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# TRIVENI

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INDIA'S LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY

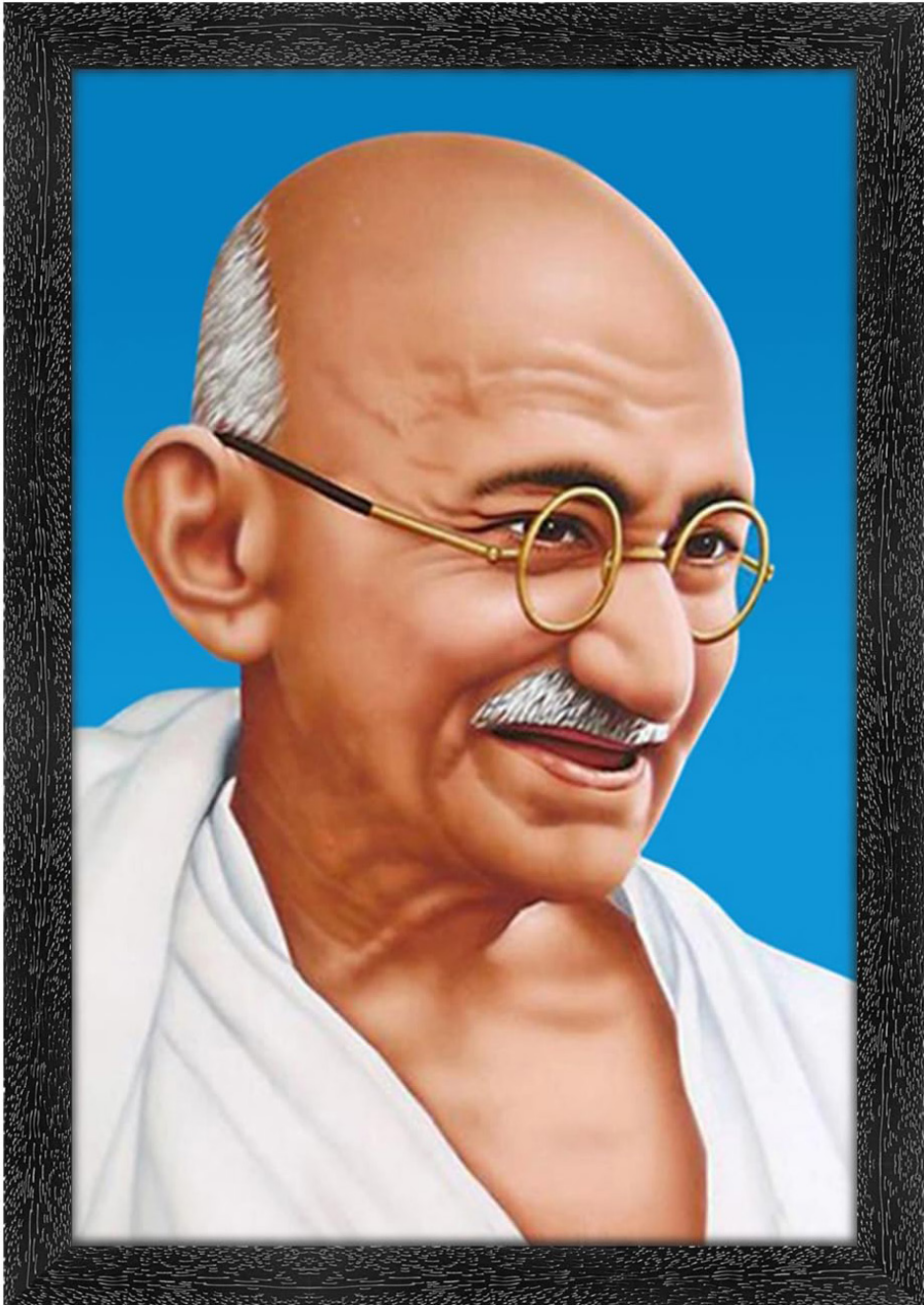


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JAN-MAR. 2025

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*My religion is based on Truth and Non-Violence. Truth is my God.  
Non-Violence is the means of realising him" – Mahatama Gandhi*

# TRIVENI

## INDIA'S LITERARY & CULTURAL QUARTERLY

VOLUME: 92

JAN-MAR. 2025

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**Golden Article reprinted from *Triveni*  
(Vol.1 No.2 Apr-Jun. 1937)**

## **The Hindu Art and Architecture in Angkor - I**

**BY C. JINARAJADASA**

"What do they know of India who only India know?" This is the overwhelming impression which remains in the mind of the Indian traveller who contemplates the great ruins of Hindu architecture at Angkor in Cambodia. Something of the same impression is felt under the influence of the wonderful stupa at Borobudur, in Java. But this impression will only be his who has freed himself from the ordinary boundary lines of Hindu tradition which thinks of India as only Hindu in religion, and who has incorporated the Buddhist stream of spiritual thought as a part of India's gift to the world. But more than in Java, the impression is overwhelming at Angkor. The stupendous nature of the great temple at Angkor is indescribable on paper, and any attempt to describe it is bound always to be a failure.

The ruins in the Province of Cambodia are the remains of a great epoch in Indian civilisation of which little is known in India. The story has to be deciphered from the monuments and

inscriptions found in them. This scholarly work has been done almost exclusively by French savants. Most of us in India are scarce aware of the great contribution of French Orientalists in the domain of Sanskrit studies. The names of Buronuf, Senart, Barth, St. Hilaire, Sylvain Levi, de la Vallee, Poussin and others, are scarcely known, except to the few who specialize in Sanskrit studies and read French. The knowledge which we have concerning Hindu civilisation in Cambodia comes from French scholars who have steadily worked on the subject since the first discovery of the ruins. Indeed, but for the insistence of these French enthusiasts, the ruins of Angkor would probably still be lying buried in the jungle. In the development of the imperialist policy of France, a clash took place between Indo-China, a colony of France, and Siam. For a considerable time, France had a Protectorate over Siam. This Protectorate ended in 1907, but when the treaty was signed, France arranged to have that part of Siamese Cambodia, in which are the ruins, incorporated as a part of French Cambodia.

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Of course this was a piece of imperialistic robbery at the expense of Siam. But the action was due to the influence brought to bear upon the French Colonial Office by the French orientalist. It is probably the only instance of imperialistic robbery which has helped the expansion of cultural ideas. For, had Siam continued in possession of the ruins, they would probably be still covered by the jungle, for Siam has little interest in ruins, nor has she the necessary funds for their exploration. France, however, having added to Cambodia this precious bit of territory, set to work to clear the jungle, and it is to her Colonial governors, under the impetus of French orientalist, that we have the excellent condition of the ruins today. Roads have been opened to them, and a curator established. If one can travel to the ruins today with convenience, it is because France has taken a pride in Angkor, and has made it accessible to the world's enthusiasts.

Though there are as yet many doubtful points of history, nevertheless it is possible to gain a general idea of what happened, and the story narrated by the French scholars from the inscriptions is briefly as follows.

There is really no historical record when Indian migration first began towards Cambodia and Sumatra and Java. It is not known how many

waves of migration there were, nor how many centuries before the Christian era the first wave took place. So far as the traditions go, the first wave to Cambodia was about the first century after Christ. A Brahmin, Kaundinya by name, is said to have founded the kingdom of Founan on the lower reaches of the river Mekong. It appears, though the point is not certain, that he took for wife some princess of the land by name Soma. From Kaundinya arose a dynasty of kings. But their history disappears, till the kingdom of Founan is conquered by another kingdom further north, founded about 400 A.D. by a Hindu named Kambu. His greatness as a ruler and conqueror is attested by the fact that he was called Kambu Svayambhuva, in imitation of the well known name of the Hindu Manu. It is after Kambu that his descendants were called Kambuja, the people of Kambu. Tradition says that Kambu took for wife the Apsaras Mera, which probably is an euphemistic way of saying that he took for wife one of the non-Hindu women of the land. It is from the word Kambuja that we have the modern word Cambodia.

The first really historical indication of the rulers of Cambodia is found in the name Rudra-Varman. From his time all the kings have the designation Varman. The following list of rulers is that found in Hachette's Guide, which contains a summary of the work and speculations of French scholars.

**LEGENDARY PERIOD**

100 A.D. Kingdom of Founan; founded by  
Kaundinya-Soma

400 A.D. Kingdom of Kambujas: founded by  
Kambu Svayambhuva-Apsaras Mera

**PRE-ANGKOR PERIOD**

Rudra-Varman.

550 Shreshtha-V.I

Bhava-V. I.

Mahendra-V.

610 Ishana-V.

635 Bhava-V. II.

Jaya-V.

**ANGKOR PERIOD**

802 Jaya-V. II. Parameshvara

869 Jaya-V. III. Vishnuloka

877 Indra-V. Ishvaraloka

889 Yasho-V. Paramashivaloka

910 Harsha-V. Rudraloka

928 Ishana- V. II. Paramarudraloka

Jaya-V. IV: Paramashivapada

942 Harsha-V. II. Brahmaloaka

944 Rajendra-V. Shivaloka

968 Jaya-V. V. Paramaviraloka

1001 Udaditya-V. I.

1002 Jayavira-V.

Surya-V. I. Parama-nirvanapada

1049 Udaditya-V. II.

1065 Harsha-V. III. Sadashivapada

1090 Jaya-V. VI. Paramakaivalyapada

1103 Dharanindra-V. I. Paramanishkalapada

1112 Surya-V. II. Paramavishnuloka

**Built Angkor-Vat**

1152 Harsha-V. IV.

1152 Dharanindra-V. II. War with Champa

1182 Jaya- Varman VII. Paramasangata. Last  
great King of Cambodia



1400 Angkor Thom abandoned to Siamese conquerors.

saves King of An-nam

### **Rise of An-nam**

1642 Cambodia expels Ibrahim, becomes vassal of An-nam.

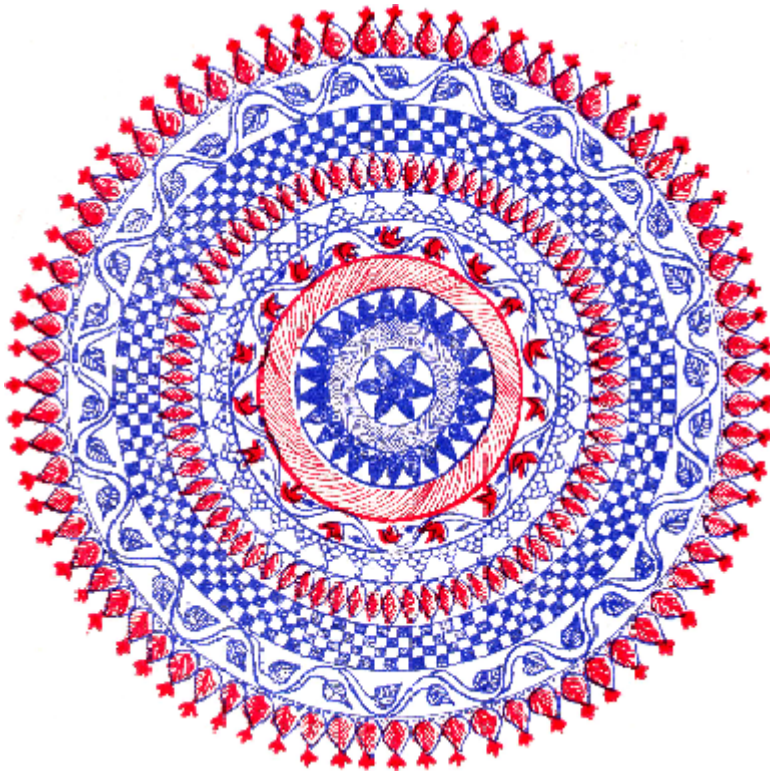
1774 Pigneau de Behane, Bishop of An-nam

### **Entry of France**

1907 Cession of Angkor to Cambodia.

1909 King Sisowath (Shri Svasti) greets ancestors at Angkor

\*\*\*\*\*



### **An Orissan Kolam**

(Folk-Art in India, James H.Cousins Triveni Jan. 1928 Vol 1 ,No 1)

## Hindu Architecture and Art in Angkor - II

By C. JINARAJADASA

### The Vishnu Temple of Angkor Vat

The ruins of Angkor fall into two groups, first, and the principal, the great Vishnu Temple of Angkor Vat; and secondly, the ruins in the city of Angkor Thom near by, and various smaller temples dotted near the city within a radius of 15 miles. Fig. 1 gives a general idea where are the chief ruins. Angkor Vat stands near to the neighbouring town of Siem Reap, and is almost a square. A mile from the Temple is the old city of Angkor Thom, whose boundaries make a square. This is the last city, for evidences have been found that the first capital was not at this spot, but some distance away. In fact, it would seem that the capital was shifted to several places, but all fairly near to the present city.

It is the Temple of Angkor Vat which is the most splendid of all the monuments. It is called a Vishnu Temple, but the sanctuary has four entrances facing the four quarters, so that there could scarcely have been an image in it. The word Angkor is said to be the Sanskrit Nagara, and Vat is said to be originally the Sanskrit Vata,

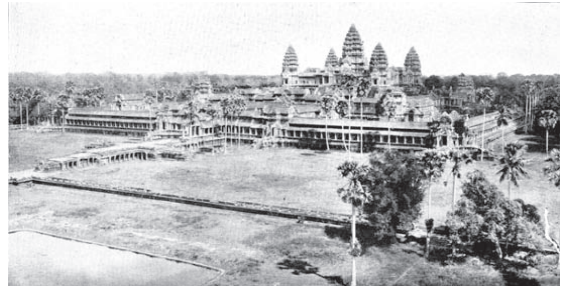


Fig. 1. Plan of the Monuments

an enclosure. It is impossible to give any adequate description of the impressive extent of Angkor Vat. The temple enclosure is surrounded by a great canal. This was the river near by diverted to make a water enclosure. The length of the enclosure from west to east is 4923 feet, and from north to south 4226 feet. The temple faces west and not east, as one would expect. The reason suggested is that this was inevitable, since the chief road to the city was from south to north and the entrance to the temple had to abut on the road. It is this strange orientation of the temple which has suggested to some French scholars lately that perhaps the



height can be judged from the fact that the height of the Gopuram at Madura is 152 feet. The Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris has about the same height as Angkor Vat. Both were built at about the same period. To ascend to the sanctuary is a serious task, as the staircase is the steepest I have known of any temple in India, and one has to come down it sideways because of the great inclination. It is noteworthy that the central tower has four minor towers as supports, somewhat resembling the conception of the Taj where the central tomb has four minarets at the four corners. On the first level, as also at a higher level, there are two small buildings which will be noted in the ground plan of the temple (Fig. 3). These are called libraries,

In all the carvings at Angkor, and in the monuments near by at their best period, there is a theme which is very significant. It is represented by Fig. 4. Again and again this is worked out in very beautiful forms. We find it also In Fig. 5, which reproduces a Devi. On

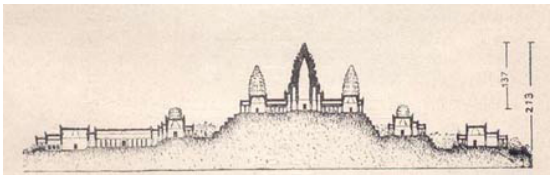


Fig. 3. Ground Plan of the Temple of Angkor Vat

the right side is a very beautiful panel in sandstone. One characteristic of all the work at Angkor Vat is a beautiful fineness and finish which one rarely finds in Indian temples built of granite.

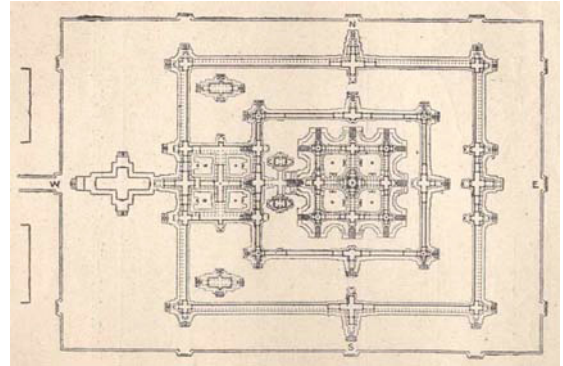


Fig. 4. Denticule, representing the decorative theme in Khmer Art



Fig. 5. Decorative theme: A Devi

The city of Angkor Thom is a square, and has four gates to the cardinal points, with an



additional gate which was the gate through which the dead were taken out. The moment one comes to Angkor Thom, one is impressed by a new idea in architecture, and that is the enormous faces which are over the four gateways, and specially which are over all the cupolas of the temple at the centre of the city, which is called Bayon. These faces are huge, some 9 feet high, as those over the gate. The others in the cupolas of Bayon vary from 5 feet to 7.5 feet (Fig, 6). In this temple there are 160 of these faces in groups of four making each cupola. These enormous faces have a curiously hypnotising effect by their repetition, and some tourists find them a little bit frightening, even though the temple is now in ruins. Archaeologists say that originally Angkor Thom was dedicated to the cult of Avalokiteshwara, and that soon afterwards, when the Hindu kings once again reigned, the faces were ascribed to Shiva.

Another new idea is at the City gate. On either side of the gate is an enormous Naga, with a highly decorative head carved in stone. This Naga is held up by a large number of giants, and the length of the snake must be nearly 100 feet. For many years the French experts considered that Angkor Thom was earlier in structure than Angkor Vat, but during the last three years it is now settled that Angkor Vat is

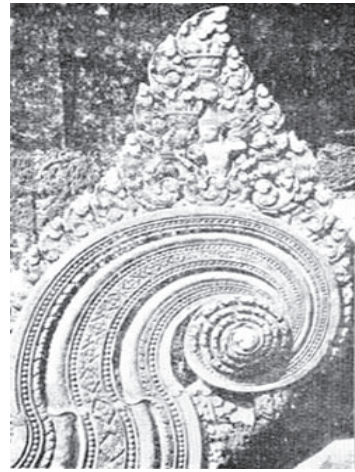


Fig. 6. Temple of Bayon, City of Angkor Thom. Heads decorating Cupolas

the earlier structure. This is borne out by the fact that at Angkor Thom the sculptural work is rather hurried, and lacks the fine artistic ensemble which impresses one at Angkor Vat.

When Indian scholars some day will visit Angkor and begin to decipher the inscriptions and make a careful study of the monuments and the sculptures, they will be able, with the knowledge of what exists in India, to write a series of descriptions which will be different from the French manuals on Angkor. One could well spend two weeks at Angkor looking carefully at all the monuments, but the traveller has usually little time.

As I have said in the beginning, one comes away with a profound impression which is



Fig. 7. Basement of the Temple of Khleang

summed up in the words, "What do they know of India who only India know?"

I add in conclusion a little summary concerning the way to reach Angkor. There are two routes to Angkor. The more convenient one for travelers who cannot speak French is through Bangkok in Siam. From Bangkok there is a train to the border town of Aranha. The railway line ends there, and the Province of French Cambodia begins. Angkor is 100 miles from Aranha, and the travel agencies arrange for motor cars, with guides who are Indians and speak English, French and the vernaculars. The second route is from Saigon. Everything in the city is French and there is scarcely anyone who speaks English. There is no railway line to Angkor but there are good roads. The distance

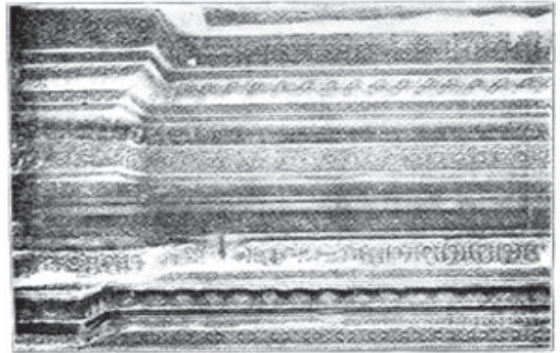


Fig. 8. Garuda

is 292 miles, and the trip takes the whole day, with the necessary stoppages. A motor bus starts early in the morning, and is usually crowded. It arrives at Angkor between 6 and 7. Private motor cars can be engaged and do not take much less time, though more comfortable.

The hotel accommodation is excellent. Nearest to the ruins is a small hotel operated by the administration. To miles away, at the town of Siem Reap, is large Grand Hotel for Cook s tourists and others who travel at that rate. There is also a smaller but quite excellent hotel under French management and less expensive. There are in addition Chinese sleeping houses, where the visitors sleep on big raised chowkis, about ten on a chowki. My Annamite friends assured me that they had all the comforts which they needed.

The best guide books are in French, but probably Cook at Bangkok issues something sufficient as a simple guide book. In French there are two works: (1) *Vers Angkor* (Paris, Hachette); (2) a fuller and more authoritative manual is *Guide Archeologique aux Temples d'Angkor* by H. Marchal, Conservator of the Angkor Group (Paris).

A small work which gives in brief the history of Champa is that of Professor Phanindra Nath Bose, published in 1927 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. This work consists of a series of articles written evidently

for magazines. It is to be desired that Professor Bose would rewrite the material, and put it all into one coherent story, without the continual reiteration of incidents now characteristic of his book.

Two well-documented chapters on Cambodia and Champa are found in the third volume of Sir Charles Eliot's scholarly work, *Hinduism and Buddhism*. He has visited Angkor, and studied the history of the period according to the French scholars. Eliot's two chapters are so far the best in English.



***Sola-ma-deviyar***  
***Reprinted from South Indian***  
***Portraits TG Aromuthan***  
***Triveni March 1928 Vol. 1 - No 2***



## Media and Literature

B. S. Murthy

Being a land of many languages, India's media is no monolithic phenomenon. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the regional differences, the vernacular media has a uniformity of character. Thus we can broadly categorize the Indian media into the English version and the vernacular variety. The difference between these is more pronounced in the 'space value' of the print media than in the 'airtime quality' of the electronic variant.

Over to the English print media first. The lament of the learned is that sparse is the space for literature in it. And their nostalgia is for the media that propped up fiction through its columns in the golden era of the novel in Europe. After all, weren't the classics of yore dawned on the world as the serials in newspapers there? The lament continues and the nostalgia persists as the Indian media fails to address the concerns of the connoisseurs. It's not as though it had turned its back on literature as such but has

come to be hand in glove with the mainstream publishers to publicize the stuff they want promoted. And what it is like? If the writer were to be famous, never mind his notoriety, or established reputation, don't bother about his credentials, then the publishers sign up without a second thought. And why not? Wouldn't some hype ensure initial sales? The eulogy-interview-review regimen in the media sets the tone for the book release. Thus willy-nilly the media helps the commercial publishing coup de grace by hyping the author as a new literary avatar. Of course, all this, more often than not, tends to favour the dubious writer than to highlight a deserving book. After all, it's one thing to glamorize the author of questionable quality and another to evaluate the literary contribution of a writer of substance. The media hype might help buttress the publishers' bottom lines but criticising genuine works only would serve the cause of literature. Thus while the publishers shun the genuine literature for fear of loss, the author-published books get a short shrift from the media for want of space.

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However, but for wasting the precious media space on many a penny work, the hype wouldn't help, for after all the discerning readers would have seen through the game any way. Though being the talk of the town for a while, most of these books collect dust in the bookstores before they become fodder to the shredding machines in time. Well the newspapers/magazines that hyped them too would be no more than waste paper by the month end, in time to turn pulp in the paper mills. What an irony of hollowness or both! However, overnight the hype turns the novice into a literary celebrity before anyone had shown any inclination to read his work! What is more, being a victim of its own propaganda, the media periodically props up the image of those that it helped create in the first place! It is thus the media space is made to supplant the reader base that made the authors of yore the leading lights of literature. That being the case, where is the space for the emerging talent to get sighted when all attention is bestowed on those that it had helped establish in the first place. That the media only covers the activities of the celebrity authors but seldom discusses the sum and substance of their works might sound mad. There is a method in this madness for the hype was built around the authors' persona and not over the content of his writing. Won't all this prove Shakespeare right? After all, didn't he

state that reputation is a most idle and false imposition often got without merit and lost without deserving!

However, this sad state of affairs could be redressed, while yet catering to the modern media's penchant for the trivia. It's a pity though that the media managers seem not to apply their minds to the malaise that afflicts them. Well it all boils down to managing the media space for profit with a corner still left for literary promotion. But for the naïve, none would fault the media for the red carpet it spreads for advertising. After all, it is the advertising revenue that enables the media houses to get their dailies delivered at the doorsteps of the readers. But what about the rest of the vast space in the print and round the clock airtime on the cable networks? Can't a literary niche be created in them both without hurt to the rest of what goes on for the news? Any SWOT analysis would underline the need for the media to nourish quality literature.

When the world was not a global village, the news was not thick and fast, and that afforded literature to get its due. After all, the times have changed, just not for the media alone! On the flip side, it may be said that the writing of the day too is not the literature of the past. Be that as it may, the media needs to help nourish quality

writing in its columns for its own well-being in the long run. After all, how else the language skills of the future media personnel would have got honed than by going through the language grill of the current newspaper columns. Thus, if the media managers of the day fail to keep an eye on the literary quality of the writing in their columns, then tomorrow's dispatches from their correspondents would bear e-mail mark. And that would be that, but how to avert that!

All said and done, it needs to be borne in mind that bringing out newspapers is a rush job. After all, they have to reach millions of homes far and wide well before the subscribers stir out of their beds. Thus, the time available at the editorial desks to process the gathered news leaves no time to make literary drafts out of it all. It is this constraint that all the more calls for the development of language skills in the reporters and the journalists alike. And that would be possible only when the books they would be newsmen take to have a literary quality of their own. And that in turn depends on promoting books of literary quality in the media for effective public orientation. Shouldn't one find adequate media space for that?

One only needs to scan the newspapers of the day to note that much of the precious space is mindlessly wasted. Understandably politics, business and sports besides crime, cinema and

trivia take the bulk of the media space for these are the topics that make the average readers buy newspapers in the main. Well in what could be seen as tokenism, some if not all the newspapers concede meagre space for literary subjects, mainly in the form of book reviews. Of course in whatever space that is left after hyping the selected works. Nonetheless, the space for the 'news that sells' itself could be better structured so as to make enormous room for the less glamorous literature. Under many a headline the subject matter gets repeated, wasting the precious media space and the reader's time. Neither it is unusual that the same news with the headline and all that figures on one page gets repeated on the other! Well if properly drafted and edited, the space so saved would be no inconsiderable one into which literature and its poor cousins of fine arts could be squeezed in. However, since editors, given that the production manager breathes down their necks, any way wouldn't have time to sharpen their blue-pencils, it is imperative that the newsmen develop writing skills to make their dispatches cogent as well as coherent. If only that happens how much media space would be available for the promotion of literature and arts as well?

Besides, road accidents, murders, rapes, dowry deaths, and such mishaps are accorded the

status of dispatches with headlines, and all that occupy so many columns. If all of them were grouped together under the relevant headings, the space so released would be no mean a space. Another wasteful practice with the English media is its penchant for the 'carpet coverage' of the cricket news. What the special correspondent elaborates in the main story is as well carried in the guest column of an eminent past master of the game. It is a different story with other sports though. Well it seems we have come to have media haves and media have-nots. Same is the case with the trivia that is given so much space in today's media along with cinema. The way trivia is highlighted makes one suspect that the media is starved of newsworthy material. However, if all the trivia could be clubbed in a corner wouldn't that suffice to satiate the appetite of the curious? Besides that would save the bother for the interested readers to scan through the entire paper and miss some of it some time. Thus, if imaginatively structured, half a page or more a day could be made available for literature and the fine arts in every English daily.

Well all that is in the realms of space creation but what about its utilization? Whatever little space, not counting the space earmarked to hype the favoured or fancied as the case may be, made available to literature is seldom made

proper use of either. Book reviews take the space and rightly so. Of course they are meant to be windows of literature for the potential readers to peep at the book world. But are they as they are positioned in today's media, be it newspapers or magazines? After all, what one would like to know is about the new arrivals and what they are about so as to find out which of them are likely to interest him. Naturally one would like to be briefed about as many books as possible in the media. Here too the media fails their readers. The books that are taken up for reviews are the same that are being hyped. It's another matter though what gets hyped gets rubbished as well in the same media! The media mindset being such, no book, whatever its worth would ever get reviewed so long as the publishers wouldn't throw their weight behind the same. Won't the books that the leading publishers push for get reviewed in every newspaper and magazine on the stands without exception? How come every book review editor in the country selects the same books the others take up for review? Of course, it is not a matter of coincidence since it happens all the time. And thus what the media has is not the variety of many but monotony of a few. Wouldn't that suggest it is not the editorial selection but the publishers' pull at work in selecting books for the reviews?

Be that as it may what are the reviews like by and large! If it's fiction one would like to know about the plot, its literary style, the narrative pace, the strength of characterization and such features in book reviews. That about gives the reader an overview of a given novel to go in for it or not. But as reviews of fiction go, it's invariably the case of the reviewer usurping the space meant for the book to project himself or herself on the literacy stage. The poor book under review serves but as a stool for the reviewer to appear taller in the intellectual world. If it is non-fiction that is on the block, what the reader gets to know from the review is the scholarship of the reviewer and not the quality of the work. This literary exhibitionism of the reviewers besides wasting the sparse media space sickens the readers. To cap it all, the reviewer often deems it fit to sign off wondering why this book was ever written.

While the English media chokes literature thus, the vernacular media through the weeklies tend to trivialize the same by providing easy space to it. Thanks to the preponderance of magazines in all regional languages there is space out there for the *bhaasha* writers to get published. This largesse of the vernacular media naturally lowers the standard of the *bhaasha* literatures what with writers in scores having hundreds of short stories to their credit! This magazine space

produces poets by their dozens who are incapable of rhyming a couplet even. As a measure of mediocrity of the regional writing these manage to compile anthologies of their poems in a couple or more volumes. On the other hand, those who take to writing in English have to pen full-length fiction as a prelude, as there are no magazine routes to take his or her piecemeal work along. The only publishing avenue available for these aspiring authors is the commercially governed mainstream publishing. After all, while the budding *bhaasha* writer's short story is not expected to steamroll the magazine sales, the English fiction publishers have their own calculus about the return on the investment on the manuscripts they take up.

It is here the English media could play a vital role in promoting genuine non-commercial literature of quality. If only the extra half a page that was talked about is earmarked for excerpts from the author-published books, then the literary lovers would have opportunities to make their own choices. Likewise, instead of parroting the same news round the clock the cable networks could air the book readings of the budding authors. After all, the networks have time to spare for literature and the authors wouldn't spare any effort to send in the videos of their reading for the screening. Of course the interested could obtain the chosen books from

the authors themselves as any way there would be none to undertake distribution of the uninitiated. All this in time determines the type of books that the public favours and that would force the publishers to get onto the right literary track. That would be when the publishers would

give up commercializing literature, as is their wont today. Thus it is upto the media first to arrest the decline and then help the Indian literature reach the creative heights it is capable of attaining.



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## Concerned Journalism – Women’s Concern

**S. K. Mangammal Chari**

Journalism: - A Journalist is an editor or writer for public, through newspapers, periodicals, magazines and reviews. Journalism is therefore ultimately for public reporting for public-good. It involves collection of relevant information and facts through on the spot observation or through interviews and reporting such facts in an unbiased manner. The main classification of such information will fall under broad headings namely:

1. Political, 2. Social, 3. Economical, 4. Literary and cultural and 5. Recreational or concerning sports or games. The reporting of the events and the information after judicious selection of items for publication, covering these broad headings in a planned and systematic manner, forms the basis of good journalism. If, therefore, politics enters into journalism there is scope for bias, resulting in coloured reporting, which goes against the purpose of true journalism. We often have newspapers or magazines now-a-days

manned and managed by persons who have political leanings and as such the information focused in such newspapers or magazines becomes a tirade against particular political parties without reason or rhyme; sometimes such information being on hear-say without proper verifications. Most of the newspapers, now-a-days belong to this category. I can just count in fingers, ideal newspapers reporting matters in impartial way, with no element of unnecessary provocation ruffling tempers of the reading public. By and large, ideal newspapers should publish facts as such and select items for publication under various headings aforesaid, items of each heading published on specified pages of the newspapers. Such impartial reporting and broadly classified reporting can enlighten the public of all tastes on matters of current importance. Such newspapers also can publish chosen articles on important current matters of social and economic importance by experts on the lines. Such reporting really helps public good. Newspapers or magazines publishing bomb-shell items with no particular

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significance for public good in headlines (most exaggerating the facts) in provocative language often prove bane of the society. I have analysed the various aspects of present day journalism tending to ruffle the tampers of the public and leading to events tampering the progress of humanity as such and going against the very purpose of journalism. I wish to emphasize that such tendencies in journalism should be scrupulously avoided and should be discouraged by the enlightened readers.

True Journalist: - Journalists should not be under pressure from publishers or editors or even from government and should be allowed to report in an unbiased manner. They should be free from prejudices, while observing things and while reporting. This enjoins them a sense of moral and public responsibility. Further, a journalist should be judicious in selecting items which are (of immediate importance) on current topics and which need focusing for the enlightenment and judgment of the public. They should be a guide for the public to act in a right manner for their own good and also focus certain events for attention by the government. Brevity and clarity in such reporting are also necessary. These are the main concerns for a journalist.

Problems of humanity on the present day and role of journalism: - Reporting through printing

matter has started with the advent of the printing press during the 15<sup>th</sup> century by which time the problems confronting humanity in all spheres have become multifold and more complex in nature as compared to these in earlier centuries. The industrial Revolution and new discoveries and inventions had built a wide gap between the rich and the poor leading to economic imbalances, created a wedge between rural and urban population, agriculture and industry, labour problems etc. etc.

The journalism actually started, therefore, at a crucial period, when human problems became multifarious and complex. To add to this, subordinate role given to women in society from times immemorial had already assumed great proportions by the time the journalism could start its holy mission and gradually, the atrocities committed on women and pitiable plight of this sex came into fore alarmingly in great proportions, giving a challenge to journalists for focusing their problems in the right perspective. The political, social, economic and sports aspects in public life have assumed specialised importance in each field requiring journalists trained in specific fields and with specialisation in such fields for judicious and clear reporting of items under each category. The mobilisation of concerned journalists with adequate requisites for publication of right type of

newspapers and magazines has therefore become imperative. Of all the problems facing humanity now, social problems have occupied undoubtedly a place of paramount importance and these social problems are mostly related to the plight and position of women now-a-days which if focused in a right perspective with adequate attention paid to it by journalists, can bring back this neglected back-bone of the society, to its rightful place, resulting in solution of much of the social problems faced now-a-days.

I would like to elucidate the background from the early stages right to the present day for the subordinate role given to women in society, which has deprived them of their rightful place and had made them the victims of social atrocities. The main concern of the present day journalism should be the concern of the women aggravated and neglected.

#### Subordination of women from times immemorial.

Role of Women in Religion: - Religion is worship of God for good acts and God has no form either male or female, why then have we predominance of male Gods? Men have intended to create a superiority complex in them, giving women a psychological inferiority complex. I have no grudge against men. They

are helpful and useful. Some complex in them should have made them give a secondary place for women who in the early ages could not stand upto. This continued in higher proportions later on. In Christianity it has been said, that God first created man and woman came out of his rib. Jesus Christ was their Lord. In Islam Prophet Mohammad was worshipped. Women have no significant place in Islam. They are not allowed in the places of worship. In Hinduism, the counterpart of woman God, “Lakshmi” is half of male God ‘Vishnu’. The combination of this God is again a male. “Vakshasthalastitha” (better half). In Siva, Parvathi is merged, though the combination is called ‘Arthanarishwara’. Women cannot be priests nor ‘Pujaris’. In early Gurukulas for learning Vedas and Upanishads, women were not made fit. This is the place of women given in religion, for good or bad. The women then, were not bothered and this led to their subordination in religion. The Pronoun for God is ‘He’, a male.

Place for women in Language: - If we take some of the clubbed words in English language, for example—‘Male and Female’, ‘Men and Women’. Men were given priority. We say ‘mankind’ as if there is no woman in society. In Hindi we have ‘Pati-Patni’, ‘Bhai-Bhahen’. It is only in Telugu, we have ‘Bharya-Bhartalu’, ‘Alumagalu’, making a woman the first word in

the combination. Generally in language also, partiality had been shown towards men.

Place of Women in Society: - Shakespeare said 'Frailty thy name is woman' (an aspersion on women). Religion oriented society in early days wanted women to be 'Pativratas', subordinate to men and always at their footsteps. Men have not been ordained to be 'Patnivratas'. Women have been confined to house, and the head of the family was the husband and who became the bread earner. The women had accepted this position in good faith. Men were also good then and were found to look after their wives by religious obligation. All might be well then.

The atrocities on Women during later Centuries: - But gradually, men began to take advantage of women's secondary role accepted by them in good faith in early centuries and started ill-treating them in inhuman way. Men assumed the right to beat women, taking advantage of their physical strength. In villages, we find generally men coming heavily drunk and beating their wives, leaving them helpless. If woman tries to be away from her beating and cruel husband she is considered to be "Vyabhichari" and scoffed at. Later when women population became more than men population, leading to partial shortage of bridegrooms, girl's father has to shell down heavy dowry to the boy's party

for her marriage. Otherwise, the girl could not be suitably married. The evil of dowry had become a curse to women community. It is often said that girl's father becomes a pauper after a girl's marriage. For the sake of dowry, wives have been ill-treated by husbands and even beaten up and driven out. There were cases of suicide by women due to ill-treatment of the husbands and in-laws.

Women have also been subordinated to social atrocities in public making them helpless victims.

The days when women were in the household and men worked outside things were not so bad. But now-a-days, due to economic reasons, women also work and earn along with their husbands and at the same time, the husbands expect them to cook at home and look after the household duties. Are women to bear all these cruelties. In fact women are more overworked now-a-days than men.

Position of Women as Depicted by Writers: - In 1950s, Lynn White wrote that "Personality became really a male attribute and women became subhuman species". Casey Miller and Kate Swift wrote that in 1970s "the girls in England were not as important, responsible or self-sufficient as boys or as healthy in their outlook on life". The inventor of radium is stated

to be Madam Curie, whose husband was Pierre Curie. After marriage the women are called “Mrs” so and so, when we, chide the boys crying, we say, “Be manly. Don’t cry like a girl”, Always subordinate role has been given to women.

Awakening in Women: - There has been a wide awakening among women in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. They began to fight for their rights and for equality with men. This has come about due to constant subordination of women by men. In 1960s in England Ann Sheldon launched a series of letters to editors, satirising sexist usage. Women’s Forums have come up to ventilate their woes. But still, atrocities on women have assumed alarming proportions. There are many books available about women. She has been studied as a teenager, parent, wife, widow, mentally sick and much else, she has been studied as character in novels playing different roles, as a general statistic and in fact as an object but not as a subject. Wit or jokes were mostly aimed at women in almost all languages. This trend should change.

Need for rightful place for Women and Equality:  
- Women, when given equal opportunities, can prove definitely equal to men and even more effective. We have in our history, Jone of Arc, Madam Curie, Jhansi Ki Rani, Laxmi Bai,

Chand Bibi, Sarojini Devi Naidu, Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit and the foremost lady Indira Gandhi. It is for the good of humanity that women are given their rightful place and equality with men in all spheres. If they are at the helm of affairs, soft and healing touch will be there which will solve much of the present turmoil and may lead to better society and human welfare. Women are more courageous than men and take bold decisions without hesitation

Role of Journalists for Women’s cause: - Journalists have, therefore, important role to play in the present day world for the cause of women. They have to focus the problems of women in newspapers and magazines. There should be news and reading materials to cater to women’s needs and aptitudes. There should be focus on women’s capability and their achievements. The matters concerning them should be so oriented as to avoid an impression of secondary role to women in society. Women should also be free from inferiority complex and should take up to journalism more and more to effectively put forth their case and problems. We have few women journalists now. They should have their due share also in journalism. The present day requires journalism to be more concerned about women’s problems.

## Interdependence

**Justice Alladi Kuppaswami**

Ever since attaining independence, the 15th day of August is being celebrated as Independence day all over India. We fought for independence and obtained it after a hard struggle. In our exhilaration in attaining independence we have however forgotten that independence from foreign yoke was not an end in itself but only a means to an end, namely, the happiness and prosperity of our fellow country-men. It is not sufficient that as a nation we are free. We have to build up a society where every one lives in comfort in terms of equality or near equality. In order to achieve this, it is absolutely necessary that every one of us should co-operate and work in harmony. We fought side by side to gain independence forgetting all barriers of caste, creed or sex. But having gained the objective we got back to our old ways. It is time that we should remind ourselves that inter-dependence and cooperation is absolutely essential if we have to make any progress. While other nations are making rapid strides towards plenty and prosperity, India is still living in ignorance and poverty. Unless we wake up

immediately and make a united effort, the independence gained by sacrifice and suffering would be meaningless and empty. The slogan of independence should hereafter give place to the ideal of mutual dependence. It is however to be realized that the two things, different as they may seem, can exist together, namely, independence and interdependence. We require individualism which does not isolate a man from his community. We also need a community which assists and fosters the individual. Men have never been individually self-sufficient. It is to focus the attention of the public that no man is an island and each human being is in some way dependent on the other that it is necessary to set apart one day in a year and celebrate it as 'inter-dependence day'. The idea of inter-dependence or mutual dependence and its immense value is not new to us. The idea of setting apart a day as 'inter-dependence day' and celebrating the inter-dependence day in the same way as we celebrate the independence day is a means to remind us of our mutual dependence just as 'Independence day' reminds us of our glorious nonviolent struggle for independence.

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## **The Journey of Shankar Hazarika, an Assamese youth: From Dhemaji to Guwahati A Tale of Dreams, Sacrifices, and Hope**

**Hiren Sarma**

It was not an easy decision for Shankar Hazarika, then a 25-year-old young man from a village near Dhemaji, and his younger brother Abhi to leave their home for Guwahati in search of a brighter future. Their departure was tinged with both hope and sorrow, as they left behind a happy home where their parents made a living with their leased-out paddy fields and grew enough fruits and vegetables in the large backyard, providing nicely for the small family and allowing them to purchase all their basic needs.

For Shankar, the move was more about his kid brother, who was gaining recognition as a talented singer-songwriter. Abhi was not only making a name for himself in the nearby villages but as far as Dibrugarh and Tinsukia. Shankar, overly protective of his tall, handsome brother, was determined to support Abhi's burgeoning career.

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The author, Hiren Sarma is an Engineer by profession and lives in Houston, Texas.

Following a few odd jobs here and there, Shankar eventually landed a position with an educational trust called Assam Development Initiative (ADI). With a budding NGO salary, Shankar and Abhi could barely meet their daily needs, and it would have been a real struggle without the food supplies from their village home. However, Shankar fell in love with his job as Senior Field Coordinator for ADI on their flagship project called 'Value-based Education and Child Development'.

It was his colleagues and their friendships that influenced him most. The professional but compassionate Managing Trustee, Mrs. Bipasha Datta, a frontline social activist, and the project director, Sushmita Barua, were pillars of strength. The life skill consultant Sanjay Das, and his three Field Coordinators, Neelakshi, Anvi, and Radha, became like family to him. And last but not the least, the loving schoolchildren he often met in all the five government schools they worked with brought immense joy to his life.

But would this love and these friendships be enough for Shankar to make a better living? Would he be able to start his own family someday? And would Abhi be able to establish himself as a renowned singer-songwriter? Shankar did not have any answers yet.

Last week, during a Zoom meeting, Bipasha ba (addressed an older sister as *baideu* in Assamese) and Borta (addressed a gentleman older than his/her father *Deuta* as *Bor Deuta*) informed them that ADI would soon be seeking donations from outside sources, which would help enhance their salaries. As ever, Shankar remains hopeful and trusts in the future that lies ahead.

In the heart of Guwahati, amidst the hustle and bustle of the city, Shankar and Abhi continue to dream and work hard. The city has been both a challenge and a promise, testing their resilience and rewarding their perseverance. As the days pass, Shankar finds solace in his commitment to ADI and the impact he makes on the children's lives, while Abhi's music begins to resonate with a broader audience.

With his sweet smile, and a compassionate approach towards children, Shankar became an engaging storyteller in the schools. What

Shankar enjoyed most was that he could make even the shiest child in a classroom come forward and narrate his/her own story. Another story Shankar loves to tell others is about Arindam Barman in Kamrup Higher Secondary school when the tenth grader suddenly lost his consciousness in the school field during the break. After giving some first aid he immediately asked the school clerk to grab a taxi and together they arrived at the City Hospital emergency center. The young boy ended up with a few stents in his arteries. The Cardiologist thanked Shankar profoundly for his prompt action and literally told the boy's family that without Shankar's intervention things could have been very different. Shankar really felt fulfilled when the boy came to see him after six months telling Shankar that he passed his Board exam in first division with letter marks in two subjects.

The Value based Education project team was unique in the sense that each person has some specific qualities which the Project Director Sushmita Barua. could utilize it very effectively in completing every task. The recent initiative for practicing a Mindfulness program at the beginning of the school is gaining ground. The team noted that while it was a lot easier to get attention and participation from the students,



getting all the teachers engaged in a new activity was always an issue. The workshops like Team Building and Ethical Leadership organized by ADI helped the school management, but it still seems to be cost prohibitive at times.

Shankar and his Field coordinators personally engage themselves taking lead in the Cleanliness programs in the schools teaching the teachers, employees and mainly the children that keeping their schools, homes and the communities is everyone's responsibility. Home visits by the Field coordinators to the students who require additional help, together with the schoolteachers, is part of the project plan.

And everyone in the ADI team knows that their loving Borta, the aging, but young at heart

Mahendra Kumar Baruah, the founder and Chairman now lives and breathes with ADI every moment. He feels so fulfilled that everyone in the team wholeheartedly believe in the project and vouches for the fact that one needs to practice values in his/her own life in order to inculcate them to others, particularly the children.

The journey of Shankar Hazarika and his brother Abhi is a testament to the power of dreams, the strength of family bonds, and the unyielding spirit of hope. Their story continues to unfold, marked by the trials and triumphs of life, as they forge a path towards a brighter and more fulfilling future.

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*As Planets in their orbits never fight  
As flowers their colours in harmony unite  
As bird voices mingle in meaningful refrain  
Our millions in secular concord should remain*

*- Prof. I.V. Chalapathi Rao*

## Emerson and Indian Vedanta

**K. N. D. Sanjeeva Rao**

**(Dedicated to the memory of R.W. Emerson whose 200th birth anniversary fell on  
25th May, 2003)**

R. W. Emerson was born in Boston on 25.05.1803 in a family known for its spiritual ancestry. He prepared himself for a religious vocation at Harvard and was ordained as junior pastor in the Second Church of Boston in 1829. An original “thinker” and a “reverer of the grand, the beautiful and the good”, he gave great importance to the “moral sentiment” and the spiritual life in man rather than to the religious dogma and “form” at the church. As he was not convinced about the spiritual validity of certain ritualistic practices of the church, he resigned his pastorate in 1832, thus embarking upon his great quest for a direct religious experience within himself.

Generally all religions offer two paths for God Realisation one, the ritualistic, the exoteric path of the “*Smriti*” consisting of the historical, traditional doctrine, meant for the common

people, and the other, the philosophical, esoteric path of the “*sruti*” based on the universal truths about the spirit revealed to seers in their intuition, meant for the learned and the advanced. The former is termed as the “*karma marga*” in the vedic religion and the latter as the “*Jnana marga*”. Emerson calls the former the doctrine “of the personal, the positive, the ritual”, the traditional doctrine of Christianity, and the latter the “doctrine of the Reason” or “soul” which he discovered in his own religion and developed further by his contemplation and insight.

Though the two doctrines appear mutually exclusive and contradictory, they are only complementary because the former would lead to the latter as the ‘lower truth’ would to the ‘higher truth’. But despite this, thinkers and philosophers of no less repute than Sankara and even Sri Krishna underrated the former though they never disregarded it or discouraged its followers. Their argument is that the ritualistic

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path (*achara*) only helps purify man's mind and at best prepares him to receive the higher initiation about the Self, but it cannot make him realise the ultimate truth which spiritual contemplation (*vichara*) alone can do. Emerson's doubts about the efficacy of the ritualistic dogma in serving the ultimate spiritual purpose of man also seems to arise from a similar attitude. For, he even argues in his 'Nature' that the man 'of the unrenewed understanding' (the common man) is like a 'banished king' (referring to man's expulsion from the paradise) who 'should buy his territories inch by inch' (by following the ritualistic path of prayer, charity etc.) whereas the man of awakened Reason (the learned man) can vault 'at once into his throne' and have a 'mometary grasp of the sceptre' (referring to the way the paradise is regained direct by the knowledge of the Self or *Atma Jnana*)

Ever since he resigned his pastorate, Emerson sought to have a personal revelation of God within himself. He also required a philosophical doctrine to theorise his experience. In this great attempt to see God outside the institutions of history and tradition, he looked at Nature 'face to face'. He noticed in her the "presence of the sublime" as well as the principle of unity behind her various forms. The 'Laws of Manu'

provided him with the earliest information about 'the most high eternal Spirit' as 'transcendently present...in all creatures'. Also he observed that Jesus Christ 'was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man.' W. E. Channing's sermon "likeness to God," the germ of which was already there in the Genesis, revealed to him that "God becomes a real being to us in proportion as His own nature is unfolded within us." William Wordsworth, who saw a soul in everything and whom Emerson met in 1833, must have convinced him about the spiritual affinity between man and Nature. Carlyle, whom he also met in the same year, did strengthen his faith in the 'moral sentiment' as the basis of all religion. Coleridge's 'Aids to Reflection' and the philosophy of Kant fortified his claims of the intuitive 'Reason' as a fit instrument for getting at the 'ultimates' behind the world of sense. Plotinus acquainted him not only with the properties of matter and its relations with the spirit but a new philosophy of man's fall and his recovery. The sublimity and the universality of the Vedic hymns impressed him so much that he proclaimed "nature makes a Brahmin of me presently". The Bhagavadgita (BG) and the Kathopanishad not only furnished him with the clearest exposition of the relations between man and God, but revealed to him the final Truth about man as *Brahman* or the

Immortal Self of the Universe. Incidentally, they also provided him with a 'Philosophy of insight', a verified and verifiable mystical 'doctrine of the soul' or the 'Over-soul' he had thus far been searching for to explain his experience of 'the God-within'.

According to this doctrine which is central to Emerson's philosophy, there is a spiritual Being pervading the entire creation as 'life' does through a living organism. In other words it unfolds itself as the creation quite like a seed which grows and expands itself into a tree. (In fact, this is the root meaning of '*Brahman*' as well as '*vriksha*'.) It is the One Being present in us transcendently, imparting to us the eternal ideas of Beauty, Love, Virtue, Truth, etc. All of us have an access to it as 'an inlet into the deep' by means of our spiritual contemplation and 'moral sentiment'.

Emerson attaches paramount importance to the 'moral life'. It is the very soul of religion, its basis, and its test. It "carries innumerable Christianities, humanities and divinities in its bosom" he says "The end of creation is answered when man sets virtue as his goal." Man's obedience to the 'moral law' will make him conform to the universal order of existence. Man is God in so far as he is just at heart.

"Character is the habit of action from the permanent vision of truth." When man "shall not cheat his neighbour.... He has changed his market cart into a chariot of the sun," he goes on. Morality and Divinity are indispensable in Emerson as '*Dharma*' (righteous conduct) and '*Satya*' (truth) are indispensable in the Indian religio-philosophical context. In Emerson's view morality implies spiritual strength which will enable man to ascend to God in due course.

Emerson already started writing to his journals in the true spirit of an oriental *Rishi* that "the highest revelation is that God is in every man". He also observed that "To this truth we look when we say, Reverence thyself. Be true to thyself" etc., echoing the Kenopanishad which says, "*Brahman* is the adorable Being in all beings." Also he recognised "the dread universal essence," "the supreme Being" permeating in and through the creation some what like Arjuna who saw a similar Form of the Lord at 11:20 B.G. Again he said "There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to this inexplicable continuity of this web of God" (Creation) just like Sankara who observed "the world is without beginning" etc, and God spins it as "the spider spins its web from its own substance." He discovered that man and Nature "proceed from one root.. the soul of his soul" which is

God, as also stated in the Kathopanishad that “This Universe is a tree....its root aloft.” Then he perceived that “the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul” and Nature exists as a ‘Discipline’ for man striving to lead him back to the spirit by teaching him to transcend her, as it is taught by the great *Sankhya* philosophy. Finally he realised that “know thyself” and “study Nature” become at last one maximum” - a discovery also mentioned in the *Swetasvatara Upanishad*, reflecting the Oneness of Being in the *Advaita Vedanta*.

Thus describing the experience of his union with the Supreme Being Emerson writes “my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into Infinite space – all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all. The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part and parcel of God. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty.” This passage relating his experience of the Reality testifies to the ‘Darsana’ or Revelation Emerson had in his own soul. This is also an example of man’s soul expanding “to the full circle of the Universe” as was found in the case of Suka in the Bhagavata purana. Any number of passages can be quoted from the Upanishads revealing similar experience of spiritual ecstasy described as “*Brahma Ananda*” or the

Supreme Bliss. As the ‘I’..consciousness vanishes, the witness state (*Sakshitwa*) alone remains. This is so accurately represented by the speaker’s identification with the eye-ball. The individual is reduced to a mere instrument of vision as the Real Seer remains unaffected by any other experience than seeing. “Religion means Realisation” and “Realisation is the annihilation of the self” according to Vivekananda. The self is lost here in acknowledging itself as the Supreme Being. The Oneness of Being realised and experienced here by Emerson once again proves the veracity of the *Advaita Darsana* or the non-dualistic vision of the Indian Vedanta.

Emerson reflects the Indian philosophical traditions in many ways. His method of separating Nature from the soul as the “NOT ME” imitates the method of ‘*neti, neti*’ or ‘not this, not this.’ adopted by Yagnavalkya in separating the Self from the non-Self. His observation that “The world –this shadow of the soul, or the OTHER ME...” etc., reminds us of the verses of Sankara “*Viswam darpana drisyamana nagaree tulyam,*” “*chaya sareere pratibimba gatre* etc. meaning that the world is a reflection and shadow of the Self. Emerson’s conception of the hold of Nature on man’s understanding reflects the control of Maya

on the mind of man as mentioned at 7:14 B.G. His three-fold classification of perception into the sensuous understanding which sees Nature as absolute, practical Reason which finds it aloof, and pure Reason which treats it only as an appearance agrees with the *Tamasic*, *Rajasic* and *Sattwic* types of perception explained in Chapter 18 of the same scripture. His idea of the creation as the growth of a tree from its root or seed reminds us not only of the verse “*Urdhvamulamadhassakham*” at 15:1 B.G. describing the tree of the universe as emanating from its Root above, but also of Sankara’s famous verse “*beejaasyantarivankuro jagadidam*” meaning, this universe is like a tree unfolding from its seed. His theory of spiritual influxes and the “inexhaustible power” drawn by man in times of his intuitive perception resembles the concept of “*Dhyana*” in the yoga Sutra. His argument that creation is not a historical occurrence but a continuity “proceeding each moment from the Divinity” finds support at 3:22 B.G. where Sri Krishna says that he is always at work. Also his observation that we “are linked to one another by spirit” echoes the words of Lord Krishna at 7:7 B.G. where he says that he is giving unity to the worlds as “a thread through a string of pearls.” Again his words “Every man may become his own philosopher” recalls the

verse at 10:11, B.G. where the Lord says that he imparts wisdom to his devotees as their Indwelling Spirit. Emerson’s advice to the materialists to “hitch” their “wagon to a star” is only the first step recommended in the *Bhaktiyoga*. His observation that a man is “always spoken to from behind” reminds us of the *Gayatri Mantra*. His aversion for controversies about the spiritual matters reminds us of the Narada Bhakti Sutra “*Vado Navalambyate*” meaning that a knower of Truth should not indulge in disputations. His discovery that man “is himself the creator in the finite” takes us to the verse “*mamaivamsa jeevaloke*” at 15:7 B.G. conveying the meaning that God’s own spark glows in every living being. His theory of transmuting matter into consciousness is but Sankara’s argument of turning “the visible into the invisible” by dwelling in the world of “pure consciousness”. His fable of the sot in the street, carried home, washed, dressed and laid in the duke’s bed, and who on his waking finds himself the duke, is just an illustration of Sankara’s aphorism “*jeevo brahmaiv na paraha*” meaning that the living being is none else than the Supreme Being (past his ignorance or Avidya) just as the sot in the fable was none else than the duke (past his drunken state or slumber). Finally, his discovery that man’s recovery lies in knowing

the truth about himself as God (by an exercise of his Reason) is just the reiteration of the Vedantic maxim “*Jnanadevatu kaivalyam*” meaning that salvation is attained only by means of the knowledge of the Self or “*Atma Jnana*”.

Emerson resembles the upanishadic sages in his spirit of inquiry as well as in his deep desire to have a direct revelation of God within himself. Like them he showed a rare spirit of courage and conviction in interrogating the world around him and getting at the ultimate Reality behind it.

His initial scepticism only helped him establish his faith in God on a more rational basis. In other words he added a new philosophical dimension to Christianity with his researches in the realm of the spirit. As a transcendentalist, he spiritualised the whole race of man which was exactly what the Upanishads had done ages before. No wonder, then, Mahatma Gandhi remarked that his writings “contain the teaching of Indian wisdom in a western Guru.”

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### *Tara*

*Nepalese School Late 12th Century Collection  
of Mrs A. Daly Dublin.*

*(Triveni Jul-Aug 1929, Vol. II. No.2)*



## Literature, Media, Social Transformation Andhra Experience Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao

Once basically an elitist occupation and preoccupation, a luxury and pastime of the privileged, literature now has come to be a general pursuit attracting interest, provoking debate and discussion, thanks to the speedy democratization of literature in the post independence scenario. Writers have a flair for observation and analysis besides powers of creative expression with their own imaginative talent. They help people in this new situation to appreciate points of view, form opinions and come to conclusions. Thus writers began playing their role more effectively as shapers of public opinion and contributors to form, reinforce and establish tastes.

The horizons of literary creativity are ever expanding, taking into their portrayal the ever widening human aspirations and ever deepening tribulations. Literary self-expression has become an 'elemental passion.' Post Independence exuberance, huge outlays of Five

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Reprinted from *Triveni Platinum Jubilee Celebrations Souvenir - Febraury 2004*

Years Plans, rapid industrialization and manifold growth of business led to the rich as also the middle-classes to have surplus leisure and surplus funds. This is evidenced in the growing demand for TVs and the gaining circulations of periodicals in the print media. Production of consumer goods and consumer / durables has scaled new heights. Media is coming in handy for causing an advertising explosion. People's tastes and demands began to be plentifully catered to. With media aid literature is claiming more and more popular and mass attention.

The Fourth estate has to still further espouse the cause of literature more significantly and project creative talent more liberally in this new millennium.

The Press yearns to be free but Editors are usually in chains. Policies of newspapers and journals too are determined by the management and not always by the Editors themselves. Market forces get more weight. The newspaper managements want circulation figures and profits to go up. Given editorial freedom, it is practical

to expect free allocation of space to literature. Some dailies do not think it even necessary to carry literary items.

The concerns of media, electronic or print, are many in the context of the fast development in various fields of human activity. Media is a purveyor of information and dissemination of knowledge essentially topical. It plays a vital role in keeping people informed with the latest happenings. All the people's concerns are media concerns, political, economic, social, popular and cultural. As such media has been playing a role in contributing to literature. What is more, it has begun influencing literary activity.

Literature nowadays is a product for people of all classes, not elitist alone. There may be writers who aver that the writing is done for personal self-satisfaction and sometimes as a therapy. As such it becomes a concern of the media. Print media has a distinctive quality that the message put across has existence, relevance and value outside the immediate.

Now even seriously called the Fourth estate, it has emerged as an empowered sector, as important as the creative endeavour itself. Few literary artifacts can do without some kind of aid from print media, before or after publication, in the present day context. We know the press

is capable of making or marring reputations though ideally it is both a promoter of writing and the provider of an appetizer for reading.

Current concerns are important when we live in troubled times. The spirit of the times is permeated with thoughtlessness and an author's job is to provoke, promote and motivate thinking with the fond hope of leading readers into new vistas of light and understanding, of charity, tolerance and compassion.

The current concerns of our media relate to social justice and condition of certain classes of individuals, which are too striking to brook neglect. Establishment of an egalitarian society by enriching the content of the present democratic set up has received great attention in our literary works. They are used as devices for social transformation. There has been an exploration for new forms of expression in the genre, in the lexical, stylistic and even grammatical modes. Most of the writing has been intended for persuasion or proselytizing, even in creative writing. There has been an extension of the very purpose of literature. Ancient *Lakshanagrandhas* and prosodic canons have been given the go by. Literature has come to be tool, a device, and a powerful engine. Newer and newer ways of expression have been put to harness by individual writers

deliberately. Among the genres, the most popular have come to be fiction (short and long), biography and travelogue all with themes relating to social change. Even novellas and novelettes ceased to be mere romances by packing powerful messages for social uplift, women's emancipation and constant and sometimes aggressive striving towards real social and economic equality.

Writing has always been undertaken with a view to bringing about a change in how so ever small a quantity or with whatever degree of intensity, or, for conveying a bit of information or disseminating knowledge. Then, writing is always against a background, political, economic, social etc., a context, and produced at a point of time. The reader goes to writing for a variety of purposes, some times for sheer pleasure of getting into the writer's imagination, the point of view, the philosophy of life, a possible message and so on. The writer today has his target reader clearly in his mind. The writer in the present day context is a product of his own times, his own upbringing, equipment and exposure. His ultimate message could be just personal or imaginative, or a plea to attract attention to his cause, point of view etc., to provoke readers to exercise their minds to modify their individual attitudes. To some extent,

a social purpose, an intention to bring about some kind of social change has been there in many writers. Of these some have importance historically for the enduring effect of their work during their own times and even much later. From the writing of the 20th Century, we can easily isolate the powerful strains of social reform and social reconstruction and transformation. After 1947, the focus is on social equality, elimination of exploitation of all kinds, gender - equality, economic independence and so on. The thrust is on enlightening our people, for the nation to emerge as powerful in the comity of nations.

Telugu has several magazines, published as weeklies, monthlies, quarterlies or even annual numbers. There are publications with women as their target readership. These carry short and long fiction and some poetry too: *Vanita, Vanita Jyoti*, for example There are children's magazines, which carry short stories and poems besides extremely inspiring information for children and the young to shape their own character. *Chandamama, Bala Mitra, Bala Jyoti*, for example. There are specialized literary magazines too *Bharati* was a literary cultural monthly always in the forefront. Though very good and extremely prestigious, it had to face closure after half a century's existence. It was a

sister publication along with *Andhra Patrika* Daily and weekly founded by the doyen of Telugu letters, Viswadata Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao. *Andhra Prabha*, *Andhra Bhoomi*, *Andhra Jyoti*, and several other dailies have literary pages. The more prominent of the weeklies today are *Andhra Jyoti*, *Swati*, *Andhra Bhoomi*, to name some. Among the monthlies the prominent ones are *Swati*, *Andhra Bhoomi*, *Misimi*, *Moosi*, and *Praja Sahiti*. The last two named came up only a few years ago but have become established ones, largely owing to their thrust on literary fare. Most of these publish poems, criticism, reviews and literary interviews. Some carry serialized long fiction also. There are several small magazines, which have come up not only from the capital, Hyderabad, but also from several district head quarter cities. The Registrar of Newspapers of India permits these to utilize postal concessions but not many of them appear to be using it with the result that not all periodicals are listed in the RNI yearbook.

During the 60's of the last century and later till the eighties roughly, novel was very popular with scores of women writing long fiction very competently. The boom in serialized novels in periodicals caused a boom in novel publication also. But today short fiction is the 'in thing.' Poetry is being favoured extensively by the small

periodicals for it takes shorter space and then the circulation, though limited to a few regions, makes the publication viable. Poetry lovers are poets too in very large numbers in Telugu. When I had to go through Telugu free verse published during the eleven years between 1985 and 1995 (a self-imposed task) I came across no less than two hundred and more poets, men and women. I have a feeling that the media promoted Feminist and Dalit poetry in the recent years. But for periodicals encouraging them very meaningfully, so many poets and writers could not have come to see light or become prominent. This is no adverse comment on the value or the quality of performance of these writers. To get prominent anybody has to appear in publication first.

Short story, novel, literary pen portrait, literary interview and correspondence from readers are all included in the Dailies' literary pages or in the weeklies. While the part of the novel, or the poem is before the reader, making it possible for him to form an impression for himself, in literary assessments and reviews, the reader has to depend in the first instance entirely on the essayist or the reviewer of a book.

A literary text or a book has to necessarily have a set of criteria for evaluation (Review is evaluation), which may be a kind of

measurement testing, calibration or judgment. Literary texts are expressions of subjective thinking, analysis or argument to a very large extent. Objectivity and fair play to the extent possible should be the guidelines for the application of known tenets drawn from known and / or established theories, literary categories etc. Even a theory can be set up for the first time if the basic principles and methodology therein are hinted at before its being applied to a literary text. Without a firm adherence to a basic frame of reference critical practice tends to become arbitrary, subjective and loaded with value judgments attributable to prejudice. The mention of the specific system of measurement gives units significance, whether avoirdupois, metric or local and indigenous. Generalizations are not always mathematical certainties. Blanket and sweeping statements almost always generate more heat than light. The reviewer may have to find himself in indefensible position if elastic tapes and loaded scales are used in measurement.

The reviewer knows his clientele more closely than the novelist/poet/writer does his readers. The writer's reach is far wider than that of the reviewer though sometimes it is literary critics and/or academics. Some from the newspaper 'staffers' on their own make high grades by dint of their own merit.

Newspapers, like makers of many a mass-produced products for public consumption, have to bear in mind reader preferences acknowledging consumer sovereignty. But in the matter of selecting books for reviewing, it is heartening to note that the prestigious papers review only 'solid' works. The 'interview' does not give the interviewer, much scope for free wheeling, as the review does. There is a fair opportunity for the reviewer to make insightful predictions or posit acceptable generalizations. What is more, the review has an already established format. Today's reviewers may be tomorrow's literary critics now in the making if they are not already that.

#### Implications for writers and the media dealing with literature

The most powerful and hence very significant part the media plays is through reviews and comments. While basically introducing new titles to readers, sometimes reviews make very sensational reading sparking discussions and igniting controversies. With the readership now considerably enlarged and knowledgeable and literature savvy, especially in the regional languages, the reading public getting interested in writers as well as their writing demand the judgment of the reviewer to be impartial and objective. Reviewers need to be balanced and

impersonal which they sometimes are not. Writers too should be confident of the acceptability, quality and content of their work before rushing into print.

Litterateurs are not always media savvy. Experts in the print media need not necessarily be literary critics. In the current practice of media coverage of literature, reviews and assessments of individual works, or the total body of a writer's work, this is evident. In many newspapers, especially in Telugu, literary pages do not seem to be competently handled to project the achievement or point out the loopholes in writing. The whole problem lies here: what the reviewer says goes into print and the less discerning take the printed word as gospel truth. The writer when hurt, and unjustly too, has no way of hitting back or, at least, defend himself. From the reviewer's side, the task is sometimes self-imposed for it is usually never paid or paid well, if at all is paid something. For nothing, writers are sometimes damaged by harsh, inept and hasty pronouncements made by novices who have no real idea of what their 'averments' (or, sometimes, unintentionally damaging statements) are capable of doing. Specialists are not easily available even for big papers. Regional papers and literary periodicals with limited circulation on which writers have to depend find it difficult to get really competent

hands to handle literary pages. New entrants into the profession with no solid base of literary understanding yield to temptation to play to the gallery or to make sweeping statements. Judging a text with a sense of superiority starting with the assumption that the reviewer knows the art of writing more than the writer, are some of the pitfalls of inexperienced reviewing. The playing field, if reviewing is taken as one, has to be ensured being level.

The current concerns are more humanitarian than artistic. Ways are devised to eradicate evil practices like child labour, sexual discrimination, to augment facilities for the care of the old and the handicapped, the visually handicapped and under privileged sections of society. The forms of expression relate as much to the genres opted for by the individual writer, the particular concern in the discourse he is at work on as well as his mood and his tone and attitude towards the reader. In almost all genres new forms of expression are being experimented: Magic Realism and Critical Realism in fiction, new poetic forms like Haiku and Free Verse in poetry, to name a prominent few.

While appreciating the need for the current social concerns, which have been receiving the attention of authors in all genres, I take this opportunity to place before this learned



assembly a couple of points for consideration. We have concentrated all our attention on immediate utilitarian goals. Literature down the ages has been catering to satisfying the imaginative exploitations of an enduring nature also: for example the urge to know about the nature and goal of human existence, the relation between Man and God, the physical and the abstract and so on. In other words, an other-worldliness needs to permeate new writing where aesthetic enjoyment for its own sake is the goal.

Literature has several purposes other than being an instrument for social change. Litterateurs of the distant past have kept in their mind far reaching and sustainable goals: to enlighten and ennoble, to impart spiritual and universal human values to help their fellow men order lives in laudable ways. Here I come to the ennobling spiritual values of far reaching significance. I am bothered by the persistent thought that we seem to be spending all our energies on things immediate without spending even a fraction of them on the enduring, everlasting aesthetic values. There is a feeling that literature faces now the threat of fragmentation with various sections of society voicing forth their own grievances about rampant social injustice. This may not be the case with literature in other

languages. The present tendency in Telugu writing appears to be more sectarian and caste-oriented thus becoming more and more narrow and parochial. I don't suggest that social values are not important. Political Freedom had been of paramount importance till we won it. Aspirations take time to be realized. Resorting to vociferous and vicious attacks does not strictly belong to the domain of literature for all time. Our readers know how to distinguish the 'book of the hour' from the 'book for all time'. Though we are rightly worried about social and economic equality, it is time to look back again and go beyond immediate *saamjikaspruha*, social awareness, to a more lasting, soothing, inspiring, abstract artistic awareness. Writing that does not promote harmony cannot lay any claim to belong to the domain of sublime literature. Literary excellence should contain the element of universality and evidence a capacity to satisfy higher yearnings too.

*Rasaanubhava* of a higher order, which enlivens, leavens and liberates us from the earthy and immediate, should also be among our present concerns. To provide this kind of writing a special set of skills, insights and an understanding of human existence in terms of the spiritual plane, solid inputs in terms of intuitive-imaginative efforts are necessary.

Democratization of literature is fully achieved, thanks to the current political set up. It is time we as a brotherhood of authors turned our attention to the more enduring and for that reason more valuable concerns like aestheticism and spirituality. By dealing with artistic concerns constantly trying to fashion few forms of expression in writing, we can hope to contribute our mite to real happiness and joy, insightful understanding, more thoughtful compassion and wisdom by making life rich and meaningful. One

effective way could be to re-evaluate the classics with a large and open mind and reinterpret them in fresh creative works. The young, the uninitiated and newly educated classes should be given helpful exegeses of our time-tested pieces of literary excellence in the light of our aesthetic categories to enable them to draw inspiration and attempt writing with deeper nuances. This is by no means an easy task.

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### ***Buddha, The Wandering Monk,***

***Colossal Copper Image from Sultanganj, Bengal***

***Gupta Period (320-600AD)***

***Collection of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery***

***(Triveni Mar-Apr 1930, Vol III No. 2)***

## ENDOWMENT LECTURE – 2018

**M. Gopalakrishna**

### **Introduction:**

I deem it an honour to deliver the First Triveni Endowment Lecture in memory of Late I.V Chalapati Rao Garu, a distinguished principal, educationist, orator, writer and editor of Triveni who was a philosopher and guide to citizens, teachers, students and a dear friend.

Born in 1923, Sri Chalapati Rao lived to the ripe age of 93 years and passed away in April 2016 in Hyderabad. Hailing from Machlipatnam, a center of national fervor, he was inspired by the freedom fighters. With the death of his father, Shri Rao had to shoulder the family burden. On completion of his education, he joined as a lecturer in English and served in the Bhimavaram, Eluru and Rajahmundry Government Colleges.

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Reprinted from *First IV Chalapathi Rao Endowment Lecture on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at Vivekananda Institute of Human Excellence, Shri Ramakrishna Mutt, Hyderabad*

His direct recruitment as Principal of Shri Raja Rajeshwari Govt College at Karimnagar was a turning point in his career. He served there for eight years, which raised both his stature as a good teacher and administrator and the reputation of the College. He was posted as Principal of P.R. Government College at Kakinada, which he re-organized to meet the changing requirements.

He was appointed Deputy Director of Public Instruction, a rare honour for a teacher who had not obtained the professional B.Ed. Degree! He made the Department relevant to the needs of the state. For Rao, education with ethics and values was a vision, raising the standards of colleges, a mission and action to provide guidance to teachers and students his passion.

Shri Rao retired from Service in 1978, but was selected as Registrar of the then Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) at Hyderabad where he served for five years. He was associated with the Association for the Aged

and the Andhra Mahila Sabha. Life after retirement was the most fruitful period of his life. Despite losing one eye in a freak accident, and his wife, he overcame the disability and grief by sheer will power, and dedicated his life to the propagation of Indian Ethics, Values and Culture. Shri Rao joined as the Editor of Triveni in 1991 and selflessly served it for over two decades. Sri Yabaluri Raghavaiah Memorial Trust published eight of Rao's books under the series of 'Culture Capsules.'

"Triveni", the literary quarterly, was started at Madras in 1927 with Shri B V Narasimha Rao as Trustee and Shri K. Rama Koteswara Rao as Editor. Its reputation as a literary magazine has spread far and wide. Prof. Y Sreedhar Murthy, the present Managing Trustee took over in 2008.

Shri Ramakrishna Mutt Hyderabad is a revered institution and repository of Vedantic knowledge and instruction. Its mission is selfless service and inculcation of Indian values and ethics amongst students and youth of India and the world, through the Vivekananda Institute of Human Excellence. Shri Rao used to deliver lectures in this hallowed hall.

## **ETHICS AND VALUES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The first Triveni Endowment Lecture on Ethics

and Values for National Development is a befitting tribute to the memory of Shri Chalapati Rao and doubly blessed as it is presided over by Swami Jnanadanandaji, President of R K Mutt. The subject is of enduring relevance as a link between the past and the present and inspiration to create a better future for our country.

### **India – A country and a nation:**

**India** is a sub-continent and territorial entity. It is an ancient country but a young nation. A country is a territorial area united by geography, social, economic, political structure and cultural coherence. A nation is the large group or groups of people residing in a country and united by common descent, language(s), religion(s), ethnicity(s), history(s), culture(s), tradition(s), consent, and consensus and united in thought, word, belief, values, culture and collective action. Such a multi-linguistic, multi-religious, multi-racial, diverse, pluralistic cultural entity is India which is known variously as Hindustan, Indes, Indon, India and **Bharat** and as the land beyond the river Sindhu.

A country, a nation and its people are usually considered synonymous. A nation has a specific **identity** which is a combination of its history, geography, geology, its religions and its people with their ethics and value systems and **way of**

**life.** It is also a cultural concept of what other people and nations think of India and what Indians think about their country, themselves and other countries, nations and people.

**Geologically** India is one of the oldest parts of the globe, the Gondwana land mass, which later drifted and became India, Australia and Africa. The Deccan Plateau is home to some of the oldest rock formations of the world.

**Geographically,** India is a peninsula surrounded by three seas. India is referred to as “*Asethu Himachalam*” land stretching from the Himalayas to the seas. **Our National Song and Anthem** “*Vande Matharam*” and “*Jana Gana Mana*” proudly mention about the land, rivers, waters, regions, crops, people and culture of India. Indians consider India as Mother and motherland and superior even to Heaven! “*Matha, Matrubhumischa, swargadapi gariyasi*”.

**Historically,** India has had an unbroken culture and civilization of over 5000 years, starting from the pre-historic era, the Harappan Civilization, Vedic period and the unbroken continuity till date.

**Culturally,** its influence spread all over the world as the land of knowledge due to its

reputed seats of learning like Nalanda, Nagarjuna and Takshashila Universities. Its scientific, religious and cultural pursuits and achievements were the envy of other nations. Its philosophy, culture and way of life was carried by itinerant preachers from India and visitors to India from all parts of the world. Its diversity, spirit of religious tolerance, hospitality, openness, spiritual knowledge, harmonious economic growth and peaceful co-existence with its neighbours was the envy of the world. It nurtured kingdoms, and some of the earliest democratic and republican societies. It accepted all faiths from Animism to Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and other religions from all over the world. It traded globally and was a commercial haven for Arab traders. Early Christian missionaries like St. Thomas and the Syrian orthodox church took root in India much before it spread elsewhere. Parsis from Iran sought refuge and settled in India. In recent times, ideologies of Democracy, Socialism, Secularism, Communism and Marxism have also taken root.

**India's cultural influence** was widespread as ‘Brihath Bharath’ all over South East Asia, Tibet, parts of China and large tracts up to Afghanistan and Central Asia, primarily due to Sanskrit, Pali and Brahmi texts on religion. It

gave the concept of Zero, Vedic mathematics and Astronomy to the world and exported Yoga, martial arts and way of life. Sanskrit was developed as a refined language with its own grammar and syntax. Hinduism and Buddhism spread all over the world from India.

India's trade was spearheaded by merchants from the East Coast during the rule of Cholas, Pallavas and Kalingas to most of South-east Asia. Trade with Rome and the Middle East and China flourished as evidenced by archaeological finds, artifacts and coins. India's built heritage or its influence is visible in AngkorVat in Cambodia. Its living heritage is seen in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Laos, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, China and other countries. The **"Namaste"** greeting, **names** and **religious beliefs** and stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata and its influence on language, dress, and culture in many countries are signs of India's cultural influence through amity and unity.

Students from all over the world flocked to India for education, professional skills or religious instruction. India exported spices, silks, ideas and scholars and imported gold in the past. Today, Indian scholars migrate to advanced countries for study! The nature of trade may be

changing, but the exchange of knowledge and technology continues between the East and the West.

India's lasting contribution to the world are its **spirit of 'humanity', pluralism**, tolerance, acceptance of diversity, peaceful co-existence and assimilation driven by its idealist concepts of *"Ano Bhadra Krithavo Yanthu Visawatah"* or "Let noble thoughts come to us from all parts of the world" and *"Vasudaiva Kutumbakam"* that "the world is but one family". India believes that tolerance is culture, *"Sahanam eva Sanskruthi"*

The world has shrunk with better communications while technology has led to the death of time and distance. We were slow in adopting the earlier three Industrial Revolutions. We are now on the threshold of the Fourth Industrial revolution of Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Frontier sciences, Space voyages, 3 D Printing, genetics and the like and cannot afford to miss it. Meanwhile, nations have moved from dependence to independence to inter-dependence and now to Internet-dependence! Local, Regional and National is now merging into International. Local events anywhere have an impact everywhere in the world. Local has truly become global! Nations have to now become more **global in outlook**



**while being local, focal and where necessary Vocal!**

Up till the 1750s, India was a prosperous nation. In 1830, it accounted for 23% of the then World's GDP while China accounted for 25%. The British rule of 200 years impoverished the country. Only after Independence, has India come into its own. It needs to now go fast-forward to fulfill its destiny and provide for its citizens, rapid economic development and prosperity.

### **India's Constitution:**

India achieved freedom after the world's most unique struggle in an Indian way through Ahimsa or Non-violence. It framed the Constitution of India in accord with its history, culture, ethics and values. The ideals of India are enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution, which states that:

“WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all;

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation.

Do hereby Adopt, Enact and give to ourselves this constitution”

The Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties in the Constitution elucidate India's aims, hopes and aspirations, which is to create an “**Inclusive Society**” where **Opportunity** for all must be provided; **Competence** built to utilize the opportunity and **Access** provided to avail such opportunities to improve the **Standards of Living** which is the paramount need. Successive governments in India both at the Union and State level have been engaged in the national task of economic development through various Plans, Policies, Missions, Statements, Schemes and Projects.

The faster and higher rate of growth of the economy can alone ensure alleviation of poverty, create more employment and bring about overall improvement in the social and economic progress of India. Our economic development is dependent on the internal rate of savings, a culture of thrift and investments

with assurance of good returns and surpluses for further investment to spur the rate of growth. Economic success depends on ICOR, the incremental capital output ratio. India being short of capital has to attract and secure foreign investments in industry, infrastructure, technology and managerial expertise. India has a balance of payments deficit in foreign trade which has to be bridged. India has seen rapid growth of the services sector and steep decline of the agricultural sector with static levels of productivity and stagnation in the industrial sector. We have, of late, secured the highest foreign investment in the world; and have diversified the range of manufacturing to meet both local and foreign demand. The Government's programs of Make in India, Build in India, Skill India, Digital India and Start-up India are the new initiatives taken. However, a lot more needs to be done in skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling of our people to fit in with the new requirements and create more employment. India has improved its rate of growth of GDP to an average of 7% over a fairly long period and has recently even overtaken China's rate of growth, a heartening development.

### **India, a potential Power House:**

India is the largest democracy of the world and

the second most populous country with a large demand for goods and services and greater potential for higher growth. It is the fifth largest economy of the world and poised to become the third largest. People below the age of 35 in India constitute more than half the population. This ensures for India, a thirty year “**window of opportunity**” amidst the world's ageing population. We have to gainfully utilize our human capital to fill the skill gaps between our levels and that of the world in terms of Knowledge, Technology, Strategy, Performance, Productivity, Competitiveness, Credibility and Leadership. This involves development of Intellectual, Organizational, Commercial and Social capital.

**India's strengths** as a Nation are its Democracy, its Demography, its Diversity, its Diaspora and its growing Demand for goods, services and technology. Its worldwide Diaspora are the source of ideas, investments, innovations, technology, start-ups, and managerial expertise. Its demand, both present and potential has to be more effectively utilized to leverage its growth. We have to skill, re-skill and up-skill our population. However, what is lacking is Discipline and sharper focus on our goals and measures to accelerate action in a time bound manner.

**The bane of India's progress** is Crime, Corruption, Communalism and Casteism, and atrocities on Women and Dalits. Even more disturbing is the nexus between corruption and crime and the links between politicians and criminals! In popular parlance, we have to break the chain of corruption of *Neta, Dada, Lala, Baba, Bibi, Jhola, Haftha, Mamool* and the like. Corruption arises due to wrongful use, abuse and misuse of authority for personal gain. We have to make Corruption which is now a "Low risk-High return" game to a "High risks – No Return" and pain and prison game. W.Gladstone as Prime Minister of England said "it is the responsibility of a leader to make it easy for people to do good and make it difficult to do bad". This is required to eliminate corruption! It also requires political will, administrative skills and public goodwill.

Our drawbacks are the lack of **Character**, Commitment, Courage and Conviction that with concerted action we can create our own destiny and build a great future for our country.

The policy and agenda of the country must be National Development which provides for universal welfare of the people by elimination of poverty. We must provide equal opportunities by way of quality education,

including vocational and futuristic digital skills, Better Health, Housing, Roads, Ports, Water, Transportation, Infrastructure and Services to help citizens to lead happy lives. We have to rise in the rating of the Human Development Index and move towards the "Happiness Index" in line with India's ethics and values. Happiness comes when people like and enjoy doing what they are doing for their own progress and that of the Country.

### **Priority needs:**

India has to monitor and keep abreast of developments both within the country and events elsewhere in the world that could impact and impede its progress.

Maintenance of **Internal and External Security** is the foremost need, particularly, in the light of our past history as a nation when we were subjugated for over 1000 years and our recent border experiences and the continuing wars of attrition. "**Food Security**" for the population has to be provided along with nutritional security, "**Water Security**" must be ensured along with water Use-efficiency and Conservation. "Waste not – want not", drip irrigation and re-circulation of water, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover and Refine" must become the national creed. "**Energy security**"

is very important and we should increase renewable energy utilization and provide power for all at affordable cost. “**Ecological security**” by way of reducing pollution, green gases and utilization of waste and **coping with climate change** is essential for agricultural growth and productivity. Development has a meaning only when we ensure “**Security of livelihood**”. All these securities are inter-related. Our task is to ensure the five “A”s of Availability, Accessibility, Adequacy, Appropriateness and Affordability of goods and services.

The security of livelihood is emphasized in the Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Organization (UNO) and the Millennium Development Goals and are the three Ls of **Literacy, Longevity and Living standards** which is judged by per capita income. India ranks very low on the Human Development Index. We now have the Rights to Education, Food, Employment, Information and other services. Education has been made compulsory up to the age of 14; but we still have the problems of poor quality and phenomenon of drop-outs. Enrolment at college and university level and in technical and Ph.D courses has to improve in terms of numbers, standards and quality. R & D i.e. Research and Development must become Result and Delivery!

India needs to do a lot more by providing employment and livelihood through skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling, “*Nityam Adhiyanah*” or continuous learning must be our creed.

**Gender disparities** have to be reduced and removed. It is an irony that 50% of the population, women, are not adequately educated, enlightened, enabled, empowered and gainfully employed to play their rightful role in the society. It is estimated that if all the women in India are provided gainful employment, it would immediately increase India’s GDP by 27% and the per capita income by 31%. Special programs for awareness and protection of the girl child and women should get priority. Atrocities on women should get the severest punishment. Women’s representation must move up in line with their population. In the western world, Woman is depicted as Eve, the temptress in the Garden of Eden and cause of downfall of man. In India, she is “*Shakti*” or strength and creation. We must empower women and make them creative and economically strong.

Development of a country will be successful if it is in line with its culture, ethics and values. The development efforts and success of Europe, US, Japan, Korea, China, Indonesia and

Singapore are traceable to the importance accorded to education including skilling for manufacture, services and health and sanitation. This was made possible by instilling pride in the country's heritage and vision of a better future. Progress could be either development oriented or export oriented, but preferably a harmonious combination. Self-sufficiency and self-reliance must continue to be our priority.

### **Governance:**

Governance comes from the French word 'Gubernare' which means rule, but with the consent and consensus of the ruled. Governance is the higher form and standard of administration. It is the role of the captain of a ship who is steering and not that of the oarsmen rowing the ship. The captain is responsible to set the direction and take the ship speedily and safely to its destination. Governance is the compass that sets the direction and the clock that sets the pace of progress. Governance requires understanding of personal and public good to steer the country. Gita advises Indians to be Satvik in outlook and Rajasik in action for good governance. "*Pravrittincha Nivrittincha*"

**Governance** is defined as the philosophy, policy, principles, processes and practices for exercise of political, economic and

administrative authority at all levels in the management of a country's affairs and utilization of its administrative, social and economic resources for public good. It has the **Political** dimension, represented by the Legislative and Electoral process, the **Aggregative** dimension of linking decentralized Panchayati Raj institutions with the Legislative Assemblies and Parliament. More Functions, Funds, Functionaries and Focus could make them vibrant. The **Executive dimension** covers the functions of the Executive; the **Legislative** dimension enacts the laws and regulations to help regulate the conduct of national affairs. The Socializing dimension which maintains cordial relationship among and between the people and the Government. We also have the **External Dimension** which is concerned with International diplomacy, trade and commerce. But the breath, essence and spirit of governance is "people's participation".

**Government** is the instrumentality through which Governance is delivered. Our government is emphasizing "Minimum government and Maximum governance". It is said that "if you have good people, you will have good governance". The delivery of good Governance requires an effective and honest Government which is expected to be "SMART"

i.e. Simple, Moral, Accountable, Reliable, Responsive and Transparent. Good ethics, morals and values means good administration and business. A Government and business without ethics is a Government and business at risk!

Governance has three major actors, the **State**, the **Market** and **Civil Society**. The State is the country or nation and Government. Market is trade and commerce both internal and external and Civil Society comprises the citizens, media and non-government organizations.

### **Governance in India in the past:**

**The ‘Vedas’ are among the earliest records of mankind. “Vid” means to know, to listen and to learn. The Upanishads represent the quintessence of the Vedas, while Vedanta explains the purpose and end result of all spiritual endeavour. Vedas are not a compilation by an individual but the distilled wisdom of mankind. While Vedas prescribed the standards, and leaders practiced them, the *Rishis* and rulers were expected to honour, maintain and continue the traditions and co-relate them to ground realities.**

The four- fold path **prescribed for people in the *Smriti* was to follow “*Shruthi*” or the**

**Vedas. ‘*Smriti*’, remember the *Ithihasas and Puranas*, practice ‘*Sadachara*’ or good conduct and follow ethical practices and lastly “*Swasyacha Priyam Atmana*” or act in accordance with the shrill voice of one’s own conscience, the final judge.**

Our scriptures like Ramayana noted that India comprises of ‘peoples’ of different races, languages and cultures and needs to be governed and welfare assured in a “just” and “equitable” manner, “*nyayena margena palayantham*” and provide for security of life of not only men; but also animals and wild beasts. The state must deploy the services of intellectuals for the proper and just administration of the country.

### **Governance and Public Leaders:**

People are exhorted to become leaders and not followers! But “Unless one is a good Leader, he cannot secure followers”. It is said “To obey is to learn to command”. Governance requires people to understand that “means are as important as the ends to achieve our goals”. Albert Einstein, the scientist remarked that in the modern world, “there is perfection of the means but confusion of the ends”. We need clarity of both the means and ends.

In the context of falling standards of Governance



and public service, Britain set up the Lord Nolan and Neill Q C Committee in 1997 to examine the requirements of leadership and the conduct and character expected of a public leader and a public servant. The Committee recommended that all public leaders and public servants have to develop and follow the essential qualities of Selflessness, Integrity, Openness, Accountability, Honesty, Objectivity and Leadership. India must actively cultivate these qualities amongst public leaders and public servants for good Governance and fulfillment of Citizens Charters.

### **Vision:**

India must develop a **National Vision** with a perspective for the next fifty years or a two generational plan. A Vision needs many Missions which require Action. But it is the national Passion alone that can drive and sustain the Action. Such action must also have elements of compassion, dispassion and secure unity of people's thoughts and action.

India has always believed that Vision or **Kalpna** must be backed by **Sankalpna** or determination, followed by '**Parikalpna**' or a sound Plan of Action and '**Rupakalpna**' or building the country and its image and '**Karya Nirvahana**' or doing sincere work and

**'Karya Sadhana'** or the achievement of the goal. Towards this end, the elders have to guide and youth must become growth engines and drivers of progress who propel the country in the fast forward mode to its rightful destiny and make India a beacon light for the world.

### **Change Management:**

We have a global environment of uncertainty, volatility, complexity and ambiguity. India as a nation can survive and thrive only when it can change fast in tune with global needs. It needs sight, deep insight and foresight and preparedness to negotiate the global conditions. Change is the only constant in life and transformation is the way of life. It is not the speed of change that should worry us but the slowness of our response to change! To be successful, we have to "Read the change, Lead the change and Ride the change." No wonder, rapid and beneficial change is the thrust of promises held out in the manifestoes of political parties!

### **The Gita's Upadesa:**

The Bhagavad Gita is the Lord's own song and sermon delivered through a process of dialogue and conversation '*Sambodhana Boditham*'. It says that the leader has to set high standards, and follow those standards so that common

people may emulate them. A Leader has to exemplify and simplify matters. He has to be Kingly outside and Saintly inside. A king has to be actively calm and calmly active. Albert Einstein when asked about his concept of leadership, said “A leader is one who sees simplicity in complexity, opportunity in difficulty and harmony in discord”.

The Gita says that a leader has to be a Thinker and Doer. A leader must have equanimity of mind “*Samatvam Yoga Uchyate*” and that Yoga is linking thought and action, leading to efficiency and effectiveness in the work i.e. “*Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam*”. The last verse in the Gita says that when Yogeshwara Krishna i.e. Lord Krishna as Yogi, the thinker, joins hands with Arjuna, the ready archer, decisive action will take place and lead to assured victory, firm policy, wealth and success. Our focus and action combined with Lords blessings is required to secure victory.

**Ethics and Epics** of the past have stressed the need for leaders to set high standards and put them in practice so that others follow them. The culture, ethics and values of a country influence its growth whether fast or slow. Sea-faring nations have always excelled in global trade and commerce. Migrations over the centuries

have taken place in search of land, wealth and livelihood. The ethos of a country determines its choice of development and its direction and pace. The English character was forged on the play fields as fair play. Germany’s growth is traced to their national commitment to discipline enforced by the strict School Headmasters. The staunch belief in liberty, equality and fraternity led to the French Revolution! Unity of the workers led to the formation of the Soviet Union. Search for a better life by immigrants made the USA, the land of enterprise and opportunities. Technological adoption, adaptation and miniaturization with quality and value addition are propelling the progress of Japan, Korea and South East Asia. Search for better life, dominance and recognition as the center of the Universe is spearheading the development of China. India as a country is big and must remain big and strong by forging unity within and amity outside the country.

National Development requires clarity of concept, context, content, connect and communication of objectives. It also requires clarity of Goals, Roles, Responsibilities, Resources available, Routes to be followed, Risks to be assessed, Results to be expected and Recognition and Reward. Chandogya Upanishad says that only a combination of

Knowledge (Vidya), Faith (Shraddha) and taking into account attendant circumstances, Upanishada and linking of the micro to the macro needs can deliver success.

## **ETHICS, MORALS AND VALUES**

### **ETHICS**

Ethos is a Greek word denoting spirit. It is akin to the Indian concept of life-force or Prana or Swasa. The practice of ethos is ethikos which becomes a habit in course of time. Ethos is the spirit of the individual, family, society, country or nation which influences the way the people and organizations think, do, act or react. Ethics includes morals and moral principles which pervade all walks of life. It is society's mechanism of self-regulation to maintain order and good relationships in a society. It is universal in nature and is the unwritten law which people voluntarily comply with. Good conduct and Goodness expected by society is Society's ethos. The Greek motto is "Logos, Pathos and Ethos" or every act must be done with logic and passion which must be tempered by ethos. Ethics pervade- our life as:

**Personal Ethics** is a person's own ethos, personal code of behavior and his values. The concepts of "live, let live and help live" and

"Love thy neighbor as thyself" and "Help ever, Hurt never" have to be kept in view.

**Family Ethics:** The family is the foundation of society. The Ethos of a family is "one for all and all for one" and "United we stand, divided, we fall". The individual "I" becomes the plural "We" in a family. The Eastern and Indian ethos is "We", while the Western ethos is "I" or individual which continues even after marriage! The Indian family adheres to the concept of "Lakshman Rekha" which fixes the limits which should not be transgressed. On a query by King Chandra Gupta as to the strength of his empire, Kautilya told him that the ethics of the families were the real strengths of the Mauryan Kingdom as '*Matha*' or Mother represents "Satyam" or Truth; "*Pitha*" or father is '*Jnanam*' or knowledge and wisdom; "*Sakha*" or friends teach "*Daya*" or compassion; "*Bratah*" or brothers and sisters teach us "*Dharma*" or Righteousness; "*Pathni*" or wife is "*Shanthi*" or peace and "*Putra*" or children teach us "*Kshama*" or forgiveness.

**Professional Ethics** is belief in Truth, Logic, Rationality and Public Safety. It requires updating, up-keeping and up-holding the values of the profession, ecological requirements and public good.

**Organizational Ethics** expect its employees to adhere to the prescribed Code of Conduct and ethics, and to comply with to the law, equity and social acceptance along with competence, good customer care, quality, value addition and public relations.

**Public Service Ethics** stresses the Five Es of efficiency, effectiveness, equality, equity and ethos apart from Indian-ness, Integrity, Objectivity, Impartiality, Openness and adherence to the tenets of duty and service to the citizens. Service or 'SEVA' represents Selflessness, Empathy, Voluntarism and Attentiveness.

**National Ethics** is echoed in the seal and motto of India as "*Satyameva Jayathe*" or "Truth alone Triumphs". We believe in "*Satyam Sivam Sundaram*" and "*Asathoma Satgamaya*". We are also enjoined to "*Satyam Vada – Dharmam chara*" – Speak the truth and follow the Dharma. We will now have to add "**Karma Kuru**" – do your duty to it! Everything in the world belongs to God and we should take what we need with circumspection and not covet other's wealth. "*Tyaktena Bhunjitha*"

**Business Ethics:** The purpose of a business is to create a customer, retain and delight him.

Profit must be the result of value addition which comes with quality, timely delivery, reasonable price and service. Price is fixed by the producer while value is reckoned by the customer. The brand image is a function of reliability, durability, maintainability and after sales service and customer care.

Business requires new ideas, innovations and entrepreneurship. Success is dependent on three Cs of Competence, Customer satisfaction and Competitiveness which are inter-related. Ethical business requires us to combine quality with delivery and service at the most reasonable price. The ethics of a business is to meet the demand by supply and service to the customer, the nation.

## MORALS

**Morals** enable us to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, virtue and vice. Ethos is moralistic. Morals teach us that man must grow from 'Selfishness' to 'Unselfishness' to 'Selflessness' i.e. from *Swartha* to *Niswartha* to *Aswartha*! The nation requires citizens to move from *Swahitha* to *Swa janahitha*, *Anya janahitha*, *Alpa Jana Hitha*, *Bahujana Hitha* and *Sarva Jana Hitha*.

The simple test to decide what is moral and what is not is that if a person does something

and feels good about it, it is moral. If he does something and feels bad about it, it may not be moral. All unselfish acts are considered as moral acts. Morals help us to bring about unity in our thought, word and deed. i.e. '*Manasa, Vacha, Karmana*'. Morals represent goodness. No wonder, mothers teach children to learn to "Do Good, Be Good and Feel Good". A famous quote on Governance is "There is **more** to Governance than Governance" which refers to the moral principles and actions that are important in Governance.

## VALUES

**Value** is an enduring system of belief or faith which one follows. It is a personal code of conduct and the preferred behaviour which is expected in a society. Values enable us to "Live, Let live and Help live". It also tells us "to do unto others what you expect them to do unto you". Values are anchors in difficult situations and help you to remain stable and calm during difficult and turbulent times. Good values help in building "Character" and good conduct. All religions lay emphasis on the importance of Character and Values. We have Indian values and Universal values. Important Indian Values are *Satya, Dharma, Shanti, Ahimsa, Prema, Nyaya, Gnana, Daya, Dama* or Control of ego, *Dana* or Charity, *Yagna* or sacrifice and

*Samathva* or Harmony. Almost all Indian values are accepted as Universal values showing the validity of our concepts and practices. Albert Einstein, the eminent scientist said, "Try not to become a person of success; but rather try to become a person of value."

India has always emphasized certain values in business like Truth, Trust, Transparency, Tolerance and Tact. Due to rapid progress of technology, we now have to add another "T" namely Technology to the list. Our inability to adhere to the Ts has led to avoidable disaster. What ethics, morals and values teach us is that you need to cultivate morals to be good, follow ethics "To Be", and values "to become". Education helps us to listen, think, question, know, do, understand and learn to become and be a good human being.

Ethics, Morals and Values together, strengthen concord in society and ensure peace and progress in the world. Christian ethics and values emphasize Love, Service and Sacrifice; Buddhism teaches people to follow the eight-fold path, Jainism preaches non-violence, service, charity, love and justice. Islam preaches One God and the message of brotherhood, piety, prayer, fasts and charity.

Hinduism preaches unity of all religions "*Ekam*

*Sat Vipra bahuda Vadanti*” and that man must grow from individualism to universalism. “*Vyaktitva to Vikasa Vyaktitva*”. Hinduism is a religion that does not claim to be the only true religion. It wants everyone to be a better person. A Hindu can be a better Hindu, a Muslim can be a better Muslim, a Christian can be a better Christian and man a better man!

### **Dharma or Righteousness:**

In India, Dharma is considered the eternal or universal law. The nearest equivalent in English is probably Righteousness. Dharma is defined as “*Dharmo Dharayathi Ithyahu* i.e. Dharma upholds order in the society and “*Dharmo darayathi Prajah*” that which brings people together and binds them. Dharma is “*Swayam-Bhuva*” or self-born for societal welfare. The King and his laws and orders have to conform to Dharma. A popular saying is “*Dharmo Rakshathi Rakshithah, Hathova Hanthi*” i.e. Dharma if protected, protects – Dharma if killed, kills. In India, all laws have to conform to provisions of the Constitution of India and Dharma as decided by the ethos and conscience of the Judges.

**Ethics, Values and Culture of a country and its economy are inseparable.** They cumulatively impact on its people and styles of

governance and management. In the Japanese System, consensus building, service and quality is important. The European system accords importance to quality, ecology and delivery. In many countries, price is the differential. India must develop its own brand and style of **Indian management** where ethics, morals and values along with the culture of quality, delivery, price and service become our unique selling proposition.

To ‘enculture’ the development of business in India, we must ‘**Embrain**’ our ideas, ‘**Embody**’ our beliefs in our instructions, ‘**Encode**’ our logos, ‘**Embed**’ our Ethos and Values in our systems, ‘**Empower**’ our employees and ‘**Enculture**’ and incorporate India and its values in our products. We need to Be Indian and Make in India and Enculture India in our products and persuade the world to Buy Indian.

Ethics, Morals and values are passed on from one generation to the next. It is important to start teaching Ethics, Morals and Values in our schools and develop leadership skills among students. Our scriptures say that excellence must come from within “*Athmana vindathe veeryam*”. Similarly “*Athmana Mokshartham - Jana Hithayacha*” – while seeking our own salvation, we must secure the welfare of the people.



To succeed, students need to cultivate “**Praveeniyam**” or individual “proficiency” and convert it into “**Kaushalyam**” or team or collective “efficiency” and secure “**Saphalyam**” or “achievement” of goals. Students should follow the 3 Es of **Excel** oneself, **Exceed** the expectations of parents and teachers and **Expand** their horizons, their personality and perspectives. They must know that means are as important as the ends of their efforts. Albert Einstein said “in the modern world, there is a perfection of the means but confusion of the ends”. Students must be not only Exam Ready, Employment Ready, Entrepreneurship Ready but more importantly, **Life Ready**.

All personal and national development requires us to collaborate and cooperate for mutual benefit. In business, we need what Americans call PAL or Partnerships, Alliances and Linkages. The Gita says, “*Parasparam Bhavayanta Shreyah Paramavapsyata*”. We must develop good feelings and relationships for mutual benefits. We must also follow the Rig Vedic tenet of, “**Sangachadvam, SamVadhadvam, Samvo Manamsi Janatham**” to succeed Let us walk together, let us talk together and then let us walk the talk together.

The students must remember the Upanishadic exhortation, of Swami Vivekananda, “Arise, Awake and Stop not till the goal is reached”. To reach that goal, the students will have to do their **Home-work, Hard-work, Smart work, Team-work** and build a **Network** and know never forget that it is sincere **work** that achieves our aims and objectives.

They should also be aware of and marshal the **five God given Shakthis** i.e. **Gnana** Shakthi, **Prana** Shakthi, **Ichha** Shakthi, **Deeksha** Shakthi and **Kriya** Shakthi” and to never forget their debt of gratitude to their Mother, Father, Guru and God and our Motherland India, which makes our success possible. And also continue to consider guests as God in disguise. *Athithi Devo Bhava* to create employment, to attract tourists and earn valuable foreign exchange!

Maharishi Patanjali, the father of Yoga Sutra, the essence of Yoga, stressed the importance of purpose, inspiration and aspiration for success.

“When you are inspired by a great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bounds, your mind transcends limitation, your consciousness expands in every direction. And you find yourself in a new great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties

and talents come alive and you discover yourself a greater person by far, than you ever dreamt yourself to be”.

If our youth and nation become conscious of their potential, faculties and talents and transcend limitations, they will become greater persons and make India, a great country, a good democracy, a prosperous economy, the polestar and cynosure of the world.

I would like to conclude my talk with the stirring message of the convocation address delivered 7000 years ago, to the outgoing graduates by the Kulapathi of Takshashila University, with the mantra of “*Asma Bhava – Parashu Bhava*”. Be as strong as a rock in your determination and be as sharp as the edge of the battle axe in intellect. And if the edge gets blunted, go back

to the hard rock of your determination and hone it to the same sharpness so that we can fight one more battle and win the war of life! Let these two thoughts be the golden weapons of India, our motherland, Bharat.

Let me conclude by thanking the learned audience, the Sabha, for the patient hearing and conclude by echoing your feelings that India will strive to fulfill the timeless prayer

Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah,

Sarve santu nira mayaah,

Sarve bhadrani pasyantu

Ma kaschid dukhabhaga bhaveth

**LOKAH SAMASTHA - SUKHINO  
BHAVANTU**

## On Shashi Tharoor's 'Nehru -The Invention of India'

**K. Gopalakrishna Murthy**

Biography - Short and Simple written by Shashi Tharoor, a New York based under secretary to the United Nations Organisation and an Author of good repute in his own right, makes an interesting reading to the present generation of readers. Many biographies on Nehru came out in the past. The newly released one based on authentic biographies on Nehru by S. Gopal and M. V. Chalapati Rao and many others. Tharoor consulted and took pains to gather material from various reliable sources and wove the story. The narration is novel-like abounding in anecdotes which capture imagination. All the ten chapters are full of historical happenings that take the readers to the distant past.

Nehru's early life right from his birth, his education, his family relationship with his parents and other members of the family is a beautiful narration of events that pass before our mind's eye as we read sentence by sentence. A stream like flow.

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The aristocratic ambiance in which Nehru was brought up since his childhood has been very vividly described by the author. Motilal Nehru, the leading lawyer, at the behest of Madan Mohan Malaviya, received the blessings of a Yogi for a male child and the dream of Motilal and the blessings of the Yogi came true. This book gives us an insight into Nehru's upbringing and how he grew until he was sent to Harrow for his studies at the age of fifteen.

Now let us go to Tharoor. "An elegant house named Anand Bhavan or (Abode of Bliss) in desirable residential area, with mostly British neighbours, fancy carriage, a stable of Arabian steeds, and a wardrobe full of English suits, many tailored in Savile Row. Jawaharlal grew up surrounded by every imaginable creature comfort. Not only did he have Electricity and running water in the house (both unheard of luxuries of most of his compatriots) but the family was equipped with such unusual perquisites as a private swimming pool and Tennis court. Motilal ordered the latest toys for his son from England including the newly invented tricycle".

Such was the princely luxury amidst which his child hood passed out. As a child he did not show any extraordinary academic brilliance. He even was known as indifferent. He was brought up by the two British governesses at home. A private tutor the Irish French FERDINAND. T. Brooks who taught him English poetry and initiated the young boy to English classics such as Scott, and Dickens, Conan Doyle and Mark Twain. His efforts to study Sanskrit did not go any further than to read Upanishads and Bhagavadgita in English translation. He came under the spell of Annie Besant's theosophy at the age of 13. But this did not last long. Any religious sentiments he nourished was due to the women folk at home who attached importance to Hindu customs and religious traditions. He was put in British public school, Harrow at the age of 15. Once more let Tharoor say about public school.

By an intriguing coincidence some 15 years earlier the school had educated a young man called Winston Spencer Churchill who after stints in the colonies was already embarking upon a prodigious career in British public life.

Though both Nehru and Churchill were the Harrovians they had diametrically opposed views on India. Churchill once said that India is neither a country nor a nation. It is merely a geographical expression. It is no more a single

country than the equator. And Nehru anglicised product of Harrow and Cambridge disproved the arrogant assertion of Churchill and became the chief Architect of modern India which Tharoor brought out in his Biography 'Nehru- The invention of India'.

It is a part of history that this princely Nehru came under the influence of saintly Mahatma Gandhi and plunged into the freedom struggle. Those were the days when the Indian National Congress had been run by the Moderates, who were satisfied with ritual adoption of prayers and petitions imploring British rulers to do better by India. At the instance of Mrs. Annie Besant, a friend of Nehru's family, he joined the home rule league and he made his maiden public speech on 20th June 1916.

Thus began his political life which had weathered many a storm since then. Tharoor has dealt with the history of pre independent era and the part played by Nehru with an analysis clear and critical in its own way. Some of the incidents go to prove that Motilal was Nehru's physical father and Nehru rose to a height and proved himself a political father of Motilal and made his father feel proud of his son.

Till the dawn of freedom the role Nehru played was tremendous. He showed his mettle, his devotion, his commitment and his loyalty and

stood by Gandhi. His independent spirit did not allow him to merely remain an ‘Yes’ man to Gandhi. He was frank, fearless and forthright on many issues that came under debate. Even when he differed from Gandhi on issues so dear to Gandhi, in the larger interest of the country he reconciled himself. Perhaps this made Gandhi say that his mantle would fall on Nehru, but not on Rajaji who was earlier acclaimed as his “conscience keeper”.

India became free on 15th August 1947 maimed and cut into two nations. Jinnah’s obduracy, Hindu-Muslim unrest, Lord Mount Batten’s diplomacy led to partition. Jawaharlal Nehru became the first Prime minister of free India with a 14-member cabinet, with Sardar Patel as Deputy Prime minister. These events Tharoor, the author dealt with in lucid and interesting way.

Nehru’s life is a Saga of suffering and sacrifice. He knew no rest. Always worried, but alert to realities. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu on Nehru’s 50th birthday sent her greetings, which says. “I do not think personal happiness, comfort, leisure, wealth... can have much place in your life... sorrow, suffering, anguish, strife, yes, these are the predestined gifts of life for you ...you are a man of destiny born to be alone in the midst of crowds - deeply loved but little understood”. This assessment was shared by even his daughter Indira Gandhi.

**TRIVENI**

He struck fresh chords of friendship with China, which ultimately ended up in fiasco. China attacked India. India was not prepared for defence. The then defence minister V. K. Krishna Menon a close friend of Nehru, neglected his portfolio. The non-aligned policy of Nehru on one hand, the utter negligence of Menon on the other, led to the Indo-China war, which ultimately told on Nehru’s health. The public and parliament turned on Menon instead; not even the loyal support of Nehru could save him and Menon was forced out of the Government. Nehru, let down by those in whom he had placed such a trust and betrayed by his own idealism was a broken man. He was taken ill suddenly for the first time after China had let him down. This led to many other issues in the country. On May 27<sup>th</sup> 1964, a date astonishingly foretold by one of his Minister’s favourite astrologers Haveli Ram Joshi, Jawaharlal Nehru passed away in his sleep after a massive stroke. Sleep had come to Nehru at 74. The nation mourned and wept.

A prolific writer Nehru wrote many books including, Discovery of India, Autobiography, and Glimpses of World History are some of the books that secure for him a page in history. They remain classics marked by chaste language and chiselled diction and a fund of information presented in capsule form. He may even be forgotten as a patriot and statesman, but will always be remembered as a man of

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letters. With active and industrious habits he worked for 16 to 17 hours a day. He rarely fell ill. He adopted scientific out-look. He was an agnostic like Bertrand Russel. He disliked ease and laziness. He was a modern saint strayed into politics. Tagore looked upon him as one greater than his deeds and truer than his surroundings.

By the late 1950's Nehru was widely considered a poor judge of men; and not merely by his critics, even by his admirers. His cabinet colleague Raj Kumari Amrut Kaur put it bluntly that Nehru was not a good judge of character and therefore easily deceived. He was not averse to flattery and there was conceit in him which made him at once intolerant. His very loyalty to his friends blinded him to their faults. He could not be ruthless as leader and his leadership was weakened thereby. But Nehru's own conduct was exemplary. When a trivial wealth tax was levied on his property he insisted it be assessed five times higher. His charismatic personality mesmerised the crowds. They looked at him with awe and admiration. Whether they understood him or not they remained hypnotised gazing at him. In the words of Tharoor let us see Nehru as a speaker.

He had been known to leap of the stage and physically attack hecklers in his audience -

became an olympian presence at public meetings around the country. Nehru made magnificent speeches usually with notes, but he was not a great orator. The British statesman Lord Pathick-Lawrence described Jawaharlal's style as Prime Minister.

“Unlike a European or American orator he does not commence on a bold or emphatic note or and with a carefully prepared rhetorical peroration. His voice begins quietly; almost imperceptibly like a piece of Indian Music, it rises to a height of passionate pleading and fades away at the end into silence. And his listeners are greatly moved alike by his sincerity and his restraint.

A globetrotter. He does not belong to India alone. He is a world citizen. He was democratic in spirit, aristocratic by birth, agnostic by belief. He swore by Lincoln's principles of democracy and Mahatma's non-violence. He is not free from human weaknesses, frailties and failures. He has merits and demerits both of them are mighty. They are the two faces of the same coin. The grateful nation accepted him with both.

Thus, he became Prince Charming, The darling of the millions. To any discerning reader Shashi Tharoor's 'Nehru the invention of India' is a Source Biography.





*Pushpa Ankara*



The Angkor Vat Temple

