beings, let us see that we use all the wealth of our scientific knowledge only for bringing people together and to erase the differences between them. Let us live as humans trusting that humanism alone is faith and religion. Let us all live together in peace and comfort for the wellbeing of all."

Laws Of Success [Source: Internet]:

Do you want something ? -- Will you pay the price ?

The great sin -- Gossip.

The great cripple -- Fear.

The greatest mistake -- Giving up.

The most satisfying experience -- Doing your duty first.

The best action -- Keep the mind clear and judgment good.

The greatest blessing -- Good health.

The biggest fool - The man who lies to himself.

The great gamble -- Substituting hope for facts.

The most certain thing in life -- Change.

The greatest joy -- Being needed.

The cleverest man -- The one who does what he thinks is right.

The most potent force -- Positive thinking.

The greatest opportunity -- The next one.

The greatest thought -- God.

The greatest victory -- Victory over self.

The best play -- Successful work.

The greatest handicap -- Egotism.

The most expensive indulgence -- Hate.

The most dangerous man -- The liar

The most ridiculous trait -- False pride.

The greatest loss -- Loss of self confidence.

The greatest need -- Common sense.

FATHER RETURNS

Dr. E. Srinivas Rao *

As day dawned, I focused on my usual tasks of the day with a half-hearted will. But my mind was preoccupied with the thoughts of the past through the day. I went down the memory lane.

Stream of memories

The day I bade adieu at the railway station and

I still remember my visit to Hyderabad along with my ailing father to consult a doctor.....

It was getting dark. The clock showed 6.30 pm. A slight drizzle outside made us feel a bit chill. Secunderabad bound Howrah Express was about to reach the destination. It was 4 hours since we boarded the train at Bauddnagar. I woke my father up who was relaxing on berth 45 in S 6 coach.

As we had to get off the train. I alerted him. He groaned, "How long do I survive with this ill-health? Should ill-health affect me alone? What harm have I done to others?"

"I am sure I have never troubled anyone in my life. Beguiling was unknown to me though

I had adequate opportunities with the gullible. Though they were unaware of the weights and measures used in our groceries shop, not even an iota of dishonesty cropped up in my mind. I never swerved from the path of correctness."

He moaned in pain reciting *Rama Rama*, his favourite God. He was an ardent follower of Lord Rama till his last breath.

"Don't worry, dad. Everything will be alright soon. We are going to consult a noted doctor. He is famous across the state. He is said to have been a consultant of your favourite actor, N. T. Rama Rao also," said I, in a soothing tone. The train halted at the station.

"Vinod, let's take the luggage on to the platform," I alerted. "OK brother." He said. Both of us helped father and led him to the platform. There was a lot of hustle and bustle on the platform as passengers were emerging out of the compartments like ants from holes.

"Do you want cooli, sir?" four or five came rushing to us draped in red. "Initially, we want a wheel-chair for our father." A wheelchair was brought in a few minutes. We were led out of the station.

"What shall we do? He is not able to walk. We have to go to a lodge," said Vinod.

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"It's not much distant, of course, but when the body is not in consonance with the mind, even an inch stretches to a kilometer or even more," said I. Now the need of the hour is to move out of the station and rush to the nearest lodge.

"Shall we stay in Padmaja lodge? It seems to be very near to the station. We can lift our father and go there easily. Tomorrow we can move to Sai Hospital at the appointed time." Both of us helped our father and reached the lodge with ease. I brought rotis for my father. He ate them and swallowed the regular tablets to be taken for diabetes and went to sleep. Both of us went to the food section and had something of our interest. We came back to the room and found that father was comfortably sleeping. Since it was a strange place, it took some time for us to fall asleep.

We were engaged in a conversation. Various issues poured in.

"I wonder how philosophical he is. Notwithstanding his illiteracy, he talks about many issues. He often talks about the value of time, money and relationships," said I.

I remember what he often says, "Money comes and goes but, values remain forever. Ships turn into bullock carts and vice versa. It's all a matter of time."

His concern for the servants is also remarkable. He seeks pleasure in sharing, whether it be joy or sorrow or food. The number of times he assisted them in times of turmoil is beyond count."

"Who taught him this? His keen observation and experience," I think.

I was reminded of my cozy association with him, may be perhaps, five years ago. We were there to grace an occasion, a betrothal ceremony. It was of our elder sister's, at RTC Crosss Roads. I suggested to hire an auto, but he declined. We had to walk from Secunderabad to RTC Cross Roads which was no less than 5 kms.

He said, "I am used to walk to the fields every day. Have I ever gone in a bullock cart, though it would be in front of our house with only a call to the servant?"

Our father was thrilled to stare at the skyscrapers while walking. He loved to witness such tall buildings. His attention was suddenly drawn towards an old man standing on the pavement. Mercy overflowed from his heart. Without a second's wait he asked me to offer him ten rupees. I was a bit shocked. The little amount we brought to Hyderabad to meet the hospital expenses was borrowed from Ranga Rao. We are yet to get strong financially.

See, how health plays truant with human lives. Sometimes I go suspicious whether it is self-invited or destined. Some say it's our own, on account of our food habits. But I disagree with them. If that is true, Kishore, a health conscious relative of ours, would not have passed away in the prime of his youth. Our father often cites. "It is all Karma. What is destined will happen. It is not in our hands."

Engrossed in such talk, we slipped into sleep.....

As usual father woke up early in the morning and started his usual conversation on the goings on in the village. He seeks immense pleasure in talking about families and relationships. He saw only good qualities in others. He seeks delight in the company of relatives.

How long their talks used to last! It was a feast to his ears. He loved to continue in the same vein but, I reminded the appointment with the doctor. Our scheduled appointment with the doctor made us get ready at a brisk pace. We were at the hospital at the appointed time. All tests were done in an hour or two. The reports were ready.

The doctor said, "It is a matter of diabetes coupled with aging factor. He will be alright. What he needs is hygienic food and mental peace." We rushed to the Pharmacy and took all the medicines prescribed. A hired auto dropped us at the Railway station in an hour. I appealed to my father to stick to the advice of the doctor. He responded in the regular tone, "Life is a journey. Fate determines everything. We are just toys in His hands. Nobody can evade destiny. What is already destined will certainly take place. Time heals all woes. We are such stuff as lives are made of."

He turned philosophical. I took leave from them as I had to attend to duty as scheduled. Tears streamed down my cheeks while parting them.

I was back to duty in the college. As usual, a hectic academic schedule. Five days passed. I received a heartbreaking telegram which dropped us at the native place. It was three days since my father breathed his last, a heart stroke, they said.

My parting at the railway station was the last glimpse of him. I was dismal. My woe was great. Known and unknown people were pouring in. My deep distress made me languish and remain speechless. I failed to combat my gloom. Emotions and memories overshadowed all other thoughts.

The clock knew nothing except moving and actuating, leaving behind us many untold and indelible impressions. Twelve days elapsed in the company of all the members of the family. All talk was directed at father. People say, "such a noble man a rarity nowadays. Skirmishes are unknown to him." I introspected, "Perhaps this is the root of reverence one gains in others' hearts. Neither wealth nor positions as father used to quote, brings honour and dignity."

The thought of meddling in other people's affairs had never crept into his mind, he used to say. His words on a series of occasions ring fresh in my memory, "sometimes, trifles will widen the gap between people and families. All years put together fail to bridge the gap. A harmonious accord ascertains bliss. Conformity to chord is a reprieve to all ill-thoughts. This will make all the difference in building relations."

Finally, after fifteen days of stay together, the day arrived for our parting to our own respective abodes. Our elder brother who was in the forefront and instrumental in performing all the rituals responded with tears strolling down his face, "I wish, something memorable must be done to keep his ideals alive. Only then his soul will rest in peace. Let's all collectively take a decision to continue in the same vein."

A horde of proposals emerged but, a unanimous consent was waited for a fruitful one.

'I think, a Charitable Trust in his name will serve the purpose. We can render service through the Trust,' said he. "It is a wonderful idea. But, a statue of his, if erected, will add a feather to his cherished values," echoed others. The proposal received commendation from all. We resolved to have a get-together of the whole family members and reap the harvest of the proposal by next Dussarah festival and pay rich tributes to him.

It has been thirty years since he left us. Though we still feel the agony of his absence in his physical being, we are convinced that he has

been with us in his good deeds and legacy. As Dr. Stephen R Covey avers, "We can give only two things to our posterity: wings and roots."

From this perspective he gave us everything. Since then all of us have a family reunion once a year on Dussarah and share the joys and sorrows. None of us like to skip it. We never feel it as an achievement of any one of us, but a legacy bequeathed to us by our father, who, with his unassuming style of life taught us everything that we need to learn.

"Each generation is a nation," says a great man. But, each generation can lend its shoulders to its children and help them achieve more and more, and see beyond the horizon, become blessed souls in the service of humanity. Had my father been alive, he could have taught this to his grandchildren.

Aanobhadrah krathavoyanthu vishvatah-says Rigveda (May noble thoughts come to us from every side.) If this humble piece of mine can inspire anyone, I will be the happiest soul.

When a man whose marriage was in trouble sought his advice, the Master said, "You must learn to listen to your wife." The man took this advice to heart and returned after a month to say he had learned to listen to every word his wife was saying. Said the Master with a smile, "Now go home and listen to every word she isn't saying."

Source : Internet

REVISITING THE IDEA OF 'VIOLENCE' AS MEANS OF ACHIEVING POLITICAL ENDS

Dr. A. Raghu Kumar*

The murder of senior journalist and activist, Gauri Lankesh in Bengaluru on September 05, 2017 created a great debate in the minds of many liberals and even among the so called neutrals. It's not an isolated incident, as we all know, and it is one, in a series of such bizarre incidents that have been occurring since long, but the phenomenon appears more pronouncedly almost since 2013. Communists, rationalists, liberals and many people left of the centre - are victims. There is uproar. There is a confluence of thought and action. The dominant theme is "You may kill a person, but not an idea." The recurrent theme in Indian political dialogue now is 'violence'. Both sides are conducting competitive protest rallies. They demand all the people to join the issue, and any neutrality might be a reason to be labelled as an enemy or an incompetent.

Dante said: "The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who in a period of moral crisis maintain their neutrality." Is neutrality such a dangerous position? Are we necessarily to join this nauseating duality? Did not the wise men all through the history take

to silence, contemplation and time to relocate their responses as a reflexion in tranquillity when two opposing and dominant groups pose wrong questions as morally urgent ones, compelling others to take sides? Whether this "within or without" - a choice less dichotomy? Neutrality does not always mean running away from moral choices, and in fact there was always a case for positive neutrality. The recent times present before many of us some apparently moral questions, but by unveiling the mask it might be found that the case is somewhere beyond. All sides to the dispute dominating the debate have their hands stained in blood. Both are shouting down their opponents though. The choice of the present is not just a choice of 'wrong' and 'right'. We are in a dilemmatic duality of extremes as documented by Dickens's opening lines in *A Tale of Two Cities*. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we are all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on

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its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only".

The left is crying 'foul'. The right is claiming 'right'. It's the time to reflect on the very idea of 'violence' as a means of achieving the political ends. Violence is a remnant of our archaic instinct, and readily finds its space either in our individual or group behaviour. In the colonial State, and as well in post-colonial nation-states it is expressed as an apparatus of State or authority. It is proactive and retroactive in its manifestations, and on most occasions as spontaneous response to a fact situation. It is not that we can immediately analyse and resolve all forms of violence. But the need of the hour is to reflect on political violence, and the stand of various political parties or their ideologies on the 'means and ends'. The basic ethical question in any social dialogue has always been: Whether ends justify the means, or ends and means need to be negotiated on equal terms. Let's examine these basic tenets of the ideology of each moral claimant to the present dispute.

In the Theses on Feuerbach, Marx comes out with the eleventh thesis that "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it". In fact, by the time Marx made this thesis, he thought that a lot of the physical or mental phenomenon of the world is revealed. But as the unfolding of historical events informs us the very understanding of the noumenon and phenomenon world was at its initial stages. Interpretation has not yet begun. Marxism can only be understood as one of such few

attempts in interpreting the revealing world. It was a time when people across the globe started meeting, and even now, there is a lot left out to be understood in the world, leave about interpreting it. The idea of nation-state and nationalism, studies of religion and its influence on human beings, regional aspirations and their relations with global orders, the question of man-woman relations, the stress within family, the language movements, caste questions, human psychology - both individual or group etc., cannot be said to have received any reasonable understanding or interpretation by that time of this thesis. The effect of these factors on the international workers' movements is now felt by all. Unfortunately, this thesis has advanced the idea of action and activism, right at the movement and right at the instance, and thus has also conquered the space of the contemplative activity. Most of the Marx's disciples viewed the very process of thinking as "inaction" or 'ineffective'. This idea has influenced sufficiently not only Marxists but a good number of other branches of intellectual activity.

Marx in an 1848 newspaper article is said to have written: "There is only one way in which the murderous death agonies of the old society and the bloody birth throes of the new society can be shortened, simplified and concentrated, and that way is revolutionary terror!" [per Stephen Hicks Ph.D., Philosopher at www.stephenhicks.org dated 18.02.2013]. The last paragraph of the Manifesto of the Communist Party says: "The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They

openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling class tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win." Adam Schaff [in a Journal Article "Marxist Theory on Revolutions and Violence" in journal of the History of Ideas Vol.34, No.2 9 April - June, 1973 pp. 263 - 270, Published by University of Pennsylvania Press, presented at the Conference of the International Society for the History of Ideas held at the Temple University Sugar Loaf Conference House, June 16, 1972] quoting the above statement of Marx and Engels in the Manifesto contend that:

"This by now classic formulation includes two statements:

- a) that the existing social and political system is to be changed by a revolution;
- b) that the social revolution is to be identified with an overthrow of that existing social system by violence."

The later requirements of revolutionary politics prosecuted by the Marxists, Leninists, Maoists in various countries, including India, have blurred the subtle boundaries of these philosophical considerations devolving into elimination of individual class enemies. In India the concept further descended to the most problematic concepts of killing a person in the name of even an 'informer', where the prosecutor, judge and the jailor merges into one. The world has witnessed enough of its ugly shades in the statecraft of communist countries in USSR, East Europe, and China

and in many more so called New Democracies. Sometimes inevitability, sometime historical or ideological necessity, sometimes the nature of dialectics, and even an urgent tactical line of action justifies violence, against both the enemy class and an individual. Religions or religious philosophies also never rejected violence, and in fact, good number of wars, and executions of human beings were conducted without remorse in the name of God or religion or faith. Hands of all religions are blood-stained. Wars in the name of Jesus, in the name of Allah, in the name of Vishnu or Shiva! Buddhists are no exception as we have seen in the past or even in the recent past. In feudalism and in capitalism, violence is not a matter of abhorrence; rather it is venerated as a value, of heroism of a great masculine ethic. Every religion claims that it is meant for peace and prosperity of the human beings in this physical world and the way of ultimate liberation from the ordeal of life on earth. But the experience of human beings over thousands of years has always been that many wars were conducted and millions of people died in the name of religion. In an Article titled "Religion, Violence, Crime and Mass Suicide" [© 2017 Vexen Crabtree, Current Edition:2009 Aug 31, Last Modified:2017 Jan 14, Originally Published 2008 Sep 28, http://www.humanreligions.info/violence_and_crime.html, Parent Page: Religion and Morals] the author quotes public opinion (in USA) where in the perception of US public the most violent religions were said to be Islam [64%], Christianity [9%] and Hinduism [4 %]. According to the author three factors lead believers into uncivil

behaviour - (1) The irrationality of belief, (2) the legitimization given to actions by beliefs in higher authorities, without the teaching of any critical and sceptical way of judging between claims as to what those higher authorities would want, and for some people voices in their heads are all that are required as long as they believe in god(s) which have authority to speak for them, and (3) an other worldly idealism and fixation with the corruptness, evilness or immorality of this world which often pushes groups into extreme isolation where they cease to consider outsiders to be worthwhile human beings.

John Hall (Hall, John 2001) while considering the commonly prevalent public opinion that 'religion is often held up as a vessel of peace, both inner and social', in the post-September 11, 2001 scenario, however notes that 'A moment's reflection attests that religion and violence are often woven together in history's tapestries'. He concludes saying: "Even when violence is 'internal' to religion, it is subject to the same forces that operate more widely - competition, social control, rebellion, and revolution. And religiously infused violence is often externally connected to broader social conflicts. Precisely because of religion's capacity to mark socially sacred, social struggles that become sacralised continue to implicate religion in violence, and in ways that make the violence much more intractable. To sever this connection between religion and violence is an important yet utopian goal that will depend on promoting peace with justice. More modestly, sociological studies of religion should develop reflexive knowledge that can

help alter the channels and trajectories of violence, and thus, mitigate its tragic effects. These are both tasks worth our intellectual energies and our social commitment."

In India - violence or the elimination of the 'other' is not abhorrent to any ideological group, either to the left or to the right. There is not even a great debate over it before Gandhi's forceful argument for non-violence. It appears that the concept of 'non-violence' was accepted by the Indian society in general and the political leadership in particular during the freedom movement out of certain political and practical consideration, temporarily during the aura of Mahatma, and all the parties slowly relapsed into their old practices of violence. As the charisma of Mahatma faded, the inclination towards invoking violence seems to take the path of ascendancy. Some Hindutva scholars have long started questioning the very understanding and interpretation of the sloka containing the great statement of inspiration to Gandhi "Ahimsa Paramo Dharma" as 'half-truth'. They cite a sloka from *Santi Parva* of Mahabharata: *Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah I Dharn himsa tadhaiva ca* II [Non-violence is the ultimate *dharma*, so too is violence in service of *dharma*], and argue that violence in service of *dharma* is an equally great prescription. Even presuming that the religious diktat allows or even mandates violence in certain situations, can we still rely upon only on these archaic prescriptions available in all religious texts in some form or the other, at this stage of human advancement and civilization to justify violence?

In fact both the right and the left even today concede that violence is heroism and non-violence is timidity and cowardliness. All hues of the left and the right, in principle, accept 'violence' as a necessary evil at the least, and from time to time, one or the other excelled in its execution. The international experience of communism, whether it is in USSR, or in East Europe or in China, testifies for violence as the weapon and also as statecraft. "Class-enemy", "agent of a class enemy", "informer", and "State violence" etc., - a wide range of states and situations, justify the killing of the "other". It is not just the 'States' in existence, and even the 'State' in the womb - all variations of extreme left and right groups etc., justify violence and base their course of action primarily on violence. What kind of democracy we can foresee in such future 'State' is an enigmatic question.

Until the emergence of Gandhi on the world scenario of political struggles, 'killing' the opponent for any reason is justified on the historical necessity, or as a reaction to an action, or as a moral value to defend the right of an ideological group. . It is this element which was seriously challenged by Gandhi. For him, 'non-violence' is not a strategy. 'Non-violence' and 'truth' are two inseparable expressions of the one and the only Supreme Reality. Without 'non-violence', 'truth' cannot exist, and without 'truth', 'non-violence' also cannot survive. Truth and non-violence are the secular version of the God to him. The genuineness of his 'non-violence' was subjected to critical analysis. But there is no disjuncture in his conceptualization of non-

violence, as tried to be made out by some critics.

Whether the experiment of the Mahatma is just a onetime phenomenon, possible of realization only in the persistent hands of Mahatma or his likes, or is it a phenomenon establishing itself as a dominant discourse in many other struggles of the people in opposing the evil State is now put to severe test. Can we recreate an argument for absolute non-violence, now and immediately? Violence may happen in several situations - as natural element in the animal world, or a spontaneous reaction to a situation, but the issue is how we could rein in these forces of violence and how far we can journey in the direction of peaceful resolution of contradictions. As we travel from the caves and transcend tribal instincts, as we get civilized, we need to reduce the proportion of violence progressively. We may find that violence is available in nature, but it is an avoidable or reducible animal or tribal instinct. As we slowly advance in the process of civilization, we go on controlling or reducing many such remnants of animal instincts within us. We can consciously make a choice in favour of nonviolence with all its conceptual difficulties, and strive towards organizing the human societies on that basis.

Coming back to the present, the murder of four activists, leftists, or those who are somewhere around the left of the Centre, who earned the ire of the religious bigots for things they have done or not done has virtually shaken all the thinking persons. Violence in the Marxist ruled states, or in those places

where the Maoist cadres claim to be conducting revolutionary practices also needs to be subjected to intellectual scrutiny seriously without any hypocrisy or duality. All of us are saddened, including those liberals, who have nothing to do with the Left or the Right. Gandhians, and all types of peace lovers are agitated. Until and unless, we commit ourselves to the civilization project of humanity, national and international brotherhood and peaceful co-existence, and to the goals of collective development based on peace and prosperity of all, this blame game goes on, and we are always forced to take sides in this moral crisis. Until and unless we unshackle ourselves from these adamant chains, and ask both these parties, the right and the left, to stop this danse macabre, and exercise our moral indignation against both to bring back to the centrality of the virtues of non-violence and truth, we cannot justify the unique freedom struggle of this nation and the messages of the Mahatma.

Engaging all the social partners in a meaningful and purposive dialogue is sine qua non of this

civilization project. We cannot afford to allow this fragmentation of the society. It is the moral duty of the persons with wisdom to stop and contemplate a while on what is going on, and not to allow the things to drift away according to the wishes of the dominant forces of time. The present stage of human evolution demands considered choices and primacy of the will, to understand and respond to the currents. All political parties and individuals may have to spell out their stand on the utility of, and the invoking violence, as a method of conducting politics. 'Violence' is not a virtue, nor represents any value of 'heroism'. It's the weapon you hold and its advanced technology, on many occasions that decide the result of the war, and not the logical strength of your argument or theory per se. 'Violence' is an archaic ethic which the modern societies can no more afford to accept or to tolerate. It's in fact cowardice. It's misanthropic. "Non-violence" does not need any scriptural justification, it's justified on its own, and in terms of the larger goals of the civilization.

If a problem is fixable, if a situation is such that you can do something about it, then there is no need to worry. If it's not fixable, then there is no help in worrying. There is no benefit in worrying whatsoever.

– Dalai Lama XIV

TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN ESL

Dr. S. Lavanya¹
Burra Sridhar Kumar²

Although it is generally agreed by researchers, teachers, curriculum designers and teachers in the field of English language teaching ELT that teacher language proficiency is a tool, using which teachers of English can grow professionally; teacher education programmes in India seem to surprisingly ignore this crucial aspect of professional development. The programme designers do not seem to take notice of the fact that a linguistically incompetent teacher, even if methodologically aware, may feel handicapped while attending while attending to the language problems of his/her learners. Contrarily, knowledge of and about the use of English language may help teachers to achieve a better grip of their professionalism. In addition, a linguistically competent teacher may be more successful than others who lack proficiency in the language, when it comes to correcting errors of students, guiding them to use the language accurately, choosing challenging and interesting teaching materials, communicating with students fluently and accurately, giving proper instructions, getting involved in professional activities at a personal level, being aware of current research and practice, etc.

Defining 'language proficiency' for language teachers

Generally, language proficiency is referred to as one's ability to use the four macro skills that is listening, speaking, reading and writing effectively. But a report prepared for National Asian Languages/Studies Strategy for Australian Schools (NALSAS) in 1999 to study the language proficiency of language teachers quotes Bachman and Palmer, who associate language proficiency with six interrelated areas of language knowledge. They include: organizational knowledge pertaining to the way in which texts are structured; grammatical knowledge including knowledge of vocabulary, syntax and phonology/graphology; textual knowledge, which includes knowledge of cohesion and knowledge of rhetorical or conversational organization; pragmatic knowledge, related to the communicative goals of the language user and the context in which the language is being used; functional knowledge including an understanding of ideational, manipulative, heuristic and imaginative functions, as well as sociolinguistic knowledge. As the ultimate aim, any language teacher education programme is to prepare teachers for the classes they are required to teach and such programme may fall well short of being effective, if it does not

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include components from the areas of language knowledge mentioned above-not only what Chomsky calls linguistic competence as used by Hymes. It may be apt to put it as 'competence to impart competence'.

Language training for English teachers in teacher education programmes

There is plenty of research evidence to support that language proficiency, an important part of teacher knowledge, is the most essential characteristic of a good language teacher. The language proficiency of English teacher trainees was being taken for granted till some researchers in ELT like Widdowson, Richards, Bolitho, Wright, etc., pointed it out that it has not got its due attention in teacher education programmes. However, making language training 'prescriptive' in teacher education programmes may be a debatable issue considering the fact that there are sociocultural and cognitive factors which have varying impacts on the making of a teacher's language abilities across the globe. Thus it may be logical to decide the required levels of proficiency for a teacher depending on the sociocultural background of students, the amount of exposure to English language they have, the purposes for which they will be required to use the language etc.

Wright(2003) argues that "proficiency in language use, knowledge about language, and knowledge of teaching methods" are essential to successful language teaching and emphasizes that language awareness can operate under three domains corresponding

to the three areas in teacher education - user, analyst and teacher. While the first one involves using language successfully in addition to knowing the rules of use, the second one includes knowing the system of the language, and the last one is all about facilitating language learning. Wright's suggestion is indeed an interesting option since current research in language teacher education has shown a lot of sensitivity towards sociocultural factors, explicit training of and about language and affective factors related to teachers.

English language teacher education in India

The number of educational institutes in the country has been growing at a healthy rate in India since independence, but teacher preparation in the country has not been able to keep pace with it. In fact, teacher education in the country has not had enough attention until recently. It is evident from the fact that it was only in 1995, that is 20 years after its establishment, that National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) got statutory status. There is even less to talk about the education or training for English teachers in the country. In the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2010), hardly anything is mentioned about the education of English teachers.

Hiring policies for English teachers

Talking about teacher education programmes for English teachers in India will remain incomplete without having a look at the hiring

policies for them in the country. Until recently, in most state run government schools there were English teachers from all sorts of academic backgrounds. They were only required to have English teaching methodology as one of the elective subjects during their Bachelor of Education course. Their language proficiency never seemed to be a matter of importance and concern. It is obvious from this that language proficiency was never a criterion in their selection. Since the hiring policies in the majority of Indian states include employment of teachers with non-humanities background as English teachers regardless of their linguistic abilities, there should be some effort to ensure that the selected teachers are competent enough to handle the challenges in the classroom. At least a standardized test of English language proficiency for candidates aspiring to do a B.Ed. to become English teachers could be a part of the selection process. Such a test may encourage students to improve their language skills before getting into the profession of teaching English. Unfortunately, the efforts in this regard have been far from satisfactory.

Recent Developments

The disheartening scenario in English teacher education seems to be giving way to progressive changes in teacher education curricula and hiring policies. Recently, state governments like West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Goa have decided to employ trained English graduates and post-graduates as English teachers. This shows that English teachers are finally on the way to

getting their much awaited status of 'specialists'. But it remains to be seen if there are enough trained English graduates in the other remaining states to prompt a similar step by their respective state governments. It may not take long time until we have a government-recognized body to take care of the education of English teachers.

Another pleasant surprise came recently in the form of a B.Ed. syllabus proposed by NCTE. The Center has tried to compensate for the lack of proficiency among teachers who teach English with the inclusion of components for language training in the syllabus. It is a very encouraging step considering the long silence on the part of policy makers in this matter.

Solutions: Accepting the truth and acting promptly

Teacher Education programmes must help teachers to identify the features of the language that are different from that of their own and lead them to integrate local reality with it while learning and teaching it. If teachers are trained and educated to be able to control their own learning, they may be expected to promote it among their students. Favorable changes in policy may set the stage for infusing such practice into teacher education programmes and make them socially and linguistically responsive. However, changes in policy involve many factors like the political party in power in the center and the states, the appointment of curriculum designers; the political agenda behind employment of teachers; etc that do not directly come under

the preview of ELT. But we may hope that all the stages to implement NCTE's proposed syllabus and take necessary steps to equip teachers into the required linguistic and communicative competence to teach English at school level.

In addition introducing language training models in pre and in-service teacher training programmes may be a solution to the problem. The modules should contain language items

necessary for English teachers. It may be made mandatory for English teachers the prescribed modules to obtain degrees like certificate in teaching, bachelor of education, etc., to receive increments and promotion. However, the onus will still be on teachers to improve their language proficiency in their respective sociocultural context using suitable self development strategies, which can be taught during formal training programmes.

THE PANDEMIC

B. Ramachander Reddy*

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.

* Poet, Free Lancer, Hyderabad

THE ART OF LIVING

V. Muralidhar*

The renowned dramatist George Bernard Shaw says: "The art of living has an abundance of vitality which is the cause of all success"!

The expression "The art of living" has different connotations for different kinds of people coming from different backgrounds, whose ways of thinking may allow them to ruminate over understanding the concept clearly to put into daily practice in life. The art of living appears to be simple, solemn, sacred and stupendously sublime, as we are always in a dilemma as to how to understand and approach the vitally important aspect. As a matter of fact, we have repentance and precipitation in confiding all our wrong doings when solid realities are brought to limelight, and, therefore, there may be transformation of our thinking and thus healthy views of life may take place without second thought. It is said that life without wisdom is incomplete of which our knowledge, experience, intelligence, kindness and understanding the situation may be of immense help in comprehending the art of living.

Jiddu Krishna Murthi has said "Maturity is not a matter of age; it comes with understanding!"

In the first place, it is expressed that education is the manifestation of perfection already in man, which means everything is that in a dormant state. Education is the culture of the mind, as this means the development of integrated personality, physically strong, mentally active, intellectually sagacious, and spiritually advanced, morally and ethically well developed. It is all the more an interesting fact that education may bring about changes in the mind of oneself. If we change ourselves life may be more meaningful, tuneful and colourful, as this should be given utmost importance and prominence.

The very purpose of education is to meet the life situation and act to lead a life of purity. In brief, it is cogency and consistency in throwing significant meaning to be understood and, as such, the art of living is one kind of education, which should be experienced in the university of life.

I would like to dwell upon the ideal that the future lies in now of which we have to live in the present, as there is a small amount of sweetness to enjoy the present. The quotation is pregnant with meaning.

*Yesterday is but a cancelled cheque,
Tomorrow is a promissory note,
Today is ready cash,*

* Writer, Madanapalle, Chittoor Dist. A.P.

Spend it wisely my dear friend!

Further it is said that there is a psychological future, as we wish to enjoy the future.

‘I shall go to America for further studies! I shall become a celebrity! I shall study medicine.’

It is our nature that we swim, bathe and bask in the present, past and future, as the past may give us an opportunity to glorify ourselves and a peep into the future. Undoubtedly, we wish to pooh-pooh the present consciously or unconsciously, as we can never bring back the past. We always expatiate upon benevolence of 'now'. The novelist Marie Corelli has given clear enunciation in her novel *The Sorrows of Satan* about now. "Now is our motto!" NOW is the acceptable time, Now is to lose no moment, but to work, to pray, to love, to hope, to thank God and be glad for life, all in "NOW", and neither to regret the past, nor forebode the future, but simply do the best that could be done and leave all else in childlike confidence to Divine will!"

It behoves us to accept that the art of living has to be comprehensively understood taking into consideration various features namely responsibility, discipline, sincerity, devotion, love for humans, truthfulness, compassion, patience and goodness in all of us. They are all eternal values. It is required to be stated that they also purport to say in a simple way the adventitious qualities bestowed and impressed by the nature or the habit of our individual self.

The art of living can be experienced. Silence is gold sometimes, as it is silently accepted that silence is more eloquent than speech for none can assess the intensity of silence with all patience and pertinacity. At the outset, most of the experienced wise people have stated that forgiveness and consolation, for the past, tranquil happiness for the present and, at length, cheering expectation, for future will always guide and make us understand to know the meaning of the art of living. It is human nature that we wish to avoid poignant afflictions and grief in all our endeavours, that a train of reflections and reminiscences will allow us to rectify our demerits and defects in solitude so that a total transformation may take place in the mind. There is no hard and fast rules to follow:

*Sow an act you reap a habit,
Sow a habit and reap a character
And reap a destiny!*

All our sane words of advice have significant meaning and fraught with wisdom for it is our duty to understand and follow them.

Alfred Lord Tennyson says, "My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure!" As a matter of truth, some people with different mental make up are of the firm opinion that they hope to seek some guidance or initiation from religious preceptors or from heterogeneous organisations keeping in view the rich and long experience and hope to receive some training in the art of living. Ultimately they get utterly disappointed.

The art of living reveals that some people may derive personal or psychological satisfaction in extending their services to others, sharing and soothing the inner intense feelings and some will undoubtedly be helping others in various ways secretly, for they do not wish to disclose their identity. This type of people are scarcely and rarely to be found, for they wish to die unknown, unsung and unheard of. It is incontrovertibly true that feelings of satisfaction may touch a chord vibrating responsively in the hearts such rare and great gifted personalities.

*For yesterday is but a dream
And tomorrow is only a vision
But today well lived makes
Yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day.*

Kalidasa.

In short, the art of living is a cultivated fruit which the human relationship can develop in all its totality to continue like a gush of the fount of bliss in the pure heart.

Happy is the man who has this unique and great virtue!

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.

* Poet, Kolkata, Cell: 9969221288

JUSTICE

K.S. Koteswara Rao*

It was about 11.30 A.M. A sunny day. Light shadows were moving hither and thither in the Magistrate's Court, while the Magistrate's mind was crowded with tangled thoughts.

The verandah was bursting at the seams. The vociferous cries of the people, their sweating bodies with soiled clothes on, emanating an unbearable odour filled the air.

The Magistrate was young. His face had not yet lost its lambent beauty. Though a tenuous film of folds formed on either side of his lips, his fore-head had not yet yielded to wrinkles. He was in a thoughtful mood. He was like a pedestrian who abruptly forgot his destination when half way. He was like one who doubted the correctness of the path he was taking. He was dividing his time between thinking and writing. After sometime he sat gazing at the ceiling.

Right in front of the bench were seated four to five black gowns while five to six red caps stood in attention. The insignia of the Government was at a height on the wall at the back of the bench. It was ripping open the

darkness of the hall by its twinkling. The President in the portrait on a wall was peeping in all seriousness while Sardar Patel in the portrait on the other wall was looking fiercely. The ceiling fan above was covered with long standing cobwebs. Their grip on the fan was so firm that they only expand and contract by its rotation.

While the Magistrate's look was still at the ceiling the sound of a pair of boots fell on his ears. His look descended gradually from the salute of the Sub-Inspector and his smile to that of his taking a seat!

"I hope this is your case!" said the Magistrate. "Which one Sir?" asked the Sub-Inspector "Look at that case" said the magistrate pointing at a woman.

A woman stuck to the wall behind the Inspector like a lizard. She looked twenty five, seen from a distance. She felt that all eyes were on her. So she put up a little shyness. It was as awkward as the lightning of the day and as horrible as the lightning of the midnight.

The crowd in the Court felt amused at her shyness. She adjusted her upper cloth which covered half of her head. Her bosom was full and fleshy. Reality revealed itself only in her

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face (and rest of the body). Her face was lack-lustre. She was like a withered and crumpled garland in a corner of a third class compartment.

"The flesh on her body will be scarcely a pound"

This is our case. Is'nt it?"

"Yes Sir, it is ours'. May I recall to you that you too were present when the trap was set?" muttered the Head, coming close to him.

The Inspector then turned to the Court and said "Yes Sir, this is our case." He instantly asked the Head in a whispering tone.

"Will she admit her offence?"

"That was what she told us then, Sir!" said the Head.

Looking at the Inspector the magistrate said "According to the charge sheet it is you that caught her personally with a gallon of arrack."

"Yes Sir, that is true" replied the Inspector.

Addressing the accused in the singular he questioned "You are going to admit your offence. Aren't you?"

Once again she affected an awkward shyness. She was softening the red nails of the fingers of one hand with another and was stoically standing. The red upper cloth over her blue flowered long skirt was slightly fluttering by the motion of the ceiling fan. Her disheveled hair was like that of a black street dog.

"Why do you pose a feint of shyness without giving a reply?" cried the Inspector acidly, addressing her in the singular once again. She raised her eyes and saw him. He could only see her eyes but not the wetness in them.

"They are bashful only by day and not by night, Sir" told the Inspector to the Court, facetiously.

The magistrate questioned the accused, "You there! What is your occupation?"

The whole Court went into laughter at the question.

The magistrate had entered the service scarcely a month ago. All the pleaders concluded that he was a stick in the mud, an obscurant and a hard liner. He knew no flexibility. Adjustments were alien to his temperament. He pesters by insisting on 'Truth and Truth alone'. If everything is 'Maya' what else can be created out of it, except Maya? He always talks about Truth, Justice and Dharma. He may be likened to a proverbial person who harassed his wife to speak out Truth and nothing but Truth and finally strangled her and himself jumped into a Well. Everyone wants Truth and Justice, no doubt. From where can it be obtained, unless one begets it? If there is truth in the case why should we the police be here and what necessity is there for all these pleaders? The Head thought to himself.

"Hay woman, what is your business?" asked the magistrate once again.

Again there was laughter in the Court.

The magistrate was at a loss to understand the situation. He was born in the purple. Albeit his wealth, he was an admitted loner during the days of his practice. Virtually he had no practice. So he dawdled away his time in reading only stories. He used to write poetry which he kept to himself. He had a spacious bungalow at Kakinada and a newly constructed house in Hyderabad. He had some wet lands and also some dry land on which topes were raised. He was gifted with good bank balance. He was provided with a decent job - a characteristic trait of a male. He was a dutiful son to his parents. He had neither brothers nor sisters. Otherwise he would have been an affectionate brother. He was a doting husband to his wife and filial father to a daughter like Daisi Irani, Sherley Temple and Vasanti. He was too good a man. None could deny so far.

That is why he could not make either head or tail of the situation.

The Head said ".....about her business?her business is...." with suppressed smile fumbled for words and then mumbled "only that business Sir" giving a peculiar accent on the word 'that'.

"You belong to the company of Nookaraju, Aren't you?" questioned the Inspector. She just nodded her assent.

"What is that Company?" questioned the magistrate again.

The Head came very near the bench and in a whisper said. "This is unlike other companies, Sir! It connotes altogether a different meaning in this context. By a 'Company' is briefly meant a brothel.

The magistrate soon checked his tongue.

The moment he heard this about the accused before him he felt repulsive-knew not why. He was surprised at his own feeling. She was unlike those fallen women about whom he read in stories. Face to face with grim reality he felt a vomiting sensation.

"You are caught red handed with a gallon of arrack in the lane nearby the company of one mister Nookaraju, yesterday evening and according to the Madras Prohibition Act Section 4(1) the police filed a case against you. Do you plead guilty?" The woman that stood accused was thus methodically questioned.

She nodded her head in reply.

"Nodding your head won't do. You should reply by word of mouth."

"I admit the offence." said she

"So you say that you are guilty?"

"I admit the offence."

"Do you plead guilty?"

"I admit the offence, Babuji."

"So you say that you are guilty?"

"I am not guilty"

"Then why do you say that you admit the

offence?"

"I admit the offence."

"Do you know what is meant by admitting offence?"

Thus the conversation was going on between the Court and the woman. "Probably the case will go on forever. This is like a crack pot that neither clinches the issue nor leaves it open." People in the hall made some indistinct noises. The bench clerk with his legs fully outstretched sat in the chair. The hands of the wall clock were silently moving.

"Did they find you with a gallon of arrack?" the magistrate had to question her finally at the top of his voice. Sweat oozed out of his forehead which also betrayed bulged veins.

"They did not find arrack with me! They caught me on the ground that I was drunk" the accused plumped out.

"Whew! We are done with. The case is back to square one" cried a grey head with his interest waning to the vanishing point. The crowd relaxed. A young lawyer sat excited. The magistrate was flabbergasted.

"What is it that you drink?" asked the magistrate in a feeble voice.

"Beer, Brandy, Whisky, Gin - Whatever they give - from where else can I get?"

Her eyes were wet and red.

"No arrack was found with you?"

"I boozed."

The court helplessly looked at the Inspector. The Inspector eyed the Head questionably.

The Head went near the bench and cleared his throat. His voice was soft, majestic and mellifluous like one who gives a religious rhetoric.

"Babuji ! a day before an American ship arrived ! - Why should I hide it from you? The entire batch landed yester night. Poor fellows! They spend a hazardous and monotonous life on the ship. So it is anybody's guess that they are prone to satiate the cravings of flesh. They naturally drank to their fill and also got this woman drunk. Those fellows, after their game of pleasure, brought her to the threshold and left her as she was. Sir, this punk created on the road a scene which is beyond description. She looks like a vixen, but no one could imagine the obscene words that flowed from her mouth in that drunken state. It became a Herculean task to bring her to the station. Word was sent to the proprietor. But he had not the hardihood to come. He only sent her clothes. We had to thank our stars to bring her to senses and to see that she is properly clothed. What else can we do? That she consumed alcohol is true - equally true that arrack was found in her possession, Babuji !"

The magistrate's face was a variegated question mark. He had not the foggiest idea as to how to deal with the situation.

She says that she is not guilty. In the same breath she admits the offence. This is a riddle. Everything seems to be a puzzling problem.

It was at this moment the tears of the accused

trickled down in a flow. The glittering sun light on coconut leaves, the floury designs on the muck washed mud floor of the front of the hut, the side long looks of love at a young man near the temple by the side of a tank and her first moral fall in the darkness of the night - no one knew which of these flashed in her mind - she began to sob in the semi darkness of the court, leaning against the wall.

"You should not cry in a Court" said somebody.

"Carousing and then weeping in the Court !" the Inspector belted out.

"Don't frighten her" said the magistrate in an edgy voice. He was all the more nettled for she tried with his temper and wearied him.

"If no less a person than an American President chances to meet her, she ogles at him and goes into bargain straight. She is of that sort! For a woman who cares a rap even for a death sentence, does not put up a weepy face, sounds preposterous?" bellowed the Inspector.

"That you are a kind hearted soul is already known to everyone, Babuji!" the Head remarked.

"A soft disposition towards the stuff of this sort makes them eat the country away. They must be nailed down should they raise their head." The Inspector chuckled humbly.

"Drinking arrack?! That too a woman!" Fie on her! said the Magistrate disgustingly.

"This is Kaliyuga, your honour!" said the grey

headed Head. He was old enough to make that comment.

"Sir, you may reprimand me, I don't mind. Say anything to me. But one thing is a fact, Sir. Bitches of this type - excuse me for calling them so, that is.....that - that's why I said are given voting rights by the Government, is it really a Government, Sir? In the times of the Britishthe Head butted in when the Inspector was half way in his sentence.

"In those times if a person eyed a Jawan - be he insignificant, be he a recruit with unfinished training he was immediately put in a lock up. That was a dictatorial regime! The white Saheb used the stick and ruled the country. That was why the days rolled on happily."

"Unless the fellows are beaten to pulp, they don't come round, Sir".

"But do we have enough guts to give a good thrashing, Babuji? If a dog is kicked, telegrams were pressed into service anon - straight to Nehruji! If dogs have direct access to the station, we can not but keep mum with folded hands. That is precisely the prevailing situation. If the police hesitate even to touch the accused, your honour may imagine what type of Government this is! We really deserve a dictator!"

"And this dictator should whack us - excuse me, Sir for using the word -I truly mean the stuff of this sort. You have not seen the scene created by this slut on the road the previous

night. Had you, you would have sentenced her, then and there for not less than six months."

The magistrate felt that someone was dragging him down to earth. He was trying to imagine the picture painted by the Head, as to the behaviour of the accused the previous night. He had knee jerk reaction to the very thought of such behaviour especially of women. After all, a woman was first a human being.

"All said and done she too is a human being like all of us. Isn't she?" said the magistrate in a thin voice. The Inspector said "Is it proper to equate her with you, Sir?"

"Babuji's heart is as soft as butter" spoke the Head in a sweet voice.

The magistrate felt like floating in the air. It is exactly at the moment he was reminded of the advice given by a gentleman of his Department.

"How many cases per month - at least five hundred."

"If that be, why don't you clear off all the companies - I mean the companies which you talked of?"

Of course, we have been at it. But of what use? They take to the roads only to make amorous overtures to the passers-by. What a terrible nuisance they create! If it is to be expiated, it takes a full week. If they are kicked out of these companies, there will be

no one who can give them shelter, remarked the Inspector at tangent.

"Who will take these rouges under his protective wings? After all they have to keep their pot boiling. So they can't give up this life at any cost. That is their life! Our life is a life of indicting them, Babuji! Thus everyone should live his life" concluded the Head philosophically.

All the while the accused kept sobbing. But no sooner did she hear the word 'life....life' some six or seven times then she rushed to the fore at a run crying aloud.

"I am fed up - fed up with this hell of life" - she thus began. "This ignoble and infamous life is too much for me. This morsel of food, earned with great difficulty, will it be relished? Even if rammed down the throat it belches out - not a wink of sleep at night - not a minute's rest in the day - shooting pain in every limb of the body - unable to bear this unbearable pain, exhausted and enervated - you did not see me the previous night - The Head - there! - that Head did see - Babu! How many and how were they? What am I to do without seeking solace in the bottle - Tell me, Sir? Tell me? You want me to die - certainly I will die - who is going to bemoan my death? Do you? Who do I have? Nobody - if all's is well why should I live this life of a bitch? - I would have led an honourable life like your darling daughters. Please have a look at this body - No need to feel shy - My modesty was molested long ago - Not one! Not two! a lot of lustful blokes fell on me like

a pack of hungry wolves - they bit me - they clawed me - they sucked my blood - virtually they have taken my vital airs - All this is in a single night - these pleaders, these Jawans and these so called dispensers of Justice - they are all eye witnesses to this shocking scene - May I know which one of them came to my rescue? No - Not even a single man - so let you not allow me to live this raffish life - Hang me. Squelch me. Stab me - A couple of sticks are enough to burn me into a handful of ash - Throw it away to the winds. Jettison me into the Sea and put an end to this accursed life of mine". Raving and ranting thus she rushed to the magistrate.

It had become difficult for all of them in the Court to stop her. Calmness returned to her by degrees and ultimately she dropped in a lump near the wall.

"Do you observe, Babu! How rebellious and revolting she is?" said the Head.

The magistrate dropped away his eyes from the blouse she tore. He felt nausea.

"She flew like a hurricane all of a sudden" commented an old vakil.

"You go on watching - All these women as she said throw all of us to winds. I bet if my word do not come true" asserted the Inspector.

"Should I take a lenient look under P.O Act and acquit her" said the magistrate.

"Babuji, there are three old cases pending against her! She admits offence for them too" cried the Head.

Considering all the four cases "one month." said the Court.

"That's Justice" remarked the Head.

Later the magistrate began calling the remaining cases in quick succession.

[This is the translation of the telugu story *Nyayam* by the renowned and fearless advocate, poet and prolific writer Rachakonda Viswanadha Sastry, popularly known as RAAVI Sastry, a champion of the poor and the downtrodden whose birth centenary falls this July.].

Golden Article reprinted from *Triveni*, January_February, 1931

THE WORLD VIEW OF THE GITA

S. V. RAMAMURTY, M.A., I.C.S.

The Gita is over 2000 years old. There is perhaps none other of the Hindu scriptures which, while it emphasizes the highest vision of Hindu philosophy, is yet so able to relate it to the everyday life of the Hindu. The Gita is not merely for ascetics, though the ascetics know no more than the Gita can tell of God. It is not merely for the plain man who is concerned with the practical way of life, though it gives him as definite a rule of life as any man may wish. The strength of the Gita is in its balance of wisdom and work, of self-realization and the loss of one's self in the Supreme Spirit. A work so comprehensive as the Gita was bound to base its teaching on a vision of the world as wide as it was possible for men to take when the Gita was written. I am here concerned in considering what was the world as the Author of the Gita saw it and whether that world view needs to be, and if so how, recast as a result of what men have learnt in the last 2000 years.

Most of us view the world as our present-day teachers, learned in the learning of European science, bid us do. We look with tolerant understanding from our post-Copernican heights back to men who, till but three centuries ago, did not know that the Earth

moved round the Sun. Aryabhatta in the 5th century A.D. did go so far as to say that the Earth moved round an axis rather than that the whole world of stars moved daily round the Earth, but he was pooh-poohed even as the same idea was scorned in Europe. It is substantially true to say that, till Copernicus, the Earth was deemed to be the centre of a world which revolved daily round it. The Gita did not know Astronomy as post-Copernican men knew. The Gita is in that sense pre-Copernican.

The science we learn not only tells us of the configuration and movements of the heavenly bodies, it also carries out an analysis of mathematical structure which is Cartesian and tells us that the world is 3 dimensional, that it is of substance matter residing in space, moving in time.. Whether mind has a primary reality or is but a secondary quality is not of importance to science. Till recently, the space, in which matter is, has been considered to be absolute; the time, in which matter moves, has also been considered to be absolute. In the last two decades the idea has risen that space is not absolute, that time is not absolute, but a compound of the two which is not 3 but 4 dimensional is absolute. Under the world-view

of Newton as supported by Descartes, the contributions of science to God are an absolute space and an absolute time. Under the world-view of Einstein, the contribution of science to God is an absolute space- time. On all views, God, if He be, is absolute. Space and time according to Newton, space-time alone according to Einstein, are somehow characteristics of God; they are part of His being.

The Gita is not only pre-Copernican, it is also pre-Cartesian in as much as it does not analyse the world on the simple Cartesian model which has furnished the framework for the enormous development in breadth and depth of scientific knowledge.

So much for the Gita as viewed from the background of our modern knowledge of the world. Let me now analyse the vision of the world which the Gita had.

The Gita teaches men a three-fold path-of *gnana*-knowledge, of *karma*-action, and of *Bhakti*-devotion. This three-fold path is in a universe where there are three categories of existence-*prakriti*, *purushas* and *Purushottama*. The teaching of the Gita is purported to be given by the *Purushottama* for the release of *purushas* from the grip of *prakriti*. We are told that while *prakriti* holds *purushas* in its control, *purushas* are subjected to the delusion of the pairs of opposites and to the power of the three *Gunas-Sattva, Rajas and Thamas*. Each *purusha* suffers from a mind-*manas*-which is restless, hard to curb. Through the mind, it has contacts with

matter which come and go; it undergoes reincarnation. The path of knowledge taught by the Gita is the path of *Samkhya*. Under the *Samkhya* view, so long "as mind and *purusha* are associated with each other, the sufferings (of *purusha*) will continue. *Chitta* (mind) must be dissociated from *purusha*." The path of action taught by the Gita is the path of Yoga. Mind has to be curbed by practice and dispassion. The Gita teaches that action without desire for the fruits of action is preferable to renunciation of action. He who endures the force born of desire and passion is harmonized. When mind free from the force of desire finds harmony with matter, *purusha* ceases to suffer from the grip of *prakriti*. Having, through knowledge and desireless action, been freed from mind, what else has *purusha* to do? It is to realise its true nature by losing its self in the *Purushottama* through devotion to Him. The true nature of *purusha* is therefore the nature of *Purushottama*. So then, we have on the one hand *prakriti* consisting not only of matter but also of mind, and on the other *purushas* who, through the grip of mind which is alien to the nature of *purusha*, are unable to realize their true nature, namely, the nature of *Purushottama*. *Prakriti* is spoken of as one unmanifested from which all manifested beings stream forth at the beginning of a world age. *Purushottama* of whom *purushas* are but parts is another unmanifested. What is the nature of *Purushottama*? In the tenth discourse, Sri Krishna gives illustrations of what *Purushottama* is. He is time, space, matter, motion, life, mind, knowledge, deities, all qualities including good and evil, the seed and

container of all things. Elsewhere He tells us, "He is minuter than the minute, of form unimaginable" and that the whole universe is "one fragment of Himself." Again He says that, "all beings are rooted in Him but He is not rooted in them" and that "as air is rooted in the Ether (*Akasa*), so all beings rest rooted in Him". He is being and non-being. Thus *prakriti* is derived from *Purushottama* and yet it is different from Him. How are we to understand this Being who is also non-Being, who contains all space but is minuter than the minutest, who contains time and is yet timeless, who is all the manifestations of matter and mind and yet is manifested? Therefore the Gita tells us that the Supreme Spirit is "of form unimaginable". Vedanta tells us that the One Spirit is Neti, Neti-not this, not this. Sunyavada Buddhism tells us that beyond this, there is Nothing.

These are not the God and His Heaven that religions sprung up elsewhere than in India teach, where God is the Father of humanity and Heaven and Hell are located in a pre-Copernican space. Such a Heaven and Hell have been crowded out of space by Copernicus. It is a sign of the profound truth of the Gita that, while it too was pre-Copernican, it is not opposed to what Copernicus discovered. *Purushottama* of the Gita reigns as supreme in the heart of things and is the container of all, whether the Earth moves round the Sun or the Sun moves round the Earth, whether in the whole of space there is no Heaven or Hell which is not also to be found on Earth, or whether the Earth has a Heaven above and a Hell below. The Gita

therefore-and Hindu philosophy in general-have studied Reality from a direction where Copernicus had no place. He is to be found on the other side of Reality from which we have approached.

But Reality with all its sides is one. Synthesis is as much a part of it as analysis. The synthesis of Vedanta needs to be reinforced by the analysis of *Samkhya*. The *Samkhya* tells us that mind is a part of *prakriti* and not of *purusha*. *Prakriti* is thus not matter as the word is, I think, mistakenly translated, but matter-mind. *Samkhya* regards mind as a substance. Matter-mind is thus a substance of more complex structure than matter which, on the Cartesian analysis, is 3 dimensional. Has Cartesian analysis led us to any structure which is more complex than 3 dimensional and yet contains the 3 dimensional as a part of it? That is just what has happened through the Relativity theory of Einstein. That theory has led to a 4 dimensional space-time being regarded as the absolute form of the world. Einsteinians do not recognize mind as part of it, but space-time has been constructed in order to eliminate the relation to the observer's individuality and it is not unreasonable to hold that mind enters the structure of space-time. I present it as a hypothesis that *prakriti* which the Gita and Hindu philosophy in general speak of is a 4th dimensional world of matter-mind which also includes space-time, and that in that world there are three associated qualities each of which is opposed to the other two, in place of the two qualities of positive and negative in a 3 dimensional world. This hypothesis (of which I believe that the 2nd part

can be derived from the first) is an extension of the results of *Samkhya* analysis. On the *Samkhya* view, prakriti is matter-mind. All manifestations from it are made up of three real elements-*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Thamas*-as against all matter being made up of two opposite elements, positive and negative electricity. *Sattva* is opposed both to *Rajas* and *Thamas*. So also *Rajas* and *Thamas* are opposed to the remaining two respectively. Thus, if good and evil are the associated opposites in a world of matter, good, evil and what is both and neither are the three associated opposites in matter-mind. This involves a synthesis of opposites.

Prakriti and *purusha* as object and subject, as field and knower of the field, are both the same and yet different. In so far as they are the same, *Purushottama* who comprehends all purushas is also prakriti and therefore He is time, space, matter, mind, knowledge, all purushas including the 'shining' category of *Devas*. He is all that is illustrated in the tenth discourse and yet because He is different from prakriti, He transcends prakriti. No one-not even Einstein-has yet satisfactorily imagined the fourth dimensional world. Therefore Purushottama even in His lower 'unmanifested' form may be described as unimaginable. The three dimensional entities of heavenly bodies and all living things are "threaded on Him as rows of pearls on a string" 3 "All beings are rooted in Him but He is not rooted in them." 4 As "air is rooted in the Ether, so all beings rest rooted in Him". The reality of this three dimensional world that we see tends to be nil compared with the reality of the fourth

dimensional world of which it is a section and therefore may be described as *Maya*, illusion. It is as if a volume made different patterns on the surface of water in which it floats. The patterns are unreal compared with the reality of the volume. They are impermanent.

I suggest to gentlemen who are learned in Hindu philosophy that they may take the hypothesis that I have presented as a working hypothesis and see if it is not substantially consistent with the world view of the Gita and generally of Hindu philosophy.

It is an irony of fate that, as observed from Das Gupta's History of Indian Philosophy, any important growth of Indian philosophy practically stopped at the middle of the 17th century,-that is to say, just when Newton was born. Yet Newton heralded the new era of human knowledge which is the era of Natural Science. Our philosophy therefore has yet not had the benefit of what men have achieved in knowledge and experience in the last 300 years. Leadership in thought and action in India has largely passed over from Sanskritists to scientists, and considering the powerful backing science has in the world which it could not have if it were not within its limits true, Sanskrit learning has to find a rapprochement with science. I have suggested to you a working hypothesis on which the rapprochement can be made. On this idea, how is the world view of the Gita to be re-presented?

The Universe consists of purushas coming from *Purushottama*, and functioning in a

fourth dimensional world of prakriti as matter-mind. A *purusha* attaches itself to a mind part of prakriti and is then born in the world of matter. Salvation of the *purusha* is its release from the mind and this release comes through knowledge and desire less action and the loss of self in the Supreme Spirit through devotion. Hindus have studied prakriti qualitatively. If *prakriti* is a fourth dimensional world, its quantitative study remains to be achieved in the future, so that a passage may be made from *Samkhya* to physics.

Need the world be to us the same mystery as it was 2000 years ago? Are we not entitled

after two millennia of thought and action to know the reality a little more than we did? May not the mystery which hid the reality from us be due to a lack of mechanism of expression, which mechanism has, been supplied to us since through European science? Let us think of these matters with reverence and also with the confidence that is our responsibility.

[The above is the substance of a lecture delivered under the auspices of the Samskrita Academy, Madras, in connection with the Gita Day celebrations.]

READERS' MAIL

Hearty welcome to Triveni. It is a great pleasure receiving the journal after a long time. We missed the journal all this while. As usual the issue is with interesting articles and thought provoking poems. Thank you. May the magazine continue its publication without interruption.

Dr J. Bhagyalakshmi

It is heart warming that the editorial board has tried immensely to collect the articles from the distinguished members. It is a great job done. Please accept congratulations.

Purnachandra Rao Pemmaraju

Delighted that our TRIVENI came up high unscathed.

Rama Rao VVB

BOOK REVIEW

Smiles Tears and More .. Rachakonda Narasimha Sarma, Visakha Covers 'n' Crafts for Samatha Publishers, Visakhapatnam, 2016, pages 214, Price Rs.100/-

A text translated into English is a gift to a reader who does not know the source language like Telugu in which the text it is originally written. Literary translation is a unique field of creative activity. There is no readily acceptable or available theory for literary translation. It is undertaken as a labour of love which, in and by itself, is a reward. The primary objective of literary translation is to present a text in another language to the reader in a language which he knows. Dr Radhakrishnan has reminded us that all Indian literature is one although written in many languages. In our country for effective transmission the pan-India medium is English, which we have accepted as an India language. In a multi-lingual nation, to bring together the many strands of our culture and strengthen national integration the need for literary translation can not be overemphasized. Dr Rachakonda Narasimha Sarma, a poet himself and a lover of poetry in his mother tongue, has done yeoman's service in translating eighteen poets whose poems he has read in the Telugu newspaper Andhra Bhoomi. The poets arranged as they are dealt with are: Ambika Ananth, Elanaga, Sarva Siddhi Hanumantha Rao, Haima Srinivas, Turaga Janaki Rani, GVS Nageswara Rao,

C.Narayana Reddy, Peddanna Marabathula, BVV Prasad, Y. Ramakrishna Rao, Devarakonda Sahadevaao, Sailaja Mitra, Sikhamani, Avantsa Somasundar, I. Srilaxmi, MBD Syamala and Bulusu Venkateswarlu. The most significant is that this work has been dedicated to Dr. Avantsa Somasundar.

Here are four poems as samples of Dr Sarma's gusto for literary translation:

Floral Smiles

*The jasmine flowers smiled,
like the shining wedding rice
Vaidehi held in her hand
for dropping on the head of the Lord.*

*The Double jasmine flowers smiled
as Sita did,
while blushing at the playful pranks
of her companions*

*The Hibiscus flowers smiled,
Even as the cheeks of Sita flushed,
when pronouncing her husband's name.*

*The Coral flowers smiled
as Sita did,
when first she saw her husband to be.*

*In the early hours on the ninth day
of the first month of spring,
flowers of every kind*

*had willingly learnt
the charming graces of Sita the new bride,
and smiled.*

(Telugu *Poola Navvulu* - by Bulusu Venkateswararulu)

Surcease of Sorrow

*A certain discontent
spreads itself like fog
in the chambers of my heart.
Hanging down
the wooden peg of past failures
are bundles of failures,
wounding the surrounding air;
anguish in the shape of
a cauldron of mercury is heated up
in the furnace of painful thoughts.*

*Enters on the scene -
a baby with a beautiful smile
bathed in the fragrance of jasmine flowers
wafted through the window -
the sorrow ceases at once.*

(Telugu : *Taapa Semannam* by Elanaga -A few lines from the Telugu original have been omitted in the translation with the permission of the author)

The Name of Love

*When digging into the past
results in a river,
do not dig.
When display of religion
leads to chopping heads,*

*do not display.
Ready I am
for shaking hands with any one
if I can unite
two opposite shores into one.
If man were a tree,
the mind of a branch,
and cordiality a fresh flower in full bloom,
the name of "love"
should lose itself on the lips
in dance and song.
Love is a lack of feat
That is why love always wins.
(Telugu: *Prema Namam* by Garimella Nageswara Rao)*

The Sunrise in our Village

*The Sun arrives like a conqueror
tearing open the dark womb of
the quiet night.
The mountains which till then
seemed too close to one another
like congealed shadows
are now seen to move apart
farther and farther,
glittering like streaks of sacred ash
on the wrinkled foreheads of
the four quarters,
Tender and delicate leaflets
adorning the edges of the branches
a re draped now in the morning light.*

*Dense clumps of Palmyras trees
standing guard all around our town
seem to move about on frenzied haste
jostling against each other
vying as if to catch the rising sun.*

*Awe struck in the ensuing confusion
and ashamed as if caught red handed
in a crime
the young Apollo is seen to blush
till his face is red-red as a beet.*

*Arrived though with splendour and pomp
and able no longer to show his face to others
he hides himself
behind the dishevelled leafy tresses
shyly shrinking himself to the size of a bud
and wipes his bloodstained face
with tender sprouting leaves
and cool beads of dew
on the soft blades of grass
and settling himself down by slow degrees.*

*And then the sweet carols of the birds-
verily the embodied essence of happiness
with wings fluttering in joy
the birds invite the sun
with music reverberating
in the ecstatic hearts of the four Quarters*

*Clearing the throat as it were
the birds join in a vast chorus
pouring forth a million songs
and the trees in turn are shedding
profuse handfuls of flowers
while the banks adjoining the brook
plait the "Bhoopala": tune on the flute.*

*With ponds unfolding layers of shyness
and making delightful dulcet sounds
in an amorous undertones
peacocks dancing with a joyous heart
lotuses with the seductive allure of
their obeisance
and bebies of beautiful belles
with arms uplifted in sacred offering
of shining flowers,
and wafting into the air
love songs with artless innocence,
the sunrise in our village
is a symbol of prominence
on the forehead of the race
sanctifying the hearts of the village folk
with the dust from the feet of the
rising sun.*

*The sunrise in our village
is a perennial creeper of resplendent light
a testimony to the unbroken stream of
human life
and the untrammelled fullness
of consciousness;
rejuvenates the world with nectar of
gentle speech
and shines with the lustre of inseparable
friendship.*

(Telugu: Maavoori Sooryodayam - Avantsa
Somasundaram from *The Human Touch and
other Poems*, 2012)

Rama Rao Vadapalli

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