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Due to unavoidable reasons we were not able to release the Diamond Jubilee (October - December 1988) Number on time. We express our sincere regret for the inconvenience caused to you.

With this double number Vol. 37 is complete. The new volume (No. 38) begins with the January - March 1989 number (instead of April - June 1989) which may kindly be noted.

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LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY

Founded in 1923

Vol. 57 No. 3

Oct. - Dec. 1988

DIAMOND JUBILEE NUMBER

*Founded by*

K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO

*Editors*

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## INFORMATION ABOUT TRIVENI

TRIVENI is published in April, July, October and January, a new volume commencing in April every year. Subscriptions may begin with any Number but no enrolments will be made for periods of less than a year.

### RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION

	<i>Surface Mail</i>	<i>Air Mail</i>
India and Sri Lanka		Rs. 90
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Other Asian Countries	80	120
North America	U.S. \$ 18	U.S. \$ 28
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CHANGE OF ADDRESS should be intimated to the office, at least a fortnight before the date of publication of the journal. If, however, the change of address is only temporary, arrangements may be made by the subscriber with the local Post Office.

All correspondence relating to subscriptions, advertisements, etc., is to be addressed to Manager, Triveni, Ravi's College Buildings, Brodiepet, Chittoor - 522 002.

All correspondence pertaining to the editorial service including exchange journals is to be addressed to the Editor Triveni Machilipatnam - 521 001.

*Printed and Published by C. V. N. Dhan*

*at the Don Bosco Technical School Press, Guntur - 1.*

*Editors: Dr. Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao and C. V. N. Dhan*



TRIVENI is devoted to Art, Literature, and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.

TRIVENI seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit. All movements that make for Idealism in India, as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the TRIVENI — the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom, and Power.

#### THE "TRIVENI" SYMBOL

Padma (the Lotus) represents the purity of Love, Jyoti (the Flame) the light of Wisdom, and Vajra (the Thunderbolt of Indra) the splendour of Power.

## OUR THANKS

To all the business magnates and officers and other friends who helped us in securing advertisements for this number we express our grateful thanks.

— Manager, *Trivedi*

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# THE SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF TRIVENI

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Murali Venkatesa Iyengar, H.V. Ramaswami, V. Srikumaraiah,  
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Madras March 5th 1972



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Prof. A. D. Senanayake, Sri K. Chandrasekhara and  
Sri Bhavani Narasimha Rao



Sri Balam: Dev, Sri Bhavani Narasimha Rao and  
Sri K. Chandrasekhara

# DIAMOND JUBILEE OF TRIVENI

GLNCE 22 APRIL 1999



DR. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO, EDITOR, WELCOMING THE GUEST ON THE DIAL. SEATED ARE SRI C. RAGHAVACHARI, EDITOR, VISALANDHRA, AND PROF. K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTHY, VICE-CHAIRMAN, UGL.



FROM LEFT: SRI C. RAGHAVACHARI, EDITOR, VISALANDHRA; SRI C. V. N. DHAN, CO-EDITOR, TRIVENI; PROF. K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTHY, VICE-CHAIRMAN, UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION; DR. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO, EDITOR, TRIVENI.



DR. BHAVARATHI NARASIMHA RAO PRESENTING THE MEMENTO  
TO PROF. K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTHY, VICE-CHAIRMAN, UGC



PROF. K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTHY, VICE-CHAIRMAN, UGC  
RELEASING THE DIAMOND JUBILEE NUMBER OF TRIVENI WHILE  
DR. BHAVARATHI NARASIMHA RAO, AND SRI L. HASTAVACHARI  
LOOK ON

## SECTION I

From the old numbers of "Triveni"

## SECTION I

From the old numbers of "Tivert"

# Editorial

## ABOUT OURSELVES

DR. D. ANANTHIAH

Associate Editor, *Triveni*

Three score years (even without the ten, for completion of the biblical span) could be a long enough period in the life of a human being. So it is in the career of little reviews and literary periodicals, which are particularly prone to infantile mortality.

It is with a sense of unmixed satisfaction, not untouched by the feeling of exultation, that *TRIVENI* finds itself alive and kicking, after a purposeful existence of sixty eventful years. The 'Triple Stream' of Love, Wisdom and Power has never ceased to flow, with its gentle rhythm, whatever be the ups and downs, along the path, through hilly tract, sandy waste and fertile plains. Irrespective of the volume, its waters remain pure, wholesome and sparkling.

Born in Madras, the cultural capital of the South, shifting its course to Bangalore, on the same latitude, returning to Madras for a time, moving over to Machilipatnam, where it stayed in comfort for a few decades, it now finds a safe haven in Guntur, the educational and cultural centre of the region.

Forgetting figures of speech for the time being, and turning to the basic purpose in view, let us recall the thoughtful words of the Founder-Editor, the late K. Ramakrishna Rao, a literary journalist, with a vision, if ever there was one. A few months after the inauguration of the journal, he wrote, in September 1923:

"*TRIVENI* seeks to interpret the Renaissance Movement as reflected in the various linguistic units of India. The Editor is an Andhrat, and is in close touch with literary and art movements in Andhradesa. But he is anxious to publish detailed accounts of similar movements in other parts of India..... He makes an earnest appeal to scholars in other linguistic areas to write about literary and art movements, with which they are familiar. Translations of poems in different Indian languages into free verse will be particularly welcome. *TRIVENI* will thus lay the foundations for that inter-provincial harmony and goodwill which is the prelude to a federation of Indian Culture....".

Sixty years after they were written and forty years and more after the attainment of political independence by India, these words retain not only their basic validity but the urgency of appeal. For, while the ultimate goal of a federation of Indian Culture is not yet within sight, the social ideals of interprovincial harmony and

goodwill, commended as a prelude to it, an indispensable prerequisite, in fact, seem to be getting more conspicuous by their absence.

There is certainly in evidence a vigorous resurgence of regional cultures, along with a determined revival of local languages and literatures. But of inter-provincial harmony and inter-linguistic goodwill, not enough, from what we are able to see of them. On the contrary, it is disturbing to note the law of diminishing returns relentlessly in operation in this field.

No doubt, official and quasi-official organisations like the Sahitya Akademi are trying, in their own way, through awards, translations and other publications, to interpret the Renaissance Movement, as they see it. But, the complaint is always there of a certain lack of spontaneity, even of sensibility, in any literary or cultural activity, promoted by governmental patronage, regulated by bureaucratic control. There is also a danger of intrinsic literary values being overshadowed by political prejudices and distorted by ideological inhibitions.

What is more, the forces of linguistic extremism and regional parochialism, apart from religious fanaticism and primitive casteism, kept under check during the struggle for freedom, with a common enemy as a unifying factor, seem to be rearing their heads everywhere. They are seen to distort the national perspective, in the name of fostering sub-national cultures and feeding varieties of local patriotism. The cause of national integration is likely to go under, when the process of mutual understanding at the literary-cultural level is rendered more and more difficult, if not altogether impossible, for want of a general willingness to understand.

We know, from observation and experience, at home and abroad, that it is possible to create this willingness, by preparing the atmosphere conducive to it. In a continent like Europe, wide variety of languages and literatures, cultural expressions and nation-states, this is done by a process of literary translation, not only speedy but sensitive, not only competent and functional, but effective and evocative.

In a country like ours, with a bewildering multiplicity of languages and literary traditions, we do seem to know our next-door neighbours, within our own borders, not truly or adequately, at any rate. With the best will in the world, it is still too much to expect everyone to learn all the other Indian languages, to be able to appreciate the glories of these literatures. With a readily available and resourceful medium like English, which remains the *lingua franca* of the intellectual elite of this country today, rather like Latin in medieval Europe and Sanskrit in ancient India, it is possible to have a common library of the classics, modern as well as ancient, in translation, to facilitate a community of discourse.

It has been the privilege of *TRIVENI* to contribute to this communication process, which must have a beginning but can have no end. Indian Renaissance is admittedly a many-sided phenomenon. While its social and intellectual renaissance was spear-headed by Raja Rammohun Roy, the first of the Moderns, the spiritual renaissance was accelerated by Swami Vivekananda. If the political renaissance was invigorated by Mahatma Gandhi, the scientific renaissance was set in motion by Prime Minister Nehru, both of whom galvanized the country in their time. The interpretation of this dynamic phenomenon becomes a complex process, even to the extent that it is reflected in contemporary literature, art and culture.

That *TRIVENI* has been a sensitive instrument of this interpretation is known to its loyal and devoted readers, all these years. Success in this field cannot always be counted in terms of numbers. The spirit that informs the effort and evokes the response is even more important as a measure of fulfilment.

The essence of that spirit was captured by the Founder-Editor, a few years after the starting of the periodical, when he said, in words that can hardly be improved upon.

"Of the Japanese armourer it is said, as he fashions a sword and sharpens it, he sings a song. And according to the prevailing mood of the singer, the sword becomes a power for good or evil. If the spirit of a song can inform a blade of steel, why not an Editor's love his journal? I have loved *TRIVENI* with an impassioned and unalterable love, and every time a new number is sent out, I breathe a prayer that it may spread peace, joy and strength, and be a symbol of Beauty and Truth."

After two decades and more of this ceaseless striving, with an alternating experience of agony and ecstasy, he must have breathed another prayer too, which was, in say that the burden borne by him that far be taken over by helping hands to shoulders younger and stronger than his own. And that happened in 1950, when Mr. (now Dr.) Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao took over as Managing Editor and publisher. He was to Ramakrishna Rau the Founder-Editor what Hanuman was to Rama. He has held this responsibility as a sacred trust, with single-minded devotion and self-effacing modesty. After bearing the burden for nearly four decades, he has found timely support in Professor C.V.N. Dhanu of Ravi Academy, who has risen to the occasion with resourcefulness and public spirit.

After reaching yet another landmark, *TRIVENI* goes on in its long and endless journey. It must, for the task is unfinished, as yet. And it waits, with the goodwill and support of informed readers and intelligent patrons.



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## HYMN TO SINDHU (The Mother of Rivers) (Rigveda : X. 75)

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

1. O Waters, the Poet-Creator proclaims your supreme greatness in the House of the Sun.

The Waters move out in seven streams in each of three channels. Sindhu surpasses all hastening streams in her stupendous urge.

2. God Varuna dug out the path for your going when, O Sindhu, you rush to meet the Pleiades.

You surge over the fields and up along the plateaus when you move in front of these moving streams as their Master and Ruler.

3. To the Heaven the echo perseveres. And on the Earth too Sindhu, by her surge impels upward the sweep of Infinity.

It is as though from the clouds pour out floods of rain. Indeed as she flows down, the Sindhu comes roaring like a mighty bull.

4. Towards you, O Sindhu, as towards their child the Mothers bellowing rush forth, heavy with milk they are.

Like a warrior king you take lead in the outpouring when you drive forward all these streamings.

5. O Ganga and Yamuna and Saraswati ! O Shatadri with thy companion Parushni ! Cling to this hymn to you.

O Marutbridha with thy companion Asikni, O Arjikiya with thy companion Vitasta and Shushoma lend your ears to me.

6. The first on your way you joined with is Trishatania and then with Susartu and Rasa and Shwetl.

O Sindhu, with Kubha you joined Gomati, and Krumu with Mehatsu : with all of them you move forward in one single movement.

7. Draving straight, bright and gleaming in her greatness, she overflows the wide spaces of speeding realms.

Sindhu, inviolate, the greatest worker among workers, she is like a marvellous-hued steed, beautiful like the body of a woman.

8. Sindhu rides the perfect reed, drives a perfect chariot, wonderfully crated, golden-bund, great deeds she does, full of the plenitude is she.

Youthful she is, rich in fine fleece, rich in fibrous reeds, she (enjoyment).

9. SINDHU has yoked horses to her happy-going chariot. With that help she wins the plenitude in this sacrifice.

Great is its greatness that is at work. It is inviolate, shines in its own glory, exuberant in its strength.

Note: These Rivers, named after the well-known ancient rivers of the Punjab, are here symbolic of the streamings, the forces of consciousness. They are, as it is said, solar powers, the radiant energies of the Sun—the Supreme Light, their seat and source. They are encompassing and flooding the whole universe including the three domains, the Earth, the Heaven and the Mid-region. The foremost among them is the Sindhu; all the others are its branches and tributaries. Indeed, they represent the Supreme (Parashakti) and her emanations and manifestations and person



# SHIVA

## The Inconscient Creator

SRI AUROBINDO

A face on the cold dire mountain peaks  
Grand and still ; its lines white and austere  
Match with the unmeasured snowy streaks  
Cutting heaven, implacable and sheer.  
Above it a mountain of matted hair.  
Aeon-coiled on that deathless and lone head  
In its solitude huge of lifeless air  
Round, above illimitably spread.  
A moon ray on the forehead, blue and pale,  
Stretched afar its finger of still light  
Illumining emptiness. Stern and male  
Mark of peace indifferent in might !  
But out from some infinite born now came  
Over giant snows and the still face  
A quiver and colour of crimson flame,  
Fire-point in immensities of space.  
Light-spear-tips revealed the mighty shape,  
Tore the secret-veil of the heart's hold ;  
In that diamond heart the fires undrape,  
Living core, a brasier of gold.  
This was the closed mute and burning source  
Whence were formed the worlds and their star-dance  
Life sprang a self-rapt inconscient Force,  
Love, a blazing seed, from that flame-trance.

## "BRING ME THY FAILURE"

K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAO

Of the Japanese armourer it is said that, as he fashions a sword and sharpens it, he sings a song. And according to the prevailing mood of the singer, the sword becomes a power for good or evil. If the spirit of a song can inform a blade of steel, why not an Editor's love his journal? I have loved *Triveni* with an impassioned and unalterable love, and every time a new number is sent out, I breathe a prayer that it may spread peace, joy and strength, and be the symbol of Beauty and Truth.

But prolonged and lonely fight against adversity weakens a man. At the end of five years I find myself a wreck in body and mind. I am thankful, however, that *Triveni* is alive; that the 'Triple Stream' never ceased to flow, albeit fitfully and like a thin rill in a sandy waste. I am reminded of Ravana, Prince of Ayodhya. As the holy Ganges descended from heaven, it got entangled in the matted locks of the moon-crested Lord Shiva. The Prince did penance so that the stream might be let loose, to fertilise the world and quicken the illustrious dead of the Solar Race. His prayers were heard; so too are mine. The generosity of a group of friends—among them the noblest in the land—now enables me to release the life-giving waters of the *Triveni* and ensure an even flow.

It is an irony of life that while we strive and suffer to bring solace to one that is infinitely dear, the solace comes a trifle too late—weeks and months after the loved one is beyond the need of solace. Six months ago, in the midst of poverty and trouble, when not a ray of hope pierced the encircling gloom, passed away ~~our mother after seven-and-a-half years she guarded me~~ ~~the eyedid guard the eye~~ "She was a great admirer of the Mahabharata, and she was joyous in listening to the marvellous story of Bhishma and Karna. The conception of Sri Krishna as the Divine Character appealed powerfully to her."

As a devotee of the Lord, she prayed constantly that He might be the Charismer of her son, and guide him as He guided Arjuna in the field of battle. In moments of utter loneliness and depression it looked as if the Charismer had fallen asleep or let go His hold of the reins. But He is Eternal Watcher, and a mother's prayers are the hoarsest of utterings at His feet. Those that suffer physical dissolution do not pass from us. Divested of the encumbrances of the flesh, they pour forth their love in million-fold intensity. That love is an abiding possession for me, and an inspiration in my humble work.

At the commencement of a new year of life for Triveni, I cannot forget what I owe to my esteemed chief, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa. In his loving presence, I have always felt pure and stronger. One morning last year, when life seemed too oppressive, I met him in his beautiful room at Adyar and narrated my tale of woe. With unforgettable serenity he bade me cultivate a spirit of detachment—to work and not to worry about the result; and ended by reading to me the great passage from Edwin Arnold's *The Song Celestial* in which the Lord calls upon His devotees to "labour right for love of Me," and admonishes them that "if in this thy faint heart fails bring Me thy failure." That was a great experience. Since then I have "laboured right for love of Him," because I know He will accept even my failure.

Indeed, in a cause like this there is neither success nor failure. It is a continual striving after perfection. Success consists in unceasing pursuit of the Path, and the only failure that the idealist recognises is the failure to stand by Truth. Along the Path, my feet bled, my spirit was sore tried. Very often my brain was racked with the thought that the burden was far too heavy. It was like attempting the impossible. But always came an answering thought that, if the work is noble and unselfish, an unseen Power will lighten the burden; when my strength failed, I could draw on a reserve of energy. I recall what I said when the Journal was first launched. "May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the Triveni: the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power."

Reprinted from Triveni, July-Aug. 1932



## A NATIONALIST EDITOR

K CHANDRASUKHARAN

It was in the month of January 1929, that on a morning after 8 a.m., I had two visitors at my chamber in the old (no longer existing) "Ashrama" on the Lux Church Road. One was the late Sri A. R. V. Achari, the well-known Congressman, Gandhian and Councillor of the Madras Corporation. The other happened to be Sri K. Ramakrishna Rau to be introduced to me by that common friend. To have met each other was to have begun forging an abiding friendship. Ramakrishna Rau's appearance reminded me of the Founder of the famous Andhra Jaijyoti Kalasala, Sri Kopali Hanumantha Rao, a sterling man of worth for his genuine spirit of nationalism. Ramakrishna Rau also had been one of the ardent workers in the Andhra Jaijyoti Kalasala, as a teacher, who had not only served with true interest in that Institution, but had felt the same burning spirit for national regeneration in all our arts and literatures. A further element which gave unusual strength to Ramakrishna Rau's character-build was an emotional occupation, which was ready to catch the glow often while listening to noble deeds of great fighters for the freedom of the country. May be one of the reasons for the growth of a lasting bond between us was his admiration for my father.

Wearing fine Khaddar in pure white, often of the Chikacole variety, his taste and general outlook easily impressed anyone whom he met for the first time, of his tidiness of mind even as his external accomplishment. The year 1929, was something to Priveni, to be remembered for a much more memorable reason. The man of letters, Sri K. S. Venkatararamam, wrote an article on "Sri S. Subrahmanya Aiyar (Muni Aiyar)" in one of the issues of that year, which was of outstanding literary merit, apart from its portraiture and intuitive understanding of a great son of India. The Madras Bar, in those days was quick to evince its appreciation of the brilliance of its members in any of the activities they had shown the real talent or service. Dr. Alladi Krishnaswami

Aiyar, then at the heyday of his practice and leadership of the Bar as its Advocate General, required not much of an inducement to recognise Venkataramani by having a public function at the Advocates' Association premises and present him with a salver in silver, inscribed with words of adequate spiritual evocation. Because the article appeared in the pages of a just recent arrival in the journalistic world, it created a general sympathy for its growth and an eagerness to read its contents in subsequent issues. Sri Venkataramani having been also a good friend of Ramakrishna, the occasion filled the Editor with a sense of the journal's growing importance. Though it was not always a smooth sailing for the journal with its irregularities which started even so early, the discerning readers, both old and young, waited for its arrival without much accusation of its totally uncommercial attitude. Being much of an idealist, Ramakrishna never would go in for advertisements to earn money for its upkeep, if they were of the unsavoury kind or blatantly exposing of their spuriousness. "Rather would I die a decent journal, than achieve wider circulation with these methods of boosting one's own fare in the ugliest form" was his constant declamation against those who advised him to take in more of the ever so many odd types which are the natural feeders for any daily or weekly or monthly today. No doubt such a resolution had its additional adverse effect on the slender resources for running an English journal, which even otherwise could not gain a wide circle of subscribers.

Ramakrishna Rau's credentials to conduct a journal in English were many. He was a wielder himself of a good prose style. His "*Triple Stream*" attracted attention from all around for their careful appraisal of current events in the political and social life of the country as also his choice or selection of topics of the growing aspects of public life for comment. They were sought with almost similar eagerness by the sober public as later what Rajaji's "Dear Reader" columns in his *Swarnajya* or the opinions of D. V. Gundappa in his *Public Affairs* were able to draw attention.

One distinct virtue of Ramakrishna Rau was his unassuming attitude towards the younger writers who felt it an enviable honour to appear in his journal. Far from patronising any one of the younger group he would be the liaison between many of the writers, old and young, by his hearty recommendation of their individual merits to each other and make them in their turn friends and helpers for enriching a literary atmosphere in the first-floor hall of the V. M. I. A. buildings of Madras. Particularly in the early years of the *Triveni's* fortunes, the intellectual aroma in the meeting of



Literary friends around Rastakom brought him greater satisfaction than even success of his venture. Unerring in his assessments of fine specimens of *Indian Art*, he would not cease worrying for the correct print of coloured blocks of some of the productions of India's reputed artists in his journal. The articles that he gathered from persons of established reputation for their knowledge of the Arts like Dance, Painting, Music must be according to him, of the first rank, and whenever anything had passed unnoticed which sometimes later caused censure for their insignificance or lack of original matter, would be the occasion for him to feel depressed. Also any proof mistake which had escaped his very careful reading would cause him immense pain the like of which he would not have experienced even at the passing away of a dear friend.

What an amount of travail he bore with patience when added to the dwindling financial resources everytime when the journal had to come out, he had also to solicit the favour of the press from non-co-operating with him on the ground of delayed payments. But suffering of such a nature never thwarted his mirth and geniality or damp his spirits in seeking the company of men of distinct qualities for discussing him on topics of perennial interest — like art and literature.

If *Triveni* was his own choice of life, it did not stand in the way of his joining the national movement whenever an occasion offered itself for his sacrifices. On one such long interregnum in jail, he had to seek the devoted services of Sri Sampachgiri Rao of Bangalore to keep the journal alive till his return from incarceration. He could make friends everywhere: for his nature absorbed the good traits in strangers even, and made him familiar with all types of men and women who could display some talent for writing or for the arts. On the whole his name evoked reviving respect from elders as much as from the youth, and everytime he returned from jail, there was a rush to meet him with *manojas*.

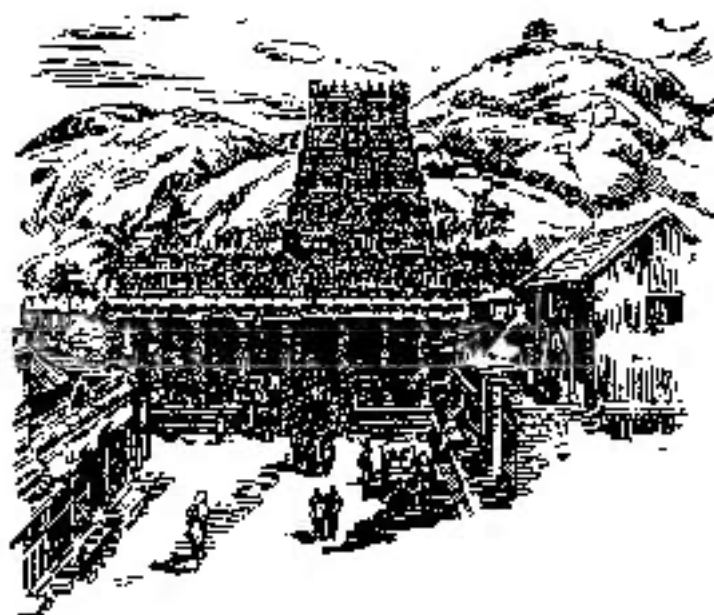
Though soft by temperament he could show firmness when confronted with attempts at compromising of principles. He was even proud, though never offensive, while directed against those who tried to subdue him. If his clothes were simple and clean, so a flush, his Editor's table never presented an appearance of clumsy disarray littered with pencils and books thrown pell-mell. At times his fastidiousness would only show how much befiting it would be to one born of a socially privileged class.

Restraint in his desires, yet unrestrained in giving of his love to others: upright in his dealings, yet unbending before violent might; strong of faith in shining ideals, yet most generous to for-

give the failings of his near and dear, he was a human of humans with an univalued claim for being an Editor.

*Triveni* was his adored child, not because he was childless himself, but because most of his cherished thoughts, ideas and experiences of life were garnered therein so very abundantly that it proved to him as to his close friends that his real adversity would be if ever he should drop the child from its secure place on his lap.

*Triveni*, Jan-March 1978



# THE BABE

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[It is believed that this poem, "The Babe," still remains unpublished in India. Our thanks are due to Mr. Janamanchi Kameswara Rao who has kindly procured the text for us.

—EDITOR.]

"What of the night" they ask,

No answer comes.

For blind time gropes in a maze and knows not its path or purpose.

The darkness in the valley stares like the dead eye sockets of a giant.

The clouds like a nightmare oppress the sky.

The clouds like a nightmare oppress the sky,

And massive shadows like iron limbs of the night

A lurid glow waxes and wanes on the horizon.

Is it an ultimate threat from an alien star,

Or an elemental hunger licking the sky?

Things are deliciously wild,

They are a noise whose grammar is a groan

And words smothered out of shape and sense.

They are the refuse, the rejections, the fruitless failures of life,

Abrupt ruins of prodigal pride,

Fragments of a bridge over the oblivion of a vanished stream.

Godless shelters that shelter reptiles,

Marble steps that lead to blackness.

Sudden tumults rise in the sky and wrestle

And a startled shudder runs along with sleepless hours.

Are they from desperate floods hammering against their cave walls,

Or from some fantastic storms whirling and howling incantations?

Are they the cries of an ancient forest flinging up its boarded fire

in a last extravagant suicide

Or screams of a paralytic crowd scourged by lunatics blind and deaf?

Underneath the noisy roar, a stealthy hum creeps up like bobbling

volcanic mud.

A mixture of sinister whispers, rumours and slanders and hisses of  
 derision,  
 The men gathered there are vague like torn pages of an epic  
 Grasping in groups or single, their torchlight tapers their faces in  
 chequered lines.

in patterns of frightfulness.

The women weep and wail,

They cry that their children are lost in a wilderness of  
 contrary paths with confusion at the end.

Others defiantly risald shaking with raucous laughter their lascivious  
 limbs unshrinkingly loud.

For they think that nothing matters.

## II

There on the crest of the hill,

Stands the man of faith amid the snow white silence

He scans the sky for some signal of light,

And when the clouds thicken and the night birds scream as they fly  
 He cries "Brothers, despair not, for Man is great."

But they never heed him,

For they believe that the elemental brute is eternal  
 and goodness in its depth is darkly cunning in deception.

When beaten and wounded they cry "Brother, where art thou?"

The answer comes, "I am by your side."

But they cannot see in the dark;

And they argue that the voice is of their own desperate desire.

That men are ever condemned to fight for phantoms

In an interminable desert of mutual menace.

## III

The clouds part, the morning star appears in the East,

A breath of relief springs up from the heart of the earth

The murmur of leaves ripples along the forest path

And the early bird sings.

"The time has come" proclaims the Man of faith

"The time for what?"

"For the pilgrimage"

They sit and think, they know not the meaning,

And yet they seem to understand according to their desires.

The touch of the dawn goes deep into the soil

And life shivers along through the roots of all things

"To the pilgrimage of fulfilment" a small voice whispers,  
 nobody knows whence.

Taken up by the crowd it swells into a mighty meaning.

Men raise their hands and look up.

Women lift their arms in reverence.

Children clap their hands and laugh.  
The early glow of the sun slutes like a golden garland  
on the forehead of the Man of faith  
And they all cry : " Brother, we salute thee ! "

## iv

Met begin to gather from all quarters  
 From across the seas, the mountains and pathless wastes.  
 They come from the valley of the Nile, and the banks of the Ganges.  
 From the snow-sunk uplands of Tibet  
 From the high-walled cities of glittering towers  
 From the dens dark trough of savage wilderness.  
 Some walk, some ride on camels, horses and elephants,  
 on chariots with banners flying with the clouds of dawn.  
 The priests of all creeds burn incense, chanting verses as they go  
 The monarchs march at the head of their armies  
 robes flashing in the sun and drums bearing loud.  
 Ragged haggard and courtesans pompously decked;  
 agile young scholars, and teachers burdened with  
 learned age, jostle each other in the crowd.  
 Women come chatting and laughing, mothers, maidens  
 and brides with offerings of flowers and fruit,  
 Sandal paste and scented water,  
 Mixed with there is the harsh, shrill of voice and

[less] in size and size]

The gossip is there who secretly poison the well of human sympathy and chuckles. The maimed and the cripple join the throng with the blind and the sick the diseased, the thief and the man who makes a trade of his God for profit and mimics the saint, the faithful. They dare not talk aloud, but in their minds they magnify their own greed and dream of endless power Of unlimited impunity for pillaging and plunder an eternity of feast for their unclean gluttonous flesh.

٧١

The Man of Ice's moves on along pitiless paths,  
Strews with flimsy over searching sounds and

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They follow him, the strong and the weak, the aged and  
the young, the rulers of realms, the tillers of the soil.  
Some grow weary and loathe the sound, angry, and suspicious  
They ask at every dragging step how much further is the end  
The man of faith sings in answer;  
They shout and shake their fists and yet they cannot resist him;  
the pressure of the moving mass and an indelinite hope push them  
forward

They shorten their sleep and curtail their rest,  
 they envious each other in their speed.  
 They are afraid lest they may be too late for their chance  
 while others be more fortunate.  
 The days pass, the ever receding horizon tempts them  
 with renewed lure of the unseen till they are sick.  
 Their faces harden, their curses grow louder and kinder.

## VI

It is night,  
 The travellers spread their mats on the ground under the baobab tree  
 A gust of wind blows out the lamp and the darkness  
 deepens like a sleep into a swoon  
 Some one from the crowd suddenly stands up and  
 Pointing to the leader with his merciless finger breaks out,  
 "False prophet, thou hast deceived us!"  
 Others take up the cry one by one.  
 Women hiss their hatred and men growl.  
 At last, one bolder than others suddenly deals him a blow.  
 They cannot see his face, but fall upon him in a fury  
 of destruction and hit him till he lies prone upon the ground,  
 his life extinct.  
 The night is still, the sound of the distant waterfall  
 comes muffled and a faint breath of jasmine is in the air.

## VII

The pilgrims are afraid,  
 The women begin to cry, the men in an agony of wretchedness  
 shout at them to stop.  
 Dogs break out barking and are cruelly whopped into silence  
 broken by moans.  
 The night seems endless and men and women begin to  
 wrangle as to who among them is to blame.  
 They shiver and shout and as they are ready to unsheath  
 their knives, the darkness fades, the morning light  
 overflows the mountain tops.  
 Suddenly they become still and gasp for breath as they gaze  
 at the figure lying dead.  
 The women sob out loud and men hide their faces in their hands.  
 A few try to slink away unnoticed, but their crime keeps them  
 chained to their Victim.  
 They ask each other in bewilderment,  
 "Who will show us the path?"  
 The old man from the East bends his head and says "The Victim."  
 They sit still and silent. Again speaks the old man,  
 "We refused him in doubt, we killed him in anger."

now we shall accept him in love, for in his death  
 He lives in the life of us all, the great Victim."  
 And they all stand up and mingle their voices and sing  
 "Victory to the Victim."

## VIII

"To the pilgrimage" calls the young, "to love, to power,  
 to knowledge, to wealth overflowing."  
 "We shall conquer the world and the world beyond this!"  
 They all cry exultant in a thundering concert of voices.  
 The meaning is not the same to them all, but only the impulse.  
 The moving confluence of wills that seeks not death and disaster.  
 No longer they ask for their way, no more doubts are there to  
 burden their minds or weariness to clog their feet.  
 The split of the leader is within them and over beyond them.  
 The leader who has crossed death and all lands.  
 They travel over their fields where the seeds are sown,  
 By the granary, where the harvest is gathered,  
 And across the barren soil where famine dwells and  
 skeletons cry for the return of their flesh.  
 They pass through populous cities humming with life  
 Through dumb desolation hugging its ruined past  
 and hovels for the unclad and unclean, a mockery of home  
 for the homeless.  
 They travel through long hours of the summer day and as  
 the light wanes in the evening they ask the man  
 who reads the sky.  
 "Brother, is yonder the tower of our final hope and peace?"  
 The wiseman shakes his head and says  
 "It is the last vanishing cloud of the sunset."  
 "Friends," exhorts the young, "do not stop. Through the  
 night's blindness we must struggle into the kingdom of living light."  
 They go in the dark.  
 The road seems to know its meaning and dust underneath  
 dumbly speaks of direction.  
 The stars—the celestial wayfarers—sing in silent chorus  
 "Move on, comrades!"  
 In the air floats the voice of the leader  
 "The goal is right."

## IX

The first flash of dawn glimmers on the dew dripping leaves of the  
 forest,  
 The man who reads the sky cries  
 "Friends! we have come!"  
 They stop and look around

on both sides of the road the corn is ripe to the horizon  
 the glad golden answer of the earth to the morning light.  
 The current of daily life moves slowly between the village  
 near the hill and the one by the river bank.

The potter's wheel goes round, the wood-cutter brings fuel to  
 the market.

The cowherd takes his cattle to the pasture.

And the woman with the pitcher on her head walks to the well  
 But where is the king's castle, the mine of gold, the  
 secret book of magic, the sage who knows love's inner wisdom?  
 "The stars cannot be wrong" assures the reader of the sky.  
 "Their signal points to that spot."

And reverently he walks to a wayside spring from which  
 wells up a stream of water, a liquid light.

Like the morning melting into a chorus of tears and laughter.

Near it in a palm grove surrounded by a strange bush

stands a leaf-charched hut.

At whose portal sits the poet of the unknown shore and sings  
 "Fainter" Open the gate."

# X

A ray of morning strikes aslant at the door.

The assembled crowd feel in their blood the primeval chant of  
 creation

"Mother! Open the gate."

The gate opens. The mother is seated on a straw bed with the  
 babe on her lap.

Like the dawn with the morning star.

The sun's ray that was waiting at the door outside falls on the  
 head of the child.

The poet strikes his lute and sings out

"Victory to man, the new-born, the ever-living.

They kneel down, the king and the beggar, the  
 saint and the sinner, the wise and the fool, and cry

"Victory to man, the new-born, the ever-living"

The old man from the East murmurs to himself—

"I have seen."

[Friedrick Bonn Fisher, while he was in India, was a great friend of Rabindranath Tagore. When Bishop Fisher was in America, poet Tagore gave a copy of "The Babe" to C. F. Andrews to be given over to Bonn Fisher which he has forgotten to do. Then Tagore sent another copy on 5-12-1930 during his sojourn to U.S.A. in December 1930 since it was the desire of the poet and C. F. Andrews that Bonn Fisher should help in its publication.]



While presenting a copy of the poem to Benni Fisher, Tagore said: "I am sure that the poem is not mere literature to you but that it conveys to your heart a living voice of a friend who has often sat by your side."

The symbolism of the poem startled Benni Fisher in its unmistakably Christian inspiration and Fred asked the poet, "Does the Babe refer to Christ?" "You may interpret it as you like," replied the poet—an enigmatic reply made less non-committal by the fact that it was addressed to Fred, obviously a Christian Minister—if given leave, would interpret it as referring to Christ.

Meanwhile during his visit to America, Tagore read this poem "The Babe" at Carnegie Hall to a large audience and the audience was deeply impressed. Macmillan asked the poet to allow them to publish it immediately before Christmas in 1930. But the poet would not allow it, since he awaited the confirmation from Benni Fisher.

When the poet had told Fred that he might interpret it as he liked, Fred could not do other than read it as a tribute from the great Hindu poet, to Christ. The fact that the poet has presented the poem to him and entrusted to him its publication served as additional evidence to Fred of the poet's intent.

The poem has been extracted from the book, *Fredric Benni Fisher* (World House), Macmillan and Co., (1944) a biography of her husband by Weichy Hunsiger Fisher, the lady of the lamp, who lighted the candle of literacy in India with unmatched dedication to the cause of eradication of illiteracy through the Literacy House, Lucknow.

—JANMANJHI KANESWARA RAO

Trivani — Oct - Dec. 1982



## RELIGION : A PLEA FOR SANITY

DR. SRI S. RADHAKRISHNAN

We live in an age of movement, of rapid movement, not only in physical but in intellectual and spiritual affairs also. Everywhere the old barriers are breaking down, the old ideas are disappearing. Religion, which was hitherto regarded as the strongest of all conservative forces, has not escaped this law of drastic change. Some are attempting to clarify religious ideas and reform religious practices; others, of a revolutionary cast of mind, are attempting to dethrone religion from its place in human life. If the revolutionaries succeed, India will lose her distinctive individuality; for religion has been the master passion of the Indian mind, the pre-supposition and basis of its culture and civilisation. The history of India has for its landmarks not wars and emperors, but sages and scriptures.

This historic life of the country is being threatened today by two forces, dogmatic denial and dogmatic affirmation, blank negation and blind faith. These two which agree in their spirit and method, though they differ in their content and conviction, have a common origin, and are the outcome of a singular narrowness of mind or obscurantism.

The denying spirits complain that religion has been a force of dangerous reaction. By withdrawing itself from the scene of mankind's social agony, it lends support to the existent order. Those who burn with a passion for social justice find religion to be worthless at its best and vicious at less than best. They ask : Is there a God? Does it pay to be upright? What is the meaning of life after all? Is the present distribution of power and opportunity, where a few have a chance to live without working, while the many have their backs broken by the burdens they bear, is this order justified? When the evils of the world cry out for redress, is it the time to discuss the state of our souls or the pictures of the unseen? Religion seems to be utterly irrelevant to the problems of the world in which we live.

There is a good deal to be said in favour of this criticism of religion, but it is a criticism, not of religion as such, but of

its otherworldly and abstract character. The mark of spirituality is not exile from the natural world. The truly religious are opposed to the injustice and iniquity of the world. They befriend not the strong but the weak and the suffering, those who cannot help themselves. 'Yatuno sarvabhutam danda bhavati bhikshatam' Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The condition is, therefore: *serve* thyself. There must be freedom and equality of status. Such a demand would make for the establishment of a universal community of free persons, and require those who accept it to overcome the artificial barriers of race and creed, nationality and wealth. Unless a man is economically secure, he cannot develop his individuality. If he is starving, his personality will wither and die. All attempts at establishing a social democracy, a more equal distribution of wealth and opportunity, may be regarded as a genuine manifestation of the religious spirit.

I should like however to utter a warning. Man cannot find his happiness, simply because we secure for him a sufficiency of material goods. We all know that there are many in this world who have all the comforts and conveniences which wealth can bring, who are yet suffering from emptiness of soul, nudity of spirit. They have done with the radiance and gladness of life. They have no hopes to inspire, no ambitions to realise, no faith to live by, no happiness to which they can look forward. Their minds are disoriented, their action is fragmentary and futile. Suppose we succeed in our attempt to build an earthly paradise, where we will have good roads and water-supply, excellent sanitation, free education for all, unlimited picture-houses and soft drinks, golf links for adults, ligas, lites and wireless insulations for everyone. Do you think they will be contented and happy? Our activities are moved, not merely by the economic motive but also by vanity and ambition, jealousy and ill-temper, or by a noble unselfish idealism or by a disinterested hatred of injustice and cruelty. Our selfishness and stupidity, our false pride and dignity will continue to corrupt and spoil the purity of our personal relationships. We will not cease to ask, "Why do we suffer, grow old and die?" Man has far horizon, invisible hopes, thoughts that wander through eternity, projects that cannot be attained in time. To find the way to truth, to create a world of beauty, to understand another human soul, he is willing to scourge himself, to endure hunger and thirst, to give up his life. This preference for the values of spirit is not an eccentricity.

The recognition of this vital fact, that man lives for a purpose larger than his needs, and is more himself when he realises it, has been the deepest phase of India's life. Occasionally, perhaps, even of us has had a few moments of impersonal joy,

when we seem to tread not on solid earth but on uplifting air, when our being is transfused with a presence that is unutterable, yet apprehensible, when we have a sense of spirit, timeless and eternal when we touch the very limits of beatitude, where seeking merges and yearning unfulfilled yield to attainment and serenity, when time stops short and life is as still as death, when we contact the universal reality whose shadow is immortality and death. *Yasya dhyaṃ avartitam, yasya mṛtyuḥ*. Death and immortality, life has in it the seeds of both, and it depends on us, on our choice, on our effort what we make of it. Life is an opportunity and we can use it for life eternal or dust and ashes. Man's peculiar position in the world is that he stands between the two poles of Nature and the Absolute, the finite and the infinite. He arises out of the natural conditions of existence, is bound up with these and is subject to them in every fibre of his being. In so far as he is a pure product of nature, he cannot realise the true meaning and purpose of his existence. But he has from the beginning an urge towards a higher perfection, beyond his merely natural status. This urge produces a disturbance of his natural harmony which is the product of animal instinct, a convulsion of his life. A verse in the *Mahābhārata* reads

*Avartitam dhyaṃ mṛtyuśchha dvayam dehe praviśṭham !*

*Mṛtyor apadyate मोक्ष, अपेक्षपद्यते अमृतम् !!*

By *moha*, by passion, by blindness, by folly, by infatuation, we fall into death; by *seva*, by truth, by loyalty, by devotion, we gain *amṛta*. To be born, to grow up, to mature, to found a family and support it, would be a human edition of animal existence. To live in the world of sense with the ideals of spirit is the privilege and destiny of man. To make out of common clay true immortals who occupy themselves with human affairs, even though they possess divine souls, is the religious tradition of India.

The life of the tradition, the duration of the memory, depends on the continuous appearance of creative spirits. They keep the memory green; they maintain the tradition alive. At the moment, however, there is such a spate of spirituality in our country, that it has become somewhat difficult for us to discriminate between the genuine saint and the spurious one. There are many in India, perhaps more than in other countries, who are willing to impoverish themselves in every way to attain the spiritual goal, and their credulity and hunger for spirit are being exploited by clever adventurers who beat the drum and bang the cymbals, indulge in publicity stunts, to draw recruits. It is therefore essential to exercise the greatest care and discrimination. I can only set forth here a few considerations.

Firstly, a true teacher has to be sought out. He is not readily accessible to the public. He has no airs of superiority and is not anxious for public recognition. Those who aim at these rewards are not free from the weaknesses to which you and I are subject. Sainthood, when genuine, is marked by true humility and love. It is difficult to find it in organizations which believe in signboards and advertisements for their spiritual wars.

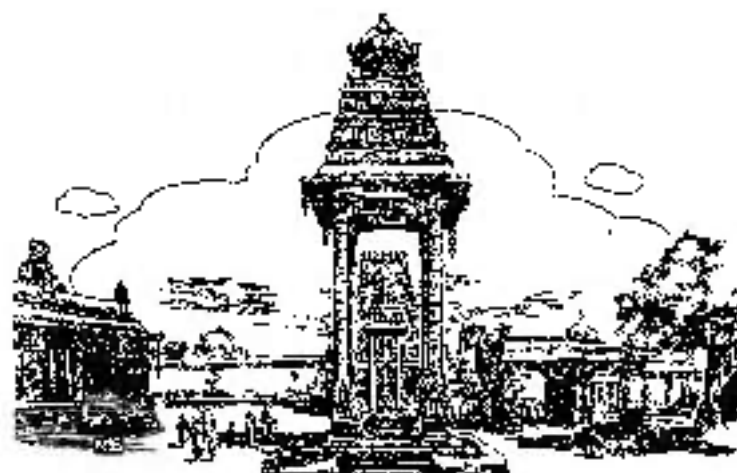
Secondly, the true teacher not only imparts instruction but transmits vitality. He helps to raise our being to a higher level. He demands from us not blind faith and implicit obedience, but alertness of mind and moral restraint. If we are deliberately hampered in blinkers, or forced into a groove, our minds become muzzled, and we cannot think freely. Spiritual insight is not anti-rational. It may go beyond reason, but it is not against reason. It is the deepest rationality of which we are capable. In it we think more profoundly, feel more deeply and see more truly. The teacher who tells us, "Blessed are those who do not think but believe," is leading us astray. The Upanishad says, "Ucā vjñānena paripasyant dhirah, jñā Brahma vjñānena viddhanta matena, pariparānti sarvagah gyanam paryanti. dhirah vivedantah." The bold thinkers see Him by means of knowledge. The Gita asks us to cross-examine even the teacher (pariprasnema). Reason is the voice of God. It achieves its end by persuasion. - Krishna, after stating his views to Arjuna, tells him "do as you please, yatharohanṁ natch karu." Any teacher who denies the freedom of the pupil, who has no respect for his personality, is not a true guide. Intellectual death is not the condition of spiritual life.

Thirdly, we progress in perfection only to the extent we progress in purity of heart. We must purify ourselves without ceasing. We are so full of wrong notions, erroneous judgments, passion and malice. We would be ashamed if we only saw ourselves as we really are. Vanity, sensuality, attachment to our petty whims and small comforts, extinguish the lights which make us see the dark side of ourselves. In our blindness, we flatter ourselves and invent a thousand excuses for our weaknesses. If any one says a word about our faults, we cannot bear him. He will cause in us impotence, grief, bitterness, fury. The glorification of self, I and mine, in all the fields of life, individual and collective, leads man into darkness and misery. To be truly free, one must be vigilant in casting aside vanity and pretension. Discipline is essential for human life. Whatever we may call ourselves, Hindu or Muslim, Sikh or Christian, whatever doctrines we may profess, their essential character as religions consists in the effort to get rid of prejudices so as to see the truth, to get rid of selfish passions so as to do the right.

But, unfortunately, many of those who have for their profession the cure of souls, especially those of weak and unstable nerves, practise a kind of sorcery and bewitch the emotional, the immature, the giddy, into a kind of magic sleep. They confuse spirit and sense, religion and the powerful seductions of life. The teacher is unconditionally obeyed and believed, and often worshipped as a God. His moral or religious integrity or depravity is not examined, but he is trusted for his saving power. This unthinking hero-worship has become a pernicious influence on the religion of our country today. No human being has the right to call upon us to believe in him blindly or surrender our moral scruples in obedience to his mandate. Only God can say "*Sarvadharmam parayajya māmekaṁ sarvaṁam vrain.*" "Call none your father on earth: for one is your father who is in heaven." "There is no God but Allah." There are no middlemen in religion.

The great religious tradition of India can be preserved only if we avoid these two extremes of atheism and blind faith, and strive for right thinking and right living. Tradition is memory; it is humanity's memory of its own past. The memory dies an artificial or accidental death when it is forcibly interrupted. It dies a natural death when it becomes crystallised and congealed. If atheism succeeds, the tradition of India will suffer death by accident; if blind faith and superstition overtake us, it will die a natural death, of old age, of hardening of arteries. Let us, therefore, avoid these two extremes.

Tripathi Nov. 1934



# THE TENSION IS EASED

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Says Uncle Sam :

"Returned from Geneva has Eisenhower ;  
The pills were over,  
Sweedly they all behaved,  
And what is more the nuclear pile is saved!  
You know how good I am ,  
Nuclear war I hate and abhor.  
Yes 'tis our pills thing of stu we did begin  
I guess we made a mess.  
But now it can't be cured

But must be endured :

You see they too have got it now  
By stealth or else somehow,  
The rascal Reds! and o'er our heads  
Some day they sure will burst it

That word, who can trust it?

They don't believe in God, their way is fraud;

Their love of peace is a temporary hoax

But we you know are pious folks,  
As for the warnings of learned men  
To the truths of Science we bow—  
They tell them now, they did not then—  
But A and H. for some time now  
Hold us under-nay for aggressive ends,  
But just for righteous defence."

The tension is eased, the West is pleased :

But Sazan's hopes are undecreased

August 18

Tiruvu Oct 1955



## GOKHALE : THE LESS KNOWN ASPECTS

THE RT. HON. V.S. SRINIVASA SASTRI\*

Among us biography is serious, almost solemn. The hero's opinions, quarels, triumphs, go on the record. Nothing about his food, mannerisms, amusements. The lighter side is kept out. Yet no account of a man can be complete without it. We cannot form a mental picture of the man unless we know how he dressed, walked and ate. Gokhale's figure is familiar—his handsome face, his fair colour, his long coat of grey, his red pugree, his scarf of white with thin lace border. Still when I tell you he wore a cap sometimes, and often tied a long narrow strip of coloured cloth round his head as a loose turban, and that for many years, like any domesticated Deccani, he changed into holy time-honoured silk at meals, and that till he made his first voyage he grew a long tuft at the back of his head and tied it into a knot—don't you feel he comes nearer to you and, if you met him, you could address him familiarly and ask, "Well, Gopal Rao, how are you today?" When I first knew him he had become heavy and disinclined to exercise. At one time he used to play tennis with the vigour and zest characteristic of youth. Middle age overtook him prematurely, and caused him to fall back on walking. Even in that easy region, don't we know of virtuous resolutions to be regular, the conspiracy of envious circumstances that overpowers us on the third or fourth day, and our dutiful submission to the decree of inexorable fate? It was one of these fateful mornings when he paused to watch Principal Patanjyee and me pitted against each other on a tennis court. The game was strenuous but didn't declare itself easily. He didn't like his pet pupil extended by an obscure stranger and cried out : "It is a misery to me to see you dragged about by Sastri." Always keen on the proprieties, I thought the word 'misery' erred on the side of excess. But when I went back, I reflected that, if I had a scholar like Patanjyee and seen him seize the Senior Wranglership and make him Principal straightaway of a great college and served under him with pride as professor, I should have thought he was invincible at tennis, or, at any rate, that



he should be invincible by rights. "So anyhow Gokhale has flesh and blood," I concluded. Talking of flesh and blood, I am reminded of a humorous remark of Mr. H. W. Nevinnson, the journalist who came to India in 1902-03 and wrote *The New Spirit in India*. Gokhale told him he hated the word 'moderate' as applied to his school of politics. Nevinnson put it down in his book, adding "as all beings of flesh and blood must".

Would you know something of his food? Being diabetic, he was placed under strict diet but didn't always observe it. He must have his brinjals daily, seasoned with chutnies in as angry a style as would have pleased any Andhra of the Krishna District. When he ate by himself, he gulped the meal as mouthfuls as though he had been famished and bulked it in three or four minutes. Given, prized above everything else by the true Brahmins, he avoided like poison; he could not endure it even on his neighbour's plate. Someone told me this was because, for a long time, he had to swallow quantities of it along with medicines. Curds were a favourite dish, and he grew lyrical when he expatiated on the unequalled merits of a preparation of curds called *srikhand*. In all India there was no sweet to compare with it, and he found it in his heart to forgive the Peshwa who lost an empire eating it. So he told Lord Kitchener at a banquet. I would like to believe his admiration was only academic, for he was not blessed with the marvellous euphoria of the ordinary Maharashtrian, who could account at one sitting for as much of it as an unhusked coconut, while the most I could boast of was two finger tips apportioned gingerly to the tongue. To those among you who may still lie frog-like in sequestered wells, let me give the latest dictionary definition of *srikhand*: "a viscous cloying viand, much valued in the Deccan, of which the main ingredient is curds thoroughly dehydrated, heavily sugarified and, besetioned to saturation point." To take pride in the delicacies of one's province, is, I suppose, an amiable variety of patriotism. All over India the native of Madras is most willing to despise himself and exalt others. Even he, I am sure, feels bucked up, when he hears his unpretentious *idli* praised beyond Raichur or Vijayanagara.

Though polite and tender-hearted to a degree, Gokhale was debased by Indian standards in the virtue of accessibility. He preferred to see people by previous appointment. He was annoyed when anybody dropped in casually, just for a chat, with no plan to discuss or suggestion to make. I fancy he would have collapsed if admirers crowded round him for mere *darshan*. Careful not to offend in any way, he was observant of forms. Usually he sat in the front verandah of his modest residence with just a shirt on, and screened from public view by the thick curtain of plants. Here his familiar associates and friends had open access and enjoyed his talks—instructive, varied, anecdotal and colivered by loud

laughter and childlike clapping of hands. Occasionally, however, he would spy a stranger, and it was then amusing to see how he would part the leaves in front of him and look through the hole for a reconnaissance. If the visitor was only slightly known or wholly unknown, he would hasten to don a coat and repair to the receiving room for the interview. Sir Raghunath Paranjpye says he inspired awe in the casual visitor. I would not put it so sharply. But it must be admitted he did not draw easily, and men have complained of a certain brusqueness or impudence of manner which did not encourage a free flow of talk. Students had to be on their guard how they approached him. He had no patience with the breezy, free and easy style that the modern student sometimes showed towards seniors. His own behaviour to Dadabhai, Rauade, Mehta, Bhandarkar, Joshi, and others of their age was strongly marked by old world ceremonial reverence, and he naturally feared that when a young man dropped the outward signs of respect, he dropped the homage of the heart as well.

At this point I shall do well to narrate Gokhale's own account of his first interview with Mrs. Besant. During one of her early visits to Poona he attended a meeting at which she answered questions from candidates for admission to the Theosophical Society. When his turn came he pled her hard and his manner perhaps appeared controversial. In her impatience she burst out: "Young man, when you come to be my age, these things will appear in a clearer light." That decided Gokhale against the Society. But 'thereby hangs a tail', as a wag has said. Long afterwards Mrs. Besant and leading Theosophists continued to claim him as a member. Questioned by me once, he became vehement and said, "When next anybody calls me a Theosophist, defy it in my name; I authorise you." The time soon came when I had to convey this displeasing news to Mrs. Besant. For a fraction of a moment she appeared nettled but she at once recovered composure and changed the topic. Inquiry showed that an intimate friend of Gokhale had paid the prescribed fee of admission and maintained his name on the register for two or three years. I guess Gokhale was aware of this fact, but he was not consenting party, and the dubious status came to an end soon. In Theosophical circles one may occasionally find the belief still in his continued membership, but the emphatic disclaimer that I have recorded should give a quietus to the story. But I must guard against a possible misapprehension. Gokhale to the last minute of his life gave testimony without stint to her unparalleled services to the country of her adoption, and, in personal behaviour, showed every mark of respect for her eminence in the world. She, for her part, never missed an opportunity of praising the pure gold of his patriotism, declared more than once that the columns of *New India* were always at his disposal and that he might treat the paper as if it were his own.

How earnest natures are drawn irresistibly to each other comes out vividly from an incident mentioned by Justice Sadasiva Iyer, when he took part in the 1926 celebration of this anniversary. In 1908, the year of the first Convention Congress at Madras, Gokhale made one of his stirring speeches on the platform of the Social Conference on the elevation of the Depressed Classes, as they were still called then. As he went back to his seat, Sadasiva Iyer caught the hem of his garment and kissed it in an ecstasy of reverence. Strange that the native fire of enthusiasm should have survived many years of refrigerative judicial work.

Gokhale had a whim once and yielded to it. He filled a shaving soap cube with sovereigns and kept it by his side. It was stolen. He took a similar cube at once and refilled it with the glimmering metal.

Gokhale loved his daughters but never demonstrated it as other fathers usually do. They lived apart from him under his sister's care, and visited him at spaced intervals. Sir Lallubhai Samaldas once told how his daughter remonstrated with Gokhale against an exacting time-table of work that he framed for his elder daughter, now Mrs. Dhavle, who had fallen back a little in her studies. Miss Samaldas used some expression like this. "You must be not only a strict schoolmaster but a loving father as well." To this let me add another observation that he made to me when he was my guest in Sydogy Lane, Triplicane. News came from Poona that his second daughter was taken ill suddenly and his presence was necessary. For a few brief moments he seemed to hesitate about his movements. Was he to cancel his Elementary Education Bill tour and return home? I pressed for this decision, and while yielding he used words, words which after 34 years I cannot recall without emotion. He seemed, he said to hear her ask haltingly, "What have I known of a father's love and care?" Poor thing, she did not survive that illness long.

I have more than once contradicted the common belief that he nominated me as his successor in the headship of the Servants of India Society. Even when asked about it in his last moments, he would say nothing. This account remains substantially true. But a passage in the autobiography of Sir P. C. Ray, published in 1932, seems to call for a slight qualification. Gokhale and I visited him once in 1911 in connection with the Elementary Education Bill. Of this interview he records in this book:

"Once Gokhale firegahy Mr. now the Rt. Hon'ble, Srinivasa Sastri to me and introduced him to me as a poor schoolmaster like himself and whispered into my ear that he looked

upon him as his future successor. His penetration and insight, I need scarcely add, have been more than justified. It is curious to note that the two great statesmen of India, who have commanded not only the applause but also the admiration and respect of listening societies at home and abroad have been, like my humble self, schoolmasters."

Gokhale had playful habit of betting on all occasions and sundry. "Come, let's put five rupees on it." That sum was his unit. Once he challenged me. I protested. Imagining I shrank from so large a figure, he cried impatiently, "Come, bet one rupee". I said I was a conscientious objector to all betting and got off. Else there was risk of a court martial.

Though he never had much money, his mode of life, ever since I knew him, was high, higher than would have been expected of him. He tipped servants like a prince. He subscribed generously for causes. He helped friends openhandedly.

Of his religious views I have spoken previously. In a fit of excessive candour he called himself an agnostic, and the name stuck to him. Not, it would appear, quite justifiably. As early as 1898, we find him, under the sting of the apology episode, invoking the grace of Guru Dattatreya and making large resolutions among which were one to practise Yoga and one to learn the best philosophical religion and teach it to the whole world. There was no room in his genuine belief for high pitched asceticism, taboos or ceremonies. I distinctly recall the eve of my admission in Calcutta when he prescribed a purificatory bath and apprised me of a slight ritual to be gone through, not, he explained half apologetically, for any spiritual merit, but to invest the occasion with solemnity. I was never to publish it or discuss it with outsiders. The prohibition is enjoined, I presume, on every new entrant, for it is not generally known to the public. He once inquired whether I had faith in astrology and when I answered in the negative, said some predictions came astoundingly true and wondered how I would explain them. I rejoined that science had many puzzles to solve but that fact need not compel us to put any credence in the calculations or revelations of astrologers. He did not thereafter resume the topic with me; but I discovered that he paid a horoscope and obtained reports of what was going to happen to him every fortnight. After his death I received periodical forecasts of my fortune, but I took no notice and they ceased in time.

Let me at this point recount an interesting experience. In the early part of 1915, when Gokhale was in the grip of his fatal

malady, we had a good friend staying with us and sharing our anxiety. He had the biographer's curiosity bump developed to abnormal size. Members had to answer searching interrogatories. Did he say his prayers regularly? Visit shrines? Observe the customary fasts and feasts? Perform his parents' *saddha*? Study the Gita or other scriptural books? We did what we could to stake his thirst for information. But one item floored us: Did he wear his *yagnopavit*? None of us knew. He thought the answer vital. Why not hazard a direct question? Why not set a trusted mental on scent? We neither assisted diligently in this research nor encouraged intrigues with the establishment in the purpose. The gentleman had, therefore, to return home with this mystery vexing his soul. Poor man, he is gone where I cannot communicate with him: or I could now supply the gap in Gughade record. From an unexpected quarter trustworthy information has come that, during the last dozen years or so of his life, he wore no sacred thread apward the chest or round the neck halterwise, as I have seen some educated men do as a sort of half-way house between conformity and open rebellion. In Calcutta, where he was a regular visitor for meetings of the old Imperial Legislative Council, he had a highly cultured Brahmo lady-friend. Mrs. Ray entertained in style, and at her table the conversation was both high-souled and animated. She admired Gokhale's character and public spirit and took special interest in his work. People called her his Egeria. I shall now let her tell the story herself. The occasion is this very day in 1943, and she is talking to the girls of a high school which she has founded in his name and to the promotion of which she has dedicated herself:

- "One incident during these discussions I will relate to you, and it will prove to you Gokhale's intrinsic love of truth and his great virtue of owning his own errors. One evening after dinner we were both trying to convince each other of our respective theories (he gave precedence to political reform, she to social reform) when I got rather angry and said, "Now, Mr. Gokhale, with all your ideals of unity of India and political freedom, tell me which of your men are sincere and truthful. You can't even give up your caste system; you don't believe in idolatry, and tell your biggest political leaders go to Benares and do their *pinda* etc. according to the old rites; none of you political men can give up to your own convictions; yet you want to unite India and govern. I am sure with all your liberal views, you are a Brahmin born. Even, you have not got the strength of your convictions." I saw him grow rather grave, and I thought probably I had overstepped my familiarity by per-

venal attack, so I turned the conversation to other higher matters. Would you believe the next morning comes to me a sealed envelope enclosing his sacred thread, cut into two pieces with the following words in a slip of paper."

"Many thanks for rousing me to order. I own that I had no business to wear my sacred thread when I did not believe in it. Henceforth I shall try to act according to my convictions. *Forgive.*"

"I have kept that sacred thread in a little box with the slip of paper attached to it. It is very seldom in life you have the opportunity of meeting a man who loves truth and is strong enough to own an error."

In the famous statement of aims which Gokhale prefixed to the Constitution and Rules of the Servants of India Society, there occurs a striking sentence of which the precise scope and significance have been the subject of some dispute. Let me read it in its context :

"One essential condition of success in the work is that a sufficient number of our countrymen must now come forward to devote themselves to the cause in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken. *Public life must be spiritualised.* Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side. A fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the Motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence which nothing can shake,—equipped with these the worker must start on his mission and reverently seek the joy of spending himself in the service of the country."

That passage was no doubt composed in one of Gokhale's inspired moments. The ideal is pure, of the other region, unattainable except by persons saintly elevation and self-conquest. It is meant to be the pole-star by which members have to steer their crazy barks to the port of duty. The words may, in actual practice, mean much or little. The custom of interpretation in such cases is to study the vows undertaken and the rules laid down for the daily guidance of members. These vows and rules determine the limits within which, roughly speaking, their actions must lie,—an upper limit above which they need not go, a lower limit below which they must not fall. As lawyers will say, the sections of an Act are the law, not the preamble or statement of objects and reasons. Another test, not so final or authoritative, but yet valuable as a rough guide or measure, is the practice and example of the man

who framed the rules and himself followed them. Gokhale lived for ten years as First Member. Though few could attain his stature or emulate his achievement, his range and line of work were there for the whole world to see. The vows and rules go to the very root of character and the inner life. I have 37 years' experience and not even for a brief season have I been free from chagrin that I have not lived up to them. When our Congress friends of Madras became the Government and announced the remuneration and allowances of their office and the regulations for their conduct, I recognised their high quality readily and declared my appreciation by saying in the Legislative Council that while we of the Servants of India Society had skipped at the matriculation stage in the University of sacrifice, Mr. Rajagopalachari and his companions were proceeding to the doctorate. I shall now mention an enterprise of even greater path and moment, not so generally known. Dr. D.K. Karve, founder of the famous 'Widows' Home' near Poona and later of the Women's University for the actual work of the home a band of qualified persons whom he organised as an *Asrama*, the rules and conditions of which were more stringent than those of our Society. After a few years his self-effacing soul did not find full rest and satisfaction in the *Asrama*. Gokhale's expression, "Public life must be spiritualised, gripped his utmost being and demanded for more self-denial and rigour of conduct. So he organised a fresh band of workers, who should reach a higher peak of selflessness, and gave them the name and style of *Nishkama karma Mazha* adopting the Gita ideal of work without attachment. These *karma-yogins* and *karma-yoginis* had to take eight vows before initiation. They are much akin in language and scope to our own, and perhaps you will like to know them :

- (a) From this day forward I shall devote my life to the work of the *Mazha*.
- (b) I shall use my capabilities to their fullest extent and while engaged in the work connected with the institution, I shall never wish for private gains.
- (c) I shall ungrudgingly submit to the decisions consistent with the rules of the institution.
- (d) I shall cheerfully remain satisfied with the arrangements made by the majority of votes regarding my maintenance and of those dependent on me.
- (e) I shall keep my private life pure.
- (f) My living and dress will be plain and simple.
- (g) I shall be genuine in the matter of the religious belief of others and I shall do nothing to shock their susceptibilities.
- (h) I shall have no wife.

The story of this new *Matha* has a sequel of some significance, for it illustrates the truth that, even of an undoubtedly good thing, there may be too much. The disparity between the *Asthanas* and the *Matha* was noticeable and engendered jealousy and hostility. The misunderstanding became acute, and Dr. Karve, with the consent of both parties, came to Gokhale for arbitration. On him rested the responsibility in a way, for it was his spiritualisation *mantra* that had worked on the ascetic spirit of the organisers of the rival orders. Gokhale's finding was that the *asthanites* had a genuine grievance and were entitled to some redress. He evolved a formula for this purpose. But he told me, for I happened to be there, that Karve had not given full consideration to the human aspects of the problem. The compromise did not work, and in Karve's own words, the *Matha* was ultimately merged in the Widows' Home, the *Sevakar* and *Sevikar* of the *Matha* becoming life-members of the Widows' Home.

*Triveni* : March 1945





## THY CHARIOT

VISWANATHA SATYANARAYANA

Proudly beat on its course  
And cruel in its speed,  
Thy car was whirling on  
My frail form was crushed unto death  
Beneath the chariot wheels,  
And streams of blood gushed forth

Thy car, divinely bright, stopped not a moment  
In hesitation that aught impeded its progress;  
Nor did it veer round to note the sudden wail  
That went up from my bruised heart.

At early dawn, dread Lord, Thy charioteer  
Will wash the blood-stains from off Thy chariot wheels,  
But, how from amongst the blood-stains of millions  
Will Thou spot out mine?

*Translated from TELUGU by*  
ADULI BAPIRAJU  
Tiruveti : May 1928



## THE CONTENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE

BY JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

What exactly is social welfare? The well-being of society, I take it. If so, it includes almost everything that one can think of—spiritual, cultural, political, economic, social. It covers thus the entire field of human activity and relationships. And yet, this wide and all-embracing sense is seldom applied to it, and we use the words in a far more restricted sense. The social worker, often enough, considers himself or herself as working in a field which is strictly separated from political action or economic theory. He or she will try to bring relief to suffering humanity, will fight disease and slum conditions, deal with unemployment, prostitution and the like. He may also seek to bring about some changes in the law in order to remedy present-day injustice. But he will seldom go down to the roots of the problem, for he accepts the general structure of society as it is, and seeks only to tone down its glaring injustices.

The lady who visits the slums occasionally to relieve her conscience by the performance of good and charitable deeds is a type we need not consider. The less we have of this patronising and condescending approach to the problem the better. But there are large numbers of earnest men and women who devote themselves to the service of their fellow creatures in the somewhat narrow way conceived above. They do good work, and to whatever extent they may benefit others, they certainly benefit themselves by the discipline and training that this service gives them.

Yet, it seems to me, that all this good work is largely wasted, because it deals with the surface of the problem only. Social evils have a history and a background, roots in our past, and intimate connections with the economic structure under which we live. Many of them are indeed the direct products of that economic system, just as many others are of religious superstition and harmful custom. Any scientific consideration of the problem of social welfare must therefore inevitably go down to these roots and seek out the causes. It must have the courage to look deep down into the well of truth and to proclaim fearlessly what it finds there. If it avoids politics and economics,

and all that goes by the name of religion, for fear of treading on dangerous ground, then it moves on the surface only and can neither command much respect, nor achieve results.

For nearly two years now I have been associated with the National Planning Committee, and the conviction has grown upon me that it is not possible to solve any major problem separately by itself; they all hang together and they depend greatly on the economic structure. To social problems, in the limited sense, this applies with equal force. Recently, the Planning Committee considered the report of their Sub-Committee, on Woman's Role in Planned Economy. This Sub-Committee, more than any other, had to deal with social problems, and it tackled them in all earnestness and with great ability. In doing so it was all the time coming up against political conditions and even more so economic aspects and religious injunctions, or just prejudices with the force of custom.

It is not easy to say which is more difficult to deal with—economic vested interests or religious vested interests. Both these series of vested interests want to maintain the *status quo* and are opponents of change. The pain of the real reformer is thus a difficult one.

It is indeed not easy to say which is more difficult to deal with—economic vested interests or religious vested interests.

Before we seek any particular reform, we must be clear what our general objective is and what kind of society we are aiming at. It is obvious that, if we have a social structure which assures work and security to all adults, proper education for the young, a widespread distribution of the necessities and amenities of life, and a measure of individual freedom for self-development, this in itself will solve many of our social problems. Crime will decrease rapidly and the criminal type will become an extreme rarity, prostitution will be infinitely less, and there will be far better adjustments of human relations. If this background and basis are not provided, then the roots of evil remain.

The problem therefore has to be attacked on all fronts and possibly the greatest difficulty will be along the so-called religious front. Religion as such need not be touched, but there are so many rules and regulations which are presumed to have religious sanctions that any attempt to vary them is likely to meet with the solid and passionate opposition of the vocaries of organised religion. Inheritance, marriage, divorce are all supposed to be parts of the personal law of various communities, and this personal law is supposed to be part of religion. It is obvious that no change can be imposed from the top. It will thus become the duty of the Government of the day to try to educate public

opinion so as to make it accept the changes proposed. It should be clearly laid down, in order to avoid suspicion, that any change of this type will only apply to a community when that community itself accepts it. This will give rise to difficulties and to a lack of uniformity, but any other course will lead to greater difficulty and ill-will, and laws passed may become dead letters so far as their application is concerned.

It seems to me that a uniform Civil Code for the whole of India is essential. Yet I realise that this cannot be imposed on unwilling people. It should, therefore, be made optional to begin with, and individuals and groups may voluntarily accept it and come within its scope. The State should meanwhile carry on propaganda in its favour.

One urgent need is the extension of the Civil Marriage Act to cover marriages between any two persons, in whatever religion they may belong, without any renunciation of religion as at present. This will of necessity be optional.

Another desirable step is to have records kept of all marriages. This will be useful in many ways and it will gradually make people think in terms of civil marriages. The sacramental forms of marriage should certainly continue for all who want them, but it will be desirable later to have a civil registration also which the State will recognise.

Divorce laws, especially for the Hindus, are a crying need, and so indeed are so many other changes. We want changes which apply to both men and women, we want changes also especially applicable to women who have suffered for ages past under a double burden. Let us accept the democratic principle of equal rights and equal obligations as between man and man and man and woman, and frame our laws and social structure accordingly.

*Printed: Oct. - Nov. 1940*



REPRODUCED BY THE PUBLISHERS FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

# RAADHAA

## SAINT ABHIRAMA

(1905 — 1964)

Drink the nectar of Raadhaa's name  
 Every day, every moment —  
 Meditate on Raadhaa.  
 The world can cause you no pain  
 That, which is called Raadhaa  
 Is a combination of two forms,  
 Listen how the flute so sweetly invites Raadhaa :  
 Raa is the individual soul  
 While Dhaa is the supreme goal.  
 Realise them through  
 Twenty-one thousand and six hundred breaths  
 When Raadhaa and Maadhava  
 Pines for each other  
 It is the Maid die; brings them together  
 Says Abhirama, the possessed one,  
 Take Mohaa to Srimati's grave  
 And Ecce shak flow deligh undeliled.

— Translated from Oriya by Brajakhshara Das  
 Triveni · Jan-March 1993



FREEDOM'S BATTLE.  
GANDHI, 'THE CHARIOTTER'  
DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

Ten years ago the political atmosphere of our country was surcharged to a degree with feelings of indignation, resentment and expectancy. Behind the month of October 1919, there was the tragedy of the Amritsar massacre, the studied secrecy maintained about the holocaust of Jallianwallabagh, the humiliations to which the men, women and children of the Punjab were subjected by Messrs. Smith and Thompson, Colonel Johnson and General Dyer, the engaging of barristers-at-law in a public street, the whipping of a bridal party in a marriage procession, the crawling of passers-by in a gulla, the showering of bombs on innocent villagers, the proclamation of Martial Law and the resignation of Sir Sankaran Nair. In front of it lay the prospect of the Reform Bill, the emerging of the monster Dyrarchy into human shape masquerading as Self-Government or a counterfeit thereof, the amnesty of political prisoners which was bound to follow a Royal proclamation, the warfare between Responsive Co-operation espoused by the Lokamanya and the rejection of the Reforms advocated by Chitranuttan Das. All this sounds as some chapter of ancient history, but one touch of bureaucracy links together the epochs of eternity by the one tie of common suffering. Today we have almost the same prospect and retrospect. Indian Nationalism, seemingly beaten and baulked of its hopes and plans, is asserting itself once again with redoubled vigour, though, being in the midst of this renaissance we are not able to analyse its contents and visualise its features before our mind's eye. By strange turn of the whirligig of time Sir Sankaran Nair, who won his laurels ten years ago by resigning his membership of the Executive Council of the Government of India on the issue of the continuance of Martial Law in the Punjab, is recovering from the pitfall of the Central Committee into which he had let himself drop and holding as bay as usual his colleagues and his masters. The Punjab is again the storm-centre of politics and public life, in which the Congress

is to be held in Lahore. At Amritsar Dr. Sarayal is again in jail today as he was in 1919, though his companion, Dr. Kitchlew, is free. They were then together. Now they are in opposite camps, not indeed hostile to national aspirations, but in campaigns ridden by internal factionalism. Gandhi swayed the Congress of the Congress and the country in 1919, though he was not in the lime-light and though he had emerged just risen from an avalanche of abuse and execration for his Satyagraha movement.

A decade has not weakened his hold on the cult of truth and non-violence and today once again, though he is not in the lime-light, he is the one man to whom the people look for guidance and salvation. At Amritsar Pandit Motilal presided in 1919. At Lahore his son will preside in 1929. But more than all these, India gave proofs of hard determination to win Swaraj in 1929 by sacrificing hundreds of her sons in the Punjab on the 10th of April that year. They were however mowed down by the distasteful cruelty of General Dyer then. Now in 1929 the flower of India's sons are proving to the world that they can make willing sacrifices of themselves, yes, sacrifice themselves inch by inch and minute by minute, cell by cell and limb by limb as much as they can hold themselves as food for cannon or dynamite. India's expectancy at the present moment is not less keen or less buoyant than it was 100 years ago and every day new reports bring new hopes and sugar new disappointments.

Ten years ago, Gandhi wrestled the leadership, not as a personal prize but through a new philosophy, from the hands of his elders. Of them there was Dr. Besant who was the harbinger of the Reforms of that era, the Messiah whose alignment had brought salvation to mankind. She was ignored, set aside and superseded. She had already herself supplanted earlier leaders like Surendranath Banerjee, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sayendra Prasad Sircar, Bhupendranath Das, Lala Lajpat Rai and of that category. She had inaugurated a whirlwind protesting, raging campaign of agitation which left no breathing time to the British brought them down to her feet. But Gandhi's

ly to choke Britain. The self-complacent dictum the Non-co-operation movement would die of proved a false political prophecy and it was initiative in boycotting the Hunter Commission, organizing an Indian Enquiry Committee into the Punjab wrongs, and publishing the impartial verdict of the nation, that was responsible for the resolution at Azadpur asking for the recall of I

was soon followed up by the declaration of

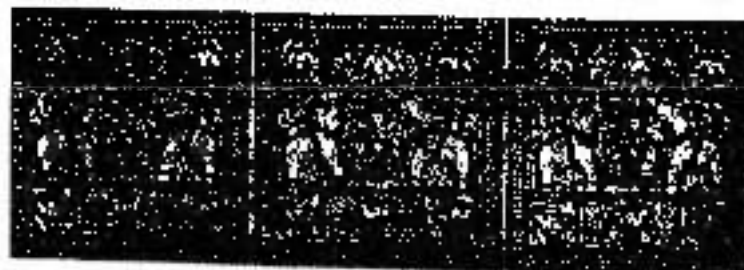
by December. Like Caesar of old, Gandhi came, saw and conquered. Here was Begun Babu palpably jealous of this pigmy, shorter, smaller and younger than himself. There was Malaviya 'perplexed and puzzled' over the ovations that greeted Gandhi everywhere which were never his. Elsewhere was Lejpat Ras saturated with Western experiences, American and English, who could not for the ghost of him understand what this Non-co-operation was and would be. Away was C.R. Das fighting the new movement with his wealth, voice and vote. All were foiled before this inscrutable small man, this philosopher-statesman, this mystic, this idealist, this man of business, this little *Bahin* *Rishi*. How should such a man, who by his irresistible moral uplift, swept away before him his elders and his contemporaries and installed himself on the god of power, allow himself in turn to be submerged by the rising tide of youthful invasions, enthusiasm and readiness to sacrifice? He sees all around him the youth of the nation hungering for freedom, thirsting for liberty, yearning to lay down their lives before the altar of the Mother, and he, at any rate, is not the man to stand between a patriot and his cherished object. Patriarchs of old have always exulted themselves by singling out their successors and installing them on the throne of power. He who lingers to the end, long after his time is up, is neither wise, nor discerning, nor even patriotic; but he, who in his own day watches the pulse and knows the warmth of the blood surging beneath his fingers can measure the strength of the throbs within and knows how to adjust himself to the rising pressure and temperature. This, Gandhi has done in nominating Jawaharlal to the chair at Lahore. The charioteer bears even perhaps a greater responsibility in the conduct of a campaign than the warrior himself that wields the weapons. We know how Nara Narayana fought the battle of Kurukshetra on to a successful end. Which was the greater of the two? Arjuna was overcome with doubt; his courage failed him; his imperiousness at one moment yielded place to vacillation at the next. Through all these vicissitudes, it was Krishna that put heart into him and guided him to victory; and Arjuna himself put a like spirit and a like courage in Uparakutara at the great sea of *Coprahana*. Today, Gandhi standing by Jawaharlal in the great battle day is to come is not a puzzle to those that have the vision, but fulfils the prophecies of the epics.

Whether it be in professions or in politics, the duty of the elder generation is clearly to take in hand the rising members of the younger and guide them along paths of rectitude and leadership. It is only when this is done that unity is established, rather continuity is ensured between the streams of life that are conventionally termed the past, the present and the future. These are but the halting stations in our march to eternity and vigorous is the man that thinks he must wipe



out all these from the map of time. The uninitiated have doubtless cavilled at one another, the old at the young and the young at the old, but the old and the young, age and youth, past and present, leaders and following, all make up one united whole, one harmonious blend, which would be imperfect without either the one or the other in its composition. So palpable a proposition as this is little understood and less realised by the common run of politicians. But there are qualities and attributes in human nature which mark the proper frontiers from the politician, even as they draw the line between the engineer and the architect, the photographer and the painter, the mechanic and the scientist, the preacher and the politician. All of us do not possess such qualities, but it is up to all of us to cultivate our minds so as to be able to recognise these qualities where they exist and realise the greatness and the glory which they bestow. Nor all may be Gandhi, but let us not lose the opportunity of knowing in our own day and realising in our own experience what Gandhi stands for.

Triveni - Sept. - Oct. 1929



## A FALSE DIVISION

BY J. KRISHNAMURTI

To most of us, profession is apart from our personal life. There is the world of profession and technique, and the life of subtle feelings, ideas, fears and love. We are trained for a world of profession, and only occasionally, across this training and compulsion, we hear the vague whispering of reality. The world of profession has become gradually overpowering and exacting, taking almost all our time, so that there is little chance for deep thought and emotion. And so the life of reality, the life of happiness, becomes more and more vague and recedes into the distance. Thus we lead a double life : the life of profession, of work, and the life of subtle desires, feelings, and hopes.

Thus division into the world of profession and the world of sympathy, love, and deep wanderings of thought, is a fatal impediment to the fulfilment of man. As in the lives of most people this separation exists, let us inquire if we cannot bridge over this destructive gulf.

With rare exceptions, following any particular profession is not the natural expression of an individual. It is not the fulfilment or complete expression of one's whole being. If you examine this, you will see that it is a careful training of the individual to adjust himself to a rigid inflexible system. This system is based on fear, acquisitiveness and exploitation. We have to discover by questioning deeply and sincerely, not superficially, whether this system to which individuals are forced to adjust themselves is really capable of liberating man's intelligence, and so bringing about his fulfilment. If this system is capable of truly freeing the individual to deep fulfilment, which is not mere egotistic self-expression, then we must give our entire support to it. So we must look at the whole basis of this system and not be carried away by its superficial effects.

For a man who is trained in a particular profession, it is very difficult to discern that this system is based on fear, acquisitiveness and exploitation. His mind is already vested in self-interest, so he is incapable of true action with regard to this

systems of fear. Take, for example, a man who is trained for the army or navy; he is incapable of perceiving that armies must inevitably create wars. Or take a man whose mind is twisted by a particular religious belief; he is incapable of discerning that religion as organised belief must poison his whole being. So each profession creates a particular mentality, which prevents the complete understanding of the integrated man.

As most of us are being trained or have already been trained to twist and fit ourselves to a particular mould, we cannot see the tremendous importance of taking many human problems as a whole and not dividing them up into various categories. As we have been trained and tested, we must free ourselves from the mould and reconsider, *ad astra*, in order to understand life as a whole. This demands of each individual that he shall, through suffering, liberate himself from fear. Though there are many forms of fear, social, economic and religious, there is only one cause, which is the search for security. When we individually destroy the walls and forms that the mind has created in order to protect itself, thus engendering fear, then there comes true intelligence which will bring about order and happiness in this world of chaos and suffering.

On one side there is the mould of religion, impeding and frustrating the awakening of individual intelligence, and on the other the vested interest of society and profession. In these moulds of vested interest the individual is being forcibly and cruelly trained, without regard for his individual fulfilment. Thus the individual is compelled to divide life into profession as a means of livelihood, with all its stupidities and exploitations; and subjective hopes, fears, and illusions, with all their complexities and frustrations. Out of this separation is born conflict, ever preventing individual fulfilment. The present chaotic condition is the result and expression of this continual conflict and compulsion of the individual.

The mind must disentangle itself from the various compulsions, authorities, which it has created for itself through fear, and thus awaken the intelligence which is unique and not individualistic. Only this intelligence can bring about the true fulfilment of man.

This intelligence is awakened through the continual questioning of those values to which the mind has become accustomed, to which it is constantly adjusting itself. For the awakening of this intelligence, individuality is of the greatest importance. If you blindly follow a pattern laid down, then you are no longer awakening intelligence, but merely conforming, adjusting yourself, through fear, to an ideal, to a system.

The awakening of this intelligence is a most difficult and arduous task, for the mind is so timorous that it is ever creating shelters to protect itself. A man who could awaken this intelligence must be supremely alert, ever aware, not to escape into an illusion; for when you begin to question these standards and values, there is conflict and suffering. To escape from that suffering, the mind begins to create another set of values, entering into the labyrinths of a new enclosure. So it moves from one prison to another, thinking that it is living, evolving.

The awakening of this intelligence destroys the false division of life into profusion or outward necessity, and the inward retreat from frustration into illusion, and brings about the completeness of action. Thus through intelligence alone can there be true fulfilment and bliss for man.

*Prigati* - Jan. 1937



## A SONG OF MIRA

(Rendered by Dilip Kumar Roy from Hindi)

My one Love is the Prince of Love,  
To none else am I sworn  
But the dancer, crowned with peacock's plumes,  
My one Rose, ref: of them -  
Who held the conch, mace, discus, lotus,  
Garlanded, blue-born.  
For Him I left my father, mother,  
Brothers, friends and home :  
Hark back to them I can no more.  
For Him alone I roam  
I am His servant who in dust  
Will serve Him day and night.  
The worldly-wise cry : "See a scandal !"  
My soul : "Beside the Light !"  
In the heart's lone waste with tears will Mira  
Now nurse Love's seeds to bloom,  
Waiting His vibrant day whose light  
Shall laugh at the terrors of gloom

Printed July - Sept. 194



## LOVE IS BLIND

(A Short Story)

Prof. N. S. PHADKE

When the train whistled and started she once again looked at her father standing on the platform, and raising her voice a little, said, "Till let you know how my business succeeds. And I'll try my best to return on Monday."

She could not hear what her father said but she continued to stand peeping through the window, and did not move although the train went across the bridge and people on the platform looked like a bunch of jumbled figures. The thick grove of Babul trees on the outskirts of her village was moving past her eyes; their tops looked tender and green owing to the recent heavy showers; the tall and thick stalks of cornfield waved in the wind, the rays of the sun shining on their dark green blades as on the surface of a lake; far away at the foot of the hill she could see the grazing sheep making clusters of dark spots; and the tile roof of the little temple on the hill-top glinted so brightly that it hurt the eye. There was a distinct promise all around in nature that the approaching Dasara holidays were going to be a festival of plenty and joy.

But was there a promise of happiness for every one? . . .

With a heavy sigh she drew back from the window and sat on the bench where she had already placed her things.

Now she noticed that there were very few people in the compartment. This was unusual and she was surprised. There were half a dozen rustic women, an old man leaning on a big stick, a middle-aged fellow guarding a load of wares who was evidently a trader, and beyond him --

She started as her eyes fell on the young man in the farthest corner who had closed his eyes and rested his head on the hard wooden side of the compartment.

She had never seen such a beautiful young man before.

His clothes were simple but very clean and fresh from the laundry. He was exceedingly fair, had dark waving hair, and the lashes of his closed eyes were long.

She made a slight nervous movement trying to look away and adjust the end of her sari which covered her bosom. A smile came on her face as she thought that it was foolish on her part to be so embarrassed. In the first place his eyes had not met hers. And, again, even if he had seen her there would have been no cause for her to blush. Only pretty women blushed, and she was almost ugly. She knew that every one in her little home town had long ago decided that Varsala, the daughter of Mr. Deshpande, was an ugly duckling, dark, unattractive, with a pock-marked face. She had come to learn that ugliness was an insurmountable hurdle in her way. When she passed her first University examination she had decided not to be a burden to her father and to pay her way through the remaining years at the college. She had frantically tried to secure a job. She was prepared to do any sort of work, but no one was willing to have her. She knew in her mind of minds that it was her ugly face that made people send her away with a refusal. She was now going to Purna to try for a new job, but there was doubt and fear in her heart more than hope. Her application had been approved and she had been called for an interview. But when she would present herself.....

Varsala had often cursed her face.

She was tempted to look at the young man again, and summoning courage she did so. He moved his right hand, and with its palm pressed the locks of hair which were being blown by the strong breeze. But he did not open his eyes.

Varsala was surprised at this. She was terribly curious to know whether his eyes were as dark as his hair. Her heart beat with nervousness but she kept gazing at him. It was rather very strange, but the young man kept his eyes closed. He would not open them. She wondered in what deep contemplation he was lost.

There was a rumble of the wheels as the train reached the next station. Now he will open his eyes, Varsala thought. The train halted; the old man with the big stick got down; a few fresh passengers climbed into the compartment with their knacks; there was a whistle and the train moved on. But the young man did not open his eyes.

Then a suspicion occurred to Varsala and she minutely looked at the lids of his eyes.

Yes, she had guessed correctly. The young man was blind!

She was deeply moved. It was a pity that such exceptional masculine beauty was cursed with blindness. Could anything be more tragic? A surge of sympathy for the young man rose in her heart. When she had first noticed him in the compartment she had said to herself, 'How handsome!' But now, watching him she said to herself, 'Poor dear', 'Poor dear'. She wanted to know who

he was, where he lived, and what sort of life he led. Her mind was filled with curiosity about him.

After a while big dark clouds gathered in the skies, winds blew, and a downpour started.

Varsala quickly drew the shutter of the window.

She noticed that the window near which the young man sat was open and gusts of rain were coming in. She got up and drew down its shutter. The young man smiled and said, "Thank you."

She said, "Will you please move a little to your left, because although I have shut the window water rushing in through the chinks? May I move your suit-case?"

He obeyed her like a child. And that made Varsala think that it must be the lot of the blind people to be always obeying some one. How helpless they were, poor dears!

She was about to resume her seat when he asked, "How far are you going?"

She replied, "I am going to Poona. Where are you going?"

"Bombay."

"But you have no one with you?"

"How can I always get some one with me? A friend put me in this train at Miraj. Now another friend will meet me at the Poona station and put me in the Bombay train. Someone will also be present at the Victoria Terminus to receive me."

"But don't you need assistance on the way?"

"Yes, I need it, and I am usually lucky to get it. For instance, didn't I get it just now?" He laughed.

But she did not. He was taking his curse of blindness lightly, and even making fun of it. But this did not amuse her. On the contrary, she was struck by the pathos that was concealed in his jovial laughter.

She asked him, "Do you always live in Bombay?"

He did not make any reply. He was so intently listening to the quality of her voice that the meaning of her words did not quickly reach his mind. Varsala, however, thought that he wanted to avoid her question, and she wondered about it.

After a while he asked, "Have you moved away to your seat?"

His question surprised Varsala. How did he know that she had moved away? But then she remembered that the blind are usually very sensitive to movement and sound. While she was thinking of how there is a law of compensation in nature, he gave her a further shock of surprise by asking, "It was your father, I believe, who had come to see you off at the station?"

So this young man had listened to the talk between herself and her father when she got into the train! And just as she had watched him closely with her eyes he must have listened to all her



talk. This thought was enough to embarrass her.

But she remembered his question and said, "Yes, it was my father who had come to see me off." And somehow, before she knew what she was doing she was telling him about the job in Poona for which she was crying.

He listened to her talk, but he seemed to be more attentive to the sweetness of her words and the music of her voice. For a broad smile came on his face as though he was enjoying some rare delight.

A little before dusk the rain stopped. The sky was still overcast with clouds and so the light was very dull. Vaisala looked out of the window. Nature seemed to be enveloped in sombre sadness that to look at it was enough to touch the hidden chords in the human heart, and to draw out some deeplying warning. It is in a moment like this that poetry is born. Or you feel like calling after someone very dear to your heart whom you cannot reach. Or, you are moved to hum the lines of song laden with the longing of a love-sick heart.

Vaisala began to sing in a subdued voice.

"How long shall I wait for you my beloved?

I am roaming through the woods and searching,

But there is no end to this journey.

Where are you my dearest? And how shall I find you?"

Gradually she forgot herself. Her voice slowly rose to a higher pitch and she sang—

"There's a rustle in the leaves of trees;

There is an aching flutter in my heart;

Come to me my dearest—"

She suddenly stopped because she noticed that somebody was softly keeping a beat to the rhythm of her song.

"There's rustle in the leaves of trees;

There is an aching flutter in my heart;

Come to me my dearest—"

She suddenly stopped because she noticed that somebody was softly keeping a beat to the rhythm of her song.

She turned round. The young man had placed his leg and was beating the rhythm with his fingers on his leather cover.

She blushed.

He asked, "Why did you stop? Please go on."

She kept silent.

He said, "The next lines of the song are even more touching. I know.

I know. Sing them. Please."

"But I have never learnt to sing."

"But you have the rare gift of a lovely voice."

She started to sing again, but now she was conscious that he was listening to her and this awareness spoiled her freedom and her abandon. As soon as she finished the song she said, "Do you know what a poor singer I am?"

He said, "No, I only know how cleverly you can lie when you mean to. You said you didn't learn to sing. I cannot believe you."

"Cannot believe me? Good!" She broke into laughter and then for a long time kept looking at him.

As the train was nearing the Poona station he took out a small note-book from his pocket and holding it out to her said,

"Will you mind writing your name and address here? I am not a big man deserving to be remembered by you, but you may as well keep this visiting card with you."

Vasala wrote her name and address in the note-book and handed it back to him. Then she looked at his card.

Vishwanath K. Poddit,

Golden Voice Gramophone Co.,

Bombay.

At the Poona station a well-dressed gentleman came searching for the blind youngman. Before going away with him he moved near her and asked, "I hope you will remember me."

"Yes, certainly."

On her way from the station to the city Vasala again and again thought of the incident in the train. She had made a fool of herself and sung to a perfect stranger. He must have decided to himself that she was a thoughtless simple girl. He must have surely laughed at her. . . The only consolation was that there was no chance of her meeting him again, and so it did not matter if he had taken her for a fool. . .

Her thoughts then turned to the interview which she was due to have on the next day. If it came off well everything would be all right and there would be an end to her worries.

But her worries did not end.

The interview did not prove satisfactory. The job was given to another lady. Vasala decided that her ugly face had once again ruined her chances. She was terribly hurt. For a long time she felt very miserable and hopeless. But then gradually she recovered from the shock. There came in her heart a sort of desperation. If life was going to be unfriendly to her, she thought, she must not go under and give up the struggle. She must rather fight back. She decided not to go home until she got a job. Any job would do. Any salary. Twenty chips, fifteen chips!

Her father kept writing to her asking her to return. But she did not go. She had not succeeded in securing a job but her resolve

had not weakened. One day she received from her father a thick long envelope. In the left hand top corner of it she found the letters "Golden Voice Gramophone Co., Bombay" printed in attractive style. Her home address was typed on it, but her father had scratched it and written her new address in its place. She opened the envelope and read the typed letter.

"I have no idea if you are still in Poona or have returned home. But I hope this will reach your hands wherever you are. I want to make a request—call it a business proposal if you like—taking advantage of the slight acquaintance which I had the pleasure of making in the train. Our Company will soon start its recording session. It has been our policy during the past years not only to record the music of well-known artists but also to discover new talent and introduce them to the public. People always want something new. I very much wish to record your songs and I shall be very much obliged if you come down to Bombay for the purpose. The Company will pay all your expenses and will also, if you suggest, arrange for your stay. If you intimate to us the date of your arrival and the train by which you intend to come I shall arrange to have our man meet you at the Victoria Terminus. Please, therefore, let me know as early as possible your decision in the matter.

"I forgot to write one thing. The Company will record four songs from you and will pay you one hundred rupees ! "

One hundred rupees ?

This was incredible ! Varsala could not believe it.

\* \* \*

And when after a few days the records of her songs had been made and she was asked to put her signature on the usual contract she could not believe her eyes. But when she signed the contract and picked up the currency notes which the accountant placed on the table she found no gladness in her heart. On the contrary, she experienced a deep regret at the thought that her business was over. She did not want to go away.

She knew that Vishwanath was very ill and she could not bear the idea of leaving him. She had spent two weeks in Bombay and she had begun to experience an attachment for him. He had been awfully kind to her. How he had fretted and worried over the recording arrangements, and how anxious he had been to see that her songs were perfectly recorded. How sweetly he had helped her to overcome her nervousness, and what clever tricks he had used to make her feel at home when she had been put on her first trial. And how conscientiously he had looked after her comfort. .

He was laid down with an attack of fever on the very next day after the recording had been finished, and had been confined

to bed for the last four days. She had sat by his side and nursed him. Her heart melted whenever she had to move away from his bed. And now she was going to leave him for good...

During his illness he would often hold her hand and lie still. Her hand would understand what his hand said. Sometimes he would speak out a few words and express his feelings, and then her mind would be very much troubled. She wanted to hold his love with both her hands. But then she would ask herself, was it not quite natural for him to imagine that she was handsome? Would it be right to take advantage of his innocence and to deceive him? Would he have drawn her to him if he could see her face? Was it not her duty to tell him the truth and have done with everything?... In moments like these she would be torn with the torture of temptation and indecision, and she would find it difficult to hold back her tears.

Once her tears dropped on his hand. He started and asked, "Vasala, are you crying?"

She said, "No."

He lifted his hand and his fingers, groping her arm, then her throat, then her cheeks, rested on her eyes. And wiping her tears he said:

"Don't cry. Are you silly?"

She pressed his hand and said, "How good and kind you have been. I can never forget your obligations."

He laughed feebly and said, "To talk like this is even more silly than crying. Come, wipe away your tears and read out to me the book which you read out to me yesterday."

Then she got up and picking up the book began to read from it. Listening to her sweet voice he went to sleep like a child. She had then found it impossible to move from him without softly putting her lips to his hand which still rested in hers.

And now she was going to leave him for good! She managed to put off the moment of parting as long as she could. Once she even decided to leave a note for him and go away without seeing him. But she thought it too wicked to do so. When at last she went to him the day had ended and night had already fallen. His room was dimly lit.

As soon as he heard her footsteps, he said, "Is that you, Vasala? There was eagerness in his voice. He must have been anxiously waiting for her.

As soon as she sat near him, he held her hand. She thought of disengaging it, but she could not do it.

He said, "I have no fever today. Tomorrow we will go to the studio together."

"Tomorrow? How is that possible?"

"Why not?"

"My business is over. The Company has paid me. I have received one hundred rupees. My father would never believe that I have earned such a fortune. Even I do not believe it. All this has been to me an incredible dream...."

She was trying to conceal her real feelings under her talk and her laughter. Vishwanath easily saw through this. He said, "Aren't you going to listen to me?"

"Yes?"

"We will go to the studio tomorrow."

"No. I want to go home."

"But how can I let you go? You came because I called you. Didn't you? How can you run away then without saying good-bye?"

"I am not running away. In fact, I came just now because I wanted to say good-bye."

"Can you leave me so casually? Is it so easy and simple for you to say good-bye? Vaisala, why are you silent? Why don't you say something?"

She kept looking at him. He was so terribly handsome. And she was an ugly woman. She made a desperate effort not to let her heart melt, and said -

"I must leave tomorrow. I have to."

His fingers made a caressing movement on the back of her hand, and the words came slowly from his lips. "Don't you have any compassion for me? Vaisala, don't you understand that I love you? I had been clinging to the hope that you will accept my love and never go away from me. Will you crush my hope and go?"

She collected all the strength of her resolve, and said:

"Vishwanath, listen. It seems you have an illusion about me. If I kept your illusion and consented to link my life with yours I shall be only doing you a great harm. How could I do that? I can never do anything that will hurt you because, in the first place, you are my benefactor, and besides, I love you very much."

"Vaisala, do you really love me?"

"Yes, very much, very much. I cannot tell you how much."

"And yet you talk of going away from me? Vaisala, I want you!"

"Vishwanath, you want me because you do not know me. I mean you do not know the reality that is me."

"I do not quite understand you."

"I am not at all as beautiful as my voice. I am so dark that I would not be fit to be your maid. My features are ungainly and my face is ugly and pock-marked. People who have eyes turn away

their faces as soon as they see me. Do you know what the people in your studio had been saying? "Where did Vishwanath pick up this sweet-throated ugly duckling?" All through these years people have despised me. This is the real me. Will you wait a woman whom the world has despised for her ugliness and at whom people have always laughed....?"

She could not control her feelings and she broke into sobs. She thought this was the end of everything! The illusion had been dispelled. Happiness had ended. Now Vishwanath would long for even the touch of her body.

But he drew her closer to him, and the touch of his hand was at once more urgent and tender. He said,

"Now listen to me. Physical beauty is for those who have eyes. I am born blind, and since I have been denied the pleasure of looking at the outward beauty of things, I have developed an inner sense of sight which even men with eyes can never possess. With this heavenly insight I can see much of the loveliness of the world to which people are usually blind. I can see the exceptional charm of your voice as no other man can. I can see the softness and sweetness of your heart. I can understand the subtle language of the yearning of your heart whenever I touch you. I don't have eyes. But I have a far better sight than common people and I see at you preying but beauty. Do you understand me? Have I convinced you that I know you as you really are? I was never under the illusion that you are beautiful. I had known from people since long ago that you were an ugly woman. I do not love your looks. I love you. Vasula, do you understand me? Will you still leave me tomorrow? Tell me."

She said nothing.

But when he drew her and her head in both his hands, and caressing it said, "Vasula, my dearest!" she fainted with happiness and nestled close to him.

Her tears trickled down on his bare chest, and Vishwanath kissed her hair.

Triveni, Dec. 1946



## THE MIND BEYOND THE MIND

C JINARAJADAŚA

The life of man is not more than a fraction of a millionth of a millimetre compared to the eternity of time. What, therefore, is the outlook for man when his body wears away and is dissolved into the elements from which it is composed? Does anything remain of man that can be thought of as in any way "immortal"? This, indeed, is the great problem around which all philosophical systems revolve.

The first important element in trying to understand the problem is to realize that a man is what he *thinks* he is. In one of the sermons of the Buddha there is the striking verse, "Thought in the mind hath made us; what we are by thought is wrought and built." Just as it is necessary, in trying to make a machine operate well, to remove all dust from it, so similarly one of the first actions of a man who is to think rightly is to separate himself from the expressions of his body, its needs, its ailments, its clamours. The English philosopher Carlyle put the whole matter satirically in one phrase, "Soul is not synonymous with stomach".

Today some of the greatest scientific thinkers in the field of physics have openly stated that what is important in understanding the universe, from their standpoint, is that matter is only after all a form of mind. It is, therefore, not an impossible assumption to state that above all things a man is mind. From this assumption comes the problem, which is, can a man organize his mind in such a manner that both Immortality and Infinity reflect themselves in his mind?

This is the problem which every religion presents to its followers. But, it is no exaggeration to say that today religions are so full of dead traditions that no man with a keen intellect, especially if he is trained in scientific ways of thought, finds a solution along the line of religion.

If religion then fails us, is there no other line of action possible? There is a way through what is called "Culture". The

word certainly is very vague, but considered in its highest sense and not limiting it to the culture of any one civilization, we mean by culture something which by experiences of our heart and mind we find is permanent among the fleeting and passing details of our lives. The poets especially are representatives of this aspect of culture, for each true poet tries to see the permanent in the impermanent. When a great poet succeeds, his creation is for all time. Homer when translated today into any language has a quality of vividness; he is still in touch with life in this year 1946 as he was in the life of his own day. So beautiful is this element in Homer that at the moment I am reading daily to a girl of eleven a brilliant translation of "*The Odyssey*", and she is as much enthralled by the story as I am. It is this quality of permanence among the impermanent which the Greek sculptors showed in all their best creations, for a statue of Pallas Athene or Apollo, though it began with a human model, was made by the sculptor to reveal a definite Idea of a divine Personality. Similarly, too, there is a sculptural quality in the great men and women created by Shakespeare. They have translated him in Japan and put some of his plays on the stage, although Japanese mentality is in many ways so different from that of the English.

In the same way, though Greece wrote over a century ago, something of what he created has still for us the quality of permanence. In a supreme manner, the great religious and philosophical works of India called the Upanishads are as living today for the seeker of truth as when they were first composed thousands of years ago. Perhaps the most brilliant instance of a philosopher and poet whose creations have the quality of permanence is Plato.

It is from these elements of culture that a man can find himself, if he has the right development of his mind, to be what the Platonist called "the Idea". That Idea of himself can be discovered by him as having the quality of immortality and infinity. So far went Plato.

But it is not enough to discover oneself as the Idea. To realize oneself as immortal requires that the Idea should be "put to work". In other words, the individual who realizes himself as the Idea must stand forth in life as one who generates ideas in the minds of others, and so brings about revolutionary changes in their lives. In this manner the individual knows that though he is mortal, yet immortality is a part of him. So we have Jesus Christ saying, "Not I work, but the Father worketh in me". And the Father is eternal.

Are all these thoughts only like the mere spinning of a spider's web which can be broken by a gust of wind? That is the test for one who seeks to know that he is not the perishable body, but is



something that can be described as an unpetishable soul. No one in this matter can lead another by the hand and say: "Follow me and I will show you Truth". On the other hand, there is the testimony throughout the ages that great souls have identified themselves with an immortal and infinite element in life, and so stand as finger-posts pointing to the road that leads to the Infinite and the Immortal. They entered upon a supreme adventure and they found success in it. How far a man today can set out on this same adventure and come to the goal he seeks depends on himself, on what is within him for task which only he can know.

Socrates, after he was condemned to death, was not disturbed in the least: even on the last day, he talked with his friends as if he would meet them the next day. Carlyle said of him: "Socrates is jeetibly at home in Zion." That is the supreme adventure in life, to be here and now, in this chaos of a world in the year 1946, to be "at home in Zion." I can only testify: *It can be done.*

Triveni : Sept. 1946



# MAN AND THE INFINITE

By D. V. GUNDAPPA

Is the universe around us and inclusive of ourselves no more than a casual welter of blind forces, with no intelligent aim or significance, or has it a meaning and a value for us? The question was provoked by an article by Dr. W. T. Stace entitled "Man Against Darkness" in the *Atlantic Monthly* for September 1948, and was discussed in a symposium in the November issue of that journal by (1) B. J. Bell asking "Is it Really That Dark?", (2) C. F. Hibbard confirming "the Principle of God", (3) E. H. Edwards querying "How can we Deny God?", and (4) J. C. Peckins directing attention to "the Quest for Basic Values". This article seeks to set out a Hindu's view of the points raised in the discussion.

## Purpose in the Universe

Is there a purpose in the Universe?

There are three parties to the question: (1) The Universe, (2) Its Maker (hypothesizing one for the sake of argument) called God, and (3) the Questioner.

The Universe, as all can see, is a miscellany of beings and not a single unitary entity. Its purposes—if any—may therefore possibly be as numerous and diverse as are minds or intelligences in it. It is also possible that the intelligences of its several creatures are in several stages of evolution—from complete dormancy to rational awareness—so that it is impossible that the entire Universe can produce any single and precise statement of purpose as being fully and finally its own at any specified moment. Further, if we would grant that the Universe is a thing created, it should follow that the quarter to which we have to turn for light as to its purpose, if there be any, is its Creator. How should a mere creature know the mind of its mysterious parent?

Next as to its Maker: When we postulate the existence of a Creator, we admit by implication that He possesses a mind or an intelligence as the active principle of His workmanship. The neuter pronoun 'It' (Sanskrit: *Tat*) is perhaps more accurate in our reference to the Creator than either the more usual 'He' or the less usual 'She'. If there be a Creator, It must be deemed to be an Absolute Power,—under no obligation to any one. If It has a

purpose or design in view, it is not bound to disclose that motive to anybody. It may have no purpose at all. What purpose has a child in view when it is playing,—other than the purpose of enjoying the fun of the play itself? Indeed, it is the nature of the child in the cradle, when it is awake, to be active with its little eyes and tiny hands and legs. What plot or plan can it possibly contemplate? The principle of intelligence within it must express itself. That is all the truth of the child's activity. The little one cannot simply bottle up its energy, and must exude it for sheer self-relief. Analogous to it may be the activity of the Crescent,—the mere process of self-expression, the mere joy (*lila*) of self-articulation. An ancient Vedic sage said: "World-activity is the *nature* of God. It is His self-existent characteristic. He does not seek anything from it. What could He want who has in Himself all powers and all means of satisfying all wants,—He whose wish is no sooner formed than fulfilled?"

God may have not one purpose, but many purposes. For, each separate being in the Universe, there may be a different purpose set; and that purpose may be changed for each from moment to moment. What is needful for each man then is to find out what exactly the purpose in relation to him may be. On a vast playground where many elements are engaged in the game, it is more important that each individual player understands his position and part than that he should hear about what is happening in remote parts of the field.

Then, let us think of the third party to the question,—the Questioner. No single questioner is the whole Universe. No body of questioners, however large and however well-informed, can count themselves the whole of it. How should a mere part know the secret of the whole? The whole is an Infinity; the questioner is a finite speck of it. How should he know the purpose of what is so far larger than himself? Secondly, why should he know,—more than that he is just a ripple on the bosom of the ocean of the Infinite?

#### Science Not Enough

The very fact that Dr. Space and his critics are both alike worried about the existence of a purpose in creation—the scepticism of the first as well as affirmation of the second—is some ground for holding that the idea of a purpose or an object is not foreign to the mind behind the universe or the will of the Creator. A great deal of what science has discovered for us is the reign of order and system and law in the life of the universe. Without laws making for regularity and sequence in natural phenomena, life must be impossible. What makes life worth-while and planable for man is that which the scientist is able to glean from the workings of the

elements of nature. But if life should be lived to good purpose, we should see it in its relation to Reality or pure and perfect principle of being,—life against the background of absolute esse. Now the point to note is that Reality or the realm of *esse* comprehends within itself not only the visible universe, but also an immeasurable beyond. What our physical senses can perceive is not the *whole of what is*. There are unimaginable stores of energy and power lying hidden here, there and everywhere, inaccessible to the microscope and the telescope of the scientist. The Creator—the Power that manifests itself as the analysable and calculable universe—does however not exhaust itself in that act. The Vedic seers have it that "the beings of the universe make up just a fourth part of God, the All-Pervasive Being; three parts of It are invisibly lodged in immortality,—in Heaven." What exists really is thus, in its fullness, a mixture of the manifest and the unmanifest, the measurable actual and the immeasurable potential. If we would understand the significance of life in all its bearings we have to reckon with the metaphysical as well as with the physical, with the transcendental as well as with the material. The scientist thus undoubtedly has a function to perform in the economy of our life; but he cannot hope to fill the whole of it. There are offices in it which he must be willing to let others fill. Among these others are poets, philosophers and practitioners of the disciplines of the soul, which is the central life-principle in each one among us,—the principle that designates itself as *T* in every living being.

Dr. Stace is apparently an impatient man. He is in a hurry to hear the verdict of science on the ultimate problems of being. But science has still a long race to run to arrive anywhere near the post. Great scientists have, without doubt, covered large tracts of what once was terra incognita in the realm of Nature and garnered much precious knowledge for us. But every one of them has at last found himself brought up against an impenetrable iron curtain. His telescopes and microscopes and arc-lamps and X-ray apparatuses have proved of no avail there. But, is that enough reason for us to conclude that the search is over and in vain? Is it not possible that there are instruments of other kinds to be tried? It is in that other direction that the scientist has to look for light to glimpse that region which his accustomed instruments have not helped him to penetrate. In sober truth, the methods and the instruments of the scientist are objective. But what Professor Stace asks to see is a vision not susceptible of objectification. Nor is that vision exclusively a matter of subjective speculation. It can be attained only by means of a subject-object continuum,—that is, through the integration of the sense of ego and the non-ego, through the abolition of all distinctions of 'mine' and 'not-mine'. In other words, it is the comingling of the indivi-

dual with the universal.—the mergence of the creature in the Creator via the Creation. This realization of man's oneness with All that there is, is not a process of simple reflection and intellectual apprehension, as are the concepts of mathematics. It is to be acquired through hard and long-continued disciplines of the soul. It calls for a training of emotions and an enlarging of fields of self-sacrifice. It is passing beyond the notions of dualism like good and evil, beautiful and ugly, sweet and bitter, and reaching such a state of mind-intellect-fusion in which one is able to feel as though one were verily the inner pervasive spirit of the whole universe and could contemplate the play (lila) of life-forces, unruffled and calm, as if one were a distant and disinterested spectator, desiring nothing for himself, because there is no 'self' to count as his own, apart from the Infinite Being at play around him. To experience this is the highest of felicities. It comes as the fruit of the sublimation of all human faculties. Words are vague and inefficient to depict it in its fullness. For each man that has known it, it is an individual possession of his own. No communism and no socialism are possible in the pure realms of the spirit. The value of all social and institutional life is merely as part of a course of discipline for it.

If the scientist would see the ultimate Truth of Life Universal, he should put more emphasis on what he has yet to find out than on what he has already found out.

### Schooling for the Soul

A purpose there is in life and in the Universe. But it is there not for God to satisfy or seek satisfaction of, but for *man* to understand and fulfil for his own benefit. That purpose at its highest is for the individual to come into unison with All Life, through the identification of his inner self with the animating spirit of the Universe.

What is the Universe? In essence, it is the incarnation of God or the Supreme Being. To that Being inexhaustible vitality and incessant vibrancy. It continuously exhibits Itself in creation. The process of the Being's self-exhibition is Nature. Nature is the kineticization of the powers latent in the Being. From that operation issue the shapes and substances and forces and pressures which make out universe; and the apparent varietousness of the contents of the universe creates the illusion of there being a hundred thousand various things in existence, each looking as though it had nothing in common with another. The One appears as the Many. Without such multiplicity in being, there can be no play and no enjoyment of being. But with multiplicity comes the illusion (*Maya*) that divides creature from creature and man from man, and generates conflicts as well as affiliations between them. To get back from these con-

traditions of the universe to the original Being should be the aim and purpose of the wise.

It helps no one to dismiss the Hindu view as Pantheism. That is a word having varieties of meaning. It is better to study a view or an idea before attaching a label to it. The core of the Vedic philosophy is the faith that the universe, including its observer, is the embodiment—but not the exhaustive embodiment—of the Supreme Being or God. But we the worldlings do not see it as God. A great deal which makes the creation of God seem a bore, of the ungodlike and a battlefield of blind forces—a great deal that makes God look either powerless or reckless—prevents our seeing Him in His handiwork. These other-than-God and anti-God aspects of the universe are but appearances; and it is the appearances that conspire the play—the masque that turns being into acting—into play-acting. The multifariousness of the universe—the separateness of bodies and minds, the dissonance of life-centres, the diversity of individualities—creates the illusion of division in existence, narrowing down the realm of each soul to the walls of the body and giving rise to egoism and conflict. *Māyā* or the mask of illusion which is part of Nature's handiwork engages its own progenitor in a game of blind-man's buff. It is the Creator's own self-amusement (*līlā*). It is the sport of good and evil and of all such pairs of contraries (*dvandvas*) which stir life and keeps up movement in the world.

To learn to pierce through the mask of *Māyā*, to transcend the dualities and contradictions of life, to catch the vision of the unity of Being which is God, and to re-value the things of the world in the light of that vision, to pass from the changeful to the changeless, is the supreme purpose for man; and to serve as a school for it is the implied purpose of the universe. It is the *Māyā* world that quickens man's hungers and calls up his ego. It stirs a hundred passions in his breast; it coaxes him and teases him; it foils his enterprises and renews his hopes. It irritates and angers him; and it defeats him and sets him either storming in rage or whining in despair. All that is schooling for the soul.

So to restrain yourself and regulate your relations with the world that your inward annoyances and conflicts are reduced and your fellowbeings are helped towards a similar harmony, to achieve law and order amidst the caprices and chaos encouraged by Nature to enrich life abound by subduing desire within,—such is the true law (*Dharma*) of good life. Love, but live so as to contribute to the true riches of life for others. This means that you should develop a sense of values based upon a discernment of the Good and the Durable (*Sat*). The only Being that is everlasting and ever-dependable is God. All values must therefore be conceived with reference to that supreme source of the Good.

Walking along the streets of temptation and trial, man learns gradually to keep his eye from distractions on the right and on the left. All fleshly impulses and sensual provocations are worked out and exhausted in the course of his traffickings with the world,—through years and ages; and then come equanimity and peace. The passing shows of the world then cease to distract him. The soul within and without is then the only reality to him. All else is worn out and melts away like mist after sunrise. Such a tranquil, passionless mind,—not tinged by thoughts of 'mine' and 'thine'—is the instrument that can enable man to see the vision of True Being divorced of the veils of creation.

There is a science of the spirit just as there is a science of the stars or of the earth. There is an inner eye in man which needs education for metaphysics, just as there is an outer eye that needs education for astrophysics. Searching among outer phenomena, Dr. Space should not complain that he does not understand phenomena. Nature is both kindly and cruel. She feeds only to kill. She attracts only to mock at. But is that not what makes the play? It is a challenge to man's sensibility. Can he look beneath the surface? Has he learnt to comprehend the spiritual substratum of life? Has he a scale of values for the world based upon the truth behind the world? Does he care for morality? Has he put himself to the trouble of searching for the foundations of morality?

The Veda teaches that the universe is the house of Lord God and that man is a guest in it,—indeed a servant of it. Does he behave like a good guest? The good guest does not swagger or assert. He is grateful to receive what is offered him and would make no cry or complaint about what is not. He is friendly with neighbours at the table and careful with crockery. He practices restraint and is full of good cheer. Above all, he conducts himself as one who has no claims to make, but only awaits favours. How will it be today if men and women and communities and nations cultivated this attitude?

All forms of religious devotion including concentration on symbols, ritual, prayer and fast and counting of the rosary—all great poetry and music and art—and all the duties of citizenship, and all rigours of law and social convention, have for their common motive the training and preparation of the soul for higher and yet higher altitudes of life spiritual, the peak of which is the vision of Universal Being.

#### "The One Remains, The Many Change and Pass"

In Europe and America, philosophy has largely been an exercise for the intellect,—like mathematics or logic. Professors there ask for the jumping pole of a formula or an argument so that, by one

near leap taken with it, they could land themselves at the centre of life's mystery. But life is more than intellect. It is at its core a spiritual fact. The sages of India, therefore, ask for the training of all the faculties and the regulation of all the impulses of man. Effort of the intellect is by no means counted superfluous. It is indeed insisted upon. But it is by itself held to be insufficient. It must be supplemented by efforts of the will and the imagination,—the will to tear down the bright silken prison-screens of the petty individual self, and the imagination to see and feel your own self as one with the limitless expanse of life around. All this means daily and hourly conduct. It is the practice of philosophy in living. Such a united effort of intellect and will and imagination can be possible only with certain inhibitions of sense-hungers and their reactions. Life has a physical basis and that basis must first be put in order if the mind-intelligence faculties should function as they should. Hence the value of ascetic abstinences. Hence the insistence on non-greed and renunciation of material riches and the practice of universal benevolence. Hence the inculcation of fortitude and calm in the presence of misfortune and adversity. All is the Lord's and nothing is yours. You are but a trustee in relation to what it pleases Him to put in your hands. If such be one's attitude, is it possible one will ever be in a hurry to rush to war? It is the practice of moral self-discipline that can give the eye of intellect the clarity and the keenness needed for the vision of the one indivisible Infinite.

A second point of difference between the Hindu and his brother of the West is in that, while the latter habitually seeks God outside of himself, the former is taught to see the ray of God's light in his own being. God is to the Hindu the all-pervasive life-principle. He therefore has no need of an external witness to the workings of God. His own existence is a witness, and what could be more indubitable or more convincing? God's voice is in your very heart-beats. God is an inescapable Presence. It is an ever-present Immanence discernible by men with cultivated souls. Every soul is a centre of an endless succession of circles of living. The Vedic word for God (*Brahman*) means literally 'the Great Being'—the one Reality which is greater than everything man can know or think of—which therefore holds within its womb everything existent—which at the same time is so subtle that it resides within the womb of the minutest thing in the universe. To prompt and persuade and teach and enable man to sense this Truth of things is the purpose of the lovely-truthful, half-responsive and half-enigmatic pageant of the universe.

The world is the soul's gymnasium. Attracting and thwarting, challenging and evading, cajoling and defying, a bait in one hand and a hook in the other, Mother Nature plays with man. Bringing



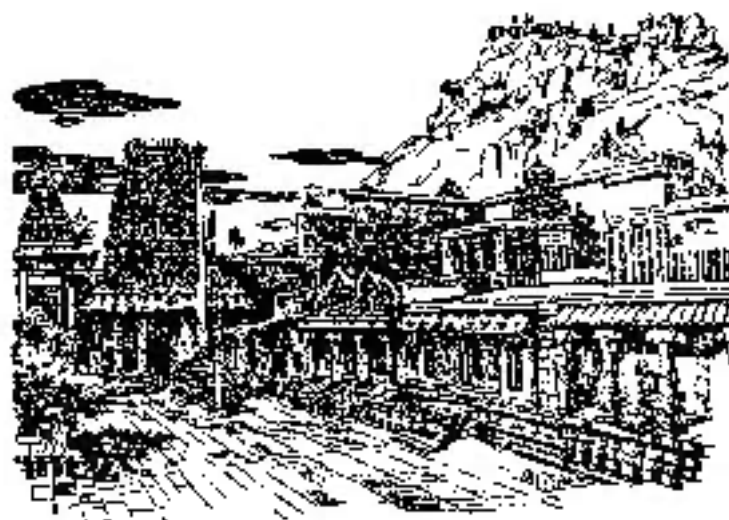
into the field an infinity of resources, she calls up the infinity of his hidden resources. He strives awhile and then slackens: he sees success within reach and falls down, dazed when stretching out, the arm to grasp it. Now he seems to prevail and now he retreats. Never wholly winning and never fleeing from the battle, he carries on the wresplay with the universe from day to day and from hour to hour, ceaselessly, eternally. "For whose good" would ask Prof. Spino. To the player's own good. To the onlooker's good too. Are we not glad to live, even as we ask whether life has a purpose? Making new adventures and meeting new crises, Man the infinitely-phased develops his own soul's muscle and sinew, so to say: he goes on so building up his inner strength that one day the challenge of the world will be to him no trial at all. That strength is his new scale of values,—a new focal point for his eye. He has come to realize that the great mighty play of universal forces is after all a play: that comedy and tragedy are mixed in it so far; the play may be of interest: that there are limits to the significance of the parts assumed in a stage-play: that to take things too seriously is to invite misery to oneself,—which again would be an extension of the play-illusion. The experienced actor creates illusions for others and is himself not subject to them. So is the man who, having observed what shadows our earth's shows etc. has learned to value the real and the lasting above the apparent and the momentary. To him nothing really is but the One, the complex One, the myriad-shaped multimentional One. Nothing can infatuate him, nothing can frighten, nothing surprise, nothing enslave and nothing upset him. He has thrown out the earthly toxins which make life a fateful lever for the soul. No more struggle for him: for he has passed beyond the barriers erected by the sense of Self. No more hate and no more anger for him: for he has transcended the scanning duality of being. No more for him the temptation to acquire and enjoy and possess: for he holds and shares all with all and through all. The pairs of opposites which divide and disturb life—good-and-evil, right-and-wrong, mine-and-another's—are only for him who is conscious of the presence of some one beside himself in creation,—some possible rival or contestant to be feared. Whom can that man fear or hate who sees All as One, who finds himself in others and others in himself?

The little pleasures and brief joys which make life seem a worthwhile business and renew our interest in it from moment to moment, and but for which there would be no incentive for our return to the struggle day after day, are but a foretaste of the infinitude of the Good that lies hidden somewhere, possibly everywhere, for us to discover for ourselves. Our happy experiences are the sea-spray blown towards us by the winds of the potencies of our own deeds (Karma)

from the boundless and invisible ocean of the Great Being (*Brahman*). That Great Being is the archetype of all that we value and hold dear in the universe—Truth and Goodness and Beauty and Power—including that vision of the Unity of various-seeming Things which can satisfy the query: "Is there a purpose in the Universe?" We are dwellers in the neighbourhood, so to speak, of an invisible fore-forest. We catch the fragrance of flowers wafted by the wind and think it a miracle and a mystery because the trees and the creepers are not accessible to our eye. Love and life-hunger and the impulse for knowledge are master-mysteries in the perennial mystery of life; and the science which can give us the key to them is not physics or physiology, but the science of soul-culture. It is the constant practice of the identification of oneself with the All. It is the personal realisation of the oneness of individual life with life universal. This is subjective *ekta*, not objective logic. Let him, who would see into the heart of creation, first look into his own heart.

The highest of joys is the joy of peace; and comes to him who has trained the mind to an attitude of indifference to the differences in the outer, who has abolished for himself all sense of distinction between the inner and the outer, and to whom equanimity has become habitual by the long-sustained practice of the presence of the One-Without-a-Second everywhere and at all times.

*Triveni* : Jan. 1952



**MAHAKAVI VALLATHOL**  
**A Cosmopolitan Poet**  
**K. P. S. MENON**

Vallathol is universally acknowledged as the man who rescued Karghaki from oblivion. He is also known and acknowledged as a Mahakavi, a great poet. But there was another side to him. He was a cosmopolitan to his finger-tips.

Vallathol was a patriot, but his patriotism was not of the kind which Dr. Johnson called "the last refuge of a scoundrel." He was no politician, though he adored Mahatma Gandhi. But Gandhiji was more than a politician. In his noble poem, "My Master", Vallathol has described Gandhiji as a compound of Jesus Christ's self-sacrifice, Sree Krishna's righteousness, Gautama Buddha's non-violence, Sankaracharya's intellect, Harischandra's truthfulness and Mohammad's integrity.

It was at the Vaikom Satyagraha that Vallathol met Gandhiji first. Gandhiji asked him whether he had taken to spinning. He said no.

"Why not?" asked Gandhiji.

"Because a poet lives in a world of his own, the world of imagination. Not for him manual work. It is through his writings that he influences the people."

"Tagore said so to me, too", said Gandhiji gently. "Do you believe in Khadi?" asked Gandhiji.

"Not only in Khadi, but in everyone of your teachings", said Vallathol. And Vallathol's poem, "Bapuji", dealing with the last hours of Mahatma Gandhi and his funeral, is excruciating in its pathos.

Vallathol was a socialist, not in any dogmatic sense but in the sense that he had a social sense. He observed the discards of society and used his gift of poetry as an instrument for healing them. In his poem, "The Pures of the Pure", he showed how bizarre could be the working of the evil of untouchability which had crept into Hindu society. A house is on fire; its inmates run hither and thither and rush to draw water from a well to put out the fire; but the high-caste owner of the well prevents them on the ground that at their touch the well might get polluted.

Vallathol's vision penetrated beyond the borders of India. His travels in Europe, when he was in his 'Sixties, gave a new dimension to his vision; and his fervent nationalism gave way to a benign internationalism.

Vallathol was distressed by the inequality, injustice and oppression in the world, which reached their climax, or had their Nemesis, in the two world wars. He took an interest in the World Peace Movement and attended its first session at Warsaw in 1950; and he visited Moscow in 1951 as a member of a Peace Mission. His visit to Moscow created a profound impression, and had an abiding influence on him. He also visited a number of other European countries with a Kathakali troupe from Kalamandalam.

A tall lanky man in his 'Seventies, an out-and-out "native" in his manners and mannerisms, completely deaf (Vallathol lost his hearing at the age of 30 and has written a poem called "Badhuta Vilapam" or "Lament of the Deaf", reminiscent of Milton's poem on his blindness), Vallathol was somewhat of a phenomenon wherever he went. At the Peace Conference in Warsaw, he electrified his audience by reciting his poem, "Song of the Peasant." This has been translated into some three dozen languages. At the commemoration meeting on the occasion of the centenary of Vallathol's birth, a representative of each of these States read the translation of Vallathol's poem in his own language.

It was, so to say, a proletarian song, but it was proletarianism with a difference. It was a typical Indian compound in which vehemence and non-violence, proletarianism and patriotism, were equally mixed. The essence of patriotism is pride in one's own country and faith in its mission. In his "Song of the Peasants" this element is harmoniously blended with burning indignation at the lot of the peasant. For example :

To weave one's livelihood out of other people's woes,  
To erect lofty arches with others' backbones,  
To build a flight of steps to heaven with others' corpses,  
This, the land of Ahimsa, will never permit.  
This naker, that is India, breaks its fetters,  
Not to run amuck, trampling the world under foot,  
But to lift up with its devoted trunk  
The suffering kindred trapped in pits.

With all his fervent nationalism and internationalism, Vallathol remained at heart a Keralite. He was not afraid to be, or behave like a simple Keralite even while entertaining sophisticated foreigners. When a delegation of Russian writers, headed by Surkov, came to India, one place which they were anxious to see was Kalamandalam in Cheruthuruthi, which was established by Vallathol as a centre for the development of our indigenous arts and

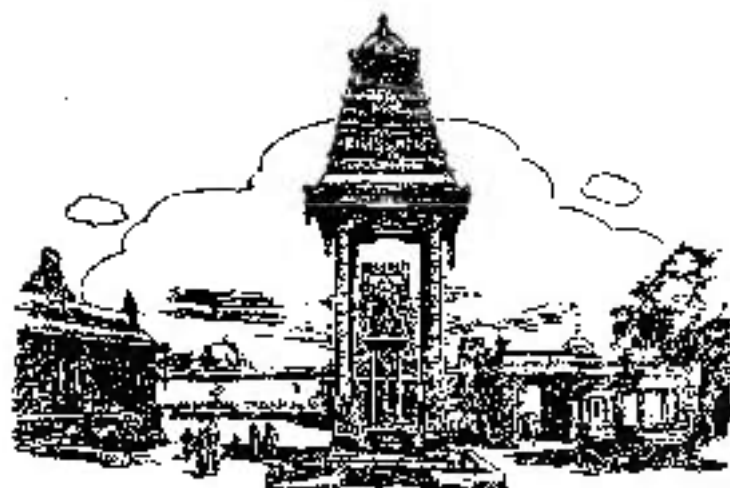
culture. Vallathol received them in his linen cloth and gave them a typically Keralite reception. The food he served, too, was Keralite. It consisted of tender coconuts, sugarcane juice, fried bananas, gingelly cakes and other delicacies, and was typically Keralite in character. Nothing pleased, or would have pleased, the Russians better.

"Let our minds dwell with pride at the name of India", said Vallathol, "but let our blood course through our veins at the sound of Kerala." Charity begins at home. So, too Vallathol, did poetry. But it did not end there. His poetry embraced all mankind so much so that the premier poet of Kerala has also an honoured place among universal poets. As Harindranath Chattopadhyaya said :

Immortals come but rarely to earth.

And he was one of the Immortal Band.

Triveni — Jan - March 1982



## THE ARTIST AND HIS AUDIENCE

N. RAGHUNATHAN

An interesting discussion has been going on in the London weeklies for some time past, in the desultory fashion characteristic of such discussions, as to what influence, if any, the consciousness that he is addressing an audience exercises on a literary artist. It would be sheer pedantry to deny that such consciousness does exist in the case of every writer, even though he may not share Dr. Johnson's downright view no man but a fool ever wrote except for money. No man, be he artist or journeyman, philosopher or baker-dasher but craves for the approbation of his fellows and this craving within limits is undoubtedly healthy; an elementary proof of which is furnished by the fact that it is a universal sentiment. We are not concerned here with those types in whom this craving becomes an obsession. But it will be useful to investigate the psychological foundations of this satisfaction that comes from recognition and to determine whether it is in any way hostile to that integrity which is the mark of all Art.

Here a digression may help. Dr. Alexander recently expressed the opinion that great art executes before it thinks. Sir Philip Hartog sought to controvert this by suggesting that a thought-mass must exist before it could be given expression to. He pointed out that when a bi-lingual person is confronted with an idea his brain is able to translate it immediately and effortlessly into either of the two languages known to him, which suggests that a thought-mass is antecedent to expression. It seems to us that the controversialists have here accidentally stumbled upon one of those fundamental distinctions that differentiate poetry from prose. Pure poetry is the supreme type of that art which executes before it thinks. It is the spirit that moveth where it listeth; the poet is but a medium, the reed through which the wind blows producing elfin music. The perfect poem exists in essence in the depths of his subconscious, waiting for his liberating voice just as the Adam lay buried in the blue-veined Carrara for Michael-Angelo's liberating fingers. This is not to deny that there is conscious art in poetry—the greatest poets have also been great artists; true with them art is the hand-

maid of inspiration, the sculptor's chisel chaps away the redundant marble. The essential genius of prose manifests itself in a different way. Here thought out merely precedes expression; it is its very anagamy. The essential elements of prose are architectonics based on fundamental brain-work, the rainbow hues of emotion and the undergone of spirit communing with itself as in a dream. A great prose style is that which renders the murmur of the spirit as purely and faithfully as it represents the paucity in which it is set. A useful definition of style (it makes no claim to precision or accuracy) would be that it is the venture of personality. (Does not the Upanishad say "*Iti yajñam Idam Sarvam*"?) The style is the man in the sense that it is his natural mode of expression. One test of really good prose is that as one reads it aloud one seems to catch the continuous echo of a living voice with its individual timbre, strength and virginal integrity. But a man has moods and his voice has many corresponding inflections to express them to a nicety; so also with his style. It is in ignoring this fact that the mistake lies of those critics who would classify and confine style into water-tight compartments, Archaic, Corinthism and so on. A man's prevailing mood, his temperament, may be such as to make one of them more germane to itself than the others; but it would be placing a restraint on the spirit of art which knows no such inhibitions, if it were to be contended that he should confine himself to one of these modes of expression.

The prose-writer clothing his nucleus in flesh and blood is called upon to do many things—to embellish, to hide, to hang a transparent veil over the face of Reality. But that nucleus itself must never be lost sight of. Now, what is the nature of this nucleus, by a sure grasp of which a writer claims attention and by an adequate rendering of which he enlarges, as we hope to show, the bounds of the human spirit? To call it the central core of his personality would seem to carry the argument but a step further: it merely begs the question. What is personality and what is its relation to art? This is an issue too big to be raised by a side-wind as it were. We must be content to indicate the answer with the brevity of a formula. Personality is expressed when a unique response is made to the significant facts of the world around us. The man in the street does not stop to analyse in his own case these responses or the nature of that personality of his which is the tuning fork from which they sound. There is aesthetic as well as philosophic truth in St. John's vision of men as trees walking. Intense awareness is the pre-requisite of all creative activity and that posits an individual stand-point, a realised self. We are such stuff as dreams are made of; but the artist in reporting his emotions and intuitions is circumstanced even as the most common

of us when we seek to rationalise the a-logical processes of a dream. There is the difficulty of establishing contact between different planes of experience as well as of managing the constantly shifting perspective which results from the mind, none too sure of itself, trying to adjust itself to this moving shadow show.

But the dream-analogy affords some guidance here. It is a common experience that even in the most riotous dream the dreamer maintains a curious detachment; his essential self seems to stand aloof, cool, critical and comprehending; it is the witness surrounded by tumult on every side but unsoiled and incorruptible. This dream-ego has a meaning for us. Deep down in his own psychic every man can, if he so wills, discover that essential self, firm as a rock, of which this dream-image is but a faint reflection. All attempts at creative expression is but an assay by the individual mind of its universal experience on the touchstone of this real self. In poetry this happens as spontaneous combustion, in prose it comes about in conscious effort. From which it follows that this self is the auditor whose approval the artist must gain. Style, which as we have already suggested, is in its essence a living voice, could find fulfilment only if such an auditor were predicated. Nor is there need for any other. Indeed more than one, not to speak of a multitude, could only cause confusion, distracting the artist from his business of seeing life steadily and reporting it whole. For it is impossible for any of us to penetrate through the thick wall of personality, as Pater puts it, and hold true and direct communion with another soul, and the difficulty is repeated on a lower plane when the artist, in his effort to adjust his vision to the supposed predilections of a hydra-headed audience, is forced to pose—(than which there could be no greater sin against the light). We have thus come by a circuitous route to the point at which we started, with conclusion that an artist must, if he is not to stray from the path of rectitude, visualise an audience of only one, his own self. In this sense all art is rigorously subjective.

An artist, then, creates primarily for himself. But when his work kindles in others emotions and inquiries analogous to his own, through perhaps of a less intensity, too, being a man as well as an artist, finds comfort in this confirmation of the fact that core of his experience corresponds to something deep-seated in universal humanity. There his interest in his art as an objective entity begins and ends. As for the reader, he has gained a compass wherewith he may chart his own soul. The more he utilises it for independent investigation, the more meanings will be discovered in the work of art which has sent him on this voyage of exploration. The sweetness in the mouth that great art leaves will on closer scrutiny be found to be granite distilled from its own soul.



# SHE WAS BREAKING STONE

NIRALA

She was breaking stone  
I saw her on the path of Allahabad.

There was no shady tree  
under which she willingly sat,  
Black beauty in the bloom of youth,  
Bent eyes; absorbed in dear work,  
with a heavy hammer in hand,  
striking again and again,  
in front vista of trees,  
a magnificent attic

The ascending sun  
the summer days,  
the angry look of the day  
shot up the scorching summer-wind  
The earth burnt like cotton  
the dust overspread,  
Almost midday set in.  
She was breaking stone.

Seeing me watching her,  
she looked once at that mansion,  
discontinuing the work.  
Finding none,  
gazed at me  
with the look of one  
who was beaten,  
but could not weep.

I felt as if a mandolin was being played on,  
I heard the music I never had heard before.  
After a moment's pause  
she shivered,  
rolled down drops of sweat

from her forehead.  
Getting engrossed in work again,  
as if she said —  
"I am breaking stone".

(Translated from Hindi by Dr. K.K. Sinha)





## GAUTAMA BUDDHA, THE LIGHT OF ASIA

### SRI SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

A GREAT thinker has said that the history of the world is the history of its greatest men. This is especially true of India whose long history is filled with the life and work of some of the greatest men the world has ever seen. But the men whom India considers great are not kings and military conquerors like Alexander, Charlemagne, or Napoleon, but philosophers and thinkers like Sri Krishna, Bhagavan Buddha, and Sri Sarbharacharya. These latter have also been conquerors, but of a different type. In the memorable words of Asoka, India's conquest is through *dharma* or righteousness (Rock Edict 13) :

"What has been obtained by this conquest (of *dharma*) creates affection. This affection is firmly established as it is won by conquest by *dharma*... This rescript on *dharma* has been written for the purpose that my sons and great grandsons who will hear about my new conquests should not consider that further conquest is to be undertaken. If there has to be conquest, through weapons of war, let them take pleasure (after their victory) in peace and light corrective measures. They should consider that the only true conquest is conquest by *dharma*."

They conquered through non-violence and love, and that love is enshrined in the grateful hearts of millions today.

The Upanishads are the fountain-head of not merely the religion of India, but of her culture and philosophy as well. The great sages of the Upanishads stand at the very dawn of history as the progenitors and inspirers of a culture and a civilization which, starting like a little stream up in the mountains in the dim antiquity of the Vedas, has come down to us as the mighty river of Indian national life, enriched and ennobled by the valuable contributions of a brilliant galaxy of philosophers and thinkers of the firm magnitude. The Indian of today, to whatever section he may belong, whether he knows it or not, is the inheritor of this rich heritage. And he is proud of the fact that this veritable Ganga of Indian culture has fertilized and nourished not only India, but lands far and near as well.

*Ittham saripam me saripam;  
 jvagam! nimmam pralixam ca pam.  
 Aprapya bodhim bahukāpādurābhāram  
 nāvarāgar kurem atah caliyāre—*

"Let my body wither away in this seat, let it be reduced to mere skin, flesh, and bones, but I shall not move an inch from hence till the highest enlightenment is gained."

Sitting cross-legged in meditation under the sacred tree, Gautama's mind rose to the height of contemplation and of ecstasy, and with the passing of every successive watch of the night, fold after fold of the garment of Truth was unveiled till the dawn found the naked Truth revealed (*Light of Asia*, p. 130):

..The spirit of our Lord  
 Lay potent upon man and bird and beast,  
 Even while he nursed under the Bodhi-Tree,  
 Glorified with the conquest gained for all,  
 And lightened by a light greater than day's.

Gautama became Buddha, the Enlightened One. And he rose from his seat with a shout of joy, for he had attained insight into the meaning of life and existence (*ibid.*, p. 131):

Many a house of life  
 Hath held me seeking e'er him who wrought  
 These prisons of the senses, sorrow-fraught,  
 Sore was my ceaseless strife.  
 But now,  
 Thou bulwark of this tabernacle—thou!  
 I know thee! Never shalt thou build again  
 These walls of pain,  
 Nor raise the roof-tree of decay, nor lay  
 Fresh rafters on the clay.  
 Broken thy house is, and the ridge-pole split!  
 Delusion hath smitten it!

Safe pass I thence! Deliverance to obtain.

Gautama had attained Deliverance and Enlightenment; but now the question arose in his mind whether he was to keep this wisdom to himself or broadcast it so as to redeem the suffering world. After an intense mental struggle, he decided to share the new-found treasure with one and all—*bahujana hitaya, bahujana sukhyaya*—for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many—and thus achieved a greater renunciation than the one he had attained by leaving the princely life. With this assurance and resolve, he proceeded to the holy city of Varanasi, where he first 'turned' the *Wheel of the Dharma*. And for the next forty years, he wandered from place to place, meeting all classes of people, from prince to peasant, wiping the 'widow's' tears and assuaging the

orphan's wails, imparting wisdom to all and gathering a large number of disciples and followers. He charged his disciples (*Dhammapadam*, quoted by Sister Nivedita in *The Master as I Saw Him*, p. 287)

Go forward without a park!  
Fearing nothing, caring for nothing,  
Wander alone, like the rhinoceros!  
Even as the lion, not trembling at noises,  
Even as the lotus-leaf unstained by the water,  
Do thou wander alone, like the rhinoceros!

The words of the Master carried a freshness and a vigour which appealed to the better minds of the day, and his adoption of the language of the people as a vehicle of expression helped in the spread of his thoughts and ideas. His wide heart embraced one and all the afflicted and the despised. After a long career of benevolent ministrations, the Blessed One passed away at Kusinagara, in the northern part of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, in the year 543 B.C.

The *Dharma* of the Lord continued to spread, thanks to the activities of the *Sangha* or monastic Order. It rescued the national mind from the intellectual confusion of the age by elevating the people morally and spiritually, and it ushered in the age of Asoka, which may be called the brightest period in India's history. The spread of Buddha-dharma under Asoka is one of the most instructive chapters of world's history. Asoka's relinquishment of war and all forms of violence as an instrument of state policy is the only example of its kind in all history; and this great example has a deep significance for us today in the context of the second world war which humanity is waging against each other. Through his numerous edicts inscribed on rocks and pillars, Asoka helped the spread of the message of love, tolerance, and service. He sent out bands of monks to spread the noble *Dharma* far and near, and for the next thousand years this activity continued to be the main aspect of India's foreign policy. In a special sense, Emperor Asoka was instrumental in making Gautama the Buddha, the Light of Asia. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru quotes the following well-known tribute of H. G. Wells to the memory of Asoka (*Glimpes of World History*, Letter 24) :

"Amidst the tens of thousands of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, their majesties and graciousnesses and serenities and royal highnesses and the like, the name of Asoka shines, and shines almost alone, a star. From Volga to Japan his name is still honoured. China, Tibet, and even India, though it has left his doctrine, preserve the tradition of his greatness. More living men cherish his memory today than have ever heard the names of Constantine and Charlemagne."

in concluding his great work on *Karma-Yoga*. Swami Vivekananda gives the following tribute to the character and personality of Bhagavan Buddha (*Complete Works*, Vol. 1, Eleventh Edition pp. 116-18):

"Let me tell you in conclusion a few words about one man who actually carried this teaching into practice. That man is Buddha. He is the one man who ever carried this into perfect practice. All the prophets of the world, except Buddha, had external motives to move them to unselfish action. The prophets of the world, with this single exception, may be divided into two sets, one set holding that they are incarnations of God come down on earth, and the other holding that they are only messengers from God; and both draw their impetus for work from outside, expect reward from outside, however highly spiritual may be the language they use. But Buddha is the only prophet who said, 'I do not care to know your various theories about God. What is the use of discussing all the subtle doctrines about the soul. Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is.' He was, in the conduct of his life, absolutely without personal motives, and what man worked more than he? Show me in history one character who has soared so high above all. The whole human race has produced but one such character, such high philosophy, such wide sympathy. This great philosopher, preaching the highest philosophy, yet had the deepest sympathy for the lowest of animals, and never put forth any claims for himself. He is the ideal *karma-yogi*, acting entirely without motive, and the history of humanity shows him to have been the greatest man ever born, beyond compare the greatest combination of heart and brain that ever existed, the greatest soul-power that has ever been manifested. He is the first great reformer the world has seen. He was the first who dared to say, 'Believe not because some old manuscripts are produced, believe not because it is your national belief, because you have been made to believe it from childhood; but reason it all out, and after you have analysed it, then if you find that it will do good to one and all, believe it, live up to it, and help others to live up to it.' He works best who works without any motive, neither for money, nor for fame, nor for anything else; and when a man can do that, he will be a Buddha, and out of him will come the power to work in such a manner as will transform the world. This man represents the very highest ideal *karma-yoga*."

All through the teachings of the Blessed One there is a constant insistence on right conduct based on true understanding. The aim of life is to develop a perfect character. Buddha referred to himself as an example of this attainment which is open to all, and never laid any special claims to divinity or godhood for himself. Religion

according to Buddha does not consist in mere performance of ritual or propitiation of deities, but it consists in the struggle to achieve self-possession and peace. In his last discourse addressed to Ananda, just before his passing away, Buddha summed up his teachings in the following beautiful words:

"Therefore, O Ananda! be ye lamps unto yourselves. Beake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the Truth. Herein, O mendicants, a brother contemplates as to the body, so as to look upon the body that he remains serene, self-possessed, and mindful, having overcome both the hankering and the dejection common in the world. And in the same way as to feelings, moods...ideas, he continues so as to look upon each that he remains serene, self-possessed, mindful, having overcome both the hankering and the dejection common in the world. And whosoever, Ananda, either now or after I am dead, shall be a lamp unto themselves, and a refuge unto themselves, shall beake themselves to no external refuge but holding fast as their refuge to the Truth, shall look not for refuge to anyone besides themselves—it is they, Ananda, among my *Shakhs* who shall reach the very remotest height—but they must be anxious to learn."

Let me conclude this short sketch with the following exhortation of Buddha as given in the *Dhammapadam* (II 1, 4, and 5)

"Wakefulness is the way to immortality; heedlessness is the way to death; those who are wakeful die not, the heedless are already dead. Continuously increasing is the glory of him who is wakeful, who has aroused himself, and is vigilant, who performs blameless deeds, and acts with becoming consideration, who restrains himself and leads a righteous life. Let such a one, rousing himself to wakefulness by the restraint and subjugation of himself, make for himself an island which no flood can engulf."





## THE SEA'S EMBRACE

JEAN BOUTHIER

The weight of love to be mired  
transported by the heart  
from one equinox to the other  
musts crumple to snap and set the bright sails

Look through one eye at the projected sketch  
of a headlock soldered to the shore  
which a wave recovers, a moment and is

Look as amazed as a lover, suspended  
over half-parted flesh which he offers to kiss

Good of the bosom transmuted into a visceral wave  
on the point where the belly pledges to keep floors aqiver

Such dedication may be read in every atropin  
Spasms of desire stagger the embrace  
By its gradual ebb the sea is lured to pleasure  
and the vein of sex to running surf, withdrawn

The gift of self the gift of life  
brief soccerball of unity  
when bodies are lowered in extreme gratitude.

*Translated from French by  
Agnes Sotiriopoulou-Skima and Ann Rovers*



## SALUTATIONS TO RAMAKOTISWARA RAU The Founder - Editor of "Triveni"

DR. B. GOPALA REDDI

I am delighted to learn that Triveni is issuing its Diamond Jubilee number shortly. It is a glorious occasion for any magazine to bring out a Diamond Jubilee number. Since I was present at the inaugural function and followed its career these sixty years, I am happy to record some of my reminiscences.

The founder-editor, Kolavenna Ramakotiswara Rau, was my teacher in the Andhra Jangayakalasala, Machilipatnam, in 1923. He was an excellent teacher of history. I was one of his favourite students. He was fond of me and wished me well when I left for Viswa-Bharati in 1924. Earlier, he was in Swarajya, an English daily founded by Tanguturi Prakasam. Our mutual affection and regard grew as years rolled by until Rau's death after a brief illness.

In 1937, when I became a Madras Minister, K.R.R. warmly congratulated me and wished me every success. K. Brahmananda Reddy's elder brother, Venkaya Reddy, was elected to the Madras Assembly from Narasaraopeta Constituency. He died prematurely causing a vacancy in the Assembly. Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya was then President of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee and selected K.R.R. for the vacancy. As a Minister, I took permission of the then Premier, Rajagopalachari and participated in the election campaign for three days extensively. He won with a comfortable majority. I was happy, as his student, to campaign for him, ensuring his great success. His tenure in the Assembly was only for a short period, as the ministry resigned in October, 1939 due to the dragging of India by the British Government into the vortex of the second war.

Later we were co-prisoners in Tanjore jail, when Quit-India movement was sweeping over the country. He never tolerated untidiness. He used to be emotionally upset whenever something went wrong in the jail. Outside jail, he was cleanly dressed. He

loved orderliness and grace in whatever he undertook. This was amply reflected in *Triveni*. We were good associates and our mutual regard and affection never showed a decline. We met occasionally and I never failed to call on him, whenever I visited his home-town, Narasaraopet.

His biggest achievement was in founding *Triveni*. In December 1927, at the time when the Congress was meeting in Madras under the presidency of Dr. M.A. Ansari, he launched his *Triveni*. At a hotel in Parasuravakam in the presence of forty and odd friends, he explained the aims and objects of his venture, followed by lunch.

The first issue was a sumptuous volume, neatly printed and with an elegant appearance. That was a dream fulfilled and he looked very happy on that occasion. It contained a facsimile letter written by Gandhiji to Maganti Bapineedu on the demise of his beloved wife, Annampurna who donated all her gold bangles to Gandhiji when he visited Eluru. It was a touching letter and Bapineedu became known through the sacrifice of his deceased wife.

That was the beginning of K.R.R.'s saga of his joy and difficulties. The little bank balance was exhausted and began to cause anxiety.

He toured all over the Telugu districts and visited the city of Madras, where he established several personal contacts. K. Chandrasekaran, who recently passed away, was a scholar and took personal interest; and helped K.R.R. in all possible ways. For a while he established several contacts in the city of Bangalore. Anxiety and perseverance chased him and pushed him to many a difficult situation. He never accepted defeat and went on with a bundle of anxious responsibilities. He was prepared to take any risk in keeping up *Triveni*. He never spared any pains to keep the flag flying. It is no exaggeration if I say he became a martyr in the struggle of *Triveni*. Mentally and physically it became a burden too heavy for him to bear. When he went to prison in 1942, his friends Mithoor Srinivasa Rao, K. Sampathgiri Rao and others published *Triveni* from Bangalore. After his release from prison, K.R.R. migrated to Bangalore and continued running the journal. Then Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao brought it to Machilipatnam (1950) and now C.V.N. Dhan joined him and is bringing it out from Guntur.

Now, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee, I recollect the financial cyclones it passed through before it could reach the safe port of sixty years. He drank the Halahala and bequeathed to the posterity the nectar of his voice offering, the *Triveni*. At *Triveni* in Allahabad, we see the Ganga and Jamuna, but we do not see the underlying current of Saraswati. We see K.R.R. and

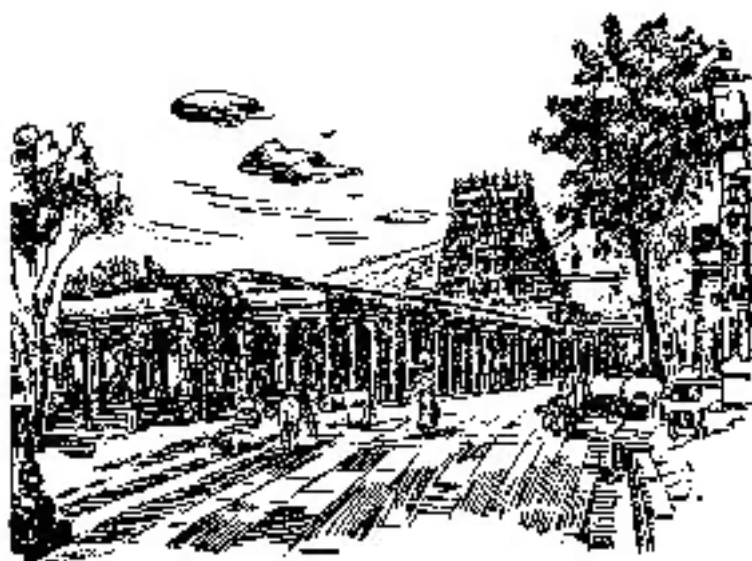
the *Triveni*. But we do not see the underlying Sarswad of anxiety and struggle. The *Triveni* we see is really the *Triveni* at Prayaga. I salute him on this sacred occasion. Long before leaders spoke of national integration and the Sahitya Academy was born, *Triveni* tried to reflect the trends of Indian languages. He preferred translations of the best in our languages, so that the States could understand each other, while not neglecting original literary articles.

*Triveni* came out through many hurdles. The undaunted spirit of K.R.R. kept the lamp burning.

The motif of *Triveni* was to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects and draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish fellowship of the spirit. K.R.R. succeeded in realising his dream to a large extent. I pay my tribute to him for his services and sacrifices. He made valuable contacts and friendships. He must be feeling happy as his mission is being carried on by Beversuji Narasimha Rao and C.V.N. Dhan.

I appeal to the new management to keep the waters flowing, to keep the lamp burning and the flag flying and continue the mission shining for a long time.

Once again, I offer my salutations to K. Ramakotiswara Rao on this memorable occasion and wish the new management every success.



## MR. S. SATYAMURTHI

KHASA SUBBA RAO

Mr. Satyamurthi is the symbol of a terrific struggle in the politics of our time, the struggle of the proud poor man ambitious for leadership and distinction. Gandhism has made us familiar with ascetic modes of rendering public service; and by abstinence, leading a simple life, giving up income, spinning, starting an Ashram or going to jail, some have managed to build great political reputations. Mr. Satyamurthi too tried his hand at some of these; he too has been drawn into the vortex of Gandhian politics. But his temperament does not respond with ease to the strain imposed by Gandhian ideology.

He is primarily a dialectician. He loves speech and debate. He rejoices in the excitement of hot controversies. Forensic triumphs are his constant delight. He is thrilled by rose garlands and the adulation of crowds. He loves limelight and enjoys having a lot of incense burnt in front of him. He is a parliamentarian of exceptional ability, and he is in his element in the atmosphere of legislatures where interpellations and points of order provide him with delicious opportunities for the display of his skill. He has expensive tastes and a keen relish for the enjoyments that money can buy. Had he been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he would have taken fortune by storm, risen to any eminence, and attained perfect happiness and contentment. The stress of having to earn a livelihood has been his undoing.

Plebian means reacting on patrician tastes rarely fail to work a revolution on character. The rewards of political life take a long time to arrive and those who aspire for them must have ample means of their own if the voice of scandal is not to work its havoc on their good name. The power given to the vote has brought a lot of canvassing into politicians' lives; and canvassing is a pretty expensive business. And there are also side-shows to be staged; tours, parties, dinners and conferences to be attended to. Expensive;

entertainment constitutes no mean part of what is called propaganda. Even to be invited to a function has its embarrassments to the poor. For, independence of spirit to the extent of not being ashamed of poverty in any form is given but to a very few, and the misery of the sensitive who cannot afford the luxuries their hearts hanker after, knows no bounds. When they are constrained to walk for lack of bus fare they have to pretend that it is for the benefit of their health. There are very few annoyances comparable to the necessity of having to trudge to the grand entrance of a fashionable place of entertainment, which fellow invitees reach in resplendent cars, but it is a constant and harassing experience of all whose public importance lacks the valuable support of a comfortable bank balance. In every kind of allegiance to the insidious influence of money-power, there is snobbery; and it is generally expressed in the defence extended to standards of propriety prescribed by wealth. It has taken a heavy toll of politicians' independence in our midst. Much of the shabby gentility seen everywhere is its handiwork. We owe to it the choice of rich candidates of poor merit for high electoral honour in preference to poor candidates of rich merit.

Mr. Satyamurthi has for years maintained an unequal struggle for supremacy in a political game played with dice heavily loaded in favour of the rich. He seems to have developed a technique of his own for getting even with all challengers in the handicapped game. He has received perhaps the roughest buffetings that have ever fallen to the lot of a political aspirant. But through them all he has managed to survive, with head well raised above the water's level, and even to keep on swimming.

It cannot be said that he has reaped an adequate harvest for the time and energy given to public life. He has missed many prizes. Desires, suddenly coming to the fore from somewhere, have quietly pushed him aside when power and supreme leadership seemed to be in sight. He must have had his bitter disappointments. But no chagrin at ill-usage has ever made the slightest breach in his steadfast devotion to Congress which, ever since he joined it, he has stuck to with unwavering loyalty. He is quite unlike so many political turncoats of our time who change their creeds with the turn of the weather and are ardent Congressmen to-day and hot gospellers of anti-Congress cults tomorrow, coming in with hopes of appointments and departing when disappointed. Early in life, on the very threshold of adolescence, he made deliberate choice of politics for a career and selected Congress for his shrine and he has never once turned back. On many an occasion he could have had a comfortable job had he wished, but the blandishments of bureaucratic office have had no power to tempt his soul. He has given to Congress a lifetime of service comparable to the deep

worship of religious devotees at the altar of some venerated deity. Nor once has he attacked colleagues in public. The value of the restraint is enhanced by his capacity for teatime political thought, as likely to arouse stormy hostility at first as it has invariably been followed by eventual acceptance in the end. Mr. Saryamurthi has thus often proved to be an advance signal for approaching changes of front in Congress policy, but rarely has he received any appreciation for these repeated manifestations of insight. He was an advocate of Council entry when "No-change" was the prevailing creed. He pleaded for office-acceptance when obstruction from within was the moxie of Congress policies. Both council-entry and office-acceptance have since come into their own, but a heavy price was paid by Mr. Saryamurthi in paving the way for it, in the shape of attacks from all and sundry arraiging him on the score of inconstancy. Consistency has been described by Schopenhauer as the hobgoblin of little minds. Mr. Saryamurthi has revealed political aptitude by not being afraid to be inconsistent or advocate changes in advance of the general preparedness of public opinion for them. To be proved right in the sequel and yet desist from triumphant vendetta, this is quite different from enduring adverse criticism for proved fallacies. Mr. Saryamurthi's ardent faith in the Congress is indeed a thing of beauty to be admired.

Yet, he suffers from temperamental limitations rather out of accord with some of the inflexible injunctions of the Congress creed. There is a deep grain of conservatism in his nature and his faith in Brahminism is a challenge to the non-communal outlook enjoined on Congressmen. Orthodoxy in social and religious matters is in Mr. Saryamurthi's blood and vain have been his efforts to shake it off. He is steeped in the culture of the Ramayana and is a profound believer in the supremacy of Sanskrit learning. He is a historicist fond of dress and good living and has an insatiable love of music. Privations make him chafe and he is apt to lapse into fussiness and vain display when charged with high and important public functions. These are the weaknesses, driven to the point of disequilibrium, of a man condemned to lifelong repression of the natural impulses of a highly sensitive and emotional temperament, and they emphasise the need in our midst for some considerate and munificent Rockefeller to endow a fund for keeping hardworking and talented politicians above all want.

Mr. Saryamurthi is one of the most hardworking of South India's politicians. He is quite methodical in his public work. He combines with diligence exceptional abilities as a speaker and debater and he is at his best in quick exchanges of wit and rallyery during question hour in the Assembly. His gifts have not however kept pace with the demands of time and a certain staleness is

visible in his recent expatiations. Often mannerisms take the place of fresh original thought, and on most occasions when he speaks, you can be sure of these ubiquitous fellows, Tom Dick and Harry, being dragged in to emphasise some point of derision. With all his disabilities and deficiencies, Mr. Satyamurthi is one of the three to whom belongs, more than to all others, the credit for having moulded the public life of Tamil Nadu into unsinkable Congress-mindedness. His remarkable resilience of spirit deserves very high tribute. The tempers of leaders are wont to rise and fall according as they receive praise or blame. But in the midst of an ocean of unfriendly carplings, Mr. Satyamurthi has contrived to keep his good humour unshooked and himself ever ready for further onslaughts against the bureaucracy's way. He has rendered public service of immense value for very poor recompense, and often in the teeth of attacks and vilification.

## D O O M

(P. K. JOY)

On the unswept, thick layer of  
 dust on the wide walkway  
 leading from the gate to the veranda  
 and even on the veranda  
 you can see only one person's footprints,  
 deep distinct impressions.  
 They are mine, of the lone visitor to  
 this huge establishment,  
 of which I'm in charge.  
 There are four large establishments  
 on this broad street in the city :  
 a Pub, a Photography Parlour, a Cinema  
 and a Rare Books Library  
 Police controls the milling customers' entry  
 into the first three,  
 while in the fourth I, the lone  
 human present,  
 sadly sit at the entrance and sleep  
 all day long,  
 to be disturbed only by rats  
 which occasionally come out of the costly book shelves  
 and scamper across my feet, squeaking  
 and heralding "Doom of Letters in the Human World."

(Translated from Malayalam  
 by the Poet himself)



# SRI AUROBINDO'S SAVITRI : PETALS OF LOTUS

M. P. PANDIT

The Lotus is a symbol of a blossoming consciousness, with each petal emanating a beauty and joy of its own at the touch of the Rays of Light. Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* is such a many-splendoured epic with an inexhaustible appeal. In this alchemic touch the simple story of Savitri-Satyavan in the *Mahabharata* extolling the virtue of conjugal fidelity has been turned into a prophetic vision of the conquest of Death for man by the Divine Grace.

In this poem running into nearly 24,000 lines - perhaps the longest epic in English literature - Sri Aurobindo lays bare many a mystery that is of moment to all of us. He traces the evolution of the world across long stretches of time, from the most primitive times to the present age of the intellect and draws a graph of the spiritual possibilities of man leading to the advent of a veritable Satya Yuga, the Age of Truth.

He describes how the awakened man is prodded by his higher Nature to discover first the divinity in himself and then extend his consciousness to embrace the whole of the universe. His mind becomes one with the universal Mind, his heart beats in unison with the hearts of his fellowmen. He comes to embody in himself both the static poise of the Self and the dynamic action of divine Power, *devamenashakti*, and he labours to fashion a new world of beauty and joy for the delectation of the Divine in manifestation. In the process he opens himself to the action of the higher planes of existence, the worlds of Mind, Life, Gods, Self, Light, Sat-Chit-Ananda and becomes a channel for the overt establishment of their powers on the wondrous soil of Mother Earth.

What is the truth of these higher worlds of which the Upanishad speaks? Are the *pranamaya loka*, the *manomaya*, the *vijnanamaya*, the *anandamaya lokas* only picturesque imaginations or metaphysical concepts or are they actual worlds as concrete as our material

world, the *anantarya*? Sri Aurobindo devotes a large portion of his epic to present a geography of the occult universe which may not be seen but is nevertheless felt and experienced in its impacts and interventions in our lives. This is the most systematic exposition of the supra-terrestrial universe, amazing in its detail, that mankind has received so far. Sri Aurobindo keeps close to the traditions of ancient Indian Wisdom and Experience, the Semitic legacy of occult knowledge and practice, in delineating the progress of the Godward pilgrim across the seven worlds hallowed by Revelation and confirmed by the high experience and realisation of the Seers and Adepts across the pages of history. The poet underlines the precise manner in which these worlds, based on independent principles, are interlinked and focussed in the being of man. He gives an inspiring vision of man as the intended embodiment of the manifesting Godhead in the fullness of time. In this rational personation the occult ceases to be occult; it communicates itself as a fact of verifiable experience and enables man to acquire fuller control over the movements of his own life. The reader realises that all his obvious limitations and imperfections are not permanent features of earthly existence; his liberation and perfection wait upon his choice. He has only to break out of his ego-shell and join in the stream of evolution that is breaking out of the frontiers of the Mind.

A number of profound themes always relevant to practical life are dwelt upon. Why is there pain and suffering in this world? Why do innocent persons have to suffer for no fault of their own? Is it possible to know things beforehand? and if possible, is that advisable? The Seer asks:

What help is in prevision to the driven?  
Safe doors cry opening near the doomed pass on.  
A future knowledge is an added pain,  
A menacing burden and a fruitless light...

Way do even Messengers of God have to suffer the cross?  
He who would save the race must share its pain....  
The great who came to save this suffering world...  
Must pass beneath the yoke of grief and pain

What is Fate?

Fate, child of past energies.  
Man can accept his fate, he can refuse.

What is the truth of prayer? Is it effective? Listen:

A prayer, a master act, a king idea  
Can link man's strength to a transcendent Force.

And of course there are telling passages on the Problem of Evil, the truth of Maya, the call of Nirvana. There are helpful descriptions of the states of the soul in its journey in the world of

Peace after leaving the physical world. All through the community of fellowship between the creatures of earth, pilgrims of the Spirit, the luminous inhabitants of the heavens, is kept to the fore. Highly interesting is the role of the Asuras, Tiryaks, the dark children of the universal Creatrix in the evolution of the world.

In narrating the origins of the universe from different angles of vision and experience, tracing the history of the psychological man from his roots in the dark soil of Inconscience to the emerging states of full-fledged consciousness, describing the cycle of the six seasons in Nature, embodying the multiple *rasas* of life, reflecting the temper and the idiom of the present technological age, Sri Aurobindo fulfills the classic requirements of a Mahakavya, in an eminently pleasing manner.

And what is the message of Savitri to the modern world?  
*to feel love and oneness is to live.*

## AN INITIATION

M. P. VINOD

Creaking out  
 sucking kisses  
 moans escaping  
 half-closed doors  
 (The moon laughs  
 from above)  
 You this side  
 circa thirteen  
     losing sleepless  
 me and ps  
 in the room across  
 Thongbus race  
 stumble fall  
 Your grip loosens  
 the image falls  
 shattering into pieces  
 The air an aching  
 A silent call  
 reaching out into the dark  
 in vain  
 Hands stray .  
 An initiation  
 The search begins.

## JOURNALISTS AS LITERARY ARTISTS

V. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

The tyro set to launch himself into the tantalizing world of Indian (English) journalism of today will certainly do well to go by the advice, "live always in the best company when you read." He has God's plenty to lay his hands on when he wants to read but one is not sure if he has any models to go by when he puts pen to paper. Professional competence there is but distinctive literary craftsmanship is scarce. The all-pervasive sense of hurry and bustle smothers the sparkling phrase and the purple patch. And more to the point, there is no inducement to pursue excellence in writing when there is a steady, not wholly inevitable, degeneration in the study of English as a language. The politician with his false pride, fumbling with his papers and speaking in Hindi at the United Nations, is a symbol of this degeneracy. Even if there is nothing slipshod about much of present-day writing, there is about it a certain colourlessness and a marked lack of coherence in thought and consistency in style. If there is no distinctive style, it is no good looking for the man behind a piece of writing. One does not search for the black cat in the dark room when it is not there.

The aspiring youngster of the early decades of this century was a lot more fortunate than our tyro. He could look for his mentors and seek to light his candle in their lamp. He might not have succeeded fully but he would have gained through sheer perseverance a sensitiveness to language. He would have imbibed a passion for the best that is known and thought in the world. With men of sweetness and light as his idols, he would have cultivated a refined taste. Two of them, who had enriched the pages of "Triveni", are entitled to our remembrance as the journal puts on a diamond-studded crown.

No two men presented a greater study in contrast than N. Raghunathan (N.R.) and M. Chalapadi Rau (M.C.), though both

distinguished themselves as journalists non-pareil, each in his own way. Raghunathan was the elder of the two by 15 years and passed away in October 1983, five months before M.C.'s death. Nothing was so typical of them as M.C. making his bow with an article in "Triveni" in the early Thirties, on John Masefield, and Raghunathan translating into English the *Valmiki Ramayana* (in three volumes) in the Eighties.

If M.C. chose to call himself an "atheist socialist and vegetarian," Raghunathan left no one in doubt that he was a traditionalist and an individualist. If the one, with his scholastic propensities, had no use for the Vedic lore and the Puranic tales, the other set much store by them and lost no opportunity to proclaim the values they embodied. If the one upheld, out of his socialist convictions, the importance of state regulation of production and distribution, the other would brook no interference by the State in individual activity. ("A pluralistic society is the indispensable safeguard of democratic freedom") If the one favoured trade unionism even among journalists belonging to an "intellectual" profession, the other tirelessly, and in the teeth of opposition, argued for professional independence from any kind of "ism." Both differed in their temperament, outlook and ideology. But both had a common background as students of English literature and had a rare mastery of that language. Their writings had an astonishingly wide range, spread over the crucial decades of India's freedom struggle, and both earned a secure niche for themselves in the history of Indian journalism.

The writings of both in the newspapers to which they were attached for the major part of their lives, "The Hindu" in one case and the "National Herald" in the other, were anonymous though discerning readers could easily detect their hand. Raghunathan reserved all his resources of wit and sarcasm for his weekly column "Soto Voto" in "Santapana" (and later "Swarajya") under the pseudonym "Vighneswara." He wrote the causerie for fifteen long years, almost without interruption, from 1946 to 1959. While making the timeless topical and fitting ancient saws into modern instances, he sought "to examine current ideas and developments in the light of those basic purposes and abiding values that one finds if he cares to look behind the superficialities of modern life in the age-long culture and way of the Indian people."

Chalapathi Rau, too, wrote a column, though not at a stretch over long years in the "Hindustan Times", the "National Herald" and the "Shankar's Weekly" under several pseudonyms, notably as "Magrus." His forte was satire and he drew liberally from his prodigious knowledge of European and British history. If only to illustrate that journalism need not be just "literature in a hurry"

and journalists need not be looked upon as "just journeymen", three aspects of their writings may well be examined, namely their attitude to prose, poetry and the profile art.

Raghunathan had a rather exalted view of the "other harmony" of prose. A great prose style, according to him, "renders the murmur of the spirit as purely as it represents the passion in which it is set." For him, the essential elements of prose were "architectonics based on fundamental brain-work, the rainbow hues of emotion and the undertone of spirit communing itself as in a dream! It caught 'the conspicuous echo of a living voice with its individual colour, strength and virginal integrity.'" He would agree with Sir Herbert Read that prose was constructive or logical with thought preceding expression but would reject out of hand Sir Herbert's view that metaphor had no particular relevance to it.

Raghunathan himself wrote in a dignified style, neither "light and easy" like Addison's nor "majestic and sonorous" like Johnson's. He scrupulously stuck to the English idiom and syntax - "not for us such royal rifting, mere phets" - and had a sense of balance and harmony. There was a classical touch about his writings, and he imparted something of the euphony of Sanskrit to his lines when he dealt with subjects purely of art and literature. He was rarely "penny plain" and could be a source of endless delight or despair when he chose to wrap himself up in the Roman toga of Marcus Aurelius or play hide and seek behind the imposing back of Sir Thomas Browne or call to his aid "Anatomy" Burton. But his quotations had an unlaboured felicity about them, an unthought grace. They elevated the familiar, took the swelling emotion on the inside and checked the argument.

There are two distinct phases in Chalapathi Rau's writings - Rau the youngster of the Thirties and Rau the veteran journalist of the - Fifties and the later years. "The pen dances" was a favourite expression of Rau's and it did when he was cutting his journalistic tooth. There was a raciness in his writing which made the reader almost breathless. He was richly allusive, diving deep into history and literature, ancient and modern, of Greece and Rome, of mediaeval Europe and Victorian England. He fed himself, as he said of Churchill, on a strong diet of Macaulay and Gibbon, and he wanted to write with Macaulay's "swaggering scateousness," with history as the background. He did it all his life with this difference that in his later years, similes and metaphors never "tumbled down" from his pen and the "deep rhythm roll of thought never broke into words of embroidered foam."

"I have not found books in running brooks," Rau said and found K.S. Venkataramani's "simile-studded" English strange. He himself wrote in a hard, gritty style, avoiding poetic touches. Rau

had acquired, wrote Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar. "a prose-style full of iridescent flashes with a cumulative *nurra borealis* power of fascination." The fascination was there till the end of his days but one missed for "iridescent flashes."

Raghunathan was a classicist in his approach to and appreciation of poetry, drawing his inspiration from that pure well unfilled, the *Ramayana*. Pure poetry, he held, to be the supreme type of that art which executes before it thinks. "It is the spirit that moveth where it listeth; the poet is but a medium, the reed through which the wind blows producing offin music. The perfect poem exists in essence in the depths of his subconscious, waiting for his liberating voice [just as the Adam lay buried in the blueveined Carrara for Michael Angelo's liberating fingers.]" He believed that it is only the poet that has the profoundest intuitions and that a language lives and renews itself in its poets as plants do in its shoots. With a rare perception of the subtleties of poetry and music, he made a clear distinction between the two, the one as the product of poetic imagination and the other, of musical imagination. Each worked within its own laws and conventions.

Chalapathi Rau, if anything, was a modernist in his attitude to poetry. When he was a young man of only 23, he wrote in "Triveni" one of his arresting pieces on John Masefield, a revolutionary poet honoured with the Poet Laureateship of England, in 1931. Ramsay Mac Donald was then in office and M.C.'s sympathies were wholly with the Labour Party. He wrote exultantly of "King John": "Masefield strikes one at first sight as the poet of the gutter, the cabin, the bye-street, the race-course, the shadows of the underworld, and the sunshine of the open fields; he is of the very stuff and spirit of the cabinet representative of engine-drivers and coalminers, of the men with too weighty a burden, too weary a load, of men who had faced the wolf at the door and known naked hunger and starvation." Of the quality of Masefield's poetry, Rau pointed out that he had "taken experience in churches and lit up the tunnels of the dark world and made it as real and human as the romantic renderings of other poets; but more of all he has brought down poetry from the clouds to the running road and the open sea."

Rau's penchant for the unconventional and cure is again seen in his second article in "Triveni" of the Thirties on Nanduri Subba Rao's "Ekti Pazzalu". He is happy that Subba Rao had "broken the back of tradition with one fierce wrench." Rau sets out that "back-breaking" process this way: "The songs introduced a new genre in love poetry in Telugu. They are mainly the expressions of Nayuduhava in amorous grays and delicious delusions giving tongue to his passions and sensations. Here is a new type of lover. The

conventional lovers of Telugu poetry who indulged in breezy love-making had contracted into wooden and lifeless types; they yawned and spoke ponderous phrases, but had made Telugu poetry tedious and monotonously conventional with all its wealth of imagery where scene followed scene in traditional *rococo* fashion and allusions floated like icebergs in an ocean of idiosyncrasy. They were good artists too in passing; everyone of them long-eyed and broad-shouldered and long-armed; as in Homer every dawn is rosy-fingered and every breeze swift of foot. To these forms, dead, half-dead and dying, Mr. Subba Rao brought the freshness of a new experiment. He made his compositions realise the sweetness of Spenser without his sensuality and the dash of the 'Ballad of the Red-Brown Maid' without its archaisms. He achieved a directness and simplicity with a frugality of phrase that was astonishing; he is comparable in this estimable quality to Mr. A.E. Housman though the latter's 'A Shropshire Lad' is quite different in theme and style."

Consistent with his iconoclasm is his lively analysis of "Modernists, Imagists and Futurists." In this essay he lets off a dazzling cracker as it were in celebration of the "bursting horizons" and the breaking up of the frontiers. He is enthusiastic about modern poetry: "Modern poetry is not soul-spiriting but it wakes up consciousness, it is not godlike or divine; it has either much sound and fury or sound and sensibility. It is all camouflages and silhouettes or all dyes and dashes. It is not only an ironic criticism of life but a criticism of the poetry that has gone before."

Portrait-painting in literature is as old as Plutarch's "Lives" (first century A.D.). The short journalistic profiles of the "Pillars of Society" and of "Priests, Prophets and Kings" were of British origin but journalists in India were not slow in catching up with the best of the English writers. But the Indian profiles have generally tended to be either panegyrics or verbal fusillades.

M.C. was one of those who took to pen-portraiture with much enthusiasm. He revelled in writing about all men of importance. As one who was drawn early to the centre of the Indian political stage, he had opportunities of observing the national leaders at close quarters. He had few heroes among them and by temperament, he could not have played Boswell to any Johnson; and there were no Johnsons either. He chose to concentrate, generally, on the wars of his subjects and hauled them over the coals. However, in his book, "All in All" his acerbity is on a low key.

Rao is at his best in his sketches of British Prime Ministers and writers and the Viceroy of India. As a counter-poise to Churchill's devastating attack on Bernard Shaw the "Jester" he holds up Shaw as "an outstanding dramatist, a thinker whose thought will be weighed and whose assertions will be quoted, a



pinneer of British socialism and, more than that, of social justice, and a truly great man." In his portrait gallery Churchill has a prominent place and his essay on "this genius without judgement" is a *tour de force*. Conceived on a wide canvas, Churchill is viewed in a historical perspective, the style is vivid and vigorous and the judgement wise. Right from the beginning the essay grips one's attention. The opening paragraph reads :

"Mr. Winston Churchill's greatness is not compelling, for it has too much flamboyance of soul and clangour of sound, and there seems little to provoke an Indian to attempt an estimate of the greatest Englishman of the age who has been also the greatest opponent of Indian freedom. But Mr. Churchill is a personality without being an eccentric, and exploration of such vividness can be an adventure into the insular but spacious spirit which has made England English without making it European. To delineate Mr. Churchill is not to paint a portrait; on a postage stamp, he seems to need a wide canvas and a modern Rembrandt. He cannot be glamorized for he is no glamour boy; he is too robust and Johnsonian and has the symmetry of Westminster or the Cathedral of Cologne"

Raghunathan, as a journalist, never attempted a profile of any man in authority or in the limelight; he did not, however, spare any when public interest was jeopardised or the person concerned was hypocritical. When individual freedom was threatened or fundamental principles of public conduct were violated, he swung into action firing his ten-pounders. He had had, indeed, no political heroes.

Nonetheless, Raghunathan chose for his charming camera subjects and scholars. Good Samaritans, writers, musicians and obscure men who lived quiet but dignified lives. In exquisite language, he held them up for our reverence or admiration :

O! Sri Ramakrishna :

"Compassion at one pole, renunciation at the other, that is the axis that bridges the entire arch of experience. Love is the energising centre. It was this passion for completeness that drove Sri Ramakrishna to experience in himself, as far as that is humanly possible, the infinite modes of Ideal Being."

O! Saint Tyagaraja :

"The mystic state of which it was said, 'I and my father are one,' normally favours silent communion. But Tyagaraja the Nadopasaka, remained on the threshold, weaving matchless patterns on the loom of music to bring forth the beauty that possessed him. The order, the measure and the mysterious joy that throbs at the heart of creation are the attributes of his timeless song."

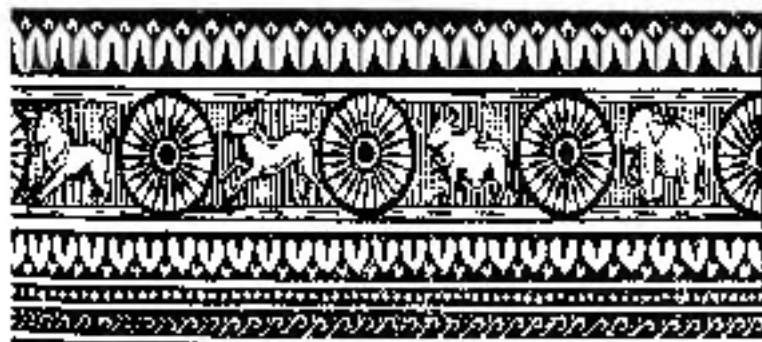
O! Dwaram Venkatasamy Naidu :

"The quiet mastery of his bowing owed much to European technique. But the firmness and purity of outline and the enriched richness of his quarter-tones were all his own."

Brahmabhatta and Rau were great intellectuals; Brahman was a greater scholar in the strict sense of the word. While Rau, in borrow the definition of an intellectual from Nirad Chaudhari, "translated his conclusions which he believed to be true, and communicated his ideas to his fellowmen with a view to influencing their minds, lives and actions," Brahman, turned back to the past and affirmed the eternal validity of the values of our indigenous culture. Though both happened to be journalists by profession, they never ceased to be students of literature and distinguished themselves as first-rate literary artists.

## REFERENCES

1. For a balanced critique of "Eeki Pankaj" see Dr. D. Anandji's essay on the subject in his book "Glimpses of Telugu Literature", A Writers Workshop Book (Price Rs. 100.)
2. Churchill wrote: "Few people praise what they preach, and so one sees so often Mr. Bernard Shaw. Few are more capable of having the best of everything both ways. The world has long watched with tolerance and amusement the humble ardor and greatness of the unique and double-headed character, while all the time the creature we regard as his bitter enemy, Saint Ignace and clown; reasonable, profound and unapproachable, Bernard Shaw receives, if not the salutes, at least the hand-clappings of a generation which honors him... as the greatest living master of letters in the English-speaking world."



DR. D. V. GUNDAPPA  
Many-faceted Man of Genius

DR. VINAYAK KRISHNA GOKAK

Poet, prose writer, philosopher, translator, playwright, biographer, literary critic, to mention only some of his contributions to the literature of all time, DVG also wrote in English, making his little journal the mouthpiece of his pre-Gandhian liberalism, practical statesmanship, humanism and his love of equality, liberty, fraternity and other Western values. His metaphysics was Vedantic-oriented, his social values were generally rooted in 19th century England and his creative writing was in tone and inspiration, with a few transitional features of diction and style. He produced lovely modern classics like *Manaku Timmana Kagga* (Gnomie folk verses of Dull Timma) and *Janpaka Chitravale* (An Art Gallery of Memories), the former a book of precious wisdom through quaint similes and the latter a memorial gallery of memorable men. They make charming reading and they are a remarkable summation of the many facets of the man and the writer. Where practical statesmanship and the builder's zeal, the kinetic features of his personality, made common cause with his creative and critical endowments, the product was a gem like the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, of which the whole of Karnataka is proud.

One of the pioneers of the modern Kannada renaissance, DVG has many things in common with other pioneers like B.M. Srikanthia, Masti, Panje Mangesh Rao, Govind Pai, Alur Venkatarao and Shantia Kavi.

An entire session of this seminar will be devoted to a discussion of the creative and critical writings of DVG, his contribution both to literature and to journalism. I shall therefore turn to poignant memories of this great man, and give one or two of his poems in English translation. I knew DVG since 1927 when I was an undergraduate in Dharwad. He visited Dharwad in 1927 and I listened to his lecture in Karnatak College and to his dis-

cussions with elders like Bendre in a meeting of the *Galeya Gama*. Later he connected me with my critical reviews and poems in *Jaya Kanyaka*, the Gumpu's monthly. In 1931 I was appointed a lecturer in English in Ferguson College, Poona, and in 1933 I was invited to preside over the *Kavighoshji* in Raichur to be held along with the year's *Sammelan*. That was just the time when DVG became President of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (technically Vice-President, with the Yuvarajah as President). DVG had immense love for the young and seemed to have decided to mould me if he could. At the Parishat meetings I was always by his side and he used to whisper into my ears certain "dos and don'ts" which were very precious indeed. He invited me to Bangalore for a lecture in the Parishat on the eve of my departure to Oxford for higher studies. He took an elder brother's interest in my movement from innocence to experience and in moulding me into a likeable young man of letters. An enchanting correspondence with me was initiated by DVG, and I responded to it with all the enthusiasm of a youngster and adoration and adventure. He wrote such beautiful English in his epistles, it was a real pleasure to read them.

I do not wish to go into other details here. I shall only refer to an epistolary episode, which he has published in his *Kenāke Vane*, a collection of poems, printing first his poem of 4th September, 1941, written after being reminded of me by a letter written by me and found in one of his old files and my reply to it on 14th September, 1947 which is a tribute to the DVG I loved. I reproduce these two poems here in English translation.

#### FRIENDSHIP

Food grows stale and cold.  
Decay fruits unold  
Even pretty girls grow old  
But friendship's fresh as ever.  
  
Bound to fade is the flower.  
Fate's own cruel hour  
Strikes. Even mangoes sour  
But friendship's fresh as ever.  
  
True some vague obsession,  
Mind's vacant-eyed seduction,  
Some tiredness, pain,  
Which I combat in vain  
Made me forget.  
  
How long can this remain  
Or memory go to sleep?  
Sure, it'll wake up with a leap  
And the brain

Till it remembers again !  
 With me it was so today  
 The mind was merry and at play.  
 Looking for something in old files  
 Flashed forth the letter which you wrote :  
 What love, what gushing forth from springs  
 Deep within ! I was overjoyed.  
 My memory flowed into the void  
 And filled it. Vanished the sense of guilt  
 Reassured was my joy, heartily.  
 I dipped the pen of my delight  
 In the ink-pot of friendship's ink,  
 Dip, dip, dip, sink, sink, sink  
 And wrote without pause this letter in verse.  
 A young green leaf, though the paper be dry  
 Make much of this with a poet's eye.  
 This scribble-babble, deeming it high,  
 O poet ! Receive this poetry.

To this epistle of 4th September 1941, I wrote my reply  
 "To Dear DVC" on 14th September, 1941.

### PROMETHEUS, THE FIRE - BRINGER

To the rock perched on a mountain peak  
 Him, Prometheus the brave,  
 Him the gods bound, bound head and foot.  
 His crime? Jupiter punished him.  
 Him, the fire-bringer to mankind,  
 Save Prometheus, O, save Prometheus !  
 None can save him ! Nothing can save him !  
 Only love, love can save him,  
 Love, sovereign Love, Love, Love divine.  
 A true dean, unafraid,  
 You stood against the granite rock.  
 Love bade an eagle-agony  
 Grab your whole heart, piece by piece.  
 Only a fill of wind your food,  
 Only rain-water was your drink.  
 Sole, the earth-mother, day and night,  
 Took her suffering son in her arms  
 And rolled him round in mid-space,  
 A top spinning in that graceless void  
 With a sweet, dear-eyed concern  
 Pleading with stars to save Prometheus,  
 Prometheus the brave, the great.

To you, Prometheus-like, O friend,  
 Who is saviour? Where is joy?  
 An eagle, gnawing at your heart,  
 Will consume you limb by limb  
 But for your immortality.  
 Alike arise your joy and mirth  
 From the bounty of the earth.  
 You cool your eyes with the lovely mists  
 That earth and sky scatter in glazes.  
 Immortal love slumbering hidden  
 In earth and sky, will spring unbidden  
 Like lightning, trumpet to the world  
 the joy and liberty Love brings,  
 And iron chains to Tyranny.  
 The promise of a Golden Age  
 Fulfil Love will, page by page.  
 Enthroned is Love in a golden car,  
 Fixed with many a glittering star,  
 Triumphant, Love will drive in state  
 Bound to her car wheels is captive Fate.  
 Till the advent of Love's procession  
 Moving eternal in progression,  
 Hope only for the symbol dawn,  
 Strong hope alone is liberty.  
 First among the hierarchy  
 Is your line of path-finders.  
 O elder! I am your younger brother  
 With your soul's eye of limpid light  
 Bless me! That is my only prayer!  
 Brother! The mighty spell of Love  
 Is its own master, its own treasure.  
 Fingering the wind of the heart  
 And all that is, with matchless art,  
 Grew our tribe and its minstrelsy  
 One with its magic symphony.  
 May my little lispings find  
 Love in the garden of your mind  
 A star gleaming across a grove  
 Is your love-letter in my dwelling,  
 In prison-like dreams of liberty.  
 All around me is it welling,  
 I plunge into your depths of love  
 And like a swan serene I float,  
 Brushing moss and clinging mud  
 That to its neck has filled this moat.

I, for a moment, have forgotten  
 All the weariness, mud-begotten  
 And into sky have taken wing -  
 There I am master, there I am king!  
 I come home with your words of love,  
 Each one sunning like a dove.

Today, as I look back on those almost juvenile sea scenes of forty-six years ago remember the excitement that was mine when I received the epistle in verse from DVG, more than twenty years my senior, calling me a friend, and writing on friendship itself; my frantic effort to find for a reply poem (I was already doomed to be a "Principal" at Wellington College, Sangli and busy from morning to evening) and my success at last ten days later, on a Sunday, when I walked away from my bungalow on the college premises and locked myself in into my "Principal's office room", to avoid visitors and intruders; and the utter absorption and emergence with which I wrote it frenziedly till I came to the last word. All this is forever etched in my memory, an imperishable part of my being.

One has to be thankful to Providence for giving us such great and generous elders standing sentinel, like light-houses in the ocean of life, lighting up its dark recesses and guiding our footsteps. Honour be their name and everlasting their glory!

(Presidential speech made at the inauguration of a national seminar (1967) at Bangalore on the occasion of the birth centenary of Dr. D.V. Gundappa)



# SITA : POWER, PENANCE, PROMISE

## An Introduction to "Sītayana"

DR. PREMA NANDAKUMAR

"The work of Valmiki has been an agent of almost incalculable power in the moulding of the cultural mind of India : it has presented to it to be loved and imitated in figures like Rama and Sita, made so divinely and with such a revelation of reality as to become objects of enduring cult and worship, or like Hanuman, Lakshmana, Bharata the living human image of its ethical ideas; it has fashioned much of what is best and sweetest in the national character, and it has evoked and fixed in it those finer and exquisite yet firm soul tones and that more delicate humility of temperament which are a more valuable thing than the formal outside of virtue and conduct."

— Sri Aurobindo

When referring to the *Ramayana*, the Vaishnava classic Sri Keshava Bhasyanam fondly and reverently records : "The great *itihāsa*, *Ramayana*, speaks of the nobility of the imprisoned lady." That is indeed the very essence of Valmiki's epic, the image of the imprisoned splendour, the epic of the Earth-born.

When we read the *Ramayana* we do follow the life story of Rama—and a marvellous tale it is of ethical imperatives, war-heroinism and awe-inspiring idealism. But it is Sita who stays back in our consciousness at the end. Sita brought to the marriage pandal by Janaka ; Sita giving away her riches and preparing to follow Rama into the forest ; Sita shyly recounting her marriage festivities to Anasuya ; Sita charmed by the Rishis and Rishiputras ; Sita thrown into a fright by Vireḍha and Surpanakha ; Sita demanding the golden deer and accusing Lakshmana ; Sita abducted by Ravana and imprisoned in Lanka ; Sita terrorized by the ogresses and consoled by Hanuman ; Sita spurned at the very moment of victory but vindicated by the fire-ordeal ; Sita anointed queen and



gifting Hanuman a string of pearls; and, of course, the terrible fate that awaits her in the Utam Kanda, and her withdrawal.

But what were the antecedents of Sita? She is shown as rising to the occasion at every moment of crisis. But we have not the same background knowledge about her as we have of Rama. Rama the student of Vasishtha receives advanced training in special missile warfare from Viswamitra; he is later seen discoursing with Rishis, lecturing to Bharata on Raja Dharma, and mollifying Lakshmana; throughout the epic we see Rama interacting with a variety of people around in one way or the other. But Sita has a passive role most of the time. She is on her own only in the Sundara Kanda. The birth and growth of Sita, her "world" within: of these Valmiki is mostly silent. For instance, after her marriage, Janaka fades out of the story altogether. While Dasaratha, Kaushalya, Sumitra, Kaikeyi and the brothers are a constant presence, we do not hear anything about Janaka, his queen and Sita's sisters. Indeed, except for the names Urmila, Mandavi and Srutakshi we have no idea of their lives, characters and relationship with Sita. It is mostly Rama's world in the *Ramayana* in spite of the fact that we are equally concerned with Sita's story of noble suffering. How about Sita's world? If this epic is about the "noble sale" (*charitram mahar*) of Sita, how do we trace the evolution of an Avatar who by her stoic penance looms as a power that guides us still? If Rama is the prince who became God, Sita too is a princess who became a goddess. But what are the guiding pathways in her ascent to the summit?

This is not the first time such questions have been posed in the minds of scholars, devotees and poets. Archaeologists and historians have conducted research all over the sub-continent to establish Sita's historical identity. Devotees have linked Sita to the Supreme Mother seen severally as Sri Devi, Bhru Devi and Sri Ranganayaki. Parasara Sharma exclaims in *Sri GunaKavya Kosa*: "The *Ramayana* lives because of you." In another famous verse, he says

"O Mother who was born as Maithili! While Rama saved only those who surrendered to him, you saved even those who did not. Such is thy profound compassion."

And in verse 37 he says that the Sita incarnation was a rehearsal for the stage appearance as Sri Ranganayaki by Lakshmi Devi.

Poets and dramatists have also sought to approach the *Ramayana* events from Sita's point of view. Among the most significant creations in this genre in recent times is Kumaran Asan's *Chinpaishanayya Sita* (1919). As a remembrance of events past in Sita's life while she awaits the return of Lava and Kusa from

Rama's court, the poem is almost bitter. How could one who showered so much affection upon her during the 13 years' exile become the stone-hearted crowned King of Ayodhya? Does power really corrupt people?

"It is hard to say it—Even a scamp would resent anyone slandering his wife. How then did the noble king heed as gospel truth the aspersions made against me?"<sup>1</sup>

And yet the image of compassion that Sita is, that she forgives Rama as easily as she forgave the ogresses in the Asoka grove. The ways of Raja Dharma are inscrutable! Hence she ends up blaming herself for her clouded vision:

"Lord, have mercy on your vainglorious rage!  
pardon me for the blemishes  
that in a state of mental disturbance  
I discovered just now in you!"<sup>2</sup>

Coming from a family devoted to *Ramayana* scholarship, my father, Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar grew up in a traditional Hindu household where the elders used to read the *Sundara Kanda* daily as Parayana. While father has not followed this ritual (though my mother has been reading the *Sundara Kanda* daily for forty years), he has immersed himself in the *Ramayana* world since his childhood days and he has written on the *Ramayana* at various times. And recently he has edited *Asian Variations on the Ramayana* for the Sahitya Akademi and translated the *Sundara Kanda* of Valmiki into English as *The Epic Beautiful*.

The *epic Beautiful*? Is it not a mere *kanda*? But then, Prof. Iyengar feels that the *Sundara Kanda* was the nucleus, the seminal epic to which other portions were added later. In fact, the *Agasthya Samhita* refers to this as the *bija kanda*. While translating the *Sundara Kanda* Prof. Iyengar was increasingly held captive by the *Ramayana* action as *Sita's story*. It was Sita everywhere for him and he also referred to the *Sundara Kanda* as *Sirayana* in his introduction to *The Epic Beautiful*.

After the completion of the translation, friends and disciples came forward with a string of suggestions and asked for more of the *Ramayana* world in English verse.

The work was begun on 1 January 1983 when he wrote the Prologue. A lifetime spent in prayerful surrender to Sita and watching her presence in the women he had come into contact with — dives images of suffering, forgiveness, penance, power and

1. *Selected poems of Kamarnu Asan* (1975), p. 124.

2. *ibid.* 1 p. 129.

sacrifice—resulted in these twelve stanzas that open with a Miktonic echo :

Of womanhood I write, of the travail  
and glory of motherhood;  
of Prakrit and her infinite modes  
and unceasing variety;  
of the primordial Shakti's myriad  
manifestations on earth;  
of the lure and leap of transcendences  
of the ruby feminine.

But the real beginning of *Sitayana* was to be on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1983, at dawn. When he awoke from a dream-state on that day, the lines were already there :

The famed philosopher-king, Janaka,  
paid obeisance to the Bard  
Of the Worlds, Narada, as he floated  
into Mithila's domain

(*Mithila*, 1.) ..

Containing 5995 stanzas (with the Prologue and Epilogue each contributing another 12) *Sitayana* has seven Books. Written in the 10-7-10-7 syllable unrhymed quatrain measure that controls the flow of the narrative without compartmentalising the thought-processes, *Sitayana* has a structural individuality of its own with the events of *Sundara Kanda* placed at the centre of the epic as the Book of Asoka, the bija-Kanda. It is the precious pendant that gives meaning to the rest of the tale : the image of the imprisoned heroine rejecting the entire wealth and power of Ravana as worthless prey and remaining faithful to the sayer of being Rama's wife upholding wifely chastity. The seven Books are further divided into seventy-seven cantos, each Book comprising eleven cantos. Of these seventy-seven cantos, more than half are completely new creation. In the rest of the cantos there is a good deal of direct translation from Valmiki but also plenty of improvisation. Kambar and Tulsidas provide inspiration now and then while echoes from great English and Indian writers are never far away. In terms of statistics it could be said that direct translation from Valmiki would be less than one-fourth of the total.

One word before I go to the text. Prof. Iyengar has given the sub-title : *Epic of the Earth-born*. Sita's story is essentially our story too. Sita, born of earth, daughter of Mother Madhavi, is a symbol of us all; the earth-born, children of Mother Sakambhari. Sita's story speaks of the greatness of the lady who remained in an apparently vast and foliage-rich garden, but she was really imprisoned there by an unscrupulous Rakshasa monster, and constantly teased and terrified by ugly ogresses. Well, we too are on

cl's earth, a vast garden luminous the splendour of Prakriti. But we are also imprisoned by our own senses (Karnas and Jnanu Indriyas) and are threatened by a variety of false-made, man-impelled, self-created sicknesses. Sicknesses of the body and the mind. We are imprisoned by birth, imprisoned by the lust of others, imprisoned by our own longings.

However, the imprisoned lady in Asoka was Sita, a Princess, a queen-to-be. We too may be pigny humanity, but we are also *anurupyah purusha*, children of immortality. Hence Valmiki took up the story of Sita to tell us what we are, whither we are going, what should be our goal. Prof. Iyengar extends the parameters of the story by including the experiences of mankind through the last few centuries as well. It is interesting that Sita's story remains astonishingly relevant even today when the world has entered the awe-inspiring Atomic Age.

While *Sitayana* is no mirror-image of the *Ramayana* of Valmiki, Prof. Iyengar has retained the seven-fold division of the original, though there has been some re-distribution of the events. Since it is Sita's story, we have — instead of Bala, Ayodhya, Aranya, Kishkindha, Sundara, Yuddha and Utara kandas, — the *Mithila*, Ayodhya, Aranya, Yuddha, Rajya and Ashrama Books. Rama is never seen directly in action when Sita is not present. All such action is reported to Sita by appropriate couriers, like Hanuman, and Trijata. Anala and Sarana. Events in Ayodhya after the departure of the exiles are reported to Sita by Srotakirji.

*Sitayana* begins with a conversation between Narada and Janaka, just as Valmiki and Narada converse at the opening of *Bala Kanda*. Janaka wishes to know why the world continues to enact a "wearisome agenda" where "might, courage and cunning have been mastered by like but enhanced powers." How do the disprivileged manage to endure and even thrive? They do so because of the presence of Love, says Narada.

Down after a dark night, a rainbow arc  
trailing a heavy shower,  
a bird's cry, a child's smile, a garden-scape,  
and we sense Love's ambience.

(*Mithila*, 58)

Janaka is reminded of Dasarath's Yajna three years earlier, and on Yajnuvalky's advice begins a sacrifice. The first step is to turn the sod:

Paired between the infiniquies without,  
and within, his hands guided  
the old ploughshare with an infallible  
sense of time and direction.

He had not progressed far, when suddenly  
a lightning-flash crossed his path;

He stopped, and his glazed eyes fell on the form  
 of a wondrous golden child.  
 Since the vision had sprouted as it were  
 from the opening furrow,  
 the enraptured Janaka cried "Sita!"  
 and bent down in gratitude.

(*Mithila*, 232-234)

Presently the royal household at Vidha has three more additions, Urmila, Mandavi and Srusakirti. Prof. Iyengar well brings out both the outward differences and the unified consciousness of the sisters through their demeanour and conversation. But Sita is the leader; and we have dreamy Urmila, self-prized Mandavi and sprightly Srusakirti.

There are charming vignettes about these flames of feminine excellence growing up in Mithila's palace. But we are never far away from high seriousness. Sita's dreams and thought-processes are recorded with guarded understatement. A dream about a serpent swooping upon a bird of Paradise brings forth an explanation from Maitreyi:

A little while, my child, and you'll be bailed  
 a rare phantom of delight;  
 and you'll win what you ardently desire  
 and the world will smile on you.  
 And a little while after, you may have  
 no quail for bitter chafce,  
 endure what seems eternal night, and win  
 and lure, and win all again.

(*Mithila*, 465-6)

Vajravalkya's wife Maitreyi is but one of the several soulful portrayals of women-teachers in *Sitarama*. There is, for instance, the Mother of the Mandala (reminiscent of the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram) who initiates the sisters into meditation. The Mother gazes into Sita's eyes:

Should you ever be seized with helplessness,  
 think of me, for I take charge  
 of all, all whom I may have seen even  
 for a mere fleeting second!  
 When danger in the future assails you,  
 fear not but look deep within  
 and seek — tearing through all barrier veils —  
 the invulnerable You.

(*Mithila*, 525-6)

Now we come to an episode which gives a decisive turn to the story. While at play, a ball had disappeared under the box

— which an enormous how had been kept. The sisters run towards the bow.

Drawing near in her naive innocence.

Sita now took a close look,  
raised the bow a little with her left hand,  
while the right rescued the ball.  
Happening to come just then, Janaka  
was o'erstraken by surprise  
and cast on his beloved child a glance  
of gloried recognition

(Mithila, 598-9)

The girls run away happily. But Janaka is wistful. This is no ordinary child but a consecrated icon of Power! How will he find the right husband for her? Yes! The hero will have to bring this bow of Shiva! He announces a Swayamvara. Presently Sita listens to the chattering Sutaakṛti speak of what she had heard. A charming young hero has come with a string of achievements to his credit: Taraka killed, Maricha worsted, Ahalya redeemed, Rama wins the contest, Dasaratha comes to Mithila and the wedding takes place. Everyone is happy, and Viśwamitra in particular. Hadn't he been the cause of separating the loving couple, Harishchandra and Chandramani? He has now made amends by bringing together Gaurama and Ahalya and also acted as the catalytic agent for the four marriages that have been celebrated in Mithila.

The Book of *Ayudhya* begins significantly with a storm. The bearers of the palanquin of Maithili and Urnula lose direction and stray away from the main party. The storm subsides. Sita and her sister find themselves in Ahalya's presence. Ahalya tells the young brides that one needs a guardian-spirit all the time. In future it is going to be worse for women as man would be scooping lower than the Asura and the Beast.

Sita and Urnula rejoin the royal party and find comfort and happiness at Ayudhya. Sita meets Arundhati who speaks of the needs for aspiration, and suddenly exclaims:

Sita, Sita, my tired old eyes yet see  
you framed in infinity:  
you're come to humankind as a power,  
a penance and a promise.

(*Ayudhya*, 168)

Power, Penance, Promise. The rest of *Sitayana* is a progressive revelation of this triune radiance that is Sita. We watch the re-enactment of the dreadful scenes leading to Rama's banishment. Sita pleads that Kaikeyi has decreed Sita's exile as well by demand-

ing Rama's banishment. But Rama will not be easily persuaded. Yet Sita will not be denied.

This, my lord, this popular assumption  
 that we're but Doll's House creatures  
 foolishly engrossed in colourful clothes  
 and glittering jewellery,  
 happily contained by domestic chores,  
 the securities of home  
 and husband, and the throes of child-bearing  
 and rearing, is mere fancy.  
 If as the partaker of your Dharma  
 I've the right to share your throne,  
 why, it follows, I must with equal joy  
 feel the thorns of exile too.  
 No cheap juvenile enthusiasm, this,  
 nor female obstinacy :  
 I've been schooled in Mithila's former Regency  
 in seasoned austerities

(Ayodhya, 421)

In the Book of Ananya we meet Good and Evil in equal measure. While Ananya fondles Sita and speaks words of wisdom, Viradha is a menace. However, inside Dandaka we have also a spiritual map of India and we meet familiar figures through the gauze-drapery of a poet's soul-view.

Sita's insouciant reverence for Rishipatnis like Kasyapuni, Maitreyi, Arundhati, Ahalya and Anasuya gives a new direction to the story. With such realised women around, it is obvious that woman is no ignorant cog in a gigantic life-machine. If she still suffers, it is because of blind tradition and crass selfishness which have turned her into a blinded slave. Thus Lopamudra.

This Jungian division of labour —  
 Woman for the home, and Man  
 for the battlefield — has driven a wedge  
 and splintered humanity.  
 While the sons get trained to become killers  
 in the horrid game of war,  
 the daughters get entrapped in the male's net  
 of pride, possession and lust

(Ananya 355-6)

Later on, after the couples take leave and move away, Agasthya calms down Lopamudra and assures her that all will be well for humanity.

Know that Mithili, born in alliance  
 with Rama and by herself,  
 she the birth-born now dwells with a mission

of change and transformation,  
 carrying Agni in her heart of rufh,  
 she can suffer and redeem.

(*Ananya*, 390-1)

*Asoka* contains some of the finest flights of inspired poetry in *Sriyana*. In vain does Ravana tempt Sita with his riches. She remains firmly wedded to the memory of Rama. There are also other moments which are really liberations. She had had some hints of what awaited her, and had strengthened herself by following the advice of the Rishi Patnis. But had she not forgotten the words of one among them? Had not Abahya told her the importance of the protective guardian - angel that Grace places before us? We can reject this symbol of grace only at our peril.

During these long months of imprisonment, Trijata and Anala, daughters of Vibhishana, keep up Sita's spirits and give her news of the outside world. As for Sita, she delves into the deeps within and gains the strength to face Ravana's blandishments and threats. She also acquires a rare poise. Imprisonment is raptur for her, and this period in her life is *Ashram-vas*, faintly foreshadowing the much longer *Ashram-vas* yet to come. For the present,

This was an interim for loneliness,  
 and rude self-sufficiency;  
 this too was a part of her ascetic,  
 and she watched, and she waited

(*Anoka*, 313)

Hanuman comes, Lanka is burning. Hanuman goes back to Rama  
 ... and the Western orange skies  
 cast a rare luminous glow  
 on Sita panted in waiting: an inner  
 flame presaging the future.

(*Anoka*, 852)

The Book of *Yuddha* is an unveiling of the Spectre of Doom as seen and reported mainly by Anala. As Sanjaya had related the course of the Mahabharata war, Anala reports to Sita the vicissitudes of the mighty struggle between Rama and Ravana. The most important additions in *Yuddha* are the introduction of Sulochana and the dream of Ravana. Mandodari and Indrajit's wife Sulochana, bound by an identical fate cling to one another at this fateful moment. Sulochana sees no point in this war which has meant a meaningless carnage for Lanka's elderly.

A pause, and Mandodari gave a groan  
 of desperation, and said -  
 Where unreason and passion sit enthroned,  
 all good sense goes a-hiding.  
 The insanities of lust and power  
 have their own queer compulsions;



and what are we, the females of the race,  
but dependable tinkers?

(Yuddha, 481)

Ravana returns to the palace after an ignominious reprieve from Rama and falls asleep, sucked into a disturbed pool of nightmare visions. Soon he wakes up, and recounts to the startled Mandodari and Sulochana a terrible sequence. But he is drowned, on, he cannot take their advice. All that he can do is to speak in rambling accents:

Ah I can't ever hope to live it down —  
the contrivance, cowardice,  
and cruelty of the notion! After  
that wind, the present whirlwind!  
For Sita too, the poor wounded woman,  
who can predict the future?  
There can be no simple cancellation  
of the mangled time between.  
And so my Queen and my Shakti, whom I've  
too long taken for granted;  
and O rare gift of Grace, Sulochana,  
whom my folly has ignored:  
forgive me, and the males of the species,  
for all our egotisms  
and iniquities — but it is too late  
to undo my transgressions.

(Yuddha, 569-572)

Ravana's end: Mandodari's lament: Sita's fire-ordeal. In the Kuru court Vikarna's is the lone voice of protest as Dushshasana derides Draupadi. Here Trijata alone raises her voice of protest:

Is there none here to rush to the rescue  
of abandoned innocence?  
Must the world reap the wages of the sin  
of driving the pure to die?

(Rajya, 177)

But we are already in the Book of *Rajya*, for there is a hall to human insanity. Grace as Agni protects Sita, and the crisis is past: Rama's "sinful story security was pierced / by the crisp air from Abye."

Like one awakened from sleep he let slip  
the darkened past as one drops  
the mercy of nightmares, and advanced  
to take his God-given wife.

(Rajya, 195)

The brief Book of *Rajya* celebrates Rama's coronation and a mighty family get-together after all those years of prayerful waiting.

Agastya tells them all about Ravana's antecedents, his career which had a glorious retro — *perrillita* — about it and the emergence of the Vanara clan. There is a meaningful juxtaposition of Ravana and Hanuman, as supermen :

Too soon, all too soon, the idyll comes to an end, and we come to the last Book, *Ashvamedha*. Exiled again ! Sita finds refuge in Valmiki's hermitage. There are sisters in distress here : but these women — Vasumati, Nadopasini — have transcended their life's anguish and emptiness by work, worship, meditation, prayer. They are indelible companions to Sita. Lava and Kusa are born. They grow up into ideal sons, and Sita now gains "a calm of mind, all dissonance spent." But deep within, Sita is the world-macher ; and she is agitated now and then by the state of the world. Prof. Tyengar sketches the position of humanity today poised on the brink of disaster, thanks to environmental pollution and atomic weaponry :

Would Man one day, drunk with Asuric milk  
and weighted with Rakshasa  
armour and overwhelming ambition,  
dare the final sacrifice ?  
Ah set up the witches' cauldron and brew  
the critical concoction  
that will fissure the atom and invoke  
the Shatterer of the Worlds ?  
Tear apart the filmy life-protector,  
charge and charge and carbonise,  
infect the elements with lethal fumes,  
and decree the end of life ?

(*Ashvamedha*, 475-477)

Sita assures herself that Grace will never fail humanity which is itself a creation of the Supreme Creatrix, Her loving compassion.

Rama's *Asvamedha* sacrifice draws almost all the figures with whom we have grown familiar in the earlier Books. Sita meets her sisters, mothers-in-law, Trijata, Anala and Sarana. Also Ahalya, Lopamudra, Arundhati. There is an undercurrent of sorrow and vague apprehensions about the future. The sacrifice gathers momentum ; Lava and Kusa recite the tale of Sita. Ah, the scene !

Once had a daughter of Mithila wept  
confined to the petty space  
under the Simsapa : and ten thousand  
pairs of eyes now streamed forth tears.

(*Ashvamedha*, 744)

Rama recognises his sons and requests Valmiki to bring Sita to the court. The poignant moment is upon us all. As Rama and Valmiki speak, as the vast concourse looks upon her clad in ochre robes, Sita herself is far, far away from it all, re-living the

momentous pass. Suddenly her husband's words penetrate her consciousness.

What was she long her husband waiting for?

Ood her marble purity,

a Fire that burns Ravana's mign: of arms,  
need further ascription?

Goodbye, then, to dear visible Nature.

the Sita Boca and Guna,

the many-hued and polyfelicit  
splendour of Earth-existence!

(Anuvansa, 835-6)

The Earth-born Sita goes back to where she came from, reclaimed by Mother Madhavi. But does Rama's suicidal sequestration spell a doom for the future?

Ten thousand cycles of hibernation,

birth, growth, flowering, fruition,

and fall, and once more winter! But the Earth  
renews itself, and endures.

The Earth never dies or sues or despairs,

for the pulses of Sita's

yearn of compassion again and faster

our evolving Life Divine

(Anuvansa, 939-40)

Sita is seen in this epic as a unambiguously human and graciously divine heroine. Her innocence and wisdom, gentleness and strength, love and compassion are all reflected in her motivations, conversations, and actions. When the moment of despair is upon us, and we feel helpless and hopeless in an increasingly menacing atmosphere, the image of Sita clad in the ochre robes of renunciation rises before us as a promise, guiding us to sanity, guarding us as Grace. And so the noble tale of Sita becomes our sanctuary as well.



## THE FACELESS EVENING

(Short story)

PROF. GANGADHAR GADGIL

*(Translated by the author from the original in Marathi)*

It was one of those dull, listless evenings of Bombay. The fading sunlight lay on it like a layer of dust. There was nothing particular about it. It had no face at all. A faceless evening. Rather shocking if one comes to think of it. But nobody seemed to give a damn. Nor did I for that matter. I was walking homewards with my legs moving forward and backward mechanically. Scores of other legs moved the same way. A concert of moving legs. Rather silly, I would say. But nobody seemed to think so.

A horsedrawn Victoria, remnant of the British era, creaked and jolted past me. The horses' hoof hit a stone. A spark sprang off it at a sharp angle. It was bright and alive for an instant and then ceased to exist. An atom of energy and an atom of time—a momentary existence, an accidental equation. A thrilling coincidence, that thrilled nobody.

Huge letters, burnt into the sky, standing aside a tall building. Brashly assertive, insistent. Trying to wipe out consciousness everything else and filling it with a Cola. Succeeding by sheer size and brightness.

A child in its mother's arms staring wide eyed at the indecipherable scribble of objects, colours, movements and clutching in its tiny fist its mother's saree. Mother gives it a bright nickel coin to hold. The child's eyes fix on it with a jerk. It closes its fingers around it to feel it. The coin vanishes from view. The child is astounded, confused. Its fingers open and the coin reappears shining and very much there. The child closes its fingers and opens them again. It does that once again and again. A flicker of comprehension. Child's face splits wide open in a big smile. The eyes sink and are lost in a surge of chubby wrinkles. Its head loses balance and falls back. The child opens its eyes and finds itself staring at a huge poster of a screen goddess. The child gapes

swesrock at the apparition in garish colours. His smile vanishes. The screen goddess huge and impervious keeps on smiling her famous million-rupce smile.

A cacophony sounds! dominated by the screaming insistent horns of automobiles. A hundred drils being driven into the ears. Faces searing out of window screens. Uniformed drivets, women with faces as smooth as plastic and blood-red lips, stone-faced Government officers, exuding authority, go-better executives, reckless young men, mild-mannered prosperous bankers. All wearing the informal faces drained of expression. "Get out of the way, damn you!" They barked wordlessly.

If they had spoken, each would have said it differently in a different voice of his own. But all the different things they had to say were translated into a primal language of sound—a mechanical scream, brash, rude, demanding.

A frightening transformation, if one came to think of it. But nobody bothered, nobody was scared.

Way down the street, a loudspeaker jutting out of a shop vomited film music. It had no face, only an obscenely large funnel of a mouth. It vomited the song without a movement of lips, an intake of breath, or movements in the throat. Three minutes of devotional music, three minutes of love. A small crowd stood around the loudspeaker drinking in the music.

Further down a hawkor blithely announced in a scintillating voice, "Auction! Gigantic auction! A company gone broke. Goods on sale! Dirt cheap! Rush and pick what you want. A lucky chance of a life-time! A company gone phut! Rush brothers, rush."

A crowd quickly gathered around him eyeing his wares greedily. Nobody bothered to ask about the company that had gone broke. Could it be the Universal Enterprise Ltd?

Suddenly a deafening sound drowned all others. A van with posters hung around it slowly approached from one end of the street. It had loudspeakers mounted on top like cannons on a tank. A stream of slogans burst out of the loudspeakers.

"Peace in Korea! We demand Peace! Peace in Korea! Peace! Peace! Peace!"

The slogans smashed into the ears and exploded in the head. They stunned. They were meant to stun.

I ran into a man I knew while I walked along the street. He stubbed. So did I! He moved his lips. I heard nothing. He moved his lips again. I heard nothing. Our words had vanished, crowded out of the universe of sound. Possibly it was a beginning of the final basinsment of what people had to say to each other. We both laughed soundlessly and went our way.

"Peace ! Peace ! Peace !" barked the loudspeakers out of their big permanently-open mouths.

It took quite some time for the deafening demand for peace to get out of my earshot. My raped and stunned ears slowly regained their ability to hear. My eyes once again began to perceive things. I began to notice again the endless stream of humanity walking past me like products on a conveyor belt. They all looked so alike ! one had the comic feeling that they were all identical coins spewing from a gigantic mixer round the corner. They all looked alike, pale imitations of the film gods and goddesses, who loomed large over their heads aside the posters in garish colours. The shrug, the slouch, the wiggle of the hips and the smiles ! Myriad imitations of the million rupee smiles.

The film stars cannot really give birth to so many of their copies. Yet this has been accomplished. The scientists too are at work, achieving what at one time was inconceivable. A woman can now conceive without copulation and bear the child of a man whom she has not known or even seen. Marie Curie's can be preserved for years. Hitler or Stalin can be the father of a child born fifty years later. The scientists may be able eventually to give new personalities to people. One could then buy a personality over a counter. "New Delhi, 29th December 1999 :

The Prime Minister today inaugurated a gleaming, high tech factory for manufacture of children. The first child produced by the factory was presented to the Prime Minister amidst flashing bulbs of cameras. On the suggestion of the Prime Minister the child has been designed to be intensely patriotic. The Prime Minister in his inaugural speech lauded the achievement of Indian scientists and said, "This is a giant step forward in the progress of our country. This factory will remove the major obstacle in the path of planned development of this country."

Our special correspondent reports that the scientists have succeeded in manufacturing pills that "would enable a person to have the kind of dreams he likes. These pills are likely to be produced on a commercial scale in the near future. Marketing experts predict that there is likely to be a heavy demand for nightmares, adventures and sexual fantasies !

Wonderful ! Isn't it ?

"Life is a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing," says Shakespeare. Stupid, isn't it ?

Did the faceless evening smile wanly. Or was it a sob ?

A girl stopped in front and threw a smile at me ! Faceless was she ? No, No, baby-faced.

"You are not seeing things. Where is your mind wandering ?", she asked with another baby-faced smile.

She opened her purse with an automatic movement, took out a tiny handkerchief, closed the purse, wiped her face and opened the purse.

"Sorry, I was thinking of something," I said.

"Thinking, were you? Of whom?" She quickly closed and opened her eyes mischievously. I had seen that pretty gesture in

She played with the pallav of her saree and wiggled her

I smiled vacuously. She responded with a pretty smile

"Did you see that Shashi Kapoor movie which is a big hit?" she asked.

She looked at me and delicately dropped her eyelids for no reason at all. It was another gesture. I had seen inevitably in a movie. She had not yet perfected it. This was a practice session.

I could think of nothing to say. I said, "The big cricket match tomorrow. Are you going to watch it?"

She arched her brows, stroked her lips delicately with her fingers, "mm . . . I might, if I am in the mood."

So we spoke for a while and bade good bye to each other. A three-minute record of gestures and talk had been played. After a little while she may play it over again . . . open her purse, take out ketchup, close the purse and throw a smile.

A record being played in thousands of homes.

"Bring me a trumpet, I will blow it with such passion..." said a poet. What next? Nothing, the needle is stuck, the same lines over and over again.

A violent screech of brakes. A blood-curdling scream. A wild rush, a stampede. A milling crowd greedily swallowed the scene of the accident. A man lay dead. The crowd stared at him, at the car. Blood! Death! A severed leg! Initial fright! of death of unknown! Behind it lurked an itch for the sensational, for gore and violence. The itch got the better of the sight. Itch and mindless curiosity.

The people in the crowd were not inherently cruel. Had the man been alive they would have rushed to help, given him a glass of water, called an ambulance. But the itch was also very much there and so was curiosity, mindless, indifferent! Itch and curiosity of a crowd! The waves of responses. Chaotic unstructured! That crowd could have been moved to tears by the broken heart of a loveless movie heroine. It could have started a riot after hearing the incendiary harangue of a demagogue. It would have stampeded in panic in the face of a posse of club-wielding policemen. It could have viciously pursued and belaboured to death a petty thief caught in the act. It could have burst into raucous laughter

on hearing an obscenity or ... It could have done anything at all and quite unpredictably.

A pool of blood. A trickle slowly began to flow out of it. They all watched its halting progress half-afraid and half-expecting that it would flow towards them. The trickle found a slope and began to flow in that direction. The people standing there screamed and fell back in confusion. A chap fell flat on his back. The crowd burst into laughter.

I shuddered when I heard the laughter. That crowd of living people frightened me more than the death that was on public view. Equally frightening was the solemnity with which they picked up the shoes of the dead man and placed them neatly by his side. They were so driven by contradictory impulses, so contrary at times and always so unpredictable.

That fear was matched by the awe-inspired by scientists delving deep into the secrets of life itself and developing techniques of manipulation and control.

A scientist might walk into the crowd, pick up the severed leg and with a magic chemical attach it to the body making it whole. He could with an injection or electrical stimulus bring him back to life. The man would then get up, put on his shoes and say to the driver who killed him, "Thanks an awful lot. Death was a thrilling experience. I enjoyed the terror of it all."

The driver may offer to do it for him once again. They may then part company with a warm handshake.

That could start a craze to get killed. Multimillion rupee companies may be floated to offer people various kinds of thrilling deaths. People would buy shares and invest in such companies. The companies may vie with each other to import latest technologies from U.S.A. and Japan. All existing laws, attitudes and philosophical speculations about death would be irrelevant and obsolete. A smart kick administered by science would change life, society, everything. While humanity is coping with this gigantic earthquake, science would administer yet another kick. Man may perish in this flood of scientific achievement. Then perhaps a new civilization of bees would grow on this earth. The possibilities were mind boggling. They inspired a terror of life and man himself.

Human life is a mammoth fair. Its main attraction is a merry-go-round that goes faster and spins faster until excitement and thrill get transformed into terror, orange, red black. The visit to the temple costs a copper paisa, as offering to God. A ride in the merry-go-round also costs a paisa. One closes one's eyes with reverence in the presence of God. When one rides the merry-go-round the eyes are closed automatically through fright. In either case one



has to grope in the dark. One comes in this world with a copper paisa of awareness and what it ultimately fetches is this

Why not spend the copper paisa on a sticky chewy sweet? One can chew on it endlessly. But that option is not open. One gets sucked in the vortex of the merry-go-round. One has to live in terror.

Terror! Terror in the shape of big, black headlines in newspapers. Each letter aspiring to fill the page, the entire consciousness. A multitude of diverse terrors. Terror of knowledge! Terror of ignorance! Terror of bondage and of boundless freedom too. Terror of others and terror of oneself!

Mammoth serpents of terror! And mammoth ladders too. One climbs high on the ladders and pierces the sky. One is swallowed by the serpents and falls into the depths of darkness. One holds one's destiny in the dice in one's little fist. A shake and a throw and where does it take us?

That evening in Bombay I was tired and dull. My legs moved mechanically like the blades of a pair of scissors to take me home.

A tiny flutter of breeze! A kite fluttered too and soared in the sky. Young little leaves on tree flickered. A little boy raised his arms high, gave a joyous shout and ran nowhere in particular, for no reason at all. The lad at the counter of the grocer's shop picked up a piece of jaggery and dropped it in his mouth. The dust on the street was lifted and travelled a little with the breeze and settled down somewhere else.

I broke out of my reverie, the thoughts got shuffled like a pack of cards. Somebody gave me just five cards and asked me to call the trump!

It was a gamble, a leap in the dark. I caught the spirit of it and said, "The last card I get that will be my trump!"

The cards continued to be dealt out and the deal never seemed to end. No last card! No trump! A nudge by an unseen hand and a card dealt out to me flicked and fell open. It was the queen of hearts.

Who gave the nudge? Why was I so thrilled at the site of the queen of hearts? Why had my fancy suddenly taken flight? I knew it. She had done it. Who was she? I didn't know. I had seen her. Where? Oh some-where, anywhere. That did not matter. All that mattered was that she was there just a few steps away from me. There she stood facing away from me talking to somebody earnestly with her chin raised just a wee bit. A little woman, slightly plump, as very young girls are. But she was not very young, just young. Her delicate arms swayed a little. Her

ears were small and delicate and waves of light shimmered over her dark, lustrous hair. She lifted her chin a little more, the rounded lustrous bun of her hair rested on her back and was lifted just a little. The red rose in her hair tilted and looked at me teasingly. The pallav of her sari draped over her arm, slipped and fell languorously on her hips. With a slight movement, she shifted her weight to one side. Her hips changed posture just a little. But that was enough to send my heart fluttering all around her.

A strange magic was at work. I stood there transfixed, transported into a fairyland fragrant with flowers. I wanted to be close to her. I wanted her to talk to me in a sweet whisper and illuminate everything with a smile.

Whence this magic? Why had it enchanted me? I did not know. It may not happen when I see her again or it might. Perhaps she was like the girl I met in the street—the girl with a three-minute record of personality. The magic spell might be broken any moment and the fairy-tale would end without even having begun.

Love stories! Oh, I have half a dozen of them. Here is one about calf love and here is a medieval romance and a third one is full of sex and violence. They all cost around three rupees. Do you want it to read on a train journey or give it as a present at a wedding?

I ignored that babble.

"It is really a bio-chemical process," observed a scientist employed in the factory for manufacturing babies.

A psychologist said something with so much jargon in it, that it conveyed no meaning at all.

I ignored them all, left my fluttering heart at her feet and walked away. Totally unaware of it, she stepped on the fluttering heart as she continued her earnest conversation. The heart lay crushed and bleeding under her foot. Yet it was deliciously happy and it was happiness and not blood that spurred out of the crushed heart.

I walked along the street covering distance with my feet like a pair of skis. My heart lay at her feet and that did not bother me at all. What had happened was something tremendous, miraculous and frightening too. But somehow I was totally unconcerned, or rather indifferent. I wanted to have a smoke and relax.

That evening in Bombay was listless and tired. Its hair was unkempt and dusty and it so happened, that had no face at all.



## BUDDHIST CHINA AND SOUTH INDIA

DR. LK. SARMA

*hao, Indu* = Hello! Welcome, Hindu; *hen hao* = excellent! that is how an Indian is warmly greeted in China. You are! The snow skinned chubby faces and black-haired, fish-eyed youth of China are lovely to look at but all in uniforms—girls in white pants and short skirts and men in Mao's coat, all blues with the red strap collars, monotonous in apparel and appearance. But there underlies a sincere love and affection to "Indus" in general a term that is sweet to utter and cherished by the Chinese—who instantly go deep in their thoughts on ancient Indian and Chinese cultural bonds. Yet Indians are rarely seen in China and the reverse is also true. Why these most ancient civilized Asians moulded in great eastern traditions and common cultural links remain somewhat isolated with each other?

I had the fortune of seeing this great country in October 1983 under an Indo-China Cultural Exchange Programme. My visit was mainly academic and to get a personal glimpse of the Chinese architectural and artistic wealth, mainly Buddhist affiliation. The historical and archaeological sites and Museums in and around Beijing, Gansu, Shanxi, Henan and Canton provinces of China were visited by me in a whirlwind tour, very ably arranged by the Central Cultural Relics Bureau, People's Republic Of China, Beijing.

Chinese chronicles mention about a gold statue of Buddha being brought to China in 122 B.C. (Western Han period). But it is fairly certain, that, China received Buddhism from India by the beginning of the Christian era (Eastern Han (25-200 A.D.) through the South-East Indian coast and Ceylon.

The three famous Chinese Travellers, Fa-hien (40-411), Yuan-Chwang (629-646), and It-Sing, (671-695) have made enormous contribution to be the development of Buddhism in China and their ~~immense~~ translation works on the Buddhist *Sutras*, *Vinaya* and *Abhidharma*, made China a reservoir of these treasures of Buddhist art, thought and literature. The foundations for such a

penitile scholarly imperus must have been laid by a few centuries earlier to this trip. A Brahmi inscription dated to mid-third century A.D. from the ancient city of *Sripurva Vijayapuri* in the Nagarjunakonda valley (Dt. Guntur, Andhra Pradesh), refers to the pilgrimage of some acharyas (scholars) to China and other countries for proselytizing the Buddhist order. These monks, together with other acharyas hailing from Kashmir, Gandhara and Ceylon, besides other places in India, worshipped the *Bodhi Vriksha Prasada* (Bodhi tree pavilion), extant on the Chula Dharmagiri Vihara monastery at Nagarjunakonda. Nagarjunakonda's Sripurva is hallowed as the seat of Acharya Nagarjuna (2nd century A.D.), the founder of *Madhyamika* school of Mahayana Buddhism which spread all over China. At this place the Mahasanghika sects made headway and its principal schools like *Chairyaka* and *Sailas* propagated on meritorious acts such as the creation, decoration and worship of *chaityas* and eventually deified the Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Mahayana Buddhism thus gained a high degree of popularity among the masses and crossed the Indian frontiers very swiftly. It is not one-sided. Chinese emperors greatly respected Indian Buddhist teachers and monks. There was a meaningful cultural exchange. Kanchipuram finds mention in a Chinese text dated to first century A.D. and called *huang cha*. It is said that Chinese emperors sent presents to the King of Fung Cha in A.D. 1-6. Although initially Buddhism was humbled by the native Confucianism and was regarded as "Barbarian religion", by the close of the Eastern Ts' in (or Jin 317-420) and the Wei (386-551) dynasties' firm foundations were laid for works of Buddhist art and Buddhism gained the status of a state religion by about 500 A.D. The translations undertaken by the Chinese traveller-trio were mostly based on the *Madhyamika* works expounded by Acharya Nagarjuna and elaborated later on by such great luminaries as Bhavarivaka and Kumarajiva (344-413). In particular, Huen Tsang studied the treatises of *Abhidharma* with the monks at Dhanyakataka, the present Amaravati-Dharamikota in Dt. Guntur not far from Sripurva Vijayapuri of Nagarjunakonda. Among the 657-Sanskrit works caused by him from India for translation, 15 were *Mahasanghika* works. In particular, this famous Chinese traveller makes mention of a *Supa*, hundred feet high, built by Mauryan emperors at Kanchi and tradition assigns another *Dharma stupa Mahanidhi* at Kaverippattinam (Dt. Thanjavur). A Buddhist temple specially meant for visiting Chinese monks existed during the time of Pallava King-Narasimhavarman-II (695-722) at Nagapattinam. These were witness of a seaborne cultural exchange between Buddhist China-India and Ceylon. It might be noted that

Bodhidharma, (the well-known founder of Chan sect who lived at the Shaolin temple (Miaotai-Songshan, Province Henan) hailed from this part of India. So also, Dinnaga (5th century), the founder of medieval Njeyar school, hailed from Kanchi, a centre for Pali-Buddhism. It appears then that South East India with its long coastal line and convenient anchorages has been in contact with China and South East Asian centres during the early centuries of the Christian era.

The consolidation of Buddhism led to the practice of making cliff grottoes and decorating them with wall paintings of Buddhist deities and legends. The most famous among these exist in North and West China. They are Kizil grottoes in Xin Jiang, the Mogao grottoes at Dunhuang (Gansu), Yunkang grottoes at Datong (Shanxi), Longmen caves at Louyang (Henan). In all these, as in Ajanta-Aurangabad, not only carved out figures, but sculptures in relief, extensively painted murals on the walls characterise the Indian impact and influences of Buddhist art. A variety of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas reflect great physical charm with all the *Mahaparinirvana Lokeshanas* in a truly Indian style. The ten-thousand Buddha cave at Long men (pl-11), is worthy of note. The seated Vairochana Buddha, 17.14 metres high, (pl-1), among other massive sculptures is a superb example of Chinese carving dated to the beginning of 7th century A.D. Besides the rock cut caves, the fossilized sand caves of Thousand Buddhas, Dunhuang (Gansu) contain unimaginably big straw built clay sculptures installed in their shrines in there. The over-size image of seated Buddha in wood, in the main cave (No. 096) measures 33 metres high and is within a seven storeyed pavilion with peat roofs, marking each storey and dated to 9th century A.D. The wooden images are so well finished and painted in pleasing colours. The five arched arches with flying apurvas and Gandharvas carrying garlands the maidens with floating garlands around fully-blossomed lotus ceilings datable to early 5th-6th century A.D., are some of the very attractive Indian style carvings at Longmen caves as well as painted ceilings of Dunhuang.

The rock art of China is a true expansion of Indian art under the impact of Mahayana Buddhist spread, starting from first century A.D. Later on with the unification of China under the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618-907), the increasing interest in Indian Buddhist philosophy and works made China virtually a forte of later Buddhism, whereas in its land of origin, this religion suffered a setback.

Even in later periods like Ming times (1366-1844) between Indian and Chinese art and architecture are traceable in the depictions such as vase and lotus scroll (*parma-kumbha*), among the white marble stone balustrades; the sturdy lions at the thresholds of the temple gateways (like the Pallava-Chola ones); the various memorial pagodas of brick-and stone built after the Bodhi-gaya-

Sarnath examples as seen at Beijing (White Pagoda), the numerous ones at Dunhuang and Shaolin temple (pl. III) premises; the small seated bronze figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas at the Fayuan Temple (Beijing) are examples displaying close links between the mainland China and the Deccan Caves (Ajanta-Karle-Kanheri) on the one hand and the Gupta examples of Sanchi-Sarnath-Nalanda and Bodhgaya on the other. Strikingly enough, even during much later times also their impact continued. To cite an example the gold crown by the Ming Emperor Zu Yi Jun Wanli (1573-1620) reveals a Vishnuchakra (crown), at its crest, a symbol of royalty and it is quite fitting that Ming rulers who upheld Buddhism and Taoism alike, held this crown in great esteem. A close semblance in architectural style can be found among the massive wooden pavilions and long halls on pillars with glazed tiled roofs in China and the medieval temples of wood in Kerala. The spacious high compounds, the well-planned gardens inside within the Forbidden City, Beijing impart a grandiose look to these architectural marvels whose colour, however, dominated the town.

An interesting anecdote which nicely summarises the behavioural pattern of the Peoples of the World, both East and West was narrated to me. It appears God Almighty sleeping in His heavenly abode, sported an idea that peoples of various countries and nationalities can approach him with their choicest desire only one and that too before the dawn. It is said that the first and earliest to reach were the Arabs who sought oil wealth. The next were Westerners (British and Europeans) who wanted intellect and pact. The third to reach at the exact time (just before dawn) were the Chinese and Japanese. Hearing that God had already given the wealth and intellect to others, they prayed for good muscles and determination to work. God gladly okayed. The last to reach were the Indians in heterogeneous groups unprepared even at the approach of sun rise, some still bathing, applying *shik* singing or reciting on God and dressing up, etc., but none were ready with any united demand. The God just got up to leave His abode and hearing as the disputing and debating noisy Indians chided them to leave the place as He had nothing left to confer. Helpless and hemoaning they fell on the feet of the God praying Him to remain with them. So the Almighty in India—every village, every town, street and house and in growing numbers historically. While the Chinese—a dutiful, determined and disciplined people—perceive and worship God through their hard work, love their country so much that one is amazed at the systematic development taking place in every sphere of life. Their pride in things ancient and regard for the antiquity and heritage is unparalleled.

Gaayama Buddha resting on the neighbouring hills, looking

at the picturesque landscape around the beautiful city of Rajagriha, in many stanzas and samskrtas utters to Ananda.

"Chiram jambudvipam anuvaram jivam manushjanam"  
and bade a final farewell.

After seeing the most unkiurful Buddhist art treasures of China, I took leave with pleasaure admiration saying to myself  
"Chiram - Chinadram."

## TRESPASSER

S. SAMAL

The streets were calm and lonely  
the leaves languid and lonely  
I paced like a  
happy prince  
under the cool  
starry night.

Thoughts blazed  
like the flash of a lightning  
and were instantly crystallized.

But now the streets  
are crowded and noisy,  
peppered with tension and worries  
lanes haunted by police  
and parish-dogs  
thoughts totally exchanged  
from this busy  
and bustling land  
if at all it happens  
to stall and progress  
once in a blue moon  
it is caught and  
throttled in no time.



## THE INDIAN POLITY - THE FOURTH PHASE

DR. A. PRASANNA KUMAR

Are we in the fourth phase of Indian polity? Is India passing through the crucial phase when people have to make up their minds about the priorities that should govern the system? Can India get back to the Gandhi-Nehru framework or should we allow the drift to continue? Primarily the issue centres around the values that India under Mahatma Gandhi and later under Pandit Nehru generated. Non-violence, democracy, secularism and unity and integrity of India were the widely accepted ideals which stood the test of time, nay the test of fire during those fateful days of partition of India. Under Gandhi's leadership which can be called the first phase of modern Indian polity, the greatest mass movement, as a historian put it, of modern times was launched. If Karl Marx, as Laski observed, found communism a chaos and left it a movement, Gandhi wrought order out of a diffuse struggle. The uniqueness of the Gandhian movement was aptly summed up by Andre Malraux who said that usually we come across revolutions without ethics or ethics without revolution but Gandhiji launched a great revolution which was ethical too. The manner in which Gandhiji resolved the tradition-modernity dichotomy also came in for special mention by Morris-Jones. Gandhiji, wrote Morris-Jones, used Hindu concepts for modern political purposes and modern concepts for the reinvigoration of traditional life. That was how 'the shock of two cultures' was overcome. The relevance of the idiom and the ethic was fully grasped by the people. More significantly Gandhiji gave shape and substance to the awakened spirit by providing an institutional framework. The launching of all India institutions like the All India Spinners Association, All India Basic Education Society was of enormous significance. First of all Gandhi sought to inject into a hitherto fragmented society a sense of oneness. Language, region and religion should not come in the way of promoting Indian unity. Secondly, social and economic emancipation came to be regarded as important as political emanci-



period under Gandhiji's leadership. "I am not" declared the Mahatma "interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatever." Sarvedaya, as everyone later understood, meant the good of all as against the good of the greater number. Thirdly, the message was clear and unequivocal that for the upliftment of the people effective mobilization of popular support and involvement of all sections of the society were vital. Government alone should not be entrusted with the task of liberating the people from bondage, not be entrusted with the task of liberating the people from bondage, political, social or economic. There were and there should be limits to state power. Voluntary effort and social action should be institutionalised. Fourthly, there was no ideological or doctrinaire rigidity in the approach of the Mahatma whether it was public life or private issues or whether it was politics or social life. He crusaded for a social order in which faith and science would be brought to the service of mankind "avoiding the risks inherent in a materialistic approach." There can be no politics without morality according to the Mahatma who evolved a synthesis of cultures and a blend of intellectuality and pragmatism. Gandhiji may have been against "a mechanical copying of revolutions in the West in all their varying phases" but he was not opposed to the basic tenets of socialism. In fact some writers interpreted it as 'Gandhian socialism' which was indigenous. His opposition was to mechanisation that would enslave man but not to the concept of economic equality. All action should be governed by selflessness, non-attachment and non-violence and spiritualisation of politics was possible through the integration of mind and body. Hiren Mukherjee felt that Gandhiji's Abhaya was greater than his Ahimsa. Gandhiji, as a writer aptly remarked, lived for as well as in mankind. Under his leadership the Indian spirit was liberated even before Independence in the political sense was attained. It was that spiritual strength, the capacity to sacrifice, suffer and endure that enabled India to overcome a series of shocks, like the partition, holocaust, appears from across the border and the assassination of the Mahatma himself.

It was this legacy that Nehru not only inherited but served manfully to uphold and strengthen. The process begun by Gandhiji continued with a new vigour under Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership. The Nehru era lasted for nearly twenty years from 1946 to 1966 just as the years from 1920 to 1947 are generally described as the Gandhian era of modern India. What is important is how Nehru carried on the work of the Mahatma though there could be some

areas in which Nehru adopted a new approach to suit the requirements of a growing nation. Broadly speaking non-violence, communal harmony and emancipation of the Harijans and the weaker sections continued to be the main goals of the polity. In fact they are as much relevant today as they were sixty years ago when the Mahatma introduced them. We may today give them new and modern names like social justice and national integration but the content is almost the same. Non-violence found a new expression in Nehru's approach when he gave to the strife-ridden world non-alignment. The immediate inspiration for Nehru was the Mahatma though for both Gandhi and Nehru the inspiration had its origins in the Indian tradition as moulded by the Buddha and Ashoka. The adoption of the Westminster type and the operation of a democratic government required mature political and administrative leadership which fortunately for India was available at both the national and State levels. To leaders like Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad and Rajaji, India had men of rare wisdom who could visualize the future needs of a newly liberated country and a heterogeneous society. The administrative system inherited from the British was highly professional in its approach and the Indian leaders moulded it to play a more positive and dynamic role in conformity with the goals of the system. If Patel was the great architect of Indian unity Nehru emerged as the maker of modern India committed to the path of democracy, socialism and secularism. The launching of several revolutions simultaneously which Rajaji Kothari described as the challenge of simultaneous change was a unique feature of the new system. Political emancipation was to be supplemented by economic and social change. Rapid changes in the form of industrialisation and expansion of educational facilities were to accelerate the pace of development. Nehru created an inspirational frame-work for such a progress and the Planning Commission, Community Development Programmes followed by the Panchayati Raj institutions were among the many such infrastructural facilities created to bring in social and economic change through democratic methods. Parliamentary system of government struck roots and its working drew the admiration of the usually cynical Western press. Delhi, wrote a British newspaper, was the School of Asia and Nehru's democracy was likened to Athens of Pericles. Nehru's foreign policy earned for India high respect in the comity of nations and Delhi became a diplomatic stopover for world statesmen. Despite his undisputed sway over the masses Nehru never allowed politics to become personalized. Among his most notable contributions was the manner in which State institutions acquired a high degree of professionalism. Equally significant was the fact that Nehru seldom presumed the erosion of the Gandhian ethic which

constituted the moral backbone of the Indian system. Not that there were no threats; not for that matter is it suggested that Nehru was thoroughly Gandhian in his style of functioning. But the point is that by and large the framework of action rested on the value system shaped by Gandhiji during a crucial phase of modern Indian history. That was why despite the 1948 war with Pakistan and the 1962 conflict with China or even the 1965 Indo-Pak war and persisting economic problems the system retained its capacity to fight and overcome a crisis without breaking up. There was no doubt that India took upon herself responsibility possibly beyond her capacity. Nehru was himself disappointed in his last years with certain trends that were surfacing in the Indian system and his inability to check them. The Chinese aggression was a shattering blow to Jawaharlal Nehru and as Hiren Mukherji observed Nehru did not seem to recover from it. The Nehru legacy, however, lasted for a few more years after his death.

The third phase began roughly around 1967 when Indira Gandhi assumed power in the real sense of the term after completing a year of 'probation' under Kamaraj's guidance. "I am," she declared "a child of politics whereas my father was a saint who strayed into politics." She was not only a child of politics but almost became its victim during those turbulent early years of her Prime Ministership. It was a different Indira Gandhi who emerged after the two critical periods—one caused by intra-party feuds and struggle for supremacy and the other caused by the threat that emanated from outside in the form of exodus of thousands of refugees from East Pakistan. She displayed a firmness that bordered, not unfixed, on ruthlessness. Like her father she aimed at rapid economic and social change but unlike him she was prepared to place ends on a higher pedestal than means. In the process she contributed to the process of deinstitutionalization which damaged the system as a whole. But to put the entire blame on her for "the criminalisation of politics" would be an exaggeration. Mrs. Gandhi had two alternatives as she understood the situation. Either she should become a victim of politics or the game. She did not hesitate to play the latter role. In the process of strengthening her own position she contributed to an enormous increase of State power. There is no denying the fact under her dynamic leadership India made rapid strides on many fronts and both in national and international politics. But some of the forces she let loose in the task of achieving the goals and targets became unmanageable like the notorious Frankenstein monster. The politician-bureaucrat combine became "a double headed monster" like what the Europeans had groomed under in the medieval times. Hand in glove the politician and the bureaucrat began to exploit the

system for their own benefit. When thrown apart, due to personal differences, the situation became even worse. Corruption assumed gigantic proportions. T.A. Pai who was a minister in Indira Gandhi's Cabinet aptly put it thus: "If a peon accepted money it was called *bakshis*; if a clerk took it, it was called *masool*; if an officer took it became bribe; if a minister took it, it was called party funds." Combined with these dangerous elements largely have been money and muscle power. The rise of a dangerous breed of people supported by black money and muscle dragged politics into the streets. The result is the rise of the politics of populism. Political leadership has in some areas passed into the hands of persons of dubious credentials who masquerade as the champions of the poor and the downtrodden. The vast majority of the illiterate and semi-literate people who find the established institutions beyond their reach have been lulled into thinking that there can be instant solutions to their chronic problems. Violence and mass protest enable them to receive attention which they would never be able to get otherwise. Morris-Jones cautioned: "India may have to live with problems she cannot solve." The 'Seventies and the Eighties have become the most dangerous decades (Selig S. Harrison's prophecy almost came true though not the way he had predicted). The Gandhian ethic has been reversed. The Gandhi-Nehru framework seems to have disappeared. The causes could be many. Those responsible for that too are numerous—politicians, bureaucrats, elite groups, intellectuals, industrialists and many others.

It is against that background that we should view the fourth phase of the Indian polity. This is the phase that immediately concerns us and eventually the future generation. The responsibility for reviving the values of the first two phases rests not only on the ruling Congress Party and the persons at the helm of affairs but on every person at all levels. It is not easy to put the decalogue institutions back on the rails. Institutions can be revived only when the values of the past are placed back on the high pedestal. It is not necessary for us to wear *khadi* and make heavy personal sacrifices as was done in the Gandhian era. Gandhiji was highly modern in outlook though he appeared traditional in his dress and style of living. We can be traditional and simple in our dress and mode of living and still be modern in outlook. Unless we revive spirit of those times and accept tolerance, non-violence and mutual respect we cannot hope to put an end to the politics of greed and hatred. That is not an impossible task because most of the people of India, literate or illiterate, subscribe to the view that there is no alternative to the Gandhi-Nehru framework and all of us are proud of that legacy. The fourth phase is a crucial one. It can be a turning point in our history. It can regain for India

peace and prestige, even if India cannot overnight become affluent. If millions of poor and illiterate people could march hand in hand behind the Mahatma for political freedom, cannot millions of people unquestionably better off than their forebears, now how to walk in the footsteps of Gandhi and Nehru in quest of the sacred goal?

## NO MORE I PRAY

JATINDRA MOHAN GANGULI

When I had prayed,  
My want, worry, fear stayed;  
I asked, He granted,  
More I asked —  
More fear came  
And unrest, discontent the same.

When I prayed not, asked not,  
To Him me and mine all left,  
Happy I felt;  
My good, my death, He, not I knew —  
I had asked for things, not good, untrue,  
What this I understood,  
All was sure and good,  
Peace came, happiness stayed,  
Fear, worry, no more my mind stayed



# J. KRISHNAMURTI'S "COMMENTARIES ON LIVING" AN APPROACH

DR. MAKARAND PARANJPE

## *Introduction*

My purpose in this paper is to offer an insight into the method and meaning of Krishnamurti's *Commentaries on Living*. In doing so I shall first describe, in a factual manner, what the *Commentaries* are. Then I shall narrate an account of my own responses to the text, which will constitute the middle section of the paper. And in the final section, I shall discuss some of the essential features of the *Commentaries* abstracted from the report of my responses to the text.

## I

### *What are Commentaries on Living?*

*Commentaries on Living*, in three series, are a record of the conversations that Krishnamurti had with various people concerning their problems. The First Series was published in 1956, the second in 1958, and the third in 1960.<sup>1</sup> All three volumes are edited from Krishnamurti's notebooks by D. Rajagopal. The First Series has eighty-eight commentaries; and the second and the third both contain fifty-seven. Each commentary has basically two parts: the first is the description of a particular, usually natural scene, and the second is the transcript of the conversation between Krishnamurti and one or more visitors.<sup>2</sup> The first part is a detailed observation that leads to a state of mind which is best characterized as meditative. This part shows Krishnamurti's minute and precise observation of both natural and human phenomena. It helps set the tone for the discussion that follows. Here the release that is affected through choiceless awareness or pure observation without an observer is demonstrated — this is the state that Krishnamurti leads his correspondant to in the next section. Thus, the first part which the reader is alone with the writer serves as a tranquil preparation for the rigors of the discussion that will follow.

The second part of the commentary is the exchange between the visitor and Krishnamurti. Here the basic emphasis is psychological.

Each visitor has a specific problem to discuss. This problem is then probed to its root. Krishnamurti usually offers no solution or practical advice, however, the thorough examination of the problem produces a certain type of release. The problem, thus, becomes the instrument of rigorous self-examination out of which is born self-knowledge and wisdom.

Each commentary is self-contained; there is no visible development of ideas as we proceed from one to the other. Thus, there is no plot or order to the *Commentaries*. One may begin anywhere and end anywhere. The effect is hardly cumulative. There is little difference from one volume to the next; the only change is the increase in length from the first series to the second and the third. Obviously the *Commentaries* are not like usual books. Their purpose is not to entertain or edify in the conventional way; their only purpose is to help one to understand oneself.<sup>1</sup>

## II

### An Account of a Reading of the *Commentaries*

I first read the *Commentaries* in the winter of 1978 when I was a second year student in the B.A. English program at the University of Delhi. I was then eighteen years old. I had only the briefest acquaintance with Krishnamurti's works prior to this, so I was approaching these books afresh. I read not from beginning to end, but randomly and haphazardly. Yet, I eventually read most of the three volumes in the space of about two or three months. After that intense first reading, I have gone back to them now and then, skimming here and there. My next serious reading was in 1985 when I used to go through the texts from cover to cover in preparation for this paper. However, I would like to focus on that first reading not only because I find that my understanding of the *Commentaries* has not progressed significantly since that first reading, but also because the impact of that first reading was tremendous, far greater than the gains made thence through physical and intellectual maturity.

The first reading of *Commentaries on Living* was certainly one of the biggest challenges I had ever faced. What I read seemed to shake me to the roots of my self. As I blundered through commentary after commentary, I found myself examining the whole complex mechanism that was my mind; I began to seriously observe myself for the first time. And it has been impossible to escape from that rigorous self-scrutiny since. The following were some of my reactions to the *Commentaries* as I now recollect them.

1. Each Commentary Deals with Essentially the "Same" Thing.

Though I knew that a great many subjects such as anger, jealousy, love, ambition, death, meditation, awareness, intelligence,

sex, desire, greed, etc., were being discussed, all the commentaries I realized, were somehow concerned with the same basic issue. This shocked me because I wanted to read on, to know more, to accumulate more information, in short, to escape from myself. Though I read more and more, though I brought more and more of Krishnamurti's books, I found that I could not increase my insight in proportion to the quantity of reading. More wasn't more. The acquisitive mind, which was seeking to improve itself, was disappointed. I reluctantly came to the conclusion that to understand even one commentary completely was to understand them all.

2. *No Solution Was Being Offered.*

Secondly, I realized that throughout the *Commentaries* though innumerable deceptions of the mind were exposed, no alternate path was suggested. The limitations and drawbacks of every type of action — religious, social, political, cultural, personal — were pointed out, but without any substitutes. This I found bewildering. The mind kept groping for some security, surety, formula in place of all the supports that were supplanted, but none was to be found. Every ideology that promised enlightenment, such as belief in God, in the Masters, in non-violence, in work, in creativity, etc., was relentlessly questioned and its hollowness exposed, but none seemed to be offered in its place. Luckily, at that point in my life, I was not clever enough to see a technique in this negation of technique. The result was a state of acute psychological uncertainty and anxiety — the basis of my self or ego was threatened.

3. *I Was Incapable of Removing My Own Confusion*

The third realization was that nothing that I did or was capable of doing could free me from the confusion that I was experiencing. My reading of the *Commentaries* showed me clearly that all my attempts to escape, deny, or hide this confusion were themselves a part of this confusion. This was seen the hard way, after the exhaustion and failure of several attempts to clarify the confusion. I began to see that these attempts were themselves within the confines of the confused self and were only adding to the confusion. The self was appropriating every attempt to reach something beyond itself; the desire for clarity or freedom itself was a hindering, a pretext for the further perpetuation of the confused self. I was left at an insoluble impasse.

Of course, these realizations were, by no means, as clear and tidy as I am presenting them here. These are merely convenient abstractions that I have drawn from my experience for the purposes of illustration. Then, I was the confusion myself; my muddled mind had seen its own reflection, as one sees one's face in a muddy puddle.



Now several years later, with much hindsight, some intellectual equipment, and after a far wider exposure to Krishnamurti, I still think that these insights gleaned from my personal crisis do suggest noteworthy pointers to Krishnamurti's majesty and meaning in the *Commentaries*.

# (E)

## *Discussion of the Above Points*

To consider the first point, it can be seen that though the *Commentaries* discuss various and seemingly different issues, there is an underlying similarity in both technique and message. As Krishnamurti observes in the First Series, "All problems arise from one source, and without understanding the source, any attempt to solve the problems will only lead to further confusion and misery" (122). Similarly, in the Third Series, he says, "There's no isolated problem and no problem can be resolved in itself; isn't that so?" (119). Thus, throughout, the movement is from the superficial to the essential: all problems are reduced, so to speak, to their common denominator, the self.

Krishnamurti resists fragmentation of any kind. He says in the Second Series

The problem of individual is also the world's problem, they are not two separate and distinct processes. We are concerned, surely, with the human problem, whether the human being is in the Orient or in the Occident, which is an arbitrary geographical division. The whole consciousness of man is concerned with God, with death, with right and happy livelihood, with children and their education, with war and peace. Without understanding all this, there can be no healing of man. (170)

Thus, Krishnamurti's approach is holistic and complete. Each problem is dealt with not in isolation, but in relation to the whole.

In this respect, Krishnamurti is in accord with the tradition of the mystics who stressed a direct, inquisitive, transcendental contact with Reality as the panacea to all the problems of the world. Just as the medieval mystics of India recommended the repetition of God's name as the primary means to this end, Krishnamurti appears to propose the one dominant technique of the choiceless awareness of Reality from moment to moment. No matter what the problem, this awareness is seen as the means to both understand and dissolve it. It is important to note how logical and precise he is in this insistence: to him awareness is always without the observer. The existence of an observer implies duality and fragmentation. But to Krishnamurti awareness is a state in which the observer himself is not. Awareness is always whole and undivided; it is not personal or divided. Hence, it is not my awareness or your awareness, but

simply awareness. The word itself is unique because it signifies the sense of being aware, without reference to subject.

Krishnamurti explains this approach in the second series: 'Without escaping to monasteries and so on, is it not possible to be passively alert to the activities of the self? This awareness may bring about a totally different activity which does not breed sorrow and misery.' (204)

Similar in the Third Series:

'There may be no need to take any particular action. In the very process of understanding the whole issue, there may be a different kind of action altogether.' (105)

Hence, though the *Commentaries* differ in subject, their underlying emphasis is similar: through dialogue, questioning, and listening, the respondent, and thereby the reader, is made aware of his or her state of mind. The same message, it would seem, is repeated again and in various garbs: as Krishnamurti tells one visitor, "Look and be simple" (Third Series 82). The clarity that arises from this method is not merely intellectual, but total.

The second point, regarding the absence of positive advice or direction is also inherent to the purpose of the *Commentaries*. The technique of offering no substitute in place of the old ways of illusion is also based on very clear reasoning. Krishnamurti repeatedly observes how Truth is ossified and perverted into dogma and propaganda in organized religions and traditions. As he says in the First Series, "We are worshippers of words and labels; we never seem to go beyond the symbol, to comprehend the worth of the symbol" (175). "rituals are vain repetition which offer a marvellous and respectable escape from self-knowledge" (25). Similarly, in the Third Series he admonishes, "Put away the book, the descriptions, the tradition, the authority, and take the journey of self-discovery" (234). In so saying, Krishnamurti is not alone: almost every mystic has condemned the hypocrisy and self-deception of empty traditionalism.

Krishnamurti's rejection of tradition is born out of the conviction that Truth cannot be repeated or duplicated.

Repetition of Truth is a lie. Truth cannot be repeated, it cannot be propagated or used.... The propagandist, religious or secular, cannot be a speaker of truth.

(First Series 63)

Instead, he claims:

Truth must be discovered anew from moment to moment, it is not an experience that can be repeated; it has no continuity, it is a timeless state. (Third Series 4)

If these premises are understood, it is clear why Krishnamurti debunks all methods or paths to Truth, but does not offer any

substitutes. He does not want to establish a new dogma, a new creed in place of the old. He does not want to offer a new description of Truth in place of the old. If Truth is to be experienced first hand, surely Krishnamurti's description of it is as detrimental as that of any other authority. As he himself tells a discussant in the Second Series :

You pay attention when I say something, do you not? But when someone else says the same thing, perhaps in different words, you become deaf. (191)

Therefore, the whole approach in the *Conversations* is negative. What is Truth is never described; instead, the theory is that "Awareness of the false as false is the freedom of truth" (First Series 180). Similarly, he says in the same volume :

The problem is the important thing, and not the answer. If we look for an answer, we will find it; but the problem will persist, for the answer is irrelevant to the problem. (122)

Hence, throughout, problems are discussed, but no clear solutions are offered. It may be pointed out that this method is as old as the Vedas with their negative definition of truth as : *nehi, kenā, vā*, or "not this," "not this." But, to my knowledge, Krishnamurti is the only teacher who has developed it into the corner-stone of his whole approach to life.

Finally, the third point regarding the futility of will or effort in resolving one's confusion needs to be addressed. This realization has its basis in what one critic called Krishnamurti's great psychological discovery—that the thinker is not separate from the thought.<sup>1</sup> This implies that the thinker cannot act upon or modify himself through thought. Or to put it differently, any such modification of the self, wrought by the self itself, is bound to be superficial and useless. Thus Krishnamurti says in the First Series, "The thinker is the thought and he cannot operate upon himself; when he does it is only self-deception" (225). Similarly, in the Second Series :

Whatever its activity, however noble its aim, any effort on the part of the "I" is still within the field of its own memories, idiosyncrasies and projections, whether conscious or not. (115)

The implications of this are obviously far reaching : we may realize our own confusion or imperfection, but we can do nothing to change it. As one discussant in the second series puts it :

"How can the mind free itself from its own bondage? It seems to me that either an outside agency is necessary, or else a higher and nobler part of the mind must intervene to purify the mind of the past" (217). :

In such a question all the major pre-occupations in Krishnamurti converge. It is clear that the mind is conflict-ridden. It is

also clear that it cannot rid itself of its conflicts by any effort of its own. Then what is the option? The process whereby the mind is transformed is a perpetual mystery, as Krishnamurti says, "If the outside agency is something beyond the mind, then thought in any form cannot touch it" (Second Series 217). In fact, for it to operate, thought itself, and its brain child, the thinker, must cease. This, Krishnamurti calls death. Death is the end, the break with one's conditioning. It is not self-generated or self-centered, nor is it a product of time. As Krishnamurti asks:

Is it possible—without resistance, without morbidity, without a suicidal or suicidal urge, and while fully alive, mentally vigorous—to enter the house of death? This is possible only when the mind dies to the known, to the self.

(Second Series 47)

Through dying to the past moment, through meditation without the meditator, through an awareness that is not conditioned by the mind, Krishnamurti tells us in his *Commentaries*, we enter a totally different order or mode of being. The beauty, perfection, effortlessness, simplicity, silence, and freedom of this state are immeasurable, truly beyond the mind and its reach.

#### NOTES

1. J. Krishnamurti, *Commentaries on Living*, ed. D. Rajagopal (London: Victor Gollancz, 1956); *Second Series* (1958, rev. Wheaton, Illinois: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1967); *Third Series* (1960, rev. Wheaton, Illinois: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1967).

An earlier version of this paper was presented at 14th Annual Conference on South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1-3 November, 1985.

2. There are a few exceptions to this pattern. Some commentaries such as "Creative Happiness" (Second Series 1-2), "Is There Profound Thinking?" and "Immensity" (Second Series 229-242) are in the form of reflections without any conversation. Conversely, others like No. 18, "Work" in First Series (250-264) does not contain the descriptive reflections of the first part but begins right away with the discussion.
3. Ferenc Orosz compares this to Einstein's discovery of relativity. See "The Psychological Philosophy of J. Krishnamurti," M.A. thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1970, p. 21.



Dr. A. K. COOMARASWAMY  
His Understanding of the Folklore

N.S. KRISHNA MURTI

Folklore of all countries and lands, contains expositions of the psyche of those communities. Racial memories in those euphonic literary patterns, are always loaded with primeval metaphysical concepts. They always have spiritual significance. In their descent by mouth to the ear, some verbal variations occur, but the basis always remains intact. Successive progenies preserved them as a rich heritage. Their survival is due to their (innate and dormant) conceptual profundity of a lasting nature.

From out of this mass of ubiquitous literature, classic and romantic writings emanated. These have developed with a surfeit of ornamentations and figures of speech. Here one is reminded of a Japanese Haiku :

The seed of all song  
is the farmer's busy hum  
As he plants his rice (paddy seed)  
— RASHO

It is given to the modern readers to discover the husk of the verbal products and rescue the kernel and make an understanding of the lofty, sublime, metaphysical and spiritual concepts. We are sure to conclude that they were not of human origin or creation, but only descents of divine intuitive perceptions of man.

Dr. A.K.C.'s understanding of the folklore is truthful and sublime though bewilderingly recondite. He always reads perennial verities in folklore and never reads anything *into* them. Folklore texts embody stories of heroic deities. But they are not mere thematic literary narrations, but they are only extra-dimensional symbolic and metaphysical revelations.

The understanding and observations of Dr. A.K.C. about folklore have an axiomatic force. He interprets the findings of several anthropologists and folklorists. To protect his own theses, he cites from Indian scriptures and other ancient writings of several countries, all over the world.

According to F.J. Child the folklore author is always in the oblivion of inglorious obscurity, but his fitting and deserving place is always enshrined in the hearts and memories of the people. The folklore remains the wealth and treasures of the community. It is their rightful possession like the Nature's gifts of water and air. This folk literature is nourished in several cradles and fostered by a multiplicity of mothers like Sivanmukha, the six-faced Lord Kumara. No doubt one discerns a structural fixity, though its descent and transmission is always oral. (English and Scotch Ballads)

Another feature of the folklore is our inability to fix the time of the original composition. The names of the roles and places referred to also remain in oblivion. The folk literatures took their root in the fertile antiquity. But they maintained a continuous growth, shot out branches in turn removed to other lands where they got grafted to other plants, where they began new lives based on the mother-stems. There they brought forth flowers and fruit. The main stem and the trunk are the same. Their essence is digested and the story or the song gets reincarnated, thus giving perpetuity of existence to the core of the spiritual or metaphysical concepts.

The transmission of the story or song is mostly oral words by the illiterates (in the modern sense) by a process of repetition through their own community media. Their levels of culture were high and praiseworthy. They safeguarded these literary treasures as sacred relics of a continuing heritage of the ethnic group. They led simple lives and, preserved these literatures with high sense of duty and devotion. The Greek dramatist of the third century B.C. Euripides said, "the myth is not my own. I had it from my mother". Such myths in India were the proper language of metaphysics. This myth has an unbroken tradition. In India from the days of yore, mythology and Vedic lore, we see in an endless variety *motifs*, which gradually and slowly spread into other Western countries. Here one instance is cited and that is the tale of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight". This tale takes the reader to the times of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. This is of Celtic origin and later on transmitted into English. The tale is the following.

One day when King Arthur and his Knights were sitting at the Round Table, a Green Knight marched into that hall and threw out a challenge. He challenged any knight there to venture to cut off his head agreeing to a condition that this slayer should offer his head in return after a year and a day. This happened during Christmas. This challenge at first was met with silence. When King Arthur himself was about to meet the challenge of the

stranger including Green Knight. Sir Gawain stood up, approached the Green Knight with a drawn sword and cut his head off. This meant that Sir Gawain would, after a year and a day, offer his head in return. Then the Green Knight took his head from the ground and placing it over his neck went away. After the due period Sir Gawain went in search of the Green Knight. He reached his abode. His desire was to keep up his word of honour. There at that place he found a beautiful damsel who showered her amours over him. He resisted. But as the last day drew near, he succumbed to the temptation and kissed her. Next day the Green Knight came and struck Sir Gawain. The head of Sir Gawain remained intact. It stayed. But the skin on the neck was slightly cut. This injury Sir Gawain had to suffer as expiation for yielding to the temptress. This tale is one of the series of the Arthurian cycle of legends.

The symbolism here sought to be explained is *self-annihilation* i.e., effacing out the Ego-'I-ness' and 'my-ness' or 'mine-ness'. These have to be completely eliminated. It is this petty feeling of 'I' that misdirects one's life by thinking that the body is the 'I'. This small 'I' is the perishable part of the personality. The imperishable 'I' has to be realised by severing the head from the body. The body is only a complex compound of the elements and other factors. But the indwelling spirit is the Ultimate 'I' or the universal Soul. This is the highest secret. Here head is the seat of the Ego, i.e., the small 'I'.

"The wisdom of the ancients (i.e., the inner contents of the *Folklore*) stems from a cultural level in which the needs of the soul and body were satisfied together. This is inherited by all humanity and without it, we should still be only reasoning animals". Thus saying Dr. A.K.C. agrees with J.L. Weston and further opines: "We hold with J.L. Weston that the Grail story is not the product of imagination, literary or popular, but at its root lies the relaxed, more or less distorted, of an ancient *rational* having for its ultimate object, the initiation into the secret of the sources of life—physical and spiritual".

## II

Two more illustrations from the Indian mythology are given for further elucidation and emphasis—*Striking off the head*. (a) *Ganesh*. Striking off the head, which is swelled up with haughtiness and egoism is that of the tale of *Ganesh*—the God with the elephant-head. In this story, *Párvati*, the divine consort of Lord *Siva*, created with saffron powder, a being and stationed him at the gate of *Tham* Abode, with instructions to prevent anyone from entering the habitation. Lord *Siva* was away then, returned home. He was denied admission. *Siva* could not tolerate the

unpertinence of this new being, who was filled with egoistic feeling. Siva decapitated this being. Parvati, who came there bemoaned at this end for her creation. Siva at once severed the head of a tiger and fixed it on the neck of the torso of the new being and rejuvenated that being to the utter joy of his divinely spouse. Genesvara Tapini Upanishad and Upanishad of the Atharva Veda explain this event and further offers an explanation of the word—Ganapati. It was formerly Gajapati. But originally at its creation it was Jagapati, Lord of the worlds. By a process of metathesis (according to Yaska) it is a Varita Viparyaya. His divine father, Siva, wanted this new being to be the Supreme God of the worlds.

(b) *Pravargya*. There is a Vedic Myth pertaining to a ritual, which can be cited appositely as a nucleus of the myths of decapitation.

*Pravargya* is a preliminary ritual, performed as a conditio precedent—as an introductory procedure. After this the principal sacrifice commences. This is gone through by re-fixing and re-habilitating the severed head of Vishnu—the President of the sacrifices, *yajña-puruṣa*. The myth that preceded this rite is our only interesting but also instructive. The operational function is to re-assemble the sacrificial God into his full divine personality.

Once the celestials, not being satisfied with the wealth they possessed, desired for yam—surpassing excellences and fame. They agreed to divide the fruit of the sacrifice. They performed the sacrifice. All the yam, they desired, was obtained by Vishnu,—one of the celestials. He walked away with the fruit, without distributing the same as agreed upon. All the celestials, hordes of thirty-three grades went after Vishnu and demanded their respective shares. Vishnu turned round and scared them away by stringing his bow in good tension. The hordes of celestials flew away and thought of a strategy. In the meantime Vishnu got inflated with pride and egoism. He lost all the benefits and excellences. In that state he rested his chin on the upper end of the bow, resting the other end on the ground. The waiting angels stealthily sent the female to snap the tensioned string of the bow. The top end of the bow that was under the chin of Vishnu got released and blew off the head of Vishnu emitting great and fierce sound—*Ghram*. The angels then to their dismay realised that their presiding arch-angel, Vishnu, is not there. *Yajña—Puruṣa*. But they needed one for the performance of sacrifices. Their need prompted them to think of the means to re-fit the severed head. This re-habilitation of the head required the cooking of a pudding to be used, as a joining paste for the head to stick on the neck of the torso. The pudding is made of melted butter at boiling point. Milk of cows and goats



are added. This mixture is used as the joining paste for re-fixing the head. Vishnu is returned and till today this ritual is performed.

One can note that the folk tale is never of popular origin, but is merely one form of the traditional narrative. Themes of the various incidents are the same all world over. They are not invented. Dr. A.K.C. condemns the pseudo-modern sophist and scholar, who revile at the folklore contents: "Our pride and faith in progress makes us look that wisdom is born with us and so find it difficult to credit the early people with great metaphysical doctrines".

Thus we can gather from the works of Dr. A.K. Coomaraswamy many illustrations for the themes propounded by him.

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*Speratus*, Jan 1902, *St. George and the Green Knight*



## NAME HIM, THE SONG IS SUNG

DR. I. PANDURANGA RAO

The universe that we have with us, in us and around us is a magnificent manifestation of the multiplicity of forms and names both apparent and real. The apparent ones present an amusing and amazing variety which keeps us away from and makes us blissfully ignorant of the absolute reality. Once we realise this, the multiplicity of forms and names reduces itself to a singular form which can take any form it chooses and any name we choose. Our choice is therefore restricted to name and cannot extend to the form which the formless assumes according to the phenomenal determinant governed by space, time and individual.

In absolute terms, the formless needs no form and hence no name. But the phenomenal world translates the absolute form into infinite variety of forms so as to make it intelligible and tangible to the physical triangle inscribed in the metaphysical circle. Thus we have a number of forms around us both within and without. We go on giving names to all these forms to identify them or (to be more accurate) distinguish each one of them from the *One Absolute* form which has no form of its own. This absolute form is so informal that it owns all forms but disowns none. Therefore any name that we choose can define it as it is basically one capable of multiplying itself into as many as the figurative world can conceive. In fact all forms belong to Him, the Absolute and therefore all names are equally appropriate to Him. *Sa Sarva Nama, Sa hi Sarva Roopa.*

But variety is in the very nature of the universe which combines in itself both divine and human characteristics. It is divine to think of reality while it is human to feel that we are many so that it becomes easy for the human mind to identify itself with one of them. But one in thousands tries to identify his or her individual existence with the universal and when he succeeds in it, he is face to face with the One which manifests itself in Many. If we are able to identify that One which has assumed so many forms, we will be in a position to find out a suitable name for

that Supreme Being responsible for the universal well-being and coordinated becoming. Once we are able to name Him, we have the melody, the musical sounds and the mellifluous flow of words and voices pouring into our ears and through them into the innermost corners of our heart where all forms converge into one vision and all names reduce into one sound. It is this moment — the most blissful moment in our life — which sings for us the song of life and makes us repeat the pronounced judgement of the Master — *Naamē Him, the Song is Sung*.

Adi Shankara refers to this absolute truth when he says "*Geyam Gita Naama Sahasram*". In the secular terminology, this sentence simply suggests recitation of *Gita* and the thousand names of the Lord. But the spiritual overtone of this celebrated saying hints at the intrinsic unity between the "Name" and the "song" of the universe that is God.

The universe, for some, is Dharmashejra while it is Kurukshetra for some others. For Kauravas who believe in the world of action and assertion (sometimes leading to aggression), it is Kurukshetra, whereas it becomes a land of Dharma for those who hank upon the balanced and just decrees of well-meaning deeds directed by Dharma. The conflict between assertion and accommodation gives rise to struggle which is eternal owing to the non-variant nature of the human mind. The only solution to this problem is to think of the Lord who is behind this game and try to utter His name with proper articulation so as to attract His attention. Viewed from this angle, the problems that arise in *Gita* "find a solution in Sahasranam". By *Gita*, we mean *Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita* and by *Sahasranam*, we refer to "*Sri Vishnu Sahasranam*". Both these texts form a part of the celebrated work "*Mahabharatam*." The former occurs in *Bhishma Parva* just before the great war between Kauravas and Pandavas, and the latter finds its place in *Anushasana Parva* — immediately after the war. Shankara rightly tries to establish an equation between the two when he says "*Geyam Gita Naama Sahasram*." In fact, the very placement of these two texts in appropriate contexts in the *Mahabharata*, a *Magna Carta* of human mind with all its limitations, elevations, excellences and exaggerations speaks volumes about the perfect correlation between the two. Shankara being an ardent admirer and a highly evolved seer of "*Advaita*" perhaps finds yet another instance of non-duality in these two texts. It is relevant to remember here that the Acharya adorned the two texts with his monumental commentary.

There is yet another significance in placement of the two texts. The first one *Gita* occurs in *Bhishma Parva*, the fifth book in *Mahabharata* while the other one "*Sahasranamam*" is covered in

the Anushāsana Parva, the thirteenth book (first among the last five). Thus there is a symmetry in the placement of the two texts. This symmetry is not only textual but also contextual in the sense that Gita was preached by Jagadguru Krishna right in the warfront at a time when there was political crisis, while Sahasranam was pronounced by the great preceptor Bhishmacharya to provide guide lines to the prospective ruler for establishing order in a state of chaos. Gita provides music to inspire the wavering warrior, while Sahasranam suggests a world of words to the bewildered ruler who finds solace in the enchanting voice of the Acharya. In Gita, the preceptor is the Lord Himself and the recipient is Partha, the spectator of the phenomenal world. In Sahasranam, the preceptor is an Acharya who condescends to help his own opponent for the sake of universal well-being and the disciple is the offspring of Dharma (Dharmarandana). In Gita, the younger brother gets the privilege of listening to the Lord direct and in isolation while his elder brother gets initiated into the sacred hymn "Sahasranam" which is much more than a mere compendium of names. The crux of Gita is the Viswarupa manifested to the dearest friend Arjuna, while the Sahasranam starts with the word "Vishvam" which summarises the entire message of all sages born and yet to be born. Thus Vishvam, the vision of Gita becomes the keynote of Sahasranam in which the name Vishvam precedes even the proper name Vishnu in whose name the entire hymn is promoted and publicised.

It is said that the essence of Vedas is contained in the Upanishads. The message of the Upanishads is supposed to have been covered in Gita. Which in turn finds its keynote address in the thousand names of the Lord enumerated in the sacred hymn "Sri Vishnu Sahasranam". Thus this short and sweet sermon presenting the quintessence of the universal existence of the Lord finds an appropriate treatment and proper glorification in the hands of Shankara, the exponent of Advaita philosophy.

Gita and Sahasranam are as relevant to the modern world facing crisis in almost all the fronts confronting cultural evolution of man as they were at the time of their advent and advocacy. Gita has become almost a book of the universe, its popularity growing with the passage of time. Apart from discussing the fundamental problems of life, it prescribes a clear-cut solution to each one of them whether we are able to practise them or not. Even a single guideline indicated in the seven hundred verses of this text can dispel clouds of darkness accumulated in the minds and hearts of individuals if only the suggestions are properly understood, assimilated and practised.

But the other text "Sahasranam" is not that easy to follow. For a superficial observer, it does not mean much except that it contains a description of the Lord glorifying the great qualities of the unqualified. But a close study of and a deep insight into each and every name that tries to depict the Lord of the universe in this sacred hymn will reveal how practical the precursor was and how eternal the message he tried to convey.

For example, the line "Suvraa, Samudāa, Sukshma, Sughoṣha, Sukhada, Subhṛī" not only reads melodious and marvellous to the human ear, but throws scintillating light on principles of public administration. The words occurring in this line describe the basic qualities of an administrator. The word "Suvraa" speaks of the strong determination which is of fundamental importance to a person involved in public service. The next quality of motivating the group of workers associated with the task is indicated in the "Samudāa". The third virtue of taking into account all the subtleties of an issue with deep insight and keen foresight finds expression in the word "Sukshma". The fourth word "Sughoṣha" suggests how careful a person should be in articulating his ideas which should be appealing not only to the intellect but even to the tender hearts of people whose cooperation is expected in the execution of a task. The fifth requisite of an administrator is to aim at the happiness and well-being of his colleagues. This is expressed in the word "Sukhada". Whatever we do should promote good to mankind in general. The last but not the least quality discussed in this line is cordiality — a good heart, kind and tender to its core. This is pronounced in the simple word "Subhṛī".

Such instances are abundant in the text. In another place, for example, the text gives us a clue as to how a person becomes really respectable. Only three words, spell out this secret. The words are "amani", "maandah" and "maanyaḥ". One who does not think high of himself but knows how to give due respect to others is always held in high esteem by all with whom he comes into contact.

Thus we find that names of the Lord enumerated in the celebrated hymn of "Sri Vishnu Sahasranam" provide not only theoretical knowledge but practical guidance to those who believe in achieving right things on the right lines at the right time. The hundred and eight verses in this text which cover thousand names of the Lord are equal in essence not only to the seven hundred verses of the great epic Mahabharata. Hence, it is said "Name Him, the Song is Sung" — "Geyam Gitaṁ Nama Sahasram".

# THE FLOWER OF GOD

(One - Act Play)

HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

*(Outside the gate of the temple in Bandarpur. The sun is setting flooding the sky behind the temple with red and gold light. Groups of pilgrims are seen pouring in and of the temple-door, carrying offerings of flowers and coconuts and plantains for the God on the altar. Alone, at a little distance near the gate, sits Chokha Mela, a Panchama, muttering prayers to himself. His eyes seem lost in devotion. The temple-bells are ringing and the lights are being lit at the altar. Three Brahmins appear near the gate who, noticing the Panchama, stand for a while, talking about him. Then, from a distance, they talk to him.)*

1ST BRAHMIN

Lo! yonder at the holy temple-gate  
Mutters a scavenger unholy prayers!

2ND BRAHMIN

The golden sunset-glimmer on his face  
Cries out for absolution!

3RD BRAHMIN

Like a shadow

He stains the path of worshippers who come  
To worship Him who sits on His high altar  
Beyond the cry of yonder loathsome thing!

1ST BRAHMIN

He is as lifeless as a tree or stone  
Upon the wayside standing in the mud  
Or lying speechless in a ditch of dirt

2ND BRAHMIN

For, nowhere in the Shastras do I find  
The stone or ~~tree~~ for such a piteous creature  
Endowed with that Immortal Mystery  
We Brahmins, in our knowledge, call the soul.

## 3RD BRAHMIN

His eyes are like the eyes of a dead man  
 When he is stretched to burn upon the pyre.  
 How it must hurt a prayer to find itself  
 Breathed through the lips of a foul Panchama !

## 1ST BRAHMIN

Who is the God he worships all alone  
 Outside the holy temple-gate?

## 2ND BRAHMIN

The God

Of filth who dwells in dingy bogs and marshes  
 And wallows in the mire like a grey pig  
 Lost in the worship of the scavengers.

## 3RD BRAHMIN

And He is seated on a lampless altar  
 Constructed by the goblin-artisans  
 Who lurk in lonely dung-hills.

## THE PANCHAMA

Silently

The broad white lotus of my worship spreads  
 Its thousand-petalled seat for Vihoba.

## 1ST BRAHMIN

What do you matter sitting there alone?

## 2ND BRAHMIN

Fool ! who has sanctioned you the sacred right  
 To paint your shadow on our temple-gate ?

## 3RD BRAHMIN

Away with you ! . . . . Between your birth and ours  
 Glimmers the sea of joy whose shining waters  
 Our hands alone may touch, of whose deep wave  
 Only our lips may drink being the lips  
 That utter incarnations and pronounce  
 Unfurling the hallowed name of God.

## THE PANCHAMA

Forgive me, noble Sures ! if I have marred  
 The glory of the Lord, if I have cast  
 My shadow on the sinless temple-gate.  
 I had not known before it was a crime  
 For a poor Panchama to sit outside .  
 The temple of the Lord, and worship Him  
 Within the inner temple of his soul.

## 1ST BRAHMIN

Who is your Lord ?

## THE PANCHAMA

He is the Lord you seek  
 Within your temple and the Lord we seek

Within our hearts since we have been denied  
Through some forgotten evils in the past  
Access unto the altar where His Image  
Burns like a dream of gold.

2ND BRAHMIN

How can a beggar  
Who sits and gapes in hunger at the gates  
Of a King's palace ever hope to gain  
Even a morsel of the royal meal?

THE PANCHAMA

Behold! the sun though burning miles apart  
Yet feeds the hunger of the loqus dower  
And the chaste moon across the spaces pours  
Her love into the moon-bird's thirsty heart.  
Even so, my Lord though severed from my touch  
And hidden in the temple from my eyes  
Still hears my voice and gives me cry for cry  
And loves me in the absence of my soul.

1ST BRAHMIN

Perched in his blind corner as in a cage  
He prattles like a parrot.

2ND BRAHMIN

Let us go  
Into the temple for the lights are lit.

3RD BRAHMIN

And let him lie like an empty gutter.

*(The Brahmins go in.)*

THE PANCHAMA

Yes! like an empty gutter to receive

The precious leavings from the plate of God

*(The crowd by this time has dwindled, most of it having already gone in for worship. Just as Chakha Meeta finishes his last sentence, a Messenger from the Lord Pithoba enters.)*

THE MESSENGER

I am the secret Messenger of God  
Who come to you, His lover, with a message

THE PANCHAMA

Sweet Messenger! you come before my eyes  
Like the fulfilment of long years of prayer.

THE MESSENGER

I bring you secret news about my God  
Your Lover, who has heard your lonely voice  
Echo like troubled fire across His dreams.  
Who seeing your restless soul Himself has grown  
Unquiet like the billow in the sea.



To despise His wandering comrade. Should you cease  
To love Him. He would crumble like the hut  
Of a poor peasant in the rainy season.

THE PANCHAMA

O does He love this scavenger so much?  
O does He dream of one who dare not dream  
Of gazing on His Image in the temple?

THE MESSENGER

The Image that is worshipped by the crowd  
My friend! is but a dead unholy thing  
Fashioned in gaudy gold for them who move  
Unvisioned in their hollow arrogance.  
God weeps in misery upon the altar  
To see His worshippers make offerings  
Of bodies decked in glittering vanity  
And hearts o'er burdened with vain gloriousness.

THE PANCHAMA

When shall I meet Him, Messenger?

THE MESSENGER

To-night

When the fat temple-priests have fallen asleep  
The Lord will come in person to invite  
His lover to the temple, and the dawn  
Will come with gifts of coloured mists and flames  
To find your heart brimming with holy quiet  
Even as the mountain-height drunk with white peace  
In mystic marriage with the midnight-heavens.

THE PANCHAMA

And will my Lord accept my loathsome body?

THE MESSENGER

Yea! for it is God's radiant House of prayer.

THE PANCHAMA

And will my King come down to meet this beggar?

THE MESSENGER

Yea! for His pride is hiding in your rags.

THE PANCHAMA

And will the Master truly love His servant?

THE MESSENGER

Behold! the servant's worship for His Master  
Has won the Master's worship for His servant.

THE PANCHAMA

And will the Lord Vittoba hush my weeping?

THE MESSENGER

Yea! for the tears you shed are from His eyes  
Who waits in patience for the starry darkness

*(The Messenger disappears. The crowd begins to stream out of the temple. It is evening.)*

## A MAN

Look at that Panchama whose hands and feet  
Are clothed in mire.

## A WOMAN

God save us! He was born  
Out of the womb of a most dreadful curse!

## 1ST BRAHMIN

He has not gone as yet!

## 2ND BRAHMIN

Why does he smile?

## 3RD BRAHMIN

To cover up the nakedness of fate!

*(The Panchama sits slumping while the people pass him by in scorn.)*

## SCENE - 2

*(The door of the temple. It is locked. It is mid-night. The three Brahmins, who are temple-priests, cower stealthily one by one and set their ears against the door as if to hear somebody talking within it.)*

## 1ST BRAHMIN

At first I thought I heard these whispers stir  
Deep in my dreams, but when I woke I found  
They came from out the temple!

## 2ND PRIEST

There he sits  
Like a disease before the holy image!

## 3RD BRAHMIN

It is the Panchama who sits outside  
This temple-gate and mutters parrot-prayers  
When evening crowns the temple-top with silence.

## 1ST BRAHMIN

Alas! the whiteness of the holy image  
Is stained with the black touch of him whose birth  
Was fashioned in some demon's womb of darkness.

## 2ND BRAHMIN

But it is passing strange how he could enter  
The guarded temple-door that still stands barred  
To other than ourselves who hold the key!

## 3RD BRAHMIN

Alas! the gorgeous raiment on his body  
And all the myriad splendour of his jewels  
Are dyed in deep pollution. Now our Lord  
Is like the moon whose skin of chastest fire

Gleams dim in Rahu's shadowy embrace  
 Or like the sun who on his swift career  
 Of gold flamed o'er the road of the blue sky  
 Is caught sudden in the black caress  
 Of Kipu and stripped bare of brilliance.

1st BRAHMIN

Unlock the door and drag the villain out.

2nd BRAHMIN

And let us solve this midnight-mystery.

3rd BRAHMIN

*(Opens the door.)*

Come out, you filthy dog, you low-born creature!

THE PANCHAMA

*(Coming out)*

I see, your eyes are flaring up like fire

As if they would devour me!

1st BRAHMIN

Had you been

A creature less unclean and less unkindly

We would have offered you as sacrifice

Long years ago at some great festive-shar.

2nd BRAHMIN

How did you find your way into the temple?

3rd BRAHMIN

Give up the truth... Who led you to the shar?

THE PANCHAMA

Who but my sky-blue Lovet, Vithoba?

BRAHMIN

He has gone mad!

1st BRAHMIN

Before to-morrow's dawn

You must be gone.

2nd BRAHMIN

And on the other shore

Of sacred Chandrabhaga you shall dwell

Nor ever cross upon this shore again!

3rd BRAHMIN

So get you gone and while the darkness hides

Your body with its nakedness of shame

And vile corruption leave our holy shore

Nor haunt the temple more with your black shadow.

THE PANCHAMA

Forgive me for the sorrow I have spread

Cloudlike across the sunlight of your hearts.

I will be gone before the dawn arrives

## THE FLOWER OF GOD

With her immaculate splendour for your eyes  
And her resplendent crown for the Lord's temple.  
And as for me, I have no need of her  
Since even while I stand in this vast midnight  
Within me stirs a white eternal dawn  
Above the golden temple of the soul  
Wherein the Lord is wreapt in dreams of peace.

1ST BRAHMIN

You have polluted God with your foul touch !

2ND BRAHMIN

And stained His virgin splendour with your presence !

3RD BRAHMIN

Yea ! you have bruised His heart of chastity !

THE PANCHAMA

*(Shrilling as in wisdom.)*

Is this the wisdom that you have acquired  
After long years of drinking at the founts  
Of sacred knowledge ? Are you not aware  
That the thrice holy Ganges still retains  
Her ancient purity though she has washed  
Day after day, year after year, the bodies  
Alike of Brahmins and of Panchamas ?  
And is the road polluted that has heard  
The echoing footsteps both of saints and sinners ?  
Or would you call the wind corrupt and wicked,  
Thy holy Sadhus and unholy harlots ?  
Then how could you believe that He who dwells  
In every speck of dust and every star  
Beyond our little strife of caste and creed  
Could ever be polluted by my presence ?

1ST BRAHMIN

Away with you ! What ! have you come to preach  
Of wisdom to the wise ?

2ND BRAHMIN

Lo ! it is said

That Shalabhu, a tiny bird, set out  
To teach the swift Bird Garuda in the fable  
The use of wings !

3RD BRAHMIN

And in another fable

A patch of gold-paint danced in foolish pride  
Before a mountain-range of real gold !

1ST BRAHMIN

And in another story it is written

That a glow-worm blinded with its own glimmer  
 Called Vasaramani a beggar's lamp!

2ND BRAHMIN

And in another, that an elephant  
 Bred in a common forest on the earth  
 Challenged the huge Airavat to a fight!

3RD BRAHMIN

And somewhere it is said that a pale snake  
 That crawls among the forests, thought to shame  
 The many-jewelled serpent-hood of Shesha  
 With its own jewel lit with a dull flame!

BRAHMINS

And you, likewise, who are a Panchama  
 Jethoran; of the Shastras, dare to come  
 Into our presence with your argument!  
 Away with you this instant!

THE PANCHAMA

I am going . . .

But Brahmins! bear in mind these words I utter:  
 You are but buying with your insolence  
 The angry touch of God who will convert  
 Your Brahmahood to Pariahdom when next  
 You incarnate within this hellish world.  
 Where now you spurn me like a filthy dog  
 For Nature, who is wise, rears me for ever  
 Her justice in a dark mysterious manner  
 Beyond our little mortal comprehension!

(The Panchama goes out)

1ST BRAHMIN

His mind is in a mias.

2ND BRAHMIN

How like the tail

Of a black brute his tongue wags in his speech!

3RD BRAHMIN

I would the Panchamas were all cruder!

(Before temple-door. The three Brahmins are seen discussing as in the last scene.)

1ST BRAHMIN

And when I reached the other shore I saw  
 Two people under the cool lemon-tree  
 Eating their midday-meal, and one of them  
 Was Chuchha Mela, the dark Panchama

2ND BRAHMIN

Perhaps, the other was a villager.

1ST BRAHMIN

I have a tale to tell you.

THE FLOWER OF GOD

3RD BRAHMIN

Tell us . . . tell us !

1st BRAHMIN

And Chelcha's wife, a very lovely lovely woman

2ND BRAHMIN

I have seen her and although she is the wife

Of a low creature . . .

3RD BRAHMIN

She is beautiful

And I have wooed her often in my dreams

1st BRAHMIN

This woman served them to their meal.

2ND BRAHMIN

I would

I were the villager !

3RD BRAHMIN

Her hands and feet

Might tempt the gods to fall from their high office.

1st BRAHMIN

I stood and watched them for a while and heard

The words that passed between them. You will marvel

When I relate to you the conversation.

2ND BRAHMIN

What did they talk about ?

3RD BRAHMIN

It makes me laugh

To hear two ignorant people talk !

1st BRAHMIN

I heard

The Panchama address a crow that sat

Upon a lemon-branch.

2ND AND 3RD BRAHMINS

What did he say ?

1st BRAHMIN

He said, " Most honoured Sir, from our your beak

The seeds are dropping on my body Guest

Do you not know that the great Lord is seated

With me in the cool shadow of this tree ?

Fly to some other branch, respected Sir !

And pardon me if I have hurt your pride . . . "

2ND BRAHMIN

What have you ever heard a man before

Conversing with a crow ?

1st BRAHMIN

'Twas done on purpose

To fling an insult on our Brahminhood,  
 For, mark you well what followed . . . . When the  
 women,

The wife of that despicable scavenger,  
 Dropped curds by accident on the guests' garments  
 Staining its hem, he cried out in despair,  
 "Alas! what have you done? Behold! my wife!  
 The curds have soiled the Lord's pure Panchama  
 Of sunset's yellow robes. Alas! the holy  
 Like a white cloud that stains the flaming silk  
 Unstained garment of the Lord is soiled!"

2ND BRAHMIN

Indeed! it was on purpose that he uttered  
 The name of God in so familiar manner  
 To wound our Brahmin's sense of sanctity.

3RD BRAHMIN

And did you teach the Panchama a lesson?

1ST BRAHMIN

Indeed I did. The moment that he uttered  
 The name of God in idle mockery  
 I sprang upon him, filled with godly rage  
 And slapped his cheek into a crimson fire.

(A group of worshippers goes into the temple)

2ND BRAHMIN

To save the reputation of our God  
 And our own honour in the eyes of God,  
 We must inflict a punishment upon him  
 Such as would seal his muttering mouth for ever

3RD BRAHMIN

Perhaps, if we could win as sacrifice  
 The body of his wife for us to touch  
 And render holy, be the Panchama  
 Would teach the fickle-garment-wearer of God.

(The group that went in rushes out shrieking)

MEN

Alas! alas! the cheek of God is bleeding!

WOMEN

Alas! His holy eyes are red with weeping!

MEN

A flood of tears has bathed the golden altar

WOMEN

And there's a shadowy patch upon His garment!

MEN

O who has filled the Lord with tears and sorrow?

WOMEN

## THE FLOWER OF GOD

Why are you silent, Masters of the temple?  
(The Brahmins gape as if struck dumb with lightning.)

MEN

You drop your eyes as though you were the culprits!

WOMEN

Vishoba's curse upon your blood-stained Priesthood!

(Curtain.)

— Courtesy "SHAMA'A "

( April 1923 )

## ALLEGATION

LAXMI NARAYAN MAHAPATRA

i do not want your turbulent world.

i wanted only a drop of nectar.

since the music of life has entranced me

and i have heard the roses without and within.

can't you see the earth and flowers scattered

in rapturous dance?

the girdle of the sea leaps in a dense moment

in thrills of passion, in vital surge,

can't you see the lone star in the infinite blue

how it stares defacing the storm and gloom?

i wonder how you fail to see

the lamp kindled in my courtyard

my arms hug you in a tight embrace

my being charged with passion enfolds you

with a kiss on your lips.

you are still, unperturbed like a snow bangle

the colours and the raptures of life

are borne back to me.

i don't want your turbulent world.

i have drunk my tears, look

i have the burning sun in my eyes.

(Translated from Oriya by the Poet)



# MAHARSHI TOLSTOY AND HIS BIRCH TREES (A Parable)

Dr. MASHI VENKATESA IYENGAR

COUNT Leo Tolstoy, who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, led the dissipated life of a rich youth, won laurels as a soldier, wrote such magnificent work that he came to be considered the compared in literature, inherited ancestral property and developed it and married and tasted the bliss of domestic life to his heart's content, came to experience profound world-weariness in his middle age. He grew so sick of life that he began to feel that he could find peace only in the grave. Tolstoy who had been brought up in a family with traditional orthodoxy grew reflective in his youth, succumbed to doubts and was convinced that was no God. But he realised that life was impossible on such a premise and concluded that the common man's way of thinking was the only right one.

Those who live in the lap of luxury and who are blessed with good health are dissatisfied and are miserable, but humbler people toiling in penury or suffering ill health accept life cheerfully. The latter's is the right attitude; life is divine; acceptance is wisdom. It seemed to the Count that this was the Eternal, Unchanging truth.

Wealthy people like himself kept these simple people in slavery; the rich few like himself exploited the toil of huge vast numbers, perpetuated injustice by acquiring property, made laws to protect it, formed their own government comprising a few crafty men to enforce them, maintained armies to support these regimes; nations were formed this way and when there was a dispute among them, wars broke out; this was the bane of civilisation. Mankind could not be saved until this was halted. This was his final conviction.

This meant that property was the first and foremost peril to world peace.

So, henceforth, not for him the ancestral property. Nor the property he had acquired by his efforts. He could not henceforth

claim that the books he wrote were his own property, and could not prevent others from publishing them. He could claim nothing as his.

Having taken this decision, Count Tolstoy declared that he had renounced property in every form. He became the Saint of the western world in the modern era. It was his desire that other wealthy people should follow his example and make the world a better place to live in; it gave him some comfort to think that they would do so.

Thoughtful persons of the world recognised the Count's sincerity; they admired the nobility of his sentiments. They praised his sacrifice. But not many followed him. His was a spirit an individual could adopt, but not a whole society. If it is wrong to regard the loaf in your hand as yours: what will you eat? Let alone other people. This principle could not gain unqualified implementation in the Sage's own home. Ancestral property was not to be touched. Nor his own property. Nor the royalty on his books. Nothing was to be regarded as his earnings. How then was the family to live.

If just one man involved he could have said, 'I shall starve'. But his wife, Sophia, had been accustomed to a life of comfort. There were six grown-up children—three sons and three daughters. Like any rich family this, too, had relatives dependent on it. Friends and acquaintances of the world famous writer paid visits. Some of these people were miserably poor; this was their only refuge. All of them had to be fed and they had to live in comfort as usual. But how.

The Count's wife, Sophia, took a decision by herself. Preach what the husband might, none of them—not even the husband himself—could survive without the property and the income. He might repudiate property; but could she? Did the children have to do it? So she assumed the reins of property which the husband had flung aside. As soon as the Sage translated his precept into practice she began to manage the property and to look to the comforts of her husband, her children, the relatives, the guests, and the visitors.

Among the friends were Chernakoff, Gorky and Suler Ietskey. Chernakoff was a radical socialist: it was his firm conviction that property was the bane of society. He was foremost in supporting Tolstoy's opposition to ownership. Gorky, too, was opposed to property. But he asserted that, just as those who support the right to property exploit the institution for their own ends (these modern men abuse their doctrine, Suler Ietskey partly agreed with one man, partly with the other, and took a middle line).

There was a birch grove near the Count's house. It was probably a congenial soil for the trees. The place could boast of

a few trees in the days of Tolstoy's youth. Somehow the place and the trees enchanted him and he had a hundred trees planted. As they grew he rejoiced. When he became the owner of the property he added another hundred trees and cleared a grove. It was something he was proud of. He used to take his guests to the grove and proudly tell them that it was his handiwork. Even in his old age, despite the weakness, he would go to the grove assisted by someone. When he could not do even that he would sit in the porch and find pleasure in gazing upon the trees. There is an Indian legend about a sage who had severed all bonds of affection but one and lay on a deer and became attached to it. The sage-like author had denounced ownership and attachment as evil; but, without his realising it, a sense of ownership and an attachment to the grove grew within him.

Countess Sophia once needed money for household expenses and she considered selling ten of the old trees. They were well grown and sturdy. They would fetch a good price. There were enquiries also. But Tolstoy who got to hear about it said, "Oh no! What a grove! Why sell the trees and disfigure it."

Sophia learnt about it and gave up the thought of selling the trees. He was the master and he had grown the trees, he was ill; he found pleasure in gazing upon the trees; who could tell how long he would be able to enjoy the sight and when the curtain would come down on his life. Why fell the trees now and bury him.

A few days later the serfs of the village the family owned waited on Chertakoff and made a representation: "None of us has a house; we want to build small houses for ourselves. Please persuade the master to give us these birch trees, we shall build houses; he has grown magnanimous; he says he wants no property; somebody may fell and carry away the trees; please get us the trees." Chertakoff reported this to Tolstoy. He added, "Anyway you are opposed to owning property; that is your conviction; I know it. Here is a fine opportunity to show it to the whole world; please grant the prayer of these serfs."

Tolstoy made no answer. When Chertakoff once again broached the subject, he said, "Once I have said that ownership is wrong, where is the need for me to grant permission. There are the serfs and there are the trees." It gave him no pleasure to say this. Chertakoff knew it. But he made the best of it; and proceeded, assuming that there was nothing to prevent the serfs from felling the trees:

The mistress, Sophia, came to hear of this. She objected, saying, "I myself gave up the plan to fell the trees because the master had planted them and taken loving care of them, will you get outsiders to fell them?"

Chertakoff retorted, "Your husband is a saint, you are subverting his magnanimity. This isn't right."

She said, "Has it become your concern more than mine that the master's magnanimity should be fruitful. Put an end to this impudence. So many of you have been eating here, how is all this to be managed without ownership. Leave the affairs of our family to us. Don't you interfere in all this?"

One word led to another. There was a quarrel. Chertakoff concluded that the mistress, Sophia, was not in her senses and said, "No matter what she says, I shall carry out the master's wishes." He then asked the serfs to fell and carry away the trees.

The serfs came. They started cutting down the trees. The mistress hired some men and prevented the serfs. The serfs were injured. They called her heartless; they gave up for the time being. As soon as the hired watch went back the serfs returned, they felled the trees: the trunk, the branches, the twigs—they carried away everything. They did it ten times and she checked them ten times, and in six months the birch grove was razed to the ground. Nothing remained, save a few stumps spared by the saw, to show where the flourishing grove had stood once.

While all this was going on, Tolstoy said not a word. Countess Sophia believed that he wished the trees to be spared. But all her efforts proved futile. She almost went mad. Tolstoy was tormented but could say nothing.

A few months later he went away from home without a word to anyone. It was only after he had left that his children realised what had happened. They sent men in search of him. They found him in a railway station. By then he was prostrate. He remained there. The men thought of taking him with them. But before anything could be done he breathed his last in the railway station.

Was it grief that the trees were no longer there. Or was it unhappiness that his wife had opposed his generosity. Was it distress that even while he preached against ownership for pride in the ownership of the trees had haunted him. Or, did all three contend in his heart as he lay dying.

No one can tell.

# RIVER—YOU ARE

PHANI BASU

Charmed by your own waves, you flow forward  
from your source  
and never bound by four walls

You can go beyond and far  
To flow in liquid rhymes is an easy step for you  
The lucky divine dancer you are  
and bound by no domestic rule

You dance your way with ethereal mirth to charm the world  
No greater joy is there than owning you  
no sadder experience  
Most fragile and perplexing is your love

You are nobody's wife  
and would not stay in home for anyone  
You do not desire a house

You wave and dance and dance towards whom  
You are river  
and forget the green behind  
once you reach the sea

*(Translated from Bengali by the Poet)*



## LOKAMANYA TILAK

Convocation Address at Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth,  
Pune.

Prof. K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY

This Vidyapeeth was established sixty seven years ago in memory of one who had been described by Mahatma Gandhi as "a maker of modern India" and as "the man who preached the gospel of Swaraj\* with utmost consistency and insistence". Therefore one would be paying one's homage to Tilak if one were to reflect on the meaning of Swaraj, the ideology of which he so fearlessly propagated. I may be permitted to do so.

Swaraj is an ancient word which occurs even in the Rig Veda in the sense of "one's own dominion", and in the earliest Upanishads too. But in two of the major Upanishads it came to be endowed with a profound significance.

The Chandogya Upanishad puts forward the concept of *Bhuma*. *Bhuma* is the vast, the unsurpassed and the abundant. *Mahat, niratisayan, huiṇi*. That which is *Bhuma* is happiness as well as the immortal. *Yo vai bhuma tat sukham—tadamananta*. It is everywhere. When one is experiencing it, nothing else is experienced. It is established on its own greatness, or not even on it at all. It is indeed all this. *Sa evadam sarvam id*. It is the Self itself, which is everywhere and is indeed all this. *Aprativedam sarvam id*. He who sees, thinks and understands this delights in the Self only, and becomes independent (*svatan*): free everywhere in every way. 'While alive he is coronated in his own autonomy'. *Jivanneva swarajye bhishikatah* (BHASHYA).

In another Upanishad, the Taittiriya, it is stated that the Ultimate Reality (*Brahman*) will be directly realised as the Self of all if it is first meditated as located in the interior of one's own heart and mind. It is first within oneself that the Self has to be cognized as immortal and effulgent. One attains the fruit of *Swarajya* then (*Swarajyaphalasiddhi*) *Swarajya* is the nature

\*This is its popular spelling, but it ought to be *Swarajya*. In the Upanishads it occurs as *svarajya*.

(*svabhāva*) of one who is independent, who is himself ruler (*svarāj*) without anyone else as his ruler (master) (BHASKARA VARTMA ON TAL. UP., 1.6.)

Śaṅkarācārya and his disciple Suresvara thus conceived autonomy as the final goal and perfection of man, which is to be realised through desireless action and knowledge based on meditation of the truth of one's own real nature. This was elaborated further sometime between 1780-1880 A.D., by Gaṅgādharaśaṅkara in his *Svarājyaśāstrikā* and Nityānanda Tīrtha in *Svarājyaśāstaraṣṭaka* (which has another title *Śivasthāyika*). The former has been explained further by the author himself and another scholar as well in their commentaries.

Tilak correctly explained this Vedantic conception in his statements like : "What is *Svarāj*? A life centred in the Self and dependent upon the Self.—*Svarāj* is the natural consequence of diligent performance of duty." (QUOTED IN RAM GOPAL, *Loka-manya Tilak : A Biography*, BOMBAY, 1955, PP. 344, 390.) But his original contribution was to bring out the political dimension of this conception : "What is *Svarāj*? It is replacement of bureaucracy by the people themselves. It is one's birthright to govern one's own house, none else can claim to do it." (1910 PP. 389, 390). "It is one's inherent right to fight for the liberty of his people for a change in the government." (QUOTED IN SRI JAG. B.G. Tilak, NEW DELHI, 1962, p. 119.)

It was the greatness of Tilak to have perceived that as man is a social and political being, he cannot have cognitive and metaphysical freedom while politically unfree. It is the first duty of a man not free to free himself. A slave cannot have *Svarāj* by just continuing to obey his master while contemplating on himself as the Ultimate Reality or the immortal universal Self. Such thinking should be preceded by discharge of his duty, which consists in first freeing himself from slavery. Then he can do *Vedanta Vichara*. Political and economic freedom is the external condition in which real internal metaphysical freedom can be realised. A nation ruled by another, or a people ruled by a bureaucracy, cannot have *Svarāj* by any amount of meditation. The *svadharma* (own-duty) of a slave is first to free himself from slavery, and the *svadharma* of a subject nation or an oppressed people is to first overthrow the imperial power or the despotic rule. *Svadharmas*, well-performed for its own sake, makes one fit for the higher freedom : real *Svarājya* as conceived by the Upanishads. The Vedantic goal is to realize one's own natural and authentic nature. Slavery and bondage, whether of an individual or of a nation, are unnatural and are obstacles to self-fulfilment. So they should first be destroyed.

Tilak was led to draw out the political implications of Vedānta by the teaching and life of Samarth Ramdas. Ramdas (1608-1681 A.D.) deeply felt the political conditions in Maharashtra and the misery of his people. He conceived of a "Region of Bliss" (in his work *Anandamani-bhavanam*) in which righteousness would be established after the destruction of the wicked and sinners. But the means for this, he taught, was performance of one's duty to oneself and one's nation after first setting one's heart firmly on God. His effort was to establish national greatness on the foundation of faith in God. (R.D. BANADE, *Mysticism in India. The Pre-Swami of Maharashtra*. REPRINT. AGENCY, 1983. PP. 265-7, 422F.)

The Mahatma was following the same tradition when he wrote, "It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves." (HINDU SWARAJ, 1938 EDM. CH. XIV.) "The most real Swarajya is to rule over oneself — *Sat se sarva swarajya to apne par sarva karne hai*. That is the synonym of Moksha or Nirvan" (*Satyameva Jayate Vangmny*, VOL. 19. NEW DELHI, 1966, p. 82.) Like Tilak's his immediate goal was more practical, viz., political independence. But its fulfilment would be when every citizen of an independent nation becomes a moral being, achieving mastery over mind and passions, and thereby comes to know himself. (HINDU SWARAJ, CH. XIII.)

The essence of morality is self-control; morality is the means to self-knowledge, which results in perfect freedom, Moksha. Politics must be that which creates conditions favourable to the "observance of morality" or "performance of duty", which, according to Gandhi, are "convertible terms". (op. cit.) This is a view in accordance with Indian tradition. The goal of the whole science of politics, Kautilya declared, is victory over the senses (*indriya-jaya*) (*Arthashastra*, 1.5.) This discussion of Swaraj may be concluded with Sr. Anubando's magisterial utterance: "True Swaraj is 'fulfilment of the Vedantic ideal in politics'". (Speeches, 3RD EDM. PONDICHERY, 1952, p. 63.)

If the Upanishads provided the Swaraj-ideology, another Vedantic text helped "to solve the moral issues involved in everyday life." (TILAK CITED IN JOG *ibid.*, p. 133.) As was then believed by many Hindus, was it necessary to renounce this world before attempting to achieve human perfection? And, after achieving it, ought one to abandon doing anything in this world? These were questions which bothered Tilak. (RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, pp. 342-343.) He thought he might find answers to these in the *Bhagavadgita*, which was considered to be the supreme epitome of Hindu philosophy. His careful impartial study of it over several years resulted in his discovery that it did give the most satisfactory answers to these and other questions. He Presented the results of his study in



his *Bhagavadgita-Rahasya* or *Karmayoga-sutra*. Thus and Sri. Aurobindo's *Udaya on the Gita* are the only two greatest modern Indian works on the Gita.

An autobiographical reference may be excused. If there is any truth in the doctrine that *punya-phala* (merit of auspicious action) not enjoyed in a particular life would be enjoyed in the next life, it was due to my past *subrata* (action well-done) that I was made to study Sankara's *Bhanyu* on the Gita and was able to read the Telugu translation of Lokanandaya's *pragmatya opas* by myself in my teens, and had occasions to read portions of them again and again in subsequent years. The Telugu translation of *Gitarahasya* was done by Nari subrahmanya Sastri (Principal, Sanskrit College, Tenali) and published in 1918. A copy of it was acquired and studied intensely by my father in the year I was born. In due course I appropriated it and still cherish it.

What according to Tilak is the substance of the teaching of the Gita? He himself summarised it as follows: The Gita teaches a *dharma* rooted in knowledge, mainly consisting of devotion and enjoining action appropriate for life-long performance. So, it harmonises intellect, emotion and agency, and shows a way, which assures a smooth life in the world, which does not become an obstacle to liberation. Everyone should worship the Supreme Self, who though One is full abiding in all beings, -- in the micro- and macrocosms -- through discharging his worldly duties throughout life according to his competence, for the good of the world (*loka-samgraha*), without any desire, with the conviction that all are like oneself (*atma-sarvanya-dristi*) and with enthusiasm. Thus life becomes a continuous act of worship, of sacrifice. The *dharma* of the Gita, Tilak claims, is fearless, inclusive and equalitarian; it does not concern itself with national, racial or caste differences; and it leads all to the highest good and tolerates all other *dharma*s (*Gitarahasya*, TELUGU TRANS., p. 66). He chose as the epigraph for his concluding chapter (*upaniṣad*) this text: "So, at times remember Me and fight". (*Tasmad sarvesha kalesha man amamara yudhya ca.*)

"The word *Dharma*", according to Tilak, "means a tie and comes from the root *dhri*, to bear or hold. What is there to hold together? To connect the soul with God, and man with man". *Dharma* is what fosters unity or oneness among man and between man and Deity (his ADDRESS AT BANARAS, JAN., 1906, QUOTED IN RAM GOPAL, *Ibid.*, p. 243.)

Tilak's summary of the Gita *Dharma* is more or less in accordance with what is found in these two lines of the famous hymns attributed to Sankara:

*Anantapada-isa. Suparyaparyahatare*

*dharmā gāne rhesitane*

Because of my self-surrender view, may all my enjoyment  
and action become a substitute for your service

(*Aravala Sahari*)

*Kadyarkarāṇa karāṇa tatantakhilaṇa dambha navaśubhāṇa*

Whatever action I do, all that is your worship

(*Śivaprasanna*)

Tilak was a lover of Indian tradition and a nationalist. He was a follower of Śaṅkarā Dharma in the same sense in which Gandhi claimed to be a Saṅgani Hīndū. Tilak desired to "emphasize and preserve the national sentiment by giving due credit to all that is good in the old system but without detriment to progress and reforms needed for our national uplift." (CITTED BY RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, p. 36.) He asserted that "he would not recognize even God if He said that unreachability was ordained by Him." (CITTED BY RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, p. 35.) He condemned intolerance and fanaticism—whether of the Hindus or the Muslims—and held it should be punished. (CITTED BY RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, p. 52.) He gave political reform priority over social reform, and expected advocates of the latter to live up to what they preached by beginning with themselves. (CITTED BY RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, pp. 30-31.) He had the perception and courage to say that the principles of Bolshevism were "eternal" and in tune with the teaching of the *Gita*: "What one has in excess of one's requirements is a trust with one for others' benefit. Whoever keeps more than one needs is a sinner." (CITTED BY RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, p. 450.) He praised whoever he taught. No leader of the Indian Independence Movement was more sincere and selfless than him, no other leader suffered more than him, and no other leader (except Sri Aurobindo) was a greater scholar, thinker and writer than him.

The Yoga-sūtra says "Vigrahaḥvishayāṇa va cittaṁ" If the mind stakes one who is devoid of attachment its object for meditation, it would be conducive to the development of dispassion (*vairagya*) and thus to spiritual benefit. I hope, therefore, my dwelling on this selfless Mahapurusha's qualities and teaching has been of some benefit to me and to all of you.

This Vidyapeeth's objective is to actualize Tilak's idea of national education: "That which gives us a knowledge of the experience of our ancestors, that which enables us to become true citizens and to earn our bread." (QUOTED BY RAM GOPAL, *ibid.*, p. 239.) It should among other things be, he said, religious and through one's own mother-tongue. What is it to be religious? To have reverence for ideals, have devotion to the One Supreme

God, and to be humble with the awareness that Truth is infinite and cannot be encompassed by the human intellect, and to endeavour to lead a life devoted to the welfare of the world. Trusting that it is education of this sort which is sought to be inculcated here, I offer my felicitations to the faculty for what they may have achieved. In an undertaking like this spectacular success is impossible. But the Vice-Chancellor and faculty may be heartened by constantly remembering "*Svapnasya dharmasya kraya mahato bhaya*" (Even a little of this *dharma* protects from great fear)

December 37, 1988



## SALUTATION TO RAMAKOTISWARA RAU

Founder — Editor of "Triveni"

C.L.R. SASTRI

If I am a journalist of any standing in the country today, it has been owing to the timely assistance rendered me by a few benevolent editors : the chief of whom have been the late Dr. S. Sachchidananda Sinha of the *Hindustan Review* (long defunct), the late K. Ramakotiswara Rau of *Triveni*, and the late Kedarnath Chatterji of the *Modern Review*, in that order. There have been some others also (like Sir Francis Low of the *Times of India*), but the three I have mentioned stand out most prominently, like Everest, Kanchenjunga and Nanga Parbat among the Himalayan mountain ranges.

My father (a distinguished journalist himself) was not only lukewarm to the idea of my becoming a journalist but absolutely antagonistic to it. But I insisted on my being one, and the person who first helped this particular lame dog over the (journalistic) stile was Dr. Sinha, who somehow sensed, right from the beginning, that I had a flair (of sorts) for writing and that, as the editor of the second most reputed English monthly in India, the *Hindustan Review* (the first, without doubt, being the *Modern Review*), he was in a position to develop that flair to the best of his ability.

He published quite a few of my effusions, both literary and political, and, by so doing, laid the foundation of my modest journalistic career. More than that, he always wished me well, bestowed his choicest blessings upon me, and read eagerly my contributions to other papers and periodicals, congratulating me on them without stint. He is no more now, and the journal also has gone the way of "the many Ninevehs and Hecampoli": and this is eminently the place for me to pay him the homage that is rightly his due. He was not merely a great man; he was a good man.

K. Ramakotiswara Rau was the second editor to recognise my talents, such as they were. It is my unforgettable misfortune never to have seen him "in the flesh". In those days *Triveni* used to come out from Madras and that, too, in a beautiful format be-

cause he was a lover of the beautiful and the good in all the arts and sciences. He himself, let me interpose, wielded a notably powerful pen though, unfortunately, he used it very sparingly in his own pages while lavishly encouraging others to spread them in any extent they pleased. I was in Trivandrum then and saw a copy of *Triveni* almost by accident. It was so seductive in appearance that I lost no time in sending in a contribution. I waited with bated breath for its fate at his hands, more than a little apprehensive that it would come back like a homing pigeon.

Imagine my astonishment when I received a cordial letter from him intimating not only his acceptance of it, but calling for more! Though it was far from being one of my finest journalistic exercises, it was far from being too interdictious, right, and my succeeding offerings showed more signs of promise. He "played boss" to them with the same generosity as he did to my maiden effort. There was only one contribution from my humble pen that he refused during all its years of my connection with his periodical. The Matruka's civil disobedience movement was at its height at that time and though, as a "Liberal", I had been at its commencement, somewhat indifferent to it, I had perforce to align myself with it as the police zoolium against the Sanyashtis escalated rapidly, even the "gentler sex" not being spared. So I indited a blistering article against our alien rulers, going at them, as the saying is, hammer and tong. Ramakrishna Rau politely declined to publish it as in his opinion its publication would, infallibly, bring both himself and his journal into endless trouble. Then I told myself that a scholar should stick to his last that, as I began my association with *Triveni* with a literary piece. After all, *Triveni* did not purport to be a political journal, its *prideau mobile* having been, on the contrary, literature and the other arts.

There was one instance when Ramakrishna Rau exhibited his spirit of sturdy independence, which I shall never forget. One fine morning I received a communication from him suggesting that for a change I might try my hand at a "pan-portrait" (mentioning, in the process, the names of Sir Tej Bahadur Sastri, the R. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, Mr. (not yet 'Sir') C.V. Chintamani, and several other eminent personages). Well, it was true that I had not attempted this kind of composition before, and I replied that my intimacy with the high and the mighty was limited to Chintamani and that I might be able to paint a (wordy) portrait of him; provided that, though he happened to be my own father, I would be allowed to criticise him as and when I proposed to do so. He readily agreed, intimating that he gave me, as he put it, *carte blanche* to write just as I chose.

In due course, I posted my "pen-portrait" of Chingamani, a long and frank and intimate affair: and, in due course also, it appeared in *Triveni* without the change of a single comma or semi-colon. The editor was very appreciative of it. Not so, however, the subject of that portrait. He took Ramakrishnan Rau heavily to task for publishing it, but the latter blithely rejoined that I had written it at his own suggestion and that I had never mentioned in my article that he (Chingamani) and I were related to each other even "north-east-wards". A certain "Mr. C.Y. Chingamani" and that, in consequence, he (Mr. Chingamani) had no grounds for any legitimate complaint, either against me or against him the editor. But, of course, my father was not mollified by this (extremely ungentle) explanation: he was not easily mollified when he felt that his *anvaya-prasava* was at stake.

After some years, *Triveni* fell on evil days, and it has not yet, I imagine, recovered from them. It was at its most resplendent when he took an active interest in it and directed it himself in every important detail. But both ill-health and financial difficulties supervened and the journal visibly declined into desuetude. The great thing, however, is that it has not given up the struggle and that, under its present ownership, it is still carrying on gamely and that, on current showing, it may be relied upon to carry on gamely for several years more. But a "quarterly" is no substitute for a monthly; and, to that extent, it has suffered a sea-change into something not quite in keeping with what it had been in its heyday, when Ramakrishnan Rau was at its helm, steering it as only a master-seaman can be expected to do.

What is to be remembered is that he conceived his journal as a sort of moral and spiritual vehicle and that, come hell or high water, it must be kept alive in some form or other. As long as he lived he dedicated his energies to doing just that: his successors must, in their turn, consecrate theirs to tread in his illustrious footsteps. In our hapless country it is not the easiest of enterprises to start a paper or a periodical: and when, by superhuman effort (nothing less), it has been got going our (collective) endeavour must see to it that that tender sapling does not perish for want of proper ministrations.

The Thirties witnessed the heyday of *Triveni*. It was bliss, "in that dawn to be alive", and to be writing for *Triveni* was "very heaven". Those, indeed, were the days for aspiring young journalists: there was no dearth of monthlies — of famous monthlies! *1 masu*. Among these Ramakrishnan Rau's *Triveni* occupied pride of place. "It flamed in the forehead of the morning sky". In him we have lost a gem of a man: let me hope that there will be no dearth of labourers in the same vineyard.

The very name he chose for his magazine gives us a measure of our hero: he was ever a seeker after "the eternal verities". It is, indeed, a name to conjure with One who was impelled to choose it, and none other, for his journalistic venture could not, it may safely be presumed, go far wrong in the evaluation of fundamentals. It was proof positive that, in his order of priorities, principles and programmes came before powers and propinquities; a person of that high calibre can always be relied upon to stand foursquare to all the winds that blow. The following memorable lines of the poet can easily be applied to him:

Cast it upon the cold green-mantling sea  
That cling along with Truth, to the last spar.  
Both Castaway,

And one must perish — let it not be he  
Whom thou art sworn to obey

Truth never perished at his hands,



## D.H. Lawrence and his Mystique of Dual Consciousness

Dr. V. RAMA MURTHY

"Nowadays men do hate the idea of dualism. It is no good, dual we are. The cross."

D.H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature* was published in 1923. It preceded the publication of *Lady Chatterly's Lover* at least by five years. A reading of some parts of the *Studies* gives us a feeling that Lawrence had a mystique of his own which he later associated with his fictional work. Moreover, the *Studies* reveals more of Lawrence than of the American classics and being subjective and impressionistic his criticism is a class of creative writing by itself. As seen from the *Studies* his ideas and convictions on man's freedom, doom of the white man, master and servant relationship, man's divided psyche form part of his mystique and these appear often as more inherent in him than in the writers he examines. His ideas have a consistent unity and strike us as theories or postulates on life. My object in this paper is to explore one of his most important postulates, that is, what he calls the dual consciousness.

According to Lawrence, all life-interchange is a polarized communication. It is a circuit with positive and negative polarity. Even master and servant relationship is essentially a polarized flow, like love. It is a circuit of vitality. Such a relationship as this cannot be reduced to any idea or abstraction. "Once you abstract both master and servant and make them both serve an idea: production, wage, efficiency and so on..... then you have changed the vital, quivering circuit of master and man into a mechanical machine man.....".<sup>1</sup> To Lawrence, this master-servant relationship, when reduced to an idea, mangles the blood-reciprocity of master and servant and results in an abstract horror. It is a natural relationship and once abstract idealism enters into the identities of master and servant the vitality of the relationship is irreparably damaged. Lawrence even approves of the master bearing his servant as that involves what he calls "passional justice". A court decision in such cases could only be mechanical justice. In such a direct action the "physical intelligence" of the servant is restored. There is



no use of approaching him through the mind, the reason, and the spirit. This is a natural form of "human coition."<sup>2</sup> Lawrence does not seem to be feudalistic in his attitude towards servants. What he seems to look for is a warm human, concrete and vital relationship. For instance, a teacher earning a student established a closer and warmer relationship with the student than when he gets him punished through a remote administrative process.

There is a male and female circuit. Love forms the mystic conjunction between the two. But each soul—male and female—has its own identity. Any merging between the two leads to disaster and death. "The soul's deepest will is to preserve its own integrity", he says.<sup>3</sup> He admires Whitman's poetry for its vitality but ridicules the poet's generalizations and identifications. When Whitman says "I am he that acts with amorous love", Lawrence discovers the poet's individuality leaking out of him. Whitman as well might have said: The femaleness aches for my maleness.<sup>4</sup> Lawrence hates generalizations in a master that is biological. By attacking Whitman, he is actually attacking all types of mysticism.

To Lawrence each soul has a substantial unity of its own. "The central law of all organic life is that each organism is insidiously isolate and single in itself", he says.<sup>5</sup> All mingling therefore is a death process. He believed in "That I am I" or that A is A. But this I is a dark forest. One has perception of only a small part of it. "That my known self will never be more than a little clearing in the forest".<sup>6</sup> He also said: "Gods, strange gods, come forth from the forest into the clearing of my known self, and then go back. When the gods come do what they bid you do".<sup>7</sup>

The soul is perceptive, unique and self-enclosed, to Lawrence. However, he becomes obscurantist when he associates it with the Holy Ghost: "Love no time with idols," he says, "serve the Holy Ghost: Never serve mankind."<sup>8</sup> He is unable to extricate himself from the Christian idiom, although his theory is a personal one. Frequently he also associates the soul with the psychological *It* (id). One should, according to him, seek "what *It* wishes done".<sup>9</sup> *It* is the deepest self and men are free only when they act according to the dictates of *It*. *It* is the primary urge. It is central to the self. Alongside *It* there is, however, a secondary urge, and that is, each individual organism longs to come into intimate contact with fellow organisms and become unified. But this union with fellow organisms is only a temporary thing because in ultimate terms each organism is isolate in itself and must return to its own isolation.<sup>10</sup> This is a "contact, only upon a certain point." This leads him to another postulate: There is a limit to everything; there is a limit to love. Lawrence seems to differ from Kierkegaard to whom love is an intense experience which leads one into fellowship with essence

or the divine. While intensifying his experience of beauty or love, Keats attains the joy of disembodied existence ("till we shine full alchemized and free of space"). To him love and death are like experiences.<sup>12</sup> Lawrence keeps love and death distinct and separate. "Love is the mysterious vital attraction which draws things together, closer, closer together. For this reason sex is the actual crisis of love. For in sex the blood systems, in the male and female, concentrate and come into contact, the nearest film intervening, yet if the intervening film breaks down, it is death!"<sup>13</sup> Love, therefore, has its limits although Lawrence allows for some balanced excess.

Lawrence warns that to try to know a person one loves, is to kill her/him: "Every sacred mystery teaches that one must leave her unknown. You know your woman darkly in the blood. To try to know her mentally is to try to kill her. Beware. O woman, of the man who wants to find out what you are. And, oh men, beware a thousand times more of the woman who wants to know you, or get you what you are!"<sup>14</sup> Lawrence believed that God Almighty "kicked" Adam and Eve out of the garden because they wanted "not doing it but knowing about it." Their self-consciousness made them ashamed of the act. God found them degenerating into "dirty hypocrites!"<sup>15</sup> So they were kicked out. To Lawrence the physical or manual work is as dignified as the intellectual. He cannot bear to see anyone disliking work like washing dishes or sweeping the floor. Book farming is more important than book farming. In his own personal life he had to face the stark tragedy of his mother hating manual labour and his father hating the sight of books or of any one reading books.

According to Lawrence man is made of a dual consciousness of which the two halves are most of the time in opposition to one another. The dual consciousness comprises blood consciousness and mind consciousness. Blood consciousness overwhelms, obliterates and annuls mind consciousness. Mind consciousness extinguishes blood consciousness and consumes the blood. "We are all of us" he says, "conscious in both ways. And the two are antagonistic in us. They will remain so. That is our cross".<sup>16</sup> It is not clear whether Lawrence is tracking the Socratic dictum "know thyself". It is also possible that underneath his antagonism to knowing there is the Genesis folklore of the forbidden fruit. He considers knowledge and belief to be opposite antagonistic states. "The more we know, the less we are. The more we are the less we know": Aristotle, Leibnitz, Bradley and Russell have expressed differing views on cognition or knowing. An object has a holistic character in which the being is greater than some of its parts. For instance, sugar is not more whiteness, more hardness, and more sweetness,

Its reality lies somehow in its unity. But on the other hand, what there can be in the thing beside these qualities will baffle us.

Lawrence is one of those who brought about a sexual revolution in the West. His *Lady Chatterly's Lover* has been hailed as a "quasi-religious tract recounting the salvation of one modern woman".<sup>1</sup> The passage which describes Lady Jane's first reaction to Connie's nakedness is hailed as "a revelation of the sacrament itself, is properly the novel's very holy of holies .....transfiguration scene with atmospheric clouds and lightning, and a pentecostal sun beam illumination the ascension of the deity "thick and arching" before the reverent eyes of the faithful . Constance Chatterly is granted the sight of guldhead, which turns out to be a portrait of the creator himself, nude, and in his impressive state".<sup>2</sup> Connie moaning with "bliss" is his "sacrifice" and a "new born thing" ... The formula is rather simple: "You meet her, cheat her into letting you have a piece of and then take off. Mellor's hum is a primitive find, fuck and forget".<sup>3</sup>

Kate Millet makes a prelapsarian Adam out of Connie. But like Lawrence she calls sex act a kind of sacrifice. Lawrence considered venery as of the great gods. "It is an offering-up of yourself to the great gods." " From this one can see that Lawrence himself is unable to reconcile his divided psyche. He intends to treat the sex act as something purely physical but at the same time he invests it with some religious mystery.

Psychologists refuse to view sex within the narrow confines of a reproductive act. According to P.D. Ouspensky: "Of all ordinary human experiences only sex sensations approach those which we may call the mystical state of ecstasy. Nothing else in our life brings us so near to the limits of human possibilities beyond which begin the unknown..."<sup>4</sup> Now, is sex act a mystical union, an integrative process, a reproductive activity or a mere physical urge? The coming together of Connie and Mellors is actually a coming together of mind and body. It cannot be a coming together of mindless animals although the emphasis is on the physical side. It is a celebration or festival of sex. At the hands of a novelist like Henry Miller it may become a heartless cycle. Between Connie and Mellors there is tenderness, there is feeling and there is polarized energy.

In *Lady Chatterly's Lover* Lawrence almost succeeded in dramatizing his mystique of sex. Adultery makes a jarring note but that is not the main point of the story. Lawrence's interest is in dramatizing the male and female circuit with a thin film intervening between the two and preventing any merging between them. He believed that only in this way there could be harmony and

completeness in life. "All the talk of young girls and virginity like a blank sheet on which nothing is written, is pure nonsense. A young girl and a young boy is a tortured tangle, a seething confusion of sexual feelings and sexual thoughts which only years will disentangle. years of honest thoughts of sex and years of struggling action in sex will bring us at last when we want to get, to our real and accomplished chastity, our completeness, when our sexual thought and sexual act are in harmony, and the one does not interfere with the other".<sup>21</sup>

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2. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
3. *Studies*, p. 176.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 17. T.S. Eliot attacks Lawrence, Hardy and others who were after Strange gods in his *After Strange Gods*.
8. *Studies*, p. 17.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
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12. Refer to Bright Star sonnet.
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## POET VYASA IN THE MAHABHARATA

Dr. S.S. JANAKI

The poetic abilities of Vyasa are considerable, although he is well known as a sage (*muni*, *rishi*), as the redactor of the Vedas, the author/compiler of the Mahabharata and Puranas, etc. The poetic genius of Vyasa is a natural outcome of the great sage-scholar that he really was. Indeed the Kavi and Rishi are made of the same stuff. Especially Vyasa's Mahabharata (M.Bh.) although neither the greatest nor the richest masterpiece of the secular literature of India, is at the same time, its most considerable and important body of poetry.

### I

The etymological equation of the words "Rishi" and "Kavi", as also the similarity between the actual representatives of these two categories, have come down in India from remote times. The Vedic exegetist Yaska says that the Rishi is so called due to his unique vision (*Rishir darsanam*). In fact, in a late Rig Vedic hymn in the tenth Mandala (125th), the omnipotent Goddess of Speech, called here Ambhīnī (a daughter of sage Ambhrina), speaks as the knower of the Supreme Brahman and Herself as that Supreme Being. In one of these Suktas, She says, "Whomsoever I love him I make formidable, him a Brahman, a man of vision (*nam rishim*) and a man of excellent intellect (*nam sampadham*)".

In later classical literature the converse process was operative as evident in the definition of "Kavi" as one endowed with all-comprehensive transcendental vision (*Kavir brahmadarsee*). Bhāṭa Tota who hailed from Kashmir and who was one of the teachers of the versatile philosopher-king Abhinavagupta, established the equation between a poet and a sage in his momentous statement that a poet is one endowed with eternal and many-sided vision, and that a poet is necessarily a sage (*na anirvāṇ kaviḥ ityuktaḥ*). Following the footsteps of Tota his student Abhinavagupta (in his commentary on Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra, 15th chapter) clearly and boldly brought Kalidasa, Bhāṇadēvārāja and such other classical writers in equation with Valmiki and Vyasa for, 'all of them attained an all-round unique mastery in the various disciplines as

a collective result of their great traditional background, perspective, skill and *samskara*".

### II

Valmiki and Vyasa have been like the two eyes of the people, and their epics, the *Ramayana* and the *M.Bh.* have conditioned their mind and lives. The formation of national character, the norms of behaviour and moral standards which the people have striven to uphold, and the hopes and aspirations which have animated them through the centuries of their long history, all these they owe ultimately to these two epics.

Many are the Sanskrit literary compositions, printed and in manuscript that praise Valmiki and Vyasa, singly or together in their introductory verses. For example, Kuviraja of the 12th century, who composed a *Sleśha Kavya* 'Raghuvamśaviya' (printed in Kavyamala Series) dealing simultaneously with the stories of the *Ramayana* and *M.Bh.*, says in one of its introductory verses :

"If the ruby of the *Ramayana* is set in the gold of *Mahabharata*, the minds of the connoisseurs will certainly be excited".

The "Bharata-varṇa" (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series) of the Keralite poet Krishna Kavi, describing the deeds of Bharata, the son of Dasharatha and Sita, called Vyasa and Valmiki the first sage-poets who framed the path for composing poetry, who are the oceans rich with gems of well-turned expressions, and are like the luminaries sun and the moon in showing the way for learned scholars and critics.

*ardresikāṁ padypathadhyasāraṁ*

*ragasāharaṁ sakti-mahāmūrtiṇām*

*samvarga-saṁdarsana-puṣhpavāṇam*

*vande bhavēnām prathimāṁ muneśvarāṁ*

It is noteworthy that one of the minor Saṁhita-puranas, the Bṛhaddharma (13th-14th centuries), glorified Valmiki and the *Ramayana* as the source of poetry and all Itihāsa-Purana literature at great detail in chapters 25 to 30 of its Purva Khanda. Valmiki was, according to this Purana, graced with poetic gifts by the Goddess Sarasvatī herself, at the bidding of Brahma. After composing the *Ramayana*, Valmiki imparted to Vyasa the eternal seed, essence and matrix of poetry so that he can compose the *M.Bh.* as a sure means means of salvation and larger in conspicuous than his own *Ramayana*.

### III

Both the *Ramayana* and *M.Bh.* are the two lighthouses or epics, according to the history of the kingly race and political situations contemporaneous with their authors in a poetic garb. Still Valmiki and Vyasa differ considerably in their comprehension of the theme

and communicating it to their audience using the required stylistic devices. The *M.Bh.* is the work of a mind of wider range and more intellectual approach than that of Valmiki. The imagination of its author is more comprehensive and brilliant. According to Sri Aurobindo the *M.Bh.* is "a mass of poetry which bears the style and impress of a single, strong and original, even unusual mind, differing in his manner of expressions, mode of thought, and stamp of personality not only from every other Sanskrit poet we know but from every other great poet known to literature".

#### IV

The *M.Bh.* itself, at its very beginning, states that it is a beautiful poem set in charming structure, figurative expressions, and descriptions of natural scenery. It continues, "Poets cannot excel this epic. In fact they have to draw upon it for their own creative activity. The eternal form is sung of here. It is indeed the Veda of Vyasa, and is called 'Mahabharata' because it is great (*mahat*) and weighty (*bharata*)".

More than anything the *M.Bh.* satisfies the requirements and criteria of a sublime and lofty poetical composition (*mahaukavya*) in its form, language, content, and aesthetic distance. "Expressions are the most powerful media of communication" (*vachanam eva prasaadena lokayatraa pravartate*), says the early Alamkara-ika Dandin. Vyasa is a great master in using minimal words and simple imagery, which at once communicate themselves to the hearer. As a random example of this, we may note the context in the Virata Parva where the piteable Draupadi is seen under the guise of Sairandhri being molested by Kichaka. Desperately at night-time she goes to the kitchen where Bhima, sighing heavily, was fast asleep like a lordly lion. Describing this situation Vyasa says, "Draupadi approached Bhima like a white, three-year old cow, born and bred in the forest, going to an excellent bull".

*Sarva-rudrair mahaheya vana jagata irihanyasee*

*upastambhata panchakule vachisva vararshabham*

The simple comparison of Draupadi to an all-white forest cow of three years brings out her condition fully laden with emotion and being under an unseemly coarse situation.

Awakening Bhima she says, "Get up, get up. Why are you still lying like a dead person?"

*utisthahutistha kim vata Bhimasena yataa mritam*

*naavirajya hi paapeyam bharmyam aalabhya jeevati*

One may note the simple language, as also the irony in "mritam", "unmritam", and "jeevati". Vyasa is specially fond of the naked beauty of a simple word or simple imagery. The highlight of *M.Bh.*, however, is its suggestive mode (*dhvani*, *vyanjana*) through which the vanity of earthly glories, the inevitable fate and the triumph

of Time are established, in and through the situations, descriptions, characterisations, etc. of the entire *M.Bh.* To put it in technical parlance, in the words of Anandavardhana, the greatest of Sanskrit literary critics, the chief *Rasa* in the *M.Bh.* is the *Quiescent* or *Santa*. Directly and primarily, no doubt, the *M.Bh.* describes the vicissitudes of the Kauravas and the Pandavas, but this viewpoint is only the *prima facie* meaning (*poorvapaksha*). Ultimately, however, the greatness of the Lord (after whom the epic is called *Narayana-katha*), and of *Dharma*, *Sama* and *Moksha* are deduced. For example, war is the essential part of its theme, and there are naturally many occasions for its descriptions. In the *Virata Parva* Arjuna fights against his enemies in the context of seeing the cows (*go-grahana*). Then there is the fight between the Kauravas and Pandavas as recounted in the *Drona* and other *Parvas*. A lesser poet than Vyasa could have made such descriptions scintillating, prosaic and monotonous. It is to be noted that Anandavardhana pays tribute to Vyasa's imagination and descriptive powers for infusing novelty and freshness in the recurring war—descriptions (*Sungtaumantaryah punah punah abhijitah api nava-novam prakasante*). The reader too enjoys the powerful, significant, and apt words used in them, balanced ideas, and effective comparisons. Besides providing a rich form Vyasa is able to connect all this with the major (*ang*) *Rasa* of *Santa* that *M.Bh.* delineates. This co-ordination is revealed in the description of the *Rathas* (chariots) and *Atcharathas* (coaching carts), ~~metres and blades, and all other~~ emblems of royalty, sinking in the mire of war. The genius of Vyasa alone can accomplish such a difficult feat of providing sublime repose and absorption to cultivated audience with nobler insights, deeper insight and mystic disposition even in and through these descriptions.

Another important feature is that while delineating such lofty sentiments Vyasa stands aloof and disinterested, and never reveals himself through his lines. Indeed the universal mind of Vyasa has enlarged the boundaries of ethical and religious outlook through a unique poetic grab. Rightly does Anandavardhana call him a "Sastra-kavi". The *M.Bh.* stands unrivalled until our times as the best *Santa-rasa-kaavya*, and also as an *Upanishad*, an *Aranyaka* among Vedas, may even as the fifth Veda.





## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF TEMPLE CAMPUS

Dr. SANIYA DEV

Truth is great, no doubt, but man cannot live by truth alone; he requires benevolence. But even truth and benevolence are not sufficient, beauty too is required. Thus it is the triple-flame of Satyam the truth, Sivam the good and Sundaram the beautiful that enlightens, rectifies and delights the human life respectively. Of this effulgent triple-flame of the true, the good and the beautiful the last has been the first impulse of man from time immemorial. Thus the beautiful, which has been the veritable source of all art, had unfolded itself even in the cave-dwelling primitive man of the Palaeolithic or the Old Stone Age.

The temples, especially in India, have been sacred shrines of not only the anthropomorphic deities but also diverse arts and crafts of aesthetic appeal. Even the external appearance of a temple is a visual epic in stone and stucco! In both ancient and medieval India the temples had been the infinite sources of not only devotional inspiration but also artistic creation. In those times there was little distinction between what were called the sacred and the secular, the material and the spiritual, the erotic and the esoteric. It was an integral and synthetic approach to life's summum bonum. Both the sophisticated urban culture and the unostentatious rural creativity had found their concrete expression in the form and content of the temple.

It is a great surprise to find the modern surrealistic trends in ancient images in the temples. Surrealism is an abnormal art expression emanating out of the subconscious world, which has made its manifestation in the twentieth century poetry as well as painting and sculpture. The imagination of the artists of yore was able to create such abnormal forms of surrealistic art. The images of Narasimha (semi-human and semi-animal), Brahma with four heads, Ganesha with the head of an elephant, Mahishasura mardini with ten arms are a few of the many surrealistic art examples of temple sculpture of India.

All arts can, in general, be divided into two- temporal and spatial. Temporal arts, which depend upon time, are auditory arts

while spatial arts, depending on space are generally visual arts. Music, Poetry and allied arts are temporal arts; painting, sculpture, etc., are spatial arts. In the South Indian temples, formerly equal significance used to be paid both to the temporal or auditory arts and the spatial or visual arts. But later on in these temples, auditory arts receive greater prominence than the visual arts. This is not to state that greater prominence should be given to visual arts than to the auditory ones; this is meant that equal prominence should be given to both of them. Musicians and dancers, painters and sculptors should equally be treated.

The T.T. Devasthanams have to be cordially congratulated by every artist, artisan, art-lover, connoisseur and common man alike for taking the initiative to bring into existence the S.V. Kala Preetham, which, it is hoped, would become a glowing centre of all arts and crafts, both creative and performing, spreading light and delight in the urban and rural areas alike. The Kala Preetham's task should be not only to revive the forgotten ancient and medieval traditional temple arts and crafts but also to give impetus to new creative and performing talents latent in young men and women. Revival of the old is noble, no doubt, but innovation of the new is nobler.

Temples ought to pay special attention to schemes of unfolding and patronising the talents of rural artists and artisans, who are by no means less dextrous, if not more dextrous, than their urban brethren. There are, in the obscure corners of the villages, talented, yet unknown painters, sculptors, potters, weavers, wood carvers, metal casters, fabric printers, doll makers, leather-puppet makers, rare ivory carvers, etc., who suffer from poverty due to lack of proper patronage. The craft of making temple lamps, lamp-holders and lamp-stands in the media of brass, bronze and other alloys is an accomplished art by itself. Various enchanting designs, shapes and ornamentations of these temple lamps emerge out of the rhythmic movements of the deft hands of these unsophisticated village craftsmen. It is indeed an aesthetic delight to watch these craftsmen at work in the process of which the amorphous raw material would culminate into forms enchanting. These craftsmen make their creations alive by infusing into them their own life.

Temples should encourage not merely the arts and crafts to be utilised by the temples but also those that are not useful for temples. The scope of temple arts and crafts has to be widened liberally. A temple campus has to become a rich museum-cum-art gallery in which are displayed various objects of arts including paintings, sculptures, handicrafts etc., irrespective of the themes they represent. The pilgrims visiting the temples should return to their homes, carrying within them the aesthetic impressions received

from the art-creations present in the temple-campus, along with their inspiring memories of their divine emotions felt in the presence of the deities in the shrines.

The temple campus should be utilised for not only displaying the arts and crafts but also conducting art seminars, symposia on art and art festivals which awaken in the common men, women and children the art-consciousness both in its creative and appreciative aspects. Such lively zeal for production as well as enjoyment of arts and crafts would be more powerful and popular if they are organised in the temple campus than done elsewhere.

More display of the finished products of art and handicrafts in the temple campus is not enough. People should enjoy the *modus operandi* as to how a painting is painted, how a sculpture is sculptured, how a pot is wrought on the potter's wheel, how a fabric is printed upon, etc. Such activities enlighten the public as to the unusual processes, methods and techniques of the execution of art-products. Hence such demonstrations of the *modus operandi* of works of arts and crafts have to be organised in the campus of the temples.

Eventually it is hoped that the atmosphere of the temple campus would vibrate with the rhythm of form and the tune of colour produced by the urban as well as the rural artists and artisans whose aesthetic aspirations turn into creative inspirations.



## THE FUTURE EVOLUTION OF MAN

MANOJ DAS

When the shy Darwin was challenged by Bishop Wilberforce to confess whether it was on his grandpa's side or on his grandma's that his ape ancestry came in, Thomas Huxley, known as Darwin's bull-dog, silenced the bishop declaring that he would surely prefer an ape ancestor to one who "did concern with success in his own sphere of activity, plunges into scientific questions with which he had no real acquaintance, only to obscure them by an aimless rhetoric, and skilled appeals to religious prejudice."

We do not know how ably Darwin was defended in a California court a few years ago where a citizen sued a teacher for his telling the former's son that the boy had descended from a monkey!

Darwin, of course, was remarkably humble by the logic of his own discovery. "Can the mind of man, which has I fully believe, been developed from a mind as that possessed by the lowest animals, be trusted when it draws such grand conclusions? I cannot pretend to throw the least light on such abstruse problems," he admitted.

A ban on Darwin's theory ("the law of biggledy-piggledy" according to astronomer Herschel) was only recently lifted from the schools of Tennessee. If it has taken a long time for the Tennessee authorities to see the point in the definition of man as "an animal that throws peanuts to his ancestors," there are still many nations and institutions who feel scandalised over Darwin's reading of their origin for reasons that are of course not scientific.

The concept of evolution, however, has become a conviction in our time whether we accept Darwin's theories of the transmission of characteristics and selection or not, or whether we agree to be considered as primates, with the gorilla and the chimpanzee as our closest kin or not.

Surprisingly, a scientific supposition like the Evolution has a support in some of the most ancient Indian myths and mystic parables. The doctrine of Dashavatar or the Ten Incarnations of Vishnu is of unmistakable significance. The first nine in this series are Matsya (Fish), Kurma (Tortoise), Varaha (Boar), Narasimha

Vamana (Dwarf), Parasurama, Rama, Balarama and Krishna. According to another list, the last three in this line of the incarnations are Rama, Krishna and Buddha.

Although each incarnation has a legend behind it, one cannot fail to note an evolutionary significance in the series.

It begins with the Fish, symbol of the manifestation of life in the water. The Tortoise indicates the extension of the animal life to the land.

The Bear stands for a new manifestation of force. Narasimha or the Man-lion is the transition from animal to man. The Vamana or the Dwarf is the primitive man, the dwarfness symbolising the infancy of the species.

Parasurama is the fully developed man, capable of wielding a Parasu or an axe, the weapon standing for his mastery over the carnal nature. Rama represents the ethical and moral power, the capacity for mastery over one's own nature.

Krishna stands for spiritual wisdom, supported in his regions by Balarama. The Buddha chalks out the way to Nirvana for those who are unwilling to continue in the process of of birth and death.

The tenth incarnation is promised. Known as Kalki, He is to put an end to the barbaric elements in man and to lead humanity towards a glorious future of spiritual perfection.

This reveals the futuristic vision imbedded in the myth and its faith in the destiny of man.

Evolution, indeed, is a vast subject, speaking both scientifically and spiritually. The scope of this article will be limited to the concept's relevance to our psychological well-being and consequently to our physical well-being.

Can human mind accept evolution without any irrefragable scientific proof at his disposal or any spiritual realisation that needs no external proof? Yes, when by evolution we mean not just the development of new species, but a growth in consciousness, a gradual recognition of the need to be good. An objective look at the whole history will establish one to be truthful and just. It is a slow process. Love of truth and justice may be more easily discernible in individuals through the ages, but its gradual triumph over the collectivity too is undeniable. There was nothing improper in openly paying the voters and buying votes in the early Roman democracy. Some people perhaps still indulge in such transactions, but they do so in secrecy. There was nothing absurd in King X of the Arabian Nights marrying a damsel at twilight and beheading her by dawn. Neither part of the activity will be possible today. We have come miles away from priding on burning witches and selling slave-markets. True democracy or true socialism may still be ideals far off from realisation, but they have come to stay and get realized.

Even pretensions to certain ideals are signs of the ultimate victory of the ideals.

These are signs of moral evolution of man. But in another faculty he seems to have evolved far more speedily and dangerously. That is in his faculty of mind -- in intelligence, or, to be precise, There was a time when man dreams of superior intelligence as blessing. It is high time we transcend this delusion. Intelligence is only a small part of the consciousness in its totality and by itself it makes a man neither noble nor happy. It is nearly always at the mercy of some other element of consciousness, call it passion or ambition or ideological mission. One can pledge one's brilliant intelligence to fools or dangerous foes of humanity. Look at some of the scientists of our time. They are far superior to the political leaders of their countries when it comes to intelligence. Yet they are conducting themselves in no better fashion than the jinn at Aladdin's command, in this case a jinn of bad Aladdins. They go on inventing and polishing ever-novel machines of death and destruction. If they do so out of their own inspiration, they are wicked, if in response to the instruction of their bosses, they are nincompoops, their intelligence notwithstanding.

The efforts to delegate intelligence to machines too are well-known, though the consequences of such efforts are yet to be appreciated. Herbert Dreyfus, a well-known American computer-specialist, observed that no computer can equal a human being in intelligence. For example, he said, no computer can play chess as good as even an average chess-player. Fiveeen years had not passed when a graduate student named Richard Greenblatt made a chess-playing computer and challenged Dreyfus to a match against it. Dreyfus accepted the challenge and was defeated in the match.

The true danger, indeed, lies not in the computer throwing man out of his earth like a new generation of Roman gods throwing out old, but in two other areas. As Doug Parker, the computer security expert at Stanford Research Institute fears, World War III may be fought out with missiles and bombs, but with computers. A sabotage of the computer-controlled defence, banking and other sophisticated systems of a country would plunge it into a chaos that would be synonymous of destruction. Parker cites an instance. "A small clerical error in calculation of the MIA (amount of money in circulation) cost stock traders 65 billion dollars." He asks, "What might happen if computerized Government economic figures were tampered with deliberately?"

It is important to note that "intelligent computers" are now being employed to guard and help operating nuclear power plants. It is not difficult to imagine the shape of things to come once the

enemy has been able to implant a bee in any such intelligent computer's banner!

The danger in the other area—the human psychology—is perhaps more formidable. We know of a couple of brilliant civilisations waning away for excessive dependence on slaves. But, slaves, after all, were human beings and they prospered when their masters declined. There is nothing human in the relation between man and his robot-slave.

It is a one-way traffic without an emotional response. If one contemplates a human agency, there is always the possibility of the agency reacting with reluctance when the command is wrong or immoral. The reaction cannot but have its impact, even if not perceptible, and the total transaction is at the natural plane of consciousness. But the coldness with which the robot can carry out the orders of his human master has something sinister about it. Man is the absolute master—and helplessly so. The absoluteness is a kind of curse. The total lack of emotion at the receiving end can slowly render man equally cold. And that coldness is not going to remain confined to his behaviour with the computers alone. It will have a deadly influence on his other relationships—political, social and personal.

Apart from the impact of such technological developments on the mind and behaviour of man, the other development that had a devastating effect, though no proper psychological survey has been made of the effect, is the threat held out by the nuclear arsenals to wipe out life from the earth. Continuous dangling of this Sword of Damocles on the civilisation's head has bred a cynicism of hitherto unknown gravity. What is the value of culture, ethics, philosophy and all the glorious endeavours of man spread over millenniums when a few power-mad fellows can put an end to everything or at least main civilisations beyond repair and degrade man beyond redemption in the twinkling of an eye by simply manipulating a few switch-boards? This is the question that lies beneath the overwhelming phenomenon of despair and dejection characterising human behaviour today—including the latest brand of drug-induced nihilism.

Indeed, a petulant pessimism has invaded human consciousness and its signs are too numerous to be listed. All sensible people realise that a chasm has been created between the material and technological situation man has created through his intelligence on one hand and his capacity to handle it on the other hand. A stark paradox stares at us in every walk of life. We have political and social theories galore but nothing seems to be the answer to the crisis.

Well-meaning savants have come out with radical theories to lead man out of the predicament which include positive eugenics, limiting the right of "fathering" a future generation to select band of talents. If not anything else, such theories highlight the disgust some intellectuals have developed in the present condition of humanity the continuation of which seems purposeless to them.

The disgust takes the form of a positive thinking in a pragmatist like Bertrand Russell when he says :

"It is difficult to believe that Omnipotence needed so vast a setting for so small and transitory a result. Apart from the minuteness and brevity of the human species, I cannot feel that it is a worthy climax to such an enormous prelude."

Julian Huxley was even more positive : "... a vast New World of uncharted possibilities awaits its Columbus... The human race, in fact, is surrounded by a large area of unrealised possibilities. The human species can, if it wishes, transcend itself... Human destiny is to participate in the creative process of development, whereby the universe as a whole can realise more of its potentialities in richer and greater fulfilments."

What seems to be no more than wishful thinking, though so poignant in these celebrated thinkers, is put forth as an assurance by Sri Aurobindo "the last great seer".

No simpler summary of Sri Aurobindo's vision and Yoga can be made than the one by the Mother :

"There is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Because man is, for the moment, the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, he considers himself as the final stage in this ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. In that he is mistaken. In his physical nature he is yet almost wholly an animal, a thinking and speaking animal, but still an animal in his material habits and instincts. Undoubtedly, nature cannot be satisfied with such an imperfect result; she endeavours to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance.

"Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness. Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. During the whole of his life upon earth, Sri Aurobindo gave all his time to establish in himself this consciousness he called supramental, and to help those gathered around him to realise it."



So, Sri Aurobindo visualises man as an evolving being — progressively growing in his consciousness. This growth will be a growth from darkness to light, darkness in this case standing for the manifold manifestation of ignorance — suffering included. About suffering, it may be relevant to quote a few words here from a letter of Sri Aurobindo written to a seeker: "Life here is an evolution and the soul grows by experience, working out by it this or that in the nature, and if there is suffering, it is for the purpose of that working out, not as a judgment inflicted by God or Cosmic Law on the errors or shortcomings which are inevitable in the ignorance."

Ignorance keeps us under its thrall through uncountable tricks. It can even put on the mask of luminous wisdom!

The more one is attached to the world, the more is one vulnerable to the duplicitous hold of ignorance. Illusory attractions and false values dominate every sphere and aspect of life. Hence, the age-old mystic prescription: Renounce the world and the life if you wish to find the Reality, the Truth.

No doubt, the world as we see it, the life as we live it, are experiences which are a queer mixture of joy and sorrow, hope and frustration, pleasure and suffering, love and death. No wonder that such conditions should be disgusting to the seekers truth and lovers of perfection. Their recoil from such a bizarre situation and their dedicating themselves to some "other-worldly" pursuits are, of course, understandable.

But can such a stand be entirely satisfactory? Don't we feel, at times, that such a recoil could not be a true answer to the enigma of the world? If the world, if the realities of our life, are basically false, what business had the Creator to create them at all? What about the efforts those great minds — poets, philosophers, artists, builders, and scientists of various disciplines — mystics apart — to enrich the human existence, to create the beautiful and to strive for perfection? Are all their urges and aspirations meaningless?

Surely, the Creator ought to have a scheme behind his creation! Despite its present state of bewildering contradictions, the world could be moving towards a certain fulfilment!

This vision of fulfilment is the vision of Sri Aurobindo. He tells us that one need not renounce the world and life to find the Truth. The world and the life are the Divine's creation and are not his anonyms. The Divine is in the process of revealing himself in this creation of his — and that is the purpose of the evolutionary misis in operation.

O Lord my God Save my Life

In fact, Sri Aurobindo's vision of evolution embraces another significant process, that of involution. "The Spirit which manifests itself here in a body, must be involved from the beginning in the

whole of matter and in every knot, formation and particle of matter."

According to Sri Aurobindo a fulfilment is awaiting man; a day will come when the world will be the Spirit's manifest home. The answer to the puzzle of life is not its rejection, but its fulfilment—to use the right term from Sri Aurobindo's vocabulary—its transfiguration.

We know that ego is at the root of most of our problems and sufferings. Yet, ego was an indispensable step in the evolutionary process. "The formation of a mental and vital ego tied to the body-sense was the first great labour of the cosmic life in its progressive evolution; for this was the means it found for creating out of the matter a conscious individual." But this ego, once the life helper, is now the bar against man's progress and it must be transcended. Sri Aurobindo explains elaborately how in myriad ways Nature teaches man to break out of his shell of ego.

We have seen how a certain process of Yoga is inherent in Nature itself. The very story of evolution is the story of a great voyage—a journey from a total ignorance towards knowledge, from an unconscious state towards an ever increasing degree of consciousness. But a time had come, when, with this natural process of Yoga, man's conscious collaboration was called for. This collaboration will pave the way for a rapid realisation of the future in store for him. Man, of course, is free to prolong the situation that prevails, but the predicament in which he is placed today, the crisis that he is facing in every walk of life, cannot be solved unless he aspires to grow farther in his consciousness. In fact, Sri Aurobindo stated that the crisis mankind is experiencing today is an evolutionary crisis. We can conclude that it is just not possible to get over the crisis with any remedy that falls short of a readiness to rise above the limitations that are the characteristics of mind.

The highly developed mind of today, left to itself, might undo all that it has achieved. Mind must be yuckled by a superior power—a gnostic consciousness, Sri Aurobindo terms it the Supramental. His Yoga was directed towards paving the way for this consciousness to take hold of human life.

Is Sri Aurobindo's vision of the future of man just a hope, just a possibility? The Mother says, "What Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's history is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is a decisive action direct from the Supreme."

It seems to be matter of time. Though we cannot say what length of time, there is reason to think that the process of evolution in the future will be more speedy than it has been so far. As George C. Simpson says in *The Meaning of Evolution* :

"Evolution is a cumulative process and in it, as usual in such processes, there is an effect of acceleration. Early stages were atten-

long and slow almost beyond imagination. They built a basis on which, finally, more rapid evolution occurred."

Does this vision of the future evolution of man imply a change in our attitude to issues and problems that beset us? It does. So far we have looked at man as he is, not as he will be. All our panaceas for his ills, methods of dealing with him in his normal as well as abnormal states, have been formulated with a view of him as he is at the moment. Once we realise that the basic force in operation in him is the evolutionary *nisus* inherent in him, that more than his body, mind and life which appear to constitute him, there is the soul or the psychic being in him, we understand him better. Since it is the soul which will dominate the psychic being of the future, the future psychology has to take care of the soul's evolutionary demands. Once we know that through different kinds of experiences the soul is striving to lead man towards a certain goal, a new dimension opens up in our diagnosis of man's problems. Most of the problems, the physical and mental traumas included, might be owing their origin to this chequered evolutionary push in man.

Even the gigantic strides the human intelligence has taken, at the cost of man's security, has its justification. The mind had to thoroughly exhaust its possibilities before the manifestation of a new consciousness.

Humanity's "earliest formula of Wisdom promises to be its last—God, Light, Freedom and Immortality." Man in his evolution is destined to realise these propositions. A faith in this itself is a step in evolution.



## SECTION III

Dr Radhakrishnan's Centenary



# HOW I BECAME A PHILOSOPHER

SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

There are some who make up their mind early what they are going to be and plan carefully from their early years to reach their goal. They find out what they wish to do and try to do it with all their might. I cannot say that I came to the study of philosophy as one dedicated from childhood to the service of the altar. I am not a philosopher because I could not help being one. "Life," says Dilthey, "is a mysterious fabric, woven of chance, fate and character." That philosophy became the subject of my special study, was it a part of my destiny, was it the result of my character or was it mere chance?

When I was a young student of seventeen in the Madras Christian College, and was vacillating about the choice of a subject from out of the five options of mathematics, physics, biology, philosophy and history, a cousin of mine, who took his degree that year, passed on his textbooks in philosophy to me, G. F. Stout's *Manual of Psychology*, J. Walton's *Logic* (2 volumes) and J. S. Mackenzie's *Manual of Ethics*; and that decided my future interest. To all appearance this is a mere accident. But when I look at the series of accidents that shaped my life, I am persuaded that there is more in this life than meets the eye. Life is not a mere chain of physical causes and effects. Chance seems to form the surface of reality, but deep down other forces are at work. If the universe is a living one, if it is spiritually alive, nothing in it is merely accidental. "The moving finger writes and having writ, moves on."

When however the study of philosophy became my life's work, I entered a domain which sustained me both intellectually and spiritually all these years. My conception of a philosopher was in some ways similar to that of Marx, who proclaimed in his famous *Theses on Feuerbach* that philosophy had hitherto been concerned with *interpreting* life, but that the time had come for it to *change* life. Philosophy is committed to a creative task, although in one sense philosophy is a lonely pilgrimage of the spirit, in another sense, it is a function of life.

I spent the first eight years of my life (1886-1895) in a small town in South India, Tirupati, which is even today a great centre of religious pilgrimage. My parents were religious in the traditional sense of the term. I studied in Christian Missionary institutions for 12 years: Lutheran Mission High School, Tirupati (1896-1900), Veeraboes' College, Vellore (1900-1904), and the M.C.C. (1904-8). Thus I grew up in an atmosphere where the unseen was a living reality. My approach to the problems of philosophy from the angle of religion, as distinct from that of science or of history, was determined by my early training. I was not able to confuse philosophy to logic and epistemology.

There are tasks and responsibilities open to an Indian student of philosophic thought, living in this profoundly meaningful period of history. The predominant feature of our time is not so much the wars and the dictatorships which have disfigured it, but the impact of different cultures on one another, their interaction, and the emergence of a new civilisation based on the truths of spirit and unity of mankind. The tragedies and catastrophes which occupy so much of the foreground of our consciousness are symbolic of the breakdown of the separatist tendencies and the movement towards the integration of national societies in a world whole. In the confusions of the contemporary scene, this fallible, long-suffering and apparently helpless generation should not overlook the great movement towards integration in which it is participating.

Through her connections with Great Britain, India is once again brought into relationship with the Western world. The interpenetration of the two great currents of human effort at such a crisis in the history of the human race is not without meaning for the future. With its profound sense of spiritual reality brooding over the world of our ordinary experience, with its lofty insights and immortal aspirations, Indian thought may perhaps warn us moderns from a too exclusive occupation with secular life or with the temporary formulations in which logical thought has too often sought to imprison spiritual aspiration. We do not seem to be mentally or spiritually prepared for the increasing intimacy into which remote peoples are drawn by the force of physical and economic circumstances. The world which has found itself as a single body is feeling for its soul. May we not prepare for the birth of the world's yet unborn soul by a free interchange of ideas and the development of a philosophy which will combine the best of European humanism and Asiatic religion, a philosophy profounder and more living than either, endowed with greater spiritual and ethical force, which will conquer the hearts of men and compel peoples to acknowledge its sway? Such a view of the function of philosophy in modern life is born out of a necessity of thought.

and an Indian student may perhaps make a little contribution to the development of a world perspective in philosophy.

I started my professional life as a teacher of philosophy in the Madras Presidency College in April 1909, where I worked for the next seven years. During that period, I studied the classics of Hinduism, the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavadgita* and the commentaries on the *Brahma Sutra*, by the chief Acharyas, Samkara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarka and others, the Dialogues of the Buddha as well as the scholastic works of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Among the Western thinkers, the writings of Plato, Plotinus and Kant and those of Bradley and those of Bergson influenced me a great deal. My relations with my great Indian contemporaries, Tagore and Gandhi, were most friendly for nearly 30 years, and I realise the tremendous significance they had for me.

Although I admire the great masters of thought, ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, I cannot say I am a follower of any, accepting his teaching in its entirety. I do not suggest that I refused to learn from others or that I was not influenced by them. While I was greatly stimulated by the minds of all those whom I have studied, my thought does not comply with any fixed traditional pattern. For my thinking had another source and proceeded from my own experience, which is not quite the same as what is acquired by mere study and reading. It is born of spiritual experience rather than of one deduced from logically ascertained premises. Philosophy is produced more by our encounters. In my writings I have tried to communicate my insight into the meaning of life. I am not sure, however, that I have succeeded in conveying my inmost ideas. I tried to show that my general position provides a valid interpretation of the world, which seems to me to be consistent with itself, to accord with the facts as we know them, and to foster the life of spirit.

Human minds do not throw up sudden stray thoughts without precedents or ancestors. History is continuity and advance. There is no such thing as utterly spontaneous generation. Philosophic experiments of the past have entered into the living mind of the present. Tradition links generations one with another and all progress is animated by ideas which it seems to supersede. The debt we owe to our spiritual ancestors is to study them. Traditional continuity is not mechanical reproduction; it is creative transformation, an increasing approximation to the ideal of truth. Life goes on not repudiating the past but by accepting it and weaving it into the future in which the past undergoes a rebirth. The main thing is to remember and create anew. Confucius said: "He who by reanimating the Old can gain knowledge of the New is fit to be a teacher."



Indian people have concentrated for centuries on the problems of divine reality, human life and destiny. Philosophic wisdom has been the drive and inspiration of their culture. We today think with our past and from the level in which the past has taken us.

Indian wisdom has also contributed effectively to the cultural development of the regions of South East Asia, which till yesterday were called Further India. The characteristic features of Indian culture can still be discerned from "Ayutthia and Angkor to Borobudur and Bali." India's historic influence spread through the ways of peace and not the weapons of war, through moral leadership and not political domination. Her influence could be discerned in the development of European thought from the time of the Orphic mysteries. Today Indian wisdom is essential not only for the revival of the Indian nation but also for the re-education of the human race.

When that noble and generous thinker, Prof. J.H. Muirhead invited me in 1917 to write an account of Indian Philosophy for his Library of Philosophy, I accepted his call, though not without considerable thought.

To outline the history of Indian philosophic thought, which has had a long span of development of over 3,000 years, on a cautious estimate, is indeed a prodigious task and I was aware that it was beyond the capacity of any single person. It might be done by a band of scholars in a co-operative undertaking, spread over a number of years, with the assistance of many research workers. The result of such an undertaking will be, not a book but an encyclopaedia, careful and comprehensive.

I was aware of the dangers and difficulties involved in an adequate historical interpretation of Indian thought, as well as of my own limitations, philosophical and linguistic. I, therefore, assumed a modest task, to produce an introduction to a vast, varied and complex process of development, a book which will arouse the interest of the readers in the insights and inspirations of the Indian genius. I tried to unveil a great panorama in which every element has some charm or interest. I tried not to overstate any case or indulge in personal dislike for its own sake.

History of philosophy should not be reduced to a mere statement of doctrines in chronological order. These doctrines are propositions, sentences with a meaning. Meanings are not absolute. They have no sense apart from when and by whom and for whom they were meant. The formulators of philosophical systems are not abstract thinkers or anonymous beings without biography or dwelling place. The date of a thinker and the place of the origin and growth of his thought are not external labels tacked on to the systems, merely for placing them in their proper chronological order.

Like all thought, philosophical thought belongs to the context of life. Its exponents belong to their age with its living beliefs and traditions, its scientific notions and myths. If we are to gain insight from the study of past writers, we must remove them from us, emphasise their distance in time and realise how different in many ways they are from us. To understand their thought, we must learn to feel and understand their world even as they felt and understood it, never approaching them with condescension or contempt. Only in that way can we understand their living effective communication with us.

There have been historians of Indian philosophy in our country who looked upon India's philosophic thought as a continuity in which it progressed rationally from one conception to another, where systems succeeded each other in intelligible order until it culminated in their own thought. All that was past was a progress towards their own present thinking. Madhusava's *Sarvadarsanasaṅgraha* is a well known instance of the treatment of the history of thought as a continuous progress to *Advaita Vedānta*. In the West, Hegel related the past history of thought as a collection of errors over against which stood out his own idealism as the truth. Intellectual unselfishness or humility is the mother of all wisdom, even though that wisdom may relate to the history of philosophy.

In re-thinking the systems of the past, I sometimes employ terms with which the Western readers are familiar. I am aware of the limitations of the comparative method which can be either a bane or a blessing. We cannot overlook the different emphases, not only between East and West, but in the different systems of the East as well as those of the West. These differences, when valid, are complementary, not contradictory. In many detailed investigations, there is agreement between the thinkers of the East and the West.

The comparative method is relevant in the present context, when the stage is set, if not for the development of a world of philosophy, at least for that of a world outlook. The different parts of the world cannot any more develop separately and in independence of each other. Even as our political problem is to bring East and West together in a common brotherhood which transcends racial differences, so in the world of philosophy we have to bring about a cross-fertilisation of ideas.

If systems of philosophy are themselves determined by historical circumstances, there is no reason why the methods adopted in historical interpretation should not take into account the needs and conditions of the age. Each interpreter appeals to his own generation. He is wise to let the generation that succeeds him choose its own exponents. It will do so whether he likes it or not. His work is fulfilled if he keeps the thought alive in his generation.

helps to some extent his successors, and attempts to answer, so far as he can, the desire of his age.

Though I have not had a sense of vocation, a sense that I was born to do what I am now carrying out, my travels and engagements in different parts of the world for over a generation gave me a purpose in life. My one supreme interest has been to try to restore a sense of spiritual values to the millions of religiously displaced persons who have been struggling to find precarious refuges in the emergency camps of Arts and Science, of Fascism and Nazism, of Humanism and Communism.

The first step to recovery is to understand the nature of the confusion of thought which shrouds the allegiance of millions of men. Among the major influences which foster a spirit of scepticism in regard to religious truth are the growth of the scientific spirit, the development of a technological civilisation, a formal or artificial religion which finds itself in conflict with an awakened social conscience, and a comparative study of religions.

The fear of metaphysics is unreal. But the metaphysical nature of man will not remain vacant. It will have a content. Metaphysical emptiness does not exist, for it is itself a metaphysics, a sceptical metaphysics. To refuse to philosophize is in itself a kind of philosophy. "The malady of contemporary empiricistic philosophizing," as Einstein calls it (on Paul A. Schilpp's *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*), will not last long.

Religious life belongs to the realm of inward spiritual revelation: when exteriorised it loses its authentic character. It is misleading to speak of different religions. We have different religious traditions which can be used for correction and enrichment. The traditions do not create the truth but clothe it in language and symbol for the help of those who do see it themselves.

In the midst of the travail in which we are living we discern the emergence of the religion of the Spirit, which will be the crown of the different religions, devoted to the perfecting of humanity in the life of the spirit, that is, in the life of God in the soul. When God is our own teacher, we come to think alike.

Sometimes we exteriorise the mystery of spiritual life. Religions which believe in the reality of spiritual life interpret the dogmas with reference to it. Religious views are not so much attempts to solve the riddle of the universe as efforts to describe the experience of sages. The concepts are verbalisations of intense emotional experience.

The mandate of religion is that man must make the change in his own nature in order to let the divine in him manifest itself. It speaks of the death of man as we know him with all his

worldly desires and the emergence of the new man. This is the teaching not only of the Upanishads and Buddhism but also of the Greek mystics and Platonism, of the Gospels and the schools of Gnosticism.

Those who overlook this perennial wisdom, the eternal religion behind all religions, this *sanatana dharma*, this timeless tradition, "wisdom uncreated, the same now that it ever was, and the same to be forevermore," and cling to the outward forms and quarrel among themselves, are responsible for the civilised chaos in which we live. It is our duty to get back to this central core of religion, this fundamental wisdom which has been obscured and distorted in the course of history by dogmatic and sectarian developments.

While I never felt attracted to travelling for its own sake, I have travelled a great deal and lived in places far from home, in England, and France, America and Russia. For some years, I have spent long periods in England and the qualities of the English people such as their love of justice, their hatred of doctrinairism, their sympathy for the underdog, made an impression on me. All Souls College, which has provided a second home for me all these years, has given me an insight into English intellectual life with its caution and stability, confidence and adventure. Whatever one may feel about the character of the Russian Government, the people there are kindly and human and their lives are filled as anywhere else with jokes and jealousies, loves and hates.

Though I have not been able to take root in any of these foreign countries, I have met many, high and low, and learned to feel the human in them. There are no fundamental differences among the peoples of the world. They have all the deep human feelings, the craving for justice above all class interests, horror of bloodshed and violence. They are working for a religion which reaches the possibility and the necessity of man's union with himself, with nature, with his fellow men, and with the eternal spirit, of which the visible universe is but a manifestation and upholds the emergence of a complete consciousness as the destiny of man. Our historical religions will have to transform themselves into the universal faith or they will fade away. This prospect may appear strange and unwelcome to some, but it has a truth and beauty of its own. It is working in the minds of men and will soon be a realised fact.

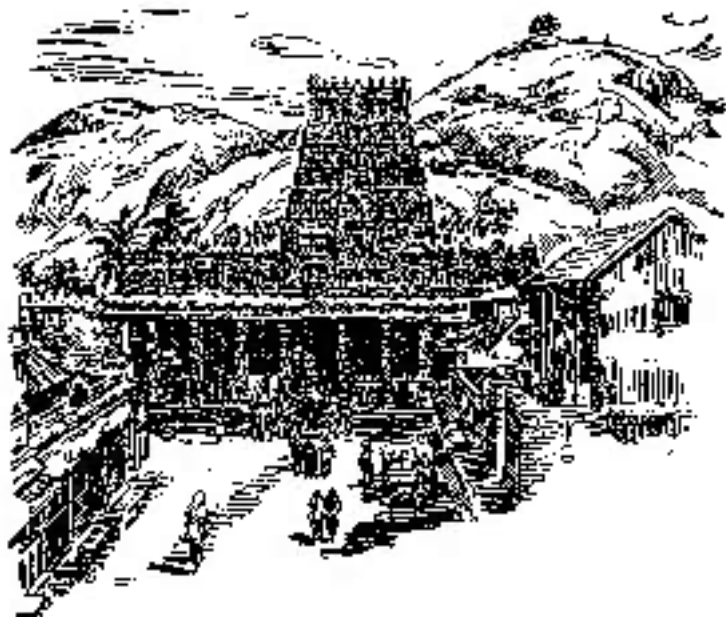
Human unity depends not on past origins but on future goal and direction, on what we are becoming and whither we are tending. Compared with the civilisation that is now spreading over the earth's surface, thanks to science and technology, the previous civilisations were restricted in scope and resources. Scientists claim that organic life originated on this planet some 1200 million years

ago, but man has come into existence on earth during the last half million years. His civilisation has been here only for the last 10,000 years. Man is yet in his infancy and has a long period ahead of him on this planet. He will work out a higher integration and produce world-minded men and women.

The eternal religion, outlined in these pages, is not irrational or unscientific, is not escapist or a-social. Its acceptance will solve many of our desperate problems and will bring peace to men of goodwill.

This is the personal philosophy which by different paths I have attained, a philosophy which has served me in the severest tests, in sickness and in health, in triumph and in defeat. It may not be given to us to see that the faith prevails but it is given to us to strive that it should.

Condensed From *"FRAGMENTS OF A CONFESSION"*



## DR. RADHAKRISHNAN : WORLD - PHILOSOPHER

Dr. PAUL ARTHUR SCHLPP

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South India is indeed historically rich, and was the natural soil to root such a seer as Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the first Philosopher - Ruler since Marcus Aurelius (in the Second Century A.D.). Why did he speak in the flowing words of a poet, like a Rabindranath Tagore, while offering his ideas with the vision of the Hindu sages, both ancient and as modern as Gandhi, and of Jesus in the West? Why? How? Because Radhakrishnan was blessed with an unusually acute mind—a gift from God—and he used that gift to become a world scholar.

Although he was born to Hindu parents on September 5, 1888 in the small town of Tiruchani, just forty miles north-west of Madras, he was not a man who had unusual advantages of wealth. His schooling and college education were primarily under Christian missionaries, and he suffered strong words of criticism from these missionary teachers about his Hindu beliefs. But, with the truly traditional attitude of Hinduism, he was tolerant and broad-minded.

It was with his beliefs of "props" shaken that he set out for self-discovery and to find his own truth.

After extensive reading of mankind's classic books both East and West, already as a very young man, he had the courage to begin to search out his own philosophy.

Like the brilliant scholar he was to be all his exceptional career, he set out to study all the Hindu classics, the dialogues of Buddha, the works of Jainism, and also the Christian Bible, Plato, Kant, Bergson, and many more. How many philosophers do we have with the staggering background of Radhakrishnan, now or in the past? After years of devoted study, he was to synthesize, to distill, to accept these eclectic ideas and remain under,

perhaps, the broadest religious umbrella of the world - Hinduism — and to write his fine book *The Hindu View of Life*.

Radhakrishnan wrote back in 1955 that the "Fundamental need of the world is the recovery of Faith" (Ref F. p. 1). Because he had observed that "Far deeper than any social, political, or economic readjustment is a spiritual reawakening." He spoke of his concern for the breakdown of our civilization, and challenged us to movements of the spirit to correct wrongs in our existing order. He wrote, of course, after the traumatic chase after Atomic Bomb Supremacy had cast its awful shadow over our globe -- or as he put it — "The new prospect of a possible liquidation of the world by man's own wanton interference." (Ref F. p. 1).

How refreshing was that book, *Recovery of Faith*, in the midst of what has been happening in Western, and even Eastern philosophy — a pre-occupation with symbolic logic and logical positivism — whatever you wish to call the movements about the meaning of language and numbers that has engulfed many of our Western philosophical meetings. In my Presidential Address to the American Philosophical Association I called it "The Abdication of Philosophy". When Albert Einstein referred to the logical positivists as "The rearing of little birdies", he put it a bit stronger than I would have put it.

Radhakrishnan dared to address social issues of his time. Like philosophers of wisdom once did, he struck deeply into the roots of true significance of man's life. He spoke to us eloquently in the King's English, to use the idiom. (This is with due respect to both America and India, who fought to ward off the British Empire)

During his lifetime I had a number of opportunities to engage Radhakrishnan in personal conversation both in America and in India. I always found him to be as amiable and hospitable as he was profound.

But, especially, I shall never forget the first time we met. I had driven to the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, from a few miles away at Northwestern University (where I spent 29 years of my life in the Philosophy Department). During the course of his lecture, I grew increasingly impressed by the great man and his ideas. Before his lecture ended I was certain I wanted to create a volume in the *Library of Living Philosophers* series on Radhakrishnan's philosophy.

After his talk, I accompanied him walking back to his room at the University Quadrangle Club, and enroute, immediately proposed the volume. Very modestly, he replied: "Oh, no, I am not in the company of Bernard Russell, John Dewey, Alfred

North Whitehead and the others on whom you have created volumes." Of course, I countered that he was too humble.

When he sat down to write his agreement to such a volume, the only blank piece of paper we could find between the two of us was the back of a laundry list. History should find that anecdote amusing.

During the two other visits to America, he had dinner with us at our home near Northwestern University. In our present home near Southern Illinois University, we have two portraits of Radhakrishnan in my study. One is inscribed to us "with love", and the other is a news photo of the two of us seated side by side, conferring in Calcutta in 1951.

Let me share with you how realistically Radhakrishnan looked at issues and ideas in the actual world. Although he was a fervent spokesman for intercultural exchange, world peace and understanding, he also dared to dispassionately examine his own Hindu world in India.

For example, like Gandhi, he was very concerned with the position and freedom of women. He was long ahead of his time recognizing the movement of Women's Liberation in the East and West. What daring it took to write the following words back in 1937, over 40 years ago.

"Full of tenderness and deep affection as Indian married life is, its value can be greatly increased by suitable changes in the social institutions which have become stabilized by the unwillingness of legislatures to interfere with social customs. The only security which Indian women have against the breaking down of their bodies and minds is the goodwill of their husbands, and that is not enough in our present conditions." (PL, p. 5A)

Radhakrishnan stood for the betterment of women's lot long before the world had given the idea much thought. After all, I come from America where women won the right to vote in public elections only in 1920. That was accomplished only by a long-kebbled amendment to our Constitution. (And women in the U.S. are still rallying for the Equal Rights Amendment.) Radhakrishnan believed in education and rights for women — single, married, divorced, or widowed.

We all know that Radhakrishnan was influenced as a young man by Swami Vivekananda — The man who also scorned America in 1893. (Loff, p. 6A). Vivekananda's writings helped Radhakrishnan to see Hinduism in its broadest aspects, social improvement rooted in spirituality. In Radhakrishnan's own later writings, he helped Hindus and Moslems to understand Christianity, and Christians to understand Oriental religions. "*No formula can confine God,*" he wrote (Loff, p. 3) Like Gandhi and other great souls,



Radhakrishnan found in essence that there are "as many paths to God as there are souls upon the quest."

He felt that "The different religions are not rivals or competing forces but fellow labourers in the same great task. God has not left Himself without witness among any people... There is always a natural manifestation of the one Almighty God amongst all right-thinking men... Serious students of comparative religion are impressed by the general revelation of God." (ALoP, p. 9)

Radhakrishnan predicted that in a "new world order" there would be no "Spiritual monopolies" such as in the past. He did not believe in a "pet. fancy of the poets that their own religion is the flower of the development of religion and the final end into which all others converge" (ALoP, p. 19)

He declared that religion must be rational and that it "Must express itself in *reasonable thought, fruitful action, and right social institutions*." Saint Thomas (who, according to legend, preached and died here in South India), could not have said it better.

Radhakrishnan attracted attention East and West as early as age 32 in 1920 with his work, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*. Already his earlier articles in the quarterly magazine *Mind* had aroused interest and his book was used as a text in India, Britain, and America. By then he had been classified, like Hegel, as an Objective Idealist, but Unlike Hegel, not an absolutist. Radhakrishnan was an everlasting seeker after truth, but he never claimed to possess it. Like Albert Einstein, he was always approximating to the absolute, but never claimed to have reached it. Also, like Einstein, Radhakrishnan was constantly aware of man's limitations. In 1921, at only 33, he was appointed to the King George V Chair of Philosophy at the University of Calcutta.

For the prestigious 14th Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, he was invited to write the article on "Indian Philosophy". He wrote for the *Hibbert Journal* and he gave the Upton Lectures in 1926 which resulted in the book, *The Hindu View of Life*. That same year he addressed the International Philosophical Congress at Harvard University. Thus, by age 32, when many young men and women are climbing the professional ladder in philosophy, Radhakrishnan was a luminary.

In his Harvard address, Radhakrishnan was already concerned about the world headed toward Technology, Science, Behaviourism, and the like — lacking a spiritual foundation. He found the world, for all its so-called "advancement", too inattentive to "poverty and starvation." He called this "a chronic condition due to lack of fellowship and cooperation."

Radhakrishnan found Aldous Huxley's popular satirical book *Brave New World* to be one that held out no hope or comfort for a just social order for modern man. Rather, it was "a world of the death of all things of the spirit." (*LoFP*, p. 21)

He found "something fundamentally defective in the present organization of society". It is not sufficiently democratic, he said. "The basis of democracy," he added, "is the recognition of the dignity of human being." (*LoFP*, p. 23)

He found "something fundamentally defective in the present organization of society". It is not sufficiently democratic, he said. "The basis of democracy," he added, "is the recognition of the dignity of human being." (*LoFP*, p. 23)

Early in his career, Radhakrishnan was pleading for a civilization founded on inter-cultural understanding, and rooted in spirit. He found the League of Nations to be "wanting" — an organization of satisfied powers and weaker nations, without true intent to ward off war. He called for "the supremacy of law and organizing the world for an enduring peace". (p. 24-25).

Radhakrishnan warned that Science rapidly became the God of our times, that "electrons and protons do not clear up the mystery of reality ... God and soul cannot be treated as mathematical equations." He found in our era a depressing lack of insight. He wrote that "analytical intellect" was too much relied upon. He called us back to read the writings of Hinduism and Christianity, to Plato and Plotinus, St. Paul, St. Augustine, Luther and Pascal. "Life is not a simple geometric pattern," he wrote, "but the essence of living is creativity." (*LoFP*, p. 29A)

As for the role of philosophy in building a better world order, he said: "To form men is the object of philosophy". (or, to be more contemporary — Human beings). (p. 36) Religion was "not fasting and prayers," but achieving "a pure and contrite heart".

"The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are," he quoted from Christian scriptures. (p. 37)

Truth, said Radhakrishnan (*LoFP*, p. 47A) is according to the *Mahabharata* "Penance and sacrifice of a high order." And "Truth is always natural with Good." "Truly religious souls from Buddha and Christ down to lesser morals ... have striven to lighten the load of humanity." Radhakrishnan has written: "We must state the burden of pain that lies upon the world, with its poor and lowly, with its weak and suffering." (*LoFP*, p. 53A)

As we said earlier, Radhakrishnan spent the first eight years of his life from 1888 to 1896 in Tirupattini. This is today still a centre for religious pilgrims. After early schooling in that small town and in Vellore, he studied at Madras Christian College from 1904 to 1908. His years of teaching were in various places in India, starting with Madras Christian College as a youthful professor at age 21. Already

just eight years later in 1917, he wrote a treatise on "Indian Philosophy" for a series edited by that distinguished British scholar, J. H. Muirhead, when Radhakrishnan was only 29. (Professor Muirhead, by the way, was a guest in our home in Evanston, Illinois, a good many years later.)

Who, within memory, he knew Oriental or Occidental, has had the privilege of commuting every year for twelve years between any Oriental University and Oxford University, as did Radhakrishnan from 1936 to 1948, commuting annually between Benares Hindu University and Oxford, teaching one semester each year in both universities? At Oxford he was Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics and at Benares he was Vice-Chancellor of the University. A unique experience whether in Oriental or in Occidental philosophy.

During those years, he added to his reputation as a philosopher who made an enormous contribution by teaching the West about the East and vice versa. His contribution to intercultural understanding in our century cannot be exaggerated.

Equally unique were 21 years in Radhakrishnan's later life, when, in addition to his profession as a philosopher, he also enjoyed a quite different profession of Diplomacy. He had been serving his country his entire life as a philosopher. Now, beginning in 1948, at age 60, he also became a diplomat. He accepted Nehru's call to represent India officially in UNESCO as their Representative in Paris. In this capacity he served for three years (1948-49). During the last year, UNESCO elected him Chairman of their Executive Council.

On his return to India from Paris, Nehru appointed Radhakrishnan as India's Ambassador to the USSR in Moscow. He held that post most successfully for another three years (1949-52). (It was during this period, when the Radhakrishnan volume was being created (that almost all of our correspondence was carried in both directions by diplomatic pouch.) On his return to India from that Ambassadorship, he was elected Vice-President of India, for the next decade (1952-1962).

And in 1962, the people of India elected him to the highest position in their giving — the President of the Republic. When Radhakrishnan stepped down from that position, in 1967, he was already 79 years old. The first — and only — "Philosopher Ruler" since Marcus Aurelius (who died in 180 A.D.) What a life of one triumph after another. Twenty-one years of public service to his people as a distinguished and universally honoured diplomat.

Sir Sarvepalli gave over 70 years of his life to his beloved subject of Philosophy, 21 of his later years additionally to his country's Diplomatic Service. No other philosopher anywhere has been able to match that record in almost 2000 years. Surely such outstanding distinguished service more than entitles him to this International

Celebration of his 100th Birthday - although there is absolutely nothing near we can possibly add to that incomparable record.

Philosophically speaking his life was exactly what he called it in his first (1937) autobiography, his "search for Truth." And, diplomatically speaking, it was what, in his second Autobiography (1952) he called a conscious decision to meeting "the World's Need," by aiming at a unified and universal "Religion of the Spirit".

Radhakrishnan was an idealist, a Philosopher whose views were broadly based upon the concepts of religion. He did not support any view of narrow dogma. "The world is seeking not so much a fusion of religions as a fellowship of religions, based on the realization of the foundational character of man's religious experience," he wrote. (LLP, p. 75).

Further, he believed that religion had to do with the inner souls of individuals. "Religious life belongs to the realm of inward spiritual revolution," he said (LLP, p. 75A). And further rejecting the more superficialities of all sects, he said: "Traditions do not create the truth, but clothe it in language and symbol for the help of those who do not see it themselves."

In his most pragmatic outlook, his philosophy preached that religious spirit must pervade a person's life by the way in which one LIVES and TAKES meaningful ACTION in life (Again, not mere fasting and prayers) he said. (LLP, p. 80A). "The mandate of Religion is that man must make the change in his own nature in order to let the divine in him make manifest itself." (LLP, p. 80).

"The truth speaks to us in varying dialects across far continents and over centuries of history," said Radhakrishnan. (LLP, p. 80A). He firmly believed that "There will come a time when the world will be inhabited by a race" of persons "freed from the yoke, not only of disease and privation but of lying words, and of love turned into hate." He said: "When human beings grow in completeness into that invisible world which is the Kingdom of Heaven, then they will manifest in the outer world the Kingdom which is within them." (LLP, p. 81A).

May we take to heart these powerful words of Radhakrishnan, that great 20th century seer, in our striving for a better world.



## DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN

### A Conspicuous Example of Multifarious Accomplishments

Dr. Sri C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR

It is given to very few persons to attain equal distinction in the fields of scholarship and research, of authorship and of administration. Dr. Radhakrishnan's career furnishes a conspicuous example of such a multifarious accomplishment.

To him has been given the much prized honour of being a Fellow of All Souls College in Oxford and the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics in the same University. He has also occupied the coveted position of the Upton Lecturer in 1929. He has been the Vice-Chancellor of several universities. As Chairman of the Universities Commission, he was instrumental in furnishing a new perspective and envisaging new ideas in respect of higher education in India.

After having been the Leader of the Indian delegation to the UNESCO, he became the President of the General Conference of that august body in 1952. He was one of those who took part in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly which was responsible for the present constitution of India and has been the Vice-President of India and held for five years the very position of President of India with great distinction.

If Dr. Radhakrishnan were asked to designate the happiest years of his life, he would, in all probability, regard the period of his Professorship in the Christian and Presidency Colleges in Madras and his work in the Mysore and Calcutta Universities and his Vice-Chancellorship of the Banaras Hindu University as the most significant in his personal career, because it was then that he perfected his intellectual perceptions and was able not only to render great service to the cause of education in the League of Nations and in the UNESCO but was able to make his mark as one of the most prominent authorities of Indian Philosophy, way of life and religion.

From the days when he contributed to the Library of Philosophy and produced his brochure on *The Hindu View of Life* (which

is a reprint of his Union Lectures delivered at the Manchester College Oxford). he has interpreted in his successive works, consecutive in thought, compact in expression and epigrammatically concise, the real meaning of religious experience as expounded in our scriptures, our systems of philosophy and our classical literature. He makes the proud boast in that book that half the world moves on foundation which Hinduism supplied, and he enunciates the proposition which he has consistently upheld that while fixed intellectual beliefs mark off one religion from another, Hinduism sets itself no such limit. Intellect is subordinated to intuition, dogma to experience, outer expression to inward realisation. Religion is not the acceptance of academic abstractions or the celebrations of ceremonies but is a kind of life or experience. It is insight into the nature of reality (*Dharma*) or experience of reality (*Anubhava*).

He made it clear to audiences in Oxford and Chicago that the Hindu thinker readily admits the validity of several points of view other than his own and considers them worthy of acceptance. He insists that the Hindu solution seeks the unity of religions, not in a common creed but in a common quest. In this little volume also, he gives an account of Hindu *Dharma* and of the main systems of philosophy and of the Hindu interpretation of *Samsara*, of *Karma* and of the *Varnashrama Dharma*.

In his *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, he has put before us comparisons and contrasts between the speculations of Greece and Palestine and the Christian world on the one hand and Hinduism on the other. He has dealt with obstacles to mutual understanding and has pleaded for the meeting of religions. In his two volumes on *Indian Philosophy*, he has interpreted the doctrines of the various systems that have originated in our country. He has given us a history of Indian thought as an undivided whole and also as consciously developing.

Under his general editorship, the Ministry of Education of the Government of India has produced a comprehensive *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*. He has, in collaboration with Dr. Charles Moore, produced an invaluable *Source Book on Indian Philosophy*. His little manual, *Kutki* (for the Future of the Civilisation), based on an idealistic view of life, is a notable literary venture. He has also produced popular editions of *Bhagavadgita* and the *Brahma Sutra*s and has contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Hibbert Journal*, philosophical articles of abiding value.

It is illustrative of Dr. Radhakrishnan's world-wide reputation that he has not only acquired the Doctorate of the notable universities of the world but has been acclaimed as a "Master of Wisdom" by Mongolia and has been awarded the Goethe Plaque—a particularly

appropriate award inasmuch as the intellectual outlooks of Dr. Radhakrishnan and of Goethe are not dissimilar.

Having known him from his youth and even before he became Professor of Philosophy in Calcutta, I am in a position to appraise his quality of a discerning and humorous acceptance of life which makes him a delightful conversationalist as well as a most reliable adviser.

## THE WORD NOT SPOKEN

Dr. P. P. SHARMA

There lay the man with foam on his lip  
with too craving for an assurance in his eye.  
He could barely manage his speech without a slip;  
His volatile hands had grown too stiff to flip;  
He was almost suffocating on the last sip  
while trying with his fading breath to say good bye.

In my pride I would take my time  
And did not utter the necessary word;  
To behave so coolly was no crime  
I felt I was acting in a pantomime,  
Taking for hard rock what was only slime,  
And all was stuck in my throat unheard.

I carry that anguish in my heart,  
Could not lay unction on the parting soul;  
Culprate as much as I might the literary art,  
And sell my wares at the busy world's mart,  
But possess myself I cannot entire and whole

The word he hungered for remained unspeak;  
I believed there would be time enough in future  
To perform acts rather than give him just a token:  
The youth's illusion, alas, at last, is broken.  
No indemnity now or ever from this slur.

## THE PHILOSOPHER - PRESIDENT OF INDIA

M. CHALAPATHI RAU

Philosophers in public authority are rare. Marcus Aurelius was the philosopher-king. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan became the philosopher-President. The cupola of a white turban hiding an abundant crop of unruly hair, a deep penetrating Calvinistic look, a striking sensitive nose, a rich resonant voice, and a spare ascetic frame—this has become a familiar ensemble in this country and in several others. Radhakrishnan's life has been like a loud incantation; his merest gestures, benedictions.

Radhakrishnan contains contrasts. The philosopher who has expounded the idealist view of life with prophetic fervour is not a bore; he is a writer of power and eloquent elegance, an orator of charm, a scholar who has lived life richly. In public he stands as an oracle of wisdom; in private he is a sparkling conversationalist. He is devoted to books and seclusion, but the world of living men attracts him. He talks of the soul and the spirit, but he has not forgotten the miseries of the world. He has preached unceasingly to people—and worked for their material advancement.

Many vivid vignettes can be drawn of Radhakrishnan striding across the world, addressing parliaments, academies, political bodies, statesmen, scholars and students.

As Vice-President, he would, at eleven in the morning, walk from his room to his high seat in the Council of States, and his first utterance would be like a prayer. The day's business would then begin. As member after member rose to ask questions and to put harking, irrelevant or troublesome supplementaries, and ministers struggled to give their answers, there would be crisp, curt interruptions from the Chair. Members would be encouraged to go on and faltering ministers would be prodded to complete their answers, and the house would rock with sallies and laughter. There would be high seriousness and excitement and amusement. Even the boisterous Bhupesh Gupta, after being shown the utmost latitude, would be made to sit down—and he would settle down with a smile of immense satisfaction. There was no false note in the house; rarely a walk-out.



there was never a protest against the Chairman's ruling. In atmosphere, it was a senate worthy of Bruges and Cairo, or Chatham and Brougham: at all moments it was like a classroom dominated by a patriarchal and teasing teacher.

Radhakrishnan had been a superb performer in the classroom in Madras, Mysore and Calcutta, at the Andhra University Senate, in the Varanasi University Court, as Chairman of the University Education Commission, as Hibbert Lecturer, and as Spalding Professor.

There is no deviation from dignity; there is self-possession in thought, word and gesture. His lectures were not confined to the curriculum or the textbook. It is well recalled how in his early days at Mysore, he would come into the class a quarter of an hour late, talk of the day's events, entertain the students with his wit, discourse on the day's theme in a few sentences, and close the period a few minutes before time.

Radhakrishnan made memorable his first public utterance in this country on his triumphal return from England after the Upton Lectures in 1926. The hall of Presidency College, Madras, overflowed; there was not even standing space for eminent public men and High Court judges. The meeting had to be adjourned to the open, and, there, standing with his hands in the pockets of his long coat, as if defying the elements, a sculptured, statuesque figure, he delivered an extempore address of exquisite diction and unceasing music, mesmerising the audience, till he broke the spell with a salute. This was the beginning of a tradition.

Radhakrishnan's theme, his diction, his accent, and his intonation became familiar in many parts of the world. The spell continued. It was extended by broadcasting networks. His is among the commanding voices, a voice that admonishes, that warns, that soothes. Early in life he showed that philosophers need not be bores, that philosophy is not dull. That has been the secret of his success. He has spoken so much and so often that little that he says seems to be new, but like Upanishadic thought, all the best that has been thought and said in the world can be reduced to some basic wisdom, and on this Radhakrishnan has made many elaborate variations, giving every utterance of his force of conviction and musical quality. Among Indian speakers of English, he is the one who has invested Anglo-Saxon speech with the tonal quality of Sanskrit. He remains an artist in the manner he says what he has to say. There is no speech of his without a beginning and a finish without its trumpet notes.

In November 1960, at UNESCO's Tagore Centenary Celebrations, in Paris, he achieved near perfection in speech. He was delivering the commemoration address to a packed audience of distinguished scholars, thinkers and writers in UNESCO's Conference

Hall at the Place de Fontenoy. Though he had known his subject for more than forty years and spoken on it several times, he made the occasion memorable for faultless diction, for sustained elevation of thought, for exhaustive mastery, for apt quotation and for melodious language. Some in the audience had heard him speak on Thoreau before, but it was an address impeccable in style and substance. English on that day sounded like Spanish, French, Persian or Sanskrit at its best.

Radhakrishnan, though a seasoned speaker, is not just like a record that can be played to please an audience or to make an occasion memorable for the nobility of his presence or for even flow of his eloquence. He can use his eloquence to new purposes at short notice. Whether he welcomed Khrushchev or Eisenhower in the Central Hall of Parliament, he did it in short brilliant speeches, in the most appropriate possible words, with wit and grace, and with understanding of other peoples, without yielding in his Indianness. It is Radhakrishnan's habit to put the most famous of statements on the back, an act of confident familiarity. He parted even Stalin, when communism's Peter the Great wanted to meet an ambassador who, he had heard, read twelve hours a day. Radhakrishnan's Central Hall performances were physically and intellectually pats on the backs of distinguished visitors.

Radhakrishnan's diction is his own, formed early in his life. He does not shun rhetoric. He has the capacity to condense his thought and his style is epigrammatic. It was said of Arthur Balfour that whenever he uttered an epigram, he made it sound like a conundrum. There is no mystery or paradox in Radhakrishnan's epigrams. They are simple, short and swift, and come in cascades. They are Baconian in their crackling aphoristic wisdom, with the flavour of Pascal's *Pensées*.

Radhakrishnan has an inner side, which through the years of his *sannyas* has been known only to him and which is barred to the world, leading it to speculation about his true self, and a personal side, which, free from the burden of philosophic message or the dignity of public demeanour sparkles every moment. He is one of the best conversationalists of the time, a wit, a raconteur, one who any moment may indulge in mild devilry of fun and impish delight at any one's expense. He unbends—and he is engaging even in his most casual remarks. He pricks pomposity and invests the most serious subject with raillery. There must be few cases of such unphilosophic humanity among philosophers. He strips himself of holiness. A recluse in spirit, no one is denied access to him. Often he is seen in his bed which is his study, surrounded by heaps of books and straggling visitors. Nothing in manuscript or print is beneath his notice, and he condescends to read the immature outpourings of the

struggling writer as much as he would like to keep himself familiar with the latest classics of philosophy and literature. He is one of the most widely read people and what he has read includes much miscellaneous literature. His philosophy takes into account the intuition of the artists, the discoveries of the scientists, and the insight of the seers. His humanity is based upon true and generous understanding, and he is prodigal in the prefaces, forewords and introductions he appends to the outpourings of even unknown writers.

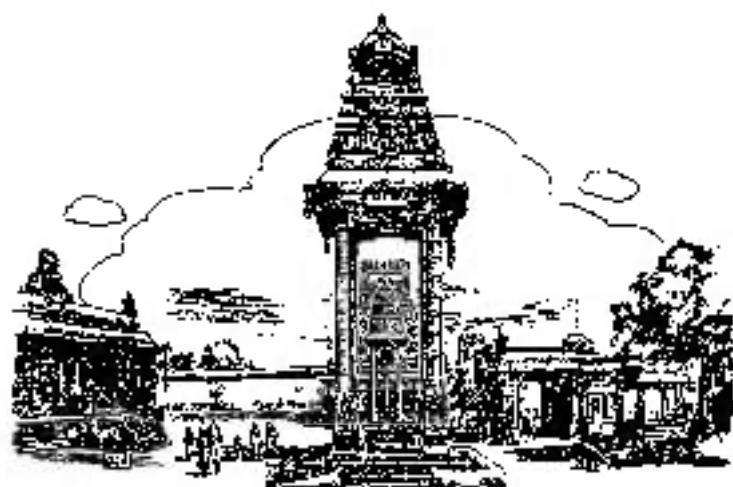
Among philosophers of modern times, he has been the most internationally known. He is a philosopher neither of the East nor of the West; he has brought about a synthesis of the cultural values of the two parts of the world. There is nothing atypical about him or his philosophy. He has written with great humility of himself, and called his writings no more than fragments of a confession. He is not a philosopher of the woods or books. He matured even before his forties, like Raman in the world of science, and, while his best writing was nearing completion, he found that his philosophy was deeply concerned with the world around him. His scholasticism ripened early into humanism. He is probably the first among non-Marxist philosophers who mix philosophy with economics and stress repeatedly that there can be no God in conditions of penury and that there is no salvation without improvement in material conditions. Whatever the reign of philosophy in contemporary religion or the reign of religion in contemporary philosophy, Radhakrishnan has, while bringing the country's rich heritage into relation with its poor undeveloped economy, sought to bring together contemporary Indian philosophy and contemporary Indian economics. He may be considered to have given a philosophic foundation to Indian Socialism.

Radhakrishnan's place in modern philosophy is like philosophy's place in the modern world; Iqbal called it "Counter-attack from the East". He grew in the atmosphere of a traditional Hindu home and of Christian mission schools where the unseen was a living reality. He was deeply immersed in the *Bhagavadgita* and the commentaries on the *Brahma Sutras*, in Plato and Plotinus, in Bradley and Bergson. Later he was a close friend for many years of Gandhi and Tagore. He does not reject science or evade it; he absorbs it. To a traveller in spirit like him, the universality of religions and the oneness of the world are living realities; eternal religion is not irrational or unscientific, escapist or asocial. This philosophy has served him in the severest tests, "in sickness and in health, in triumph and in defeat". According to one student of philosophy, "Radhakrishnan is less ponderous than Royce, less meddlesome than Bradley, less involved than Hegel; he has made idealism flow from a deep spring. By comparison Ruckert is provincial and Keyserling is trivial. Not since

Fichte and Schelling has there been such a prodigant stream of inspiration."

Radhakrishnan has contributed considerably to the Indian Renaissance and to modern humanism. He has been one of the chief architects of Upanishadism, and a pillar of the Indian Republic, and was a close and understanding friend of Nehru and his policies. To him, the political process is a part of the cosmic process. He has understood the significance of the social revolution; and he is one of its good-humoured mentors.

Even philosophers are not perfect. Such men would be monsters. Radhakrishnan may be right or wrong, but he has the courage to express himself freely. He has few doubts, and is quick in his decisions. The philosopher in action can aim only at perfectibility, not perfection. Nobody has the sincerity of Radhakrishnan's purpose, the freedom of his spirit, or the fineness of the instrument that he is. He is in tune with the revolutionary processes, a Savonarola-like figure, who does not reject life, who has a memory for the humblest faces, who is capable of loud laughter, who is constantly cheerful yet contemplative, and who expresses eloquently the human spirit, is troubled at times but remains here and serene as the storm like the mountain tops.



## DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN-AS A MAN OF LETTERS

DR. D. ANJANEYULU

Every man is a philosopher of some kind. More so, every Indian, as we know very well in our day-to-day social intercourse. But he is not necessarily a man of letters, not to the same extent, at any rate. But then, what is "Philosophy"? Derived from the Greek roots "philo" (love) and "sophy" (wisdom), it literally means "The Love of Wisdom". It represents the quintessence of the wisdom of the ancients. It is reputed to deal in abstractions, as it has to grapple with the imponderables.

Literature, on the other hand, deals, in general, with life in the concrete, reflecting the world as we see it; rather as the poet or creative writer sees it, with a keener sensitivity than his or her fellow-men and fellow-women. It lays greater store by beauty of form, aesthetic appeal and emotional effect.

There is no writer, or man of letters, worth mentioning, without a philosophy of his own. But every philosopher of note, irrespective of his originality or profundity, is not necessarily a man of letters, if you will. There have, however, been thinkers and interpreters, who represented in themselves a happy blend of the philosopher and the artist — Plato, Sankara and in more recent times Bertrand Russell and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

Radhakrishnan was among the most unusual teachers of Indian philosophy. He was a rare master of the word — the written word as well as the spoken word. He had a deep sensitivity to the beauty of form and a keen awareness of the contemporary world in all its complexity. In spreading the message of the East, with its creative intuition, to the West with its critical intelligence, his has been a signal triumph of communication, as well as of interpretation. He was a man of letters, in a very real sense, as Nehru the historian was, though neither of them chose to treat of specific literary themes, nor set themselves up as professional men of letters.

To the exposition of the principles of Indian philosophy and the spirit of Hindu religion, he brought the latest idiom of modern

(Western) thought and the scientific methods of analysis and synthesis. The metaphysics of Advaita Vedanta appear in altogether new light in the logical patterns of Hegelian Idealism. In the alchemy of Radhakrishnan's expository art, religion becomes creative, philosophy turns dynamic, and, as Prof. Joad puts it so aptly, righteousness is rendered readable.

Readability is the defining characteristic of everything written or spoken by Dr. Radhakrishnan through the half-a-century and more of his working life. But he achieves this quality, not at the expense of depth of thought or accuracy of expression or the recourse to any popular devices of rhetoric, humour or oversimplification. He combined profundity of thought with lucidity of exposition and emphasis of statement with elegant expression. His spoken word has all the polished brilliance of a written piece chiselled in the quietness of a scholar's study.

The following passage, taken from his address at the Seventieth Birthday Celebrations of Tagore in Calcutta, illustrates his style at its best — most vivid and eloquent :

"It is the peculiar glory of great literature that it lasts much longer than kings and dynasties. History bears witness to the power of the human spirit which endures longer than dynasties and eras. The political world of Homer is dead, while his song is living today. The splendour of Rome has vanished, but the poetry of Virgil is yet vital. The dramas of Kalidasa will move us like the cry of a living voice with their poignant sense of tears in human relations, while the Ujjain, of which he was the ornament, has left her memory to his keeping. When our Lords and Leaders pass into oblivion, Tagore will continue to enchant us by his music and poetry. He has added to the sweetness of life, to the stature of civilisation."

The sentences are so beautifully balanced and the contrast between the ephemeral nature of temporal power and the lasting appeal of literature provides the antithesis which could not have been worked out more effectively by a Gibbon or Macaulay. In short and clinching phrases which sound like straight-from-the-shoulder shots, he exposes the hallowness of modern civilisation with an almost Shavian pithiness.

"It has become more easy to get into a college and more difficult to get educated. We are taught to read, but not trained to think."

And again :

"The nations plead for peace and prepare for war."

There is a favourite sentence of his, which was originally spoken by a Russian peasant, quoted by Maxim Gorky, which represents a recurring manner of his style, as well as his trend of thought :

"We are taught to fly in the air like birds, and to swim in the water like fishes, but how to live on the earth, we do not know."

It might not have been actually written by him, but sentences without number, equally vivid and effective are scattered all over his works. There is a happy blending of the pithiness and brevity of Bacon with the rhetorical vigour of Macaulay.

"..... The unity of civilisation is not to be sought in uniformity, but in harmony. ....

..... The faith of the future is in co-operation and not identification, in accommodation to fellow-men and not imitation of them, in toleration and not absolutism. Progress happened in the sub-human world; it is willed in the human. Self-finding is the essence of all perfection. By seeing life steadily and whole, we find our place in it."

Humour of the breezy, commonplace sort is, perhaps, conspicuous by its absence in Dr. Radhakrishnan's writing, which is elevated in its key, impassioned in its tone and impersonal in its approach. But, the style is always well-lit and is sometimes reminiscent of the verbal wit of Oscar Wilde, as in :

"The soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul."

Sometimes, he can be paradoxical like G. K. Chesterton :

"Gentleness is not necessarily the quality of a gentleman. The real greatness of man is due to his failure, to his moving about in a world unrealised, with vague misgivings."

A penchant for aphorism lends a new edge to the broadest of his generalisations, which never fail to be convincing :

"A reconciled foe becomes a good friend; a beaten antagonist is a sworn enemy."

"Love is not a passing sentiment or a feeble emotion, but an attitude of life involving mind, feeling and will, strong, deep and enduring."

"The work is becoming outwardly uniform. The outer uniformity has not, however, resulted in an inner unity of mind and spirit."

"It is good to be devoted to the moral code, but it is wicked to be fanatic about it."

"Nationalism is not a 'natural' instinct. It is an acquired artificial emotion."

Scintillating epigrams roll down the reins of Dr. Radhakrishnan's mind — epigrams which might well excite the envy of Philip Guedallio, who knew the value of the wastepaper basket :

"The next stage of evolution is not in man's physique, but in his psyche ...."

"We have to fight for the new order first in our own souls, then in the world outside. Man the destroyer is man the builder too. This Kurukshetra may well become a Dharmakshetra. The end of our civilisation is not the end of history, it may well be the opening of a new age."

One of the main advantages of Dr. Radhakrishnan's over other philosophers and moral teachers of his time is that he was as cosmopolitan in his reading habits as he was broadminded in his spiritual outlook. If he followed the teachings of the Acharyas devoutly and delved into the great depths of the Gita, the Upanishads and the Dharmasutras (with the bewildering number of commentators) with great care, with equal diligence did he keep track of the latest works of significance in poetry and fiction, history and culture, besides religion and theology, available in the English language. Not only the contemporary masterpieces and the ancient classics available in English, but the outstanding works in Sanskrit.

Radhakrishnan was a classicist with a deep-rooted belief in the universal appeal of literature just as he was a universalist in the interpretation of the philosophy of religion. He stressed this point in his general introduction to the original edition of the works of Kaldasa, brought out by Sahitya Akademi.

In this, he observed :

"Great classics of literature spring from profound depths in human experience. ... The deeper one goes into one's own experience facing death, fighting 'are', or enjoying love, the more does one's experience have in common with the experiences of others in other climes and ages. The most unique is the most universal. The dialogues of the Buddha or of Plato, the dramas of Sophocles, the plays of Shakespeare are both national and universal. The more profoundly they are rooted in historical traditions, the more uniquely do they know themselves and elicit powerful responses from others. There is a timeless and spaceless quality about great classics."

From the manner in which his speeches and writings are liberally strewn with quotations from the Sanskrit classics, not all of them religious or philosophical, but poetic, it would not be difficult for a careful reader to gauge Radhakrishnan's love of the Kavya literature. His special preference was for the *Kavya* and *Nayaka* of Kaldasa and those of *Bhavabhuti*, his *Uttara Ramacharita* in particular.

Small wonder then that he has the highest praise for the poetic genius of Kaldasa, though his understanding was not stereotyped, and appreciation uncritical, like that of some of the traditional, oriental Pandits. He recognizes in Kaldasa India's archetypal national poet.



Kalidasa is the great representative of India's spirit, grace and genius. The Indian national consciousness is the base from which his works grow. Kalidasa has absorbed India's cultural heritage, made it his own, enriched it, given it universal scope and significance. Its spiritual direction, its intellectual amplitude, its artistic expressions, its political forms and economic arrangements, all find utterance in fresh, vital, shining phrases. We find in his works at their best a simple dignity of language, a precision of phrase, a classical taste, a cultivated judgement, an intense poetic sensibility and a fusion of thought and feeling. In his dramas, we find pathos, power, beauty and great skill in the construction of plots and delineation of characters. He is at home in royal courts and on mountain tops, in happy homes and forest hermitages. He has a balanced outlook which enables him to deal sympathetically with men of high and low degree, fishermen, courtesans, servants. These great qualities make his works belong to the literature of the world. ..."

As a sensitive student of the cultural heritage of the East and the West, with a flair for reconciling the two, wherever possible, Radhakrishnan sees in Kalidasa a philosophy of harmony and integrity. And he says :

"For Kalidasa the path of wisdom lies in the harmonious pursuit of the different aims of life and the development of an integrated personality. He impresses on our mind these ideals by the magic of his poetry, the richness of his imagination, his profound knowledge of human nature and his delicate description of its most tender emotions. We can apply to him the words of Miranda in *The Tempest* :

O Wonder,

How many goodly creatures are there here ?

How beauteous mankind is ! O brave new world,

That has such people in it."

Among India's modern philosophers, he was the most political as also the most philosophical of her statesmen. He had a keen awareness of political and other trends of the contemporary world, which only served to invest his general observations with a new urgency, without restricting his vision or warping his judgement.

His insatiable curiosity about men and things was like that of a journalist, at his best. But the casual observer could not, perhaps, suspect the insight of a poet and his love for beauty in this seasoned philosopher.

Who, but a poet, can claim his wealth of imagery, soaring into the heights of imagination ?

"Any serious pursuit of ideas, any search after conviction, adventure after virtue, arises from resources whose name is religion. The search of the mind for beauty, goodness and truth is the search for God. The child nursing at the breast of its mother, the illiterate savage gazing at the numberless stars, the scientist in his laboratory studying life under a microscope, the poet meditating in solitude on the beauty and pathos of the world, the ordinary man standing reverently before a starlit sky, the Himalayan heights or a quiet sea, or before the highest miracle of all, a human being who is both great and good, they all possess dimly the sense of the eternal, the feeling of the heaven."

Dr. Radhakrishnan could grow lyrical, not only on lofty themes like the search for the Absolute, but on the more familiar, but no less human, subjects like love and marriage. The voices of Jayadeva, Keets and Tagore seem to merge in a pleasant harmony in words which reflect our most elemental yearnings :

"When the sky is overcast with clouds, the path of the future lies through a thick forest, and when we are utterly alone in darkness, without a single ray of light, when all around are difficulties, we place ourselves in the hands of a loving woman."

Also, these observations, notable alike for their truth of nature, and beauty of expression.

What stirs lyrical poets to their finest flights is the delight of the senses, the fruitful contentment as well as the fatal passion of love."

"If (marriage) is an adjustment between the biological purpose of nature and the sociological purposes of man"

"... It can lead us to an early paradise, or in certain conditions, it may turn out to be an organised hell ..."

"... The tempests of the heart are taken over into the calm of the soul. Love is not merely the flame meeting flame, but spirit calling to spirit ..."

Not many today might be aware of the fact that Radhakrishnan contributed an essay on "Indian Philosophy" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* some half-a-century ago. It still remains a masterpiece of the art of assimilation and condensation, interpretation and presentation. A literary craftsman could be seen to have been at work here, as elsewhere.

It is worth recalling that Radhakrishnan had a deep-rooted interest in literature from the early years of his adult life. To this was allied a sustained elegance of expression, which always went hand in hand with clarity of thought and lucidity of interpretation.

Even in his student days at the Madras Christian College, he gave enough evidence of these qualities. For the M.A. degree of the University of Madras, he wrote a thesis on the *Ethics of the Vedanta*, as was obligatory at that time. The main argument and conclusion of this thesis were in the form of a direct refutation of the Christian missionary position that Vedanta was devoid of ethics. His teacher, Professor A. G. Hogg (who shared allegiance to that position) commended the thesis with no reservation. Not only for the author's capacity to rebut one argument and sustain another, but also for an extraordinary command of the English language. (Unfortunately, copies of this thesis are not easily available in any library in this country; this writer was, however, glad to learn from a knowledgeable friend that a copy of it is preserved in the British Library in London, previously known as the British Museum Library.)

One of Radhakrishnan's earliest published works was *Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore* (1918). Apart from protecting the image of Tagore as a philosopher more than the poet himself could imagine, it helped to start Radhakrishnan's own brilliant career as a writer as less than as a philosopher. In this book, he was interested in picturing Tagore as a pure product of Indian culture, especially as envisaged in the *Upanishads*. While his writing served to sharpen the author's roots as a literary craftsman, its success encouraged him to dive deeper into the sources of Indian thought.

It is well known that many of Radhakrishnan's established works are enjoyed by the general reader as models of composition as much as they are valued by the student of philosophy as examples of interpretation and insight. His address in London on *Gautama the Buddha* (1926), in the *Mastermind* series, was hailed as the interpretation of one mastermind on another. Here again a rare felicity of expression (*Cicero felicitas*) was the hallmark of his *tour de force*, which was delivered entirely from memory.

His literary skill, marked by the happy phrase and the apt expression, sometimes by an inspired urgence, is evident in some of the shorter works and collections of essays and addresses like *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (1931), *Freedom and Culture* (1935), *Religion and Society* (1947), *Kulki or the Future of Civilization* (1929), *The Spirit of Man* (1936) more than in the voluminous magnum opus "*Indian Philosophy*".

It is also true unfortunately (as even his most ardent admirers must admit) that the speeches and writings of Radhakrishnan, after Independence, especially after his choice for high offices of State (Ambassador, Vice-President and President) are less notable for their style or substance than those in the earlier period. This might be primarily because of an inevitable dilution of content and quality, as a result of repetition and elaboration, because of the excep-

sive demand for performance and the growing pressure on time, and secondarily because of a possible falling off in his powers in his Sixties and Seventies.

If criticism, however, is to be made, Radhakrishnan's style is open to the same criticism as that of Gibbon and Macaulay — an excess of symmetry, based on balance and antithesis, and a too frequent tendency to make use of quotable quotes from far and near. An incredible photographic memory, in his case as that of Macaulay, gives the impression of having adversely affected spontaneity and sensitivity.

Apart from the primacy of spiritual values for the salvation of an unquiet world and the need for a religious basis for the settlement of political and economic problems, there are one or two other things that a reader of Dr. Radhakrishnan's works cannot help learning, probably for the first time in his uncommercial ramblings. One is that philosophy is not a remote, mysterious, isolated subject to be cultivated in the retreat of a recluse. The other is that philosophy need not be a secondary preoccupation with metaphysical obscurities and, therefore, dull and dry to the general reader. It can, in fact, be vigorous like the Prefaces of Shaw, stimulating like the novels of Aldous Huxley, provocative like the science fiction of C. P. Snow, and noble like the meditations of Marcus Aurelius.

It was not merely the inescapable compulsions of his diplomatic or political office that were responsible for Radhakrishnan's comprehensive interest in all the contemporary problems of the world — political, social and cultural, no less than philosophical. The position, in fact, was the other way about. It was his lively interest in world affairs, without his being a political activist, that drew him to the centre of public life, thanks to the initiative of a kindred spirit in the person of Jawaharlal Nehru. He was no narrow nationalist; and did not hesitate to describe nationalism as "a collective form of selfishness". "We have to lift the world off its hinges and transform the national man into a universal" he would say. "Either we live together or die together. It is either one society or no society", he affirmed, in outlining the shape of the Emerging World Society.

If Shelley described poets as "the unacknowledged legislators of the world, Radhakrishnan might have looked upon philosophers as the acknowledged conscience-keepers of the world. He himself could be seen to be "an enlightened humanist", (more than an insulated academic philosopher) for whom nothing human was alien. He not only believed in the Platonic ideal of philosophers becoming kings and kings becoming philosophers, but was able to exemplify it in his own life. His political philosophy was described by Professor Humayun Kabir as "Enlightened Humanism".

In our own day, there is hardly another savant dead or alive, who used his learning so lightly and who adorned his originality with such incisive wit and felicity of expression as Dr Radhakrishnan. In the West, one could think of a few like Russell in philosophy and Trevelyan in history. He was that rare bird among philosophers, who exemplified Montaigne's dictum: "The style is the man." Here was a man whose best works could be read by the educated layman for his pleasure, as by the academic specialist for his profit. I, for one, can't say the same thing of any practising Indian philosopher in our midst.

## HARVEST

Dr IFTIKHAR HUSAIN RIZVI

Cloves of blood are sprinkled around  
And hawthorn, furze and shrubs abound.  
The aspen photos and canker blooms  
And 'thorny pears' enhance the gloom.  
Twigs lean and thirsty, bite the dust,  
And bears and wormwood gill and rust;  
All furrows engin flowers yield,  
And sharp-edged scrubbles rule the field.  
Moth-eaten leaves with their breast sired  
For loss of manes are deeply grieved.  
Rough quills of porcupines are laid,  
On each side hot winds move their train,  
Bubbles above the marshes lap,  
The traveller finds each yard a trap.  
We can't reap's what we had sown,  
This is the harvest we have grown.



## Dr. RADHAKRISHNAN'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Dr GANTI SRIRAMA MURTHY

One of the finest flowers of Indian renaissance, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had made a distinct and lasting contribution to modern Indian thought and philosophy. He had the unique opportunity of being an active and conscious participant of modern Indian history at a time when India was passing through a great crisis in the context of its attainment of Independence. It was seed-time when free India had to define its goals and directives anew in order to define its nationhood and lead its society from petrifying influences of the past to greater freedom of thought and social mobility. India, at that time, was a divided nation. It was divided in a thousand ways socially and politically. The problems of religion, caste and community, the immovable faith in life, negating philosophy of Vedanta with its debilitating components of theories of Karma and Maya, which, according to the majority of educated classes, constitute a drag on peace and progress of the nation, were there staring squarely in the face of our national leaders. But we are fortunate in that we had Titans among our leaders who had a strong and unerring sense of history and whose shoulders were broad enough to bear the onerous responsibilities it devolved on them. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sri Aurobindo, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, and K. M. Munshi on the one hand and stalwart academic historians like K. M. Panikkar, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, R. K. Mukherjee, Mazumdar, and D. D. Kosambi on the other, had been trying each in his own way, re-interpreting age-old concepts of man, time, space, progress, destiny of man and the world rejecting or absorbing the modern concepts projected by Marxism, Judaism, Christianity, etc. Of these Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan may be singled out because of their unwavering faith in the destiny of man and democracy, whose keenness of intellect could pierce through the opaque walls of scholastic tradition and social philosophy that has obviously outlived its purpose. They do not think alike, but their concern for common man and reality unites them. At a time when Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru was laying foundation-stones for secular democracy in India. Dr. Radhakrishnan made his voice of serene wisdom reverberate literally from China to Peru. A celebrated builder of bridges between the East and West, between tradition and modernity, between religion and science, Dr. Radhakrishnan has achieved yet another spectacular spiritual engineering feat of building a suspension bridge between Vedanta and Democracy. This new synthesis of Hindu religious spiritualism and man-centered Western philosophy of democracy is Radhakrishnan's nearest approach to a history of philosophy.

Dr. Radhakrishnan has absorbed the Christian philosophical thought as, perhaps, few have done in his own time or never. As Prof. A. M. Mundadan remarks, "He makes his own Christian theological and Western philosophical optimism and interprets it against the background of his vision of Indian metaphysics. The meaning of history is to make all men prophets, to establish a kingdom of free spirits. The infinitely rich and spiritually impregnated future, this drama of gradual transmutation of intellect into spirit, of son of man into son of God is the goal of history. When death is overcome, when time is conquered, the kingdom of eternal spirit is established." While accepting the optimism of scientific philosophy and some of the Christian religious tenets, it is significant that he rejected out of hand the Indo-Christian view that would establish kingdom of God on earth in fulness of time. Nor does he accept that the scope of history is outside time. It is, he thinks, within historic time.

It has been observed that Radhakrishnan had rejected the idea of cyclic time as it breeds the view of utter futility of man's endeavour. Traditional Hindu concept of time grants reality to nothing in the universe. There is nothing that does not change and pass. As Adi Sankara put it in the *Soundaryalahari*, even gods do perish at the time of *Mahapralaya* and nothing remains. Hence nothing has value and relevance in the world. "The conception of time", says Prof. A. M. Mundadan "as relentlessly reaching on, devouring its creations as it goes along, is like a sentence of death on values." But the observation does not seem to be correct. Dr. Radhakrishnan does not so much reject the idea of cyclic time as modifies it. He takes each of the four *Yugas* as self-contained time units, though, they, in truth, are sub-divisions of Mahakala. Taking this relative finality of time into consideration, man's achievement does not seem so utterly valueless. Nor does he seem to reject the idea of eternal return. Human history, according to Radhakrishnan, is an intersection of time and timeless, natural and supernatural. Religion is not a refuge from the phenomenal world. Contemplation of the timeless and performance of temporal action are the two complementary aspects of human nature. Hence action is not without its

value Arjuna. he says, is the ideal man in whom action and contemplation are ideally combined.

Prof. Mundadan cites modern writers on comparative religion like Mircea Eliade, to dispel the idea of negation and futility often attributed to the traditional Hindu view of time. "The Indian view of infinite time, of the endless cycles of creation and destruction, the myth of the Eternal Return, could be considered an instrument of knowledge and a means of realising man's desire to break through individual and historic time into the Mystical Great Time. The story of Indra described in the *Brahmanda Purana* illustrates how Indra is cured of his pride and is made to transcend the historical squarrelon. "The true story reveals in him the Great Time, the mystic time in which is the source of all beings and all of cosmic events." The situation and the lesson drawn are not different, in essence, from the situation and lesson imparted to Arjuna in the *Bhagavadgita*, as quoted by Dr. Radhakrishnan in his *Religion in a Changing World*.

Radhakrishnan's concept of history is deeply coloured by his unshakable faith in man. Though we may characterise his interpretation as spiritual or religious, it is in essence, humanistic. He allows him maximum freedom, and responsibility compatible with the cosmic events and divine will. According to him, man is not a bundle of flesh and blood, nerves and muscles. He is a bearer of divine spirit. The divine manifests through him. An *avatar* is only a manifestation of the divine in him. It is his upward ascent and ascension of the will to restore balance in nature. God is there, but he does not interfere in human affairs. He does not descend to set matters right and save mankind from destruction. Man himself will rise to the occasion. He is the creator of history. God is only the creator. Man is free to will and choose. No force outside him controls or directs his actions. Out of his own free will and choice, history is made as well as his own individual destiny. *Karma* is there no doubt but it does not predetermine the course of events or human conduct. Man's freedom is not absolute but it gives enough scope for man to develop freely as he chooses. "*Karma* is used to account for the conditions of life, but man directs his destiny," Radhakrishnan avers.

It is wrong to think that man is in the grip of determinism either of *Karma* or biology or environment. He is endowed with the power of choice. He can rebel and protest against unjust social order. "The ethical basis of democracy is faith in the significance of man", says Dr. Radhakrishnan and adds, "The human person is not a mere wave on the ocean of history which fancies that it pushes the flood while it is carried on by it ... Man can cause new currents to surge up in history."



Radhakrishnan observes that men are now disoriented, obsessed and absurd. One of the dismal aspects of making scientific civilization is the death of human person. The hope for redemption lies in religion. But no religion today is in a position to penetrate the consciousness of man. Religion fails to uplift man. He wants a faith to live by. And the solution lies in spreading a religion based on compassion and responsibility. But will man learn lessons from history and live with responsibility towards future? It is from history that we learn nothing, says Radhakrishnan in his *Kalki*. But the possibility cannot be ruled out altogether. The so-called progress is only outward progress. Science made life more and more comfortable. The saga of scientific progress is spectacular and breath-taking. But morally the world has not registered an inch of progress since the birth of man. Man's greed and selfishness increased in proportion to his material advancement. Consequently there is no guarantee that he will make a right choice and make the world safe for future. This should not be deemed as pessimism and that the world is steadily heading towards a certain doom. One bright thing about man, which ought to be borne ever in mind, is that he is different from nature and hence utterly unpredictable. No external force or necessity can ever drive him to the wall. He is essentially free, living in a dark cosy cell. He is the king of infinite time and space. His potentialities are unlimited. He can transcend his own limitations if only he wills.

Dr. Radhakrishnan does not hold that progress is inevitable or continuous. While he accepts that evolutionary force is at work in the universe, he does not accept that it has a spiritual goal to reach. He does not accept the view of Darwin that the force is blind and has no purpose at all. Nor does he contribute to the view of Nietzsche that the purpose of evolution is to produce an *Überman* (Overman) living beyond good and evil. He holds that evolution is towards an end, but the end is not spiritual or a moral. The end-product of evolution, according to Radhakrishnan, is a morally evolved society shaped evenly by freedom and responsibility. He calls it *Brahmaloka*. It is his equivalent of Gandhi's *Ramrajya*. His ideal man is a holy man; a saint, not a genius or a man of power. His ideal man reshapes human institutions with freedom coupled with responsibility with compassion which embraces all. He does not work merely for his own salvation; he accepts to uplift the entire society around him. Thus he works for *Sarvanamkari* — liberation of the community as a whole. He transcends his own limitations. Hence, he is unique and uninvolved. "History", says Radhakrishnan, "is a matter of unique individuals involved in unique events." As he affirms again, "It is those, who stand outside history, that make history." The saint, a *Jivanmukta*, is a great individual. He is great because he represents

the general will of the people. The general will finds expression through him. "He is not an irrelevant phenomenon", avers Radhakrishnan. (To Hegel, society is a gradual unfolding of reason). To Radhakrishnan, however, it is a gradual unfolding of values, moral and spiritual. It is interesting to note that while Gandhi and Karl Marx conceived an anarchic society as the end-product of evolution, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan thought of an ordered society in which equality, liberty and fraternity are a really realized reality, a society, a haven of freedom, dreamed of by Rabindranath Tagore in his famous lyric beginning "Where the mind is without fear", in his *Gitanjali*.

## NEUTRAL

Iodira Sane

(Translated from Marathi by Shrikant Thambur)

Leaning by the massive door frame  
I stand gazing  
As each life leaf dropping  
Quite neutrally, y.  
Memories do not stir. Eyes do not strain.  
Nothing ever reaches anywhere  
I might have luxuriated in complete happiness.  
Might as well have hardened by sorrow continually chastising.  
Sensations have perhaps gone numb. Or  
All this feels like streams of rainwater flowing?  
As though uncomprehending  
I stand watching each leaf drop.  
Quite neutrally.



Dr. RADHAKRISHNAN  
An Eminent Exponent of Philosophy

A. RANGANATHAN

"The appeal of history to us all", commented Professor G. M. Trevelyan. "is in the last analysis poetic. But the poetry of history does not consist of imagination roaming at large, but of imagination pursuing the fact and fastening upon it." And seen in perspective, Professor Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy* and *Idealist View of Life*, G. M. Trevelyan's *History of England*, Ananda Coomaraswamy's *History of Indian and Indonesian Arts and Rajput Painting* and P. C. Ray's *History of Chemistry in Ancient and Mediaeval India* are among the finest examples of "imagination pursuing the fact and fastening upon it" in the history of twentieth century thought.

In his autobiographical essay entitled *My Search for Truth*, Prof. Radhakrishnan observes that "philosophy is not so much a conceptual reconstruction as an exhibition of insights". Again, in his *Reply to Critique* (published in Prof. Schilpp's *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan*), Prof. Radhakrishnan argues that philosophy must take into account "the reports of the scientists, the intuitions of the artists and the insights of the saints". Furthermore, it is this creative approach of an artist that can be perceived in his voluminous writings over the decades. And if one quality is to be emphasized, it should be this, for, of all philosophers, he is the creative artist of the modern Indian philosophical scene.

Professor Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is not only a creative interpreter of Indian philosophy but also an elegant stylist. Indeed he is one of the greatest stylists in the history of philosophy. Here are some sentences culled at random: "It takes centuries of life to make a little history, and it takes centuries of history to make a little tradition". "To be spiritual is to think so hard that thinking becomes viewing"; "There can be no compulsory conscription in the House of Truth"; "In liberation, a man becomes his own masterpiece"; "Gorgeous flowers justify the muddy roots from which they spring"; "A millennium is the time when all the heads will be hard and all the pillows soft"; "The last part of life's road is to be worked in single

file": "When the wick is ablaze at the tip, the whole lamp is said to be burning"; "The path to perfection is a slope rather than a staircase"; "We cannot put our souls into uniforms"; "We invent by intuition, though we prove by logic"; "To be ignorant is not the special prerogative of man, to know that he is ignorant is his special privilege."

Prof. Radhakrishnan's celebrated volumes on *Indian Philosophy* (The first volume was published in 1923 and followed by the second volume in 1927) constitute a classic in the recent history of Indian Philosophy. Here is certainly the authentic Radhakrishnan. For these two volumes reflect the two characteristic features of Radhakrishnan's writings — elegance of style and the comparative method. Just as Professor Das Gupta's *History of Indian Philosophy* and Prof. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* and *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy* are models of dialectical exposition, so is Radhakrishnan's survey of *Indian Philosophy* a masterpiece of stylistic elegance. What strikes the reader is his elegance of style which is sustained throughout the two volumes covering more than 1500 pages. His chapters on *The Advaita Vedanta of Sankara* and *The Theism of Ramanuja* constitute the keystone of what could be termed as the architectonic unity of the two volumes. Again Prof. Radhakrishnan has made use of the comparative method despite its risks. For example, comparing Sankara's theory of knowledge with that of Kant, Radhakrishnan argues that Kant's emphasis on the Phenomena as distinguished from the Noumena, results in the Kantian "plurality of things in themselves". This is different from Sankara's position who believed in only one fundamental reality. Thus Radhakrishnan argues that "in this matter Sankara is certainly more philosophical than Kant, who illegitimately imports the distinctions of the world into the region of things-in-themselves".

Again commenting on Bradley's view that the real is the harmonious, Radhakrishnan makes the following point: "From the stricter point of view of Sankara, even harmonious truth is not reality. We cannot say that reality is harmony, for the latter means a number of parts interrelated in a whole. This distinction of parts and whole is an empirical one, which we are attributing to the transcendental reality". Interestingly enough, these differences highlight the unique contributions made by Indian thinkers to the elucidation of common philosophical problems. Equally interesting is Radhakrishnan's comparison between Sankara and Ramanuja: "Ramanuja holds that the divine is the human view enlarged. To Sankara on the other hand, the real is beyond appearances and truth is beyond thought". At this point it is also worth mentioning that despite Radhakrishnan's evaluation of some of the fundamental doctrines of Indian philosophy in the light of his own understanding of Western philosophy, he does not depart from the traditional meaning of the basic texts. To cite an

example, he describes Sri Aurobindo's thesis that the Vedic hymns must be understood at two levels — the psychological-mythic for the elect and the concrete-material for the common people — as an "ingenious point of view" which could neither be supported by modern European scholarship nor through the traditional interpretations of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā. Here it is difficult to agree with Prof. Radhakrishnan. Far from flowing traditional authority, Sri Aurobindo helps us to return to the sources of our wisdom. Although it is true that Sāṃkhya has not written on the "Sāṃhitās" as such, he has commented on the "Mantras" which occur in the Upanishads. Indeed Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of Vedic hymns is something more than "ingenious point of view". Actually it is an illuminating point of view which must be explored further in the context of Sāṃkhya's reflections on this subject.

In the concluding chapter of his work on Indian Philosophy Dr. Radhakrishnan has stressed that the Republic of "Hindu thought never developed a Montrose Doctrine in matters of culture". And Dr. Radhakrishnan has revealed not only this traditional hospitality of the Hindu mind in his exploration of the spiritual depths and metaphysical heights of Indian philosophy, but has also added a new dimension of sympathetic insight in his interpretation of Buddhist philosophy. As an interpreter of the *Brahma Sūtras*, the *Principal Upanishads* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, Dr. Radhakrishnan who had already included a section on *The Ethical Idealism of Early Buddhism* and lectured on *Gautama the Buddha* (which was justly hailed as a masterpiece "on a master-mind by a mastermind" and won for him the coveted fellowship of the British Academy) has also commented on *The Dharmapada*. It is this universality of outlook combined with an empathy reminiscent of Vachaspathi Miśra which has led him to investigate the bearings of Indian philosophy on politics and literature and the deeper implications of mysticism and ethics in his perceptive essays on Kālidāsa and Tagore, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharshi, Tilak and Gandhi. And it is also relevant to note here that Prof. Radhakrishnan has edited three volumes of philosophical essays — *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, edited jointly by Prof. J. H. Muirhead which includes contributions by Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya, Ananda Coomaraswamy, M. Hiriyana and Prof. Radhakrishnan; *Mahatma Gandhi, Essays and Reflections on his Life* containing essays and articles by Albert Einstein, Rabindranath Tagore, Radhakrishnan and several others, presented to Mahatma Gandhi on his seventieth birthday on October 2, 1939 and *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western* in two volumes sponsored and published by the Government of India in 1952.

"It is an honour to philosophy" noted Desmond Russell, "that Dr. Radhakrishnan should be President of India". Indeed Lord Russell regarded it as a fulfilment of the Platonic wish that philosophers must

he kings. However, unlike Plato who did not admit poets in his Republic, Radhakrishnan began his career with an interpretative work on *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*. Here is Professor Radhakrishnan's admirable response to Tagore: "It is the peculiar glory of great literature that it lasts much longer than kings and dynasties. History bears witness to the power of the human spirit which endures longer than dynasties and creeds. The political world of Homer is dead, while his song is living today. The splendour of Rome has vanished, but the poetry of Virgil is yet vital. The dreams of Kalidasa still move us like the cry of a living voice, with their poignant sense of tears in human relations, while the Ujjain, of which he was the ornament, has left her memory to his weeping. The great mediæval potentates are forgotten but the song of Dante is still cherished; and the Elizabethan Age will be remembered as long as the English language lives on account of its Shakespeare. When our lords and leaders pass into oblivion, Tagore will continue to enchant us by his music and poetry. For the value of his work lies ... in those elements of universality which appeal to the whole world. He has added to the sweetness of life, to the stature of civilisation". Surely, Dr. Radhakrishnan's Republic (in the geographical and cultural senses of the term) is different from Plato's Republic!

Seldom in history has there been a philosopher so representative of his age, one who so completely anticipates the aspirations of his contemporaries in ushering in a new era of understanding between nations. Professor Radhakrishnan, who was the President of the UNESCO, had also served for a period of nine years on the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation set up by the League of Nations, which included among its members such great scientists and scholars as the late Madame Curie, Sir J. C. Bose, Albert Einstein and Gilbert Murray. The similarity between Gilbert Murray and Prof. Radhakrishnan is truly striking. Like Gilbert Murray who perceived the values of Greek poetry as constituting a source of creative insights in his understanding of international relations, Dr. Radhakrishnan has also drawn upon the ancient fountainhead of Indian philosophy in his assessments of the contemporary international scene. And in its broadest sense, Dr. Radhakrishnan's career illustrates in a striking manner the controlling force of the artistic impulse.

The development of comparative religion, partly facilitated by the anthropological vistas, unveiled by Sir James Frazer, was, however, mainly due to the publication of Sanskrit classics in Europe. The impact of Indian philosophical thought on Western intellectuals like Schopenhauer, Goethe, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, W. B. Yeats, A. E. and several others, and Western influences on our leaders such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Gandhi are some aspects of this cross-fertilization of cultures and civilizations.

leading to a more fundamental cultural understanding between India and the West. Dr Radhakrishnan's famous works entitled *East and West in Religion*, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* and *East and West* are outstanding contributions to the study of Comparative Religion and the East-West Spiritual Dialogue. Indeed his *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* is particularly valuable for its comparisons and contrasts between the speculations of Greece, Palestine and Christendom on the one hand and Indian thought on the other. And Dr. Radhakrishnan's greatness as a philosopher lies in the fact that he had underscored "the power of spirit in the hearts of men". "What we require" proclaimed Prof. Radhakrishnan in his Inaugural Lecture on *The World's Untorn Soul* as the first Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford, "is not professions and programmes but the power of spirit in the hearts of men, a power which will help us to discipline our passions of greed and selfishness and organize the world which is at one with us in desire".

## DEPRESSIVE NEUROSIS

Prof. EUGENE D'VAZ

I know that I should love,  
bring the rainbow to your sky.  
Instead I peel off antidepressants  
from strips of silver foil.  
I fight demons  
fabricated by forbidden longes  
turned true by imagination.  
Quiet, mindful sleep drives them away.  
I wake up, having lost one more day,  
when love could have been given  
for the making of the rainbow garden.  
How should I call down the rain?  
In barren prayer, or in lust that squirms with guilt?  
No sapling of promise,  
no rose, no tender lily  
no empty morning butterflies,  
just a journey from tunnel to tunnel.

## DR. RADHAKRISHNAN

### A Great Speaker and Writer

Prof. HUMAYUN KABIR

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan first appeared as an author with a book on the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore. This was in a way symbolic, for all his literary activities have centred round the values of truth, beauty and goodness. A keen student of philosophy, problems about the nature of man and his relation to the ultimate have always engrossed his attention. He has delved deep into many solutions, Eastern and Western, that have been offered about the inner nature of reality. While the search for knowledge has been the ruling passion of his life, he has been equally moved by the beauty which resides in the heart of things. It was therefore no accident that his first work of philosophy should be based on the work of a man whose entire life was devoted to the search for beauty and its expression in word, line and music. Rabindranath Tagore was essentially an artist and sought to express himself in poetry, painting, music and drama. Radhakrishnan was moved by Tagore's deep feeling for harmony born out of a fusion of truth and beauty and felt that it must also be translated into intellectual terms by the philosophic seeker after truth.

Truth, beauty and goodness are the highest values and demand the total allegiance of man. It is not given to ordinary men to realise them in their daily lives, for even rare spirits can reach them only in their moments of exaltation. Ordinary men cannot live on the heights of ecstasy and must normally pursue an even course in the valleys of daily life. Unless therefore these values are related to his ordinary experience, the common man feels lost and cannot incorporate them into his life. It is Radhakrishnan's distinction that he has in all his writings sought to realise these values and make them intelligible to the common man.

One can clearly trace the growth of understanding and insight in Radhakrishnan's successive works. From a study of Tagore's philosophy of beauty, Radhakrishnan went on to analyse and explain



the hold of religion in contemporary philosophy. He rightly saw that in spite of the growing dominance of science, the religious spirit in man can never be extinguished. He sought to understand the phases through which philosophy has passed in the manifold traditions of India and, in the process, he helped to secure for Indian thinking an assured place in the philosophical map of the world. He has tried to interpret the significance of religion in the East and find an explanation why the intellectual tradition became dominant in the Western outlook. He has in fact helped to develop in the modern man an awareness of philosophy in its widest sweep which includes the traditions of ancient Egypt and India, China and the Arab World as well as the contributions of the modern West.

It is not possible in this brief survey to attempt an appraisal of Radhakrishnan's entire philosophical writings. It is enough to say that they are all marked by keen intellectual insight and a rare power of reconciling different points of view. In spite of encyclopaedic learning and familiarity with many different traditions in history, philosophy and religion, Radhakrishnan's writing is never cumbered with the weight of arid scholarship. He carries the burden of knowledge easily and handles vast masses of material with ease and elegance. His sharp analytical mind penetrates to the heart of a problem and records his own judgement in clear and lucid terms. Essentially a humanist, his writing is characterised by a rare lucidity, grace and urbanity.

The felicity of style which characterises his writings is seen even more clearly in his speeches. Rarely has a man used the word, whether spoken or written, so effectively. Both in his writings and his speeches, Radhakrishnan marshals his material with consummate mastery. With a phenomenal memory, hardly anything he has read or heard escapes him. He draws upon a vast accumulation of facts and theories and presents them with a clarity and orderliness that is deceptive. It has been rightly said that great art lies in concealing art. This is true of Radhakrishnan's art, for when he writes or speaks, the words seem to flow with spontaneous and unpremeditated ease.

Few men can forget the first impact of Radhakrishnan's oratory. He speaks not only with fluency but also with eloquence. There is a precision and clarity about his language which is a reflection of the clarity and precision of his thought. Whether it is a difficult philosophical problem or a complicated social or political issue, Radhakrishnan can present the essentials with unrivalled directness and simplicity. Once when the General President of the Indian Philosophical Congress was unable to attend, Radhakrishnan stepped into the breach at the last moment and gave a brilliant exposition on the place of intuition in philosophy. When during the stormy

days of the Indian national struggle, students were swayed with violent passion and the bureaucracy of the day was considering severe measures of repression. Radhakrishnan's intervention blunted the edge of bureaucratic wrath and turned students' energies into more creative channels.

When India became free, Radhakrishnan was among those who hailed the dawn of freedom, but even on the historic night of 14-15 August 1947, he considered it his duty to remind the people of :

"Our national faults of character, our domestic despotism, our intolerance, which have assumed the different forms of obscurantism, of narrow-mindedness, of superstitious bigotry. Our opportunities are great but let me warn you that when power out-steps ability, we will fall on evil days. We should develop competence and ability which would help us to utilise the opportunities which are now open to us. From tomorrow morning — from midnight today — we can no longer throw the blame on the British. We have to assume the responsibility ourselves for what we do. A free India will be judged by the way in which it will serve the interests of the common man in the matter of food, clothing, shelter and the social services. Unless we destroy corruption in high places, root out every trace of nepotism, love of power, profiteering and black-marketing which have spoiled the good name of this great country in recent times, we will not be able to raise the standards of efficiency in administration as well as in the production and distribution of the goods of life."

Radhakrishnan has always been proud of India's great heritage but in his view it depends essentially on the realisation of spiritual values. That is why on that historic night he declared :

"Civilisation is a thing of the spirit; it is not something external, solid and mechanical. It is the dream in the people's hearts. It is the inward aspiration of the people's souls. It is the imaginative interpretation of human life and the perception of the mystery of human existence."

Radhakrishnan has carried this great spiritual message beyond the shores of India. As one identified with UNESCO from its very inception, he played a dominant role in establishing its policies. Like UNESCO Radhakrishnan believes that wars begin in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be built. Wars arise from hatred and hatred is born out of ignorance and unfamiliarity. That is why he has again and again spoken of the common cultural heritage of man and stressed the need of mutual understanding and interpenetration of the great traditions of East and West. At Montevideo, in India and at Paris, — in fact wherever UNESCO has met — his voice has been raised in defence of the rights of man

and the vindication of the ideals which alone can assure peace, progress and prosperity for all.

Uda paid Radhakrishnan the great tribute of electing him President of the Republic. In his Assumption Speech, he spoke in glowing terms of the great value of Truth :

"The Supreme is Truth according to all religions. Men of all creeds and no creed are devotees of Truth, the great Comforter, the great Awakener. When other things fail, Truth does not."

In keeping with the tenor of his thought, he declared :

"In our national concerns we adopt democracy not merely as a political arrangement but as a moral temper. It is of a piece with our great tradition and habits of behaviour. We realise that freedom has no meaning save in the context of equality, and there can be no equality without economic justice. These ideals of freedom, equality and justice are not possessions to be defended but goals to be reached. We have often lapsed from them and suffered in consequence. In a mood of humility and national repentance, we should strive to correct our past mistakes, remove the indignities which we have imposed on our fellow men and march forward. We cannot move into the future by walking backward.

Radhakrishnan's concern for peace and understanding among all nations has impressed all who have come into contact with him. He has reiterated again and again that peace within and among nations can be based only on justice and mutual accommodation. In his Independence Day broadcast in August 1962, he declared :

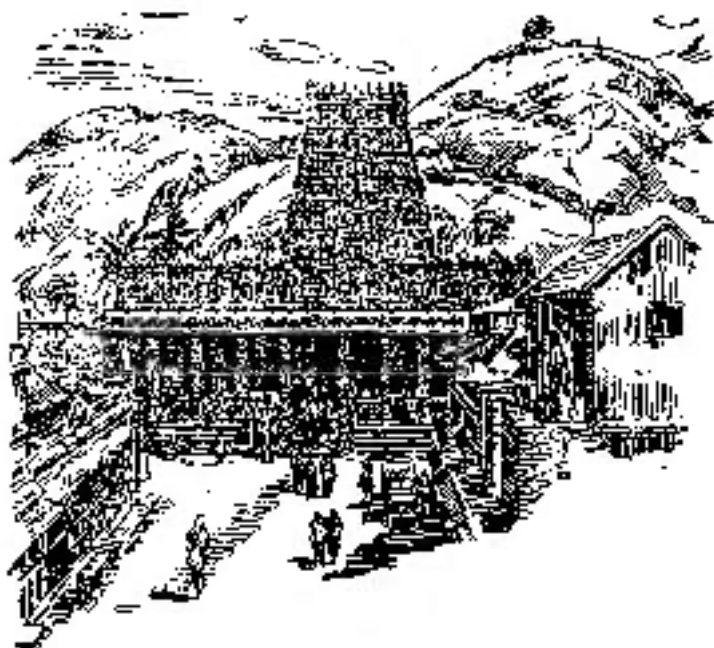
Our world is now united as never before. We should see to it that disputes are settled by law and reason. All forms of violence are symbols of human failure. As responsible human beings, in this nuclear age, it should be our objective to work for a policy of peace, friendship and disarmament. If we profess fidelity to the principles and institutions of the United Nations and use military power in our actual dealings to enforce our views, we will be condemned as hypocrites. If we believe in peaceful coexistence and not power politics, we should not look upon our enemies with disdain and we should not assume that we are always right and our enemies always wrong. We must achieve a world of law and free choice, banishing from it violence and coercion. Not merely clarity, but humane, peaceful settlement of international disputes should also begin at home.

It is easy to speak of clarity and understanding when things go well. The real test comes when violence and hatred erupt in open conflict. Radhakrishnan maintained a sane and balanced attitude during the bitter days of Chinese invasion of India in

1962 and the angry days of Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1965. He reflected the true spirit of India when he said :

"We have also to avoid any form of hatred of the people of Pakistan, who are our kith and kin. Friendship with them has always been our primary objective. It is not our desire to hurt Pakistan to save India. Our commitment to peace is well known. We do not believe in any unbudgeable chasms. There are more things which bind us together than keep us apart. In this dreadful situation, let us have a few moments of introspection and make our spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice."

One could go on referring to many such declarations during the long and distinguished career of the philosopher who is today President of India. It is enough to say that he has maintained philosophical equanimity in the midst of stress and struggle. He has preached the message of understanding and compassion. He has condemned injustice and tyranny and urged his people to resist evil while at the same time seeking to change and reclaim the evil-doer. By speech and conduct, he has sought to uphold the ideals which alone give grace and dignity to human life.



## SLEEVELESS-BEAUTY

Dr. B. GOPALA REDDY

*(Translated from Telugu by D. V. Ramaswamy)*

Unexpected sight surprises.  
Novel appearance pleases.  
It was a pleasant vision, that morn.  
Sight neither expected nor sought for smiled on me  
Her beauty was natural with golden complexion  
Beauty received me with tender lit.  
Joy inexpressible welled up in my heart.  
Maid a time I met her.  
To this situation I was a stranger  
The sleeveless jacket,  
Revealed the treasure trove of youth.  
The nonpareil beauty of shoulders  
Shone like mountain high through clouds.  
Smiled like rubies brushed up from dust.  
Blossomed like a flower in the cupid's quiver  
Shimmered like a wavelet in the river ofresses  
Dazzled like the eye of lightning  
Youth and beauty sang in unison.  
I smelt the fragrance of unimely spring  
Beauty burns like flame;  
But enlightens and inspires.  
That morn left indelible impression  
In my memory vale.  
Adoration for beauty alone sprouted in me.



## A DEFENCE OF IDEALISM

Prof. K.R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, English philosophical enquiry was dominated by the Absolute Idealist viewpoint. John and Edward Caird in Glasgow, Thomas Hill Green in Oxford and their immediate followers in one or other of the Universities made a perfectly British compound of the rigorous Idealism of Kant and Hegel and the poetic idealism of Coleridge and Wordsworth. With the birth of the new century, the citadel of idealism found itself assailed from various quarters. Practically the first shot to be fired was "The repudiation of Idealism" by George Edward Moore which appeared in *Mind* in 1903. Since then Idealism ceased to count in serious philosophical circles in England. The surviving Idealists, — F.H. Bradley, Bernard Bosanquet, Julian Webb, Sir Henry Jones, Ellis Mc Taggart and others — brilliant and estimable as they were, betrayed a residue of uncertainty and hesitancy that only increased the doubts of the sincere enquirer. On the other hand, the substitutes for Idealism showed a dangerous tendency to multiply indiscriminately. Philosophical literature became a chaos illumined by rare flashes of lightning. Pragmatism, so typically American, found an English habitation in F.C.S. Schiller. Humanism achieved varying forms in the hands of Irving Babbitt, Ramon Fernandez and T.S. Eliot. Henri Bergson's 'creative evolution' saw its English counterparts in Lloyd Morgan's 'Emergent evolution' and Samuel Alexander's space-time emergents. Realism discovered its sponsors in Bertrand Russell, John Laird and A.N. Whitehead. Even scientists like Sir Oliver Lodge, J.A. Thompson, Julian Huxley, and A.S. Eddington felt the temptation to philosophise too irresistible. Their standpoint was definitely naturalistic, but most of them were wise enough to admit that mere naturalism was not competent to link inferences that could comprehend the whole universe. Grubb Street was not idle either. Wells and Bennett and Rebecca West — along with one-hundred others — vociferously soliloquised like Caliban on Setebos. Strangest of all, General Smuts came forward with his

precious 'Holistic evolution' and felt convinced that man's perplexities have been solved once and for all. One read the latest books on Islam, rationalism and utopianism; one followed the unedifying discussions in the leading philosophical journals; one was confused, exasperated, reduced to desperation. Whatever was dear or not, one thing seemed to be certain — that Idealism was fighting a losing battle with its rivals in the realm of philosophy. The rivals did not agree among themselves, but it was no matter. They fell upon Idealism with fury and in its ultimate annihilation hoped to find their own salvation. It was a question of the Nazis and the Communists combining to exterminate the Socialists.

Indian philosophy has all along been inspired by the Idealist view of life. Idealism is in our blood. For us the ultimates of thought have constituted the base of the fabric of philosophy. Thought comes first and out of the manifold data of experience builds up the edifice of knowledge. To the Idealist the vision of the mystic and the intuitive perception of the seer are not less valid as experiences, because they are outside the domain of science as it is at present developed. Naturalism is quite an inadequate view of life since it ignores all the concomitants of what it chooses to call psychological experience. Reason is fairly reliable; intellect is extremely competent, but there are departments of knowledge to which it has no access, intuition, on the other hand, is infallible. The intuitive seer has no need to set forth the why and wherefore of it; he knows with perfect finality. The Idealist who is willing to embrace the mind is not one to banish intellect or reason or logic or science. They all serve their ends and contribute to the accumulation of knowledge. The affection I feel for a friend is a kind of knowledge to me and I am fully conscious of it; but I cannot mathematically prove it or scientifically demonstrate it. A volume of poetry is to me not the complex assortment of leaves of paper and sweet-smelling leather it appears to be, nor, as a scientist would express it, a few million billion electrons and protons desperately impinging against their neighbours a countless number of times. It is to me rather a treasure of knowledge — the outcome of the poet's experiences. Reading the poems — even merely recapitulating their ideas and their rhythms — I see the poet's rich experiences mapped out before me and it is as though I live them myself. The further my appreciation, the more identical will be my experience. Here is a phenomenon which does not come the way of science. But to deny such experience is not merely futile, it is absurd. The Absolute Idealist who makes a casual object the starting point for a chain of intellectual and arduous deductions which eventually embraces the all and finds a kinship between the invisible electrons and the monstrous pro-

portions of the stars—he is indeed a problem to men like William Archer who would fain express love and poetry and the fugitive outlines of ravishing natural phenomena in terms of the differential calculus. Sankara who was as powerfully intellectual as dozen William Archers, was careful to make intellect the willing slave of intuition, not the terrible Djinn in the Arabian Nights, the slave who would kill the master who engendered him. Unfortunately, however, the lesson of Sankara and Ramanuja, Vedanta Desika and Appayya Dikshita, has been lost upon recent generations of Indians. We have been content to repeat the old formulae, chant the traditional devotional songs, and at best to make a farce of reading the commentaries at the feet of some master. For the rest, philosophy in India has been either lifelessly historical or violently polemical. The Indian Pundit thought that all European philosophers were mimics and as utterly unworthy of his notice; a seventeenth century commentary on the Brahma Sūtras was greater than all Spinoza or Kant. And no doubt the Western Pundit returned the compliment. Sankara was a third-rate Berkeley and it is obvious Ramanuja is an amalgam of Christian thought and Hindu Theology. Thus Idealism seemed to be dead as mutton in Europe no less than in Asia. One wondered if Shaw's 'Life Force' will after all be the converging point for philosophical systems in the future. But it would appear matters are not as gloomy as all that. At any rate in his Hibbert Lectures on "An Idealist View of Life", now issued in book form\*, Professor Sir S. Radhakrishnan has given a new lease of life to Idealism as a practical creed—and as a philosophical outlook.

There can possibly be no doubt that *An Idealist View of Life* is a landmark in the history of philosophy. It is Professor Radhakrishnan's most arduous attempt at a contribution to constructive philosophy. No one else in the modern world can claim his profound intimacy with the European as well as the Indian tradition in philosophy. He is that rare phenomenon, "a philosophical bilingualist". In his new famous volumes on Indian philosophy, he had laid stress on the persistence of certain fundamental characteristics from the remote past down to our own days, minor differentiations in the various systems notwithstanding; with singular force and insinuating eloquence, he had demonstrated the underlying unity in Indian philosophy behind all the apparent diversity. But is that all? Or is all philosophy, Western and Indian, essentially one in its Idealistic approach to problems of life and conduct? In his Hibbert Lectures, Professor Radhakrishnan takes into account the

\* 'An Idealist View of Life,' Hibbert Lectures 1929, by S. Radhakrishnan. George Allen and Unwin.



thought treasures of all countries and of all times. And he attempts to discern a unifying attitude to life that shall have the sanction of the eminent philosophers of the West and the East, that shall do no violence to our reason, nor rudely prick our higher sensibilities. It is true that the East is East and the West is West—in a material sense, that is, which alone could have appealed to Rudyard Kipling, the Nobel Laureate. But in the pages of *An Idealist View of Life*, the East and the West have really met; philosophy ought no more to countenance the cleavages of race, creed and colour.

Reading *An Idealist View of Life* aloud, one feels that here at any rate is philosophy which is not forbidding, which does not overwhelm the reader with a mass of incomprehensible verbiage. One feels, besides, that the lectures are spoken to one in his study, with familiarity, with disarming cordiality. Abstract philosophical conceptions are rendered in language that satisfies the mind but unexcites the senses. (*The Times Literary Supplement* thought that the literary charm of the book is almost its greatest asset.) The transfiguration of Sanskrit passages, the occasionally massive foot-notes, and the strings of quoted authorities may well put the most hard-headed Pundit to shame—and yet Professor Radhakrishnan never degenerates to the level of a mere Pundit. In his criticisms of what he calls the modern substitutes for religion—Naturalism, Agnosticism, Humanism, Behaviourism, Pragmatism, Authoritarianism, and others too numerous to mention—he is specific without being crude, and he shows a capacity for understanding, though he promptly explains why he could not accept the other points of view. Thus: "Naturalism asks us to endure truth and reverence reality, but we cannot do so if there is a cleft between Man and Nature. Religion, by insisting on an organic connection between the world of Nature and the world of values, delivers us from our isolation and transience. It, therefore, takes us deeper than intellect and re-establishes the vital relationship already at work between Man and Nature." (p. 52) No unnecessary varnish disrupts the even flow of argument. But though the style is chastened, it is never dull. Ideas are carried out as inevitable sentences and are adjusted in memorable patterns. The whole discourse—part summary, part polemic and part creation—goes winding about and about and when one closes the book one knows that it is an admirable whole, nothing superfluous, nothing ignored. And soon one must read the book again.

The lack of spiritual note in most of the substitutes for religion is what makes them unacceptable to Professor Radhakrishnan. They are too much taken up with the earth crust. None of them "shows an adequate appreciation of the natural profundity of the human soul" (P. 82). On the one hand, there is the practical

inefficiency of Religion : for, "by postulating a perfect God who is responsible for the government of the universe, religion seems to take away the edge from ethical striving" (p. 41). On the other hand, the proposed substitutes for Religion are found to be thoroughly disappointing. Could it be that philosophy too may be able to find a way out of this spiritual impasse? Professor Radhakrishnan answers in the affirmative. "It is the function of philosophy to provide us with a spiritual rallying centre, a synoptic vision, as Plato loved to call it, a *Sarvamaya*, as the Hindu thinkers put it, a philosophy which will serve as a spiritual concordat, which will free the spirit of religion from the disintegration of doubt and make the warfare of creeds and sects a thing of the past." (p. 33) The aim of philosophy thus interpreted, it is plain that its duty is to "find out whether the convictions of the religious sects fit in with the tested laws and principles of the universe." (p. 35) What exists in its intrinsic fullness is only spiritual and the ultimates of the nature of reality could be sooner comprehended *a priori* by a process of metaphysical reflection than by simple scientific experiment. Religious or spiritual experience, though it has not the mathematical primeness of a chemical equation, has nevertheless its significant affirmations. These the great sages and seers of the world have known and they had never thought it necessary to question their validity. Professor Radhakrishnan enumerates these several affirmations : there is a mode of consciousness which unlike the perceptual, imaginative or intellectual, carries with it, "self-evidence and completeness"; the experience is not of the nature of a mere conjecture or creation, it is grasped as a discovery or a revelation; God is the symbol in which religion cognises the Absolute of philosophy; the inquirive realisation of the one-ness of the self and the universe is the beginning of real knowledge. The question arises whether inquirive knowledge is irrational. Professor Radhakrishnan is emphatic on that point : intuition is not a non-rational process; "it is only non-conceptual... We have throughout life the intuitive and intellectual sides at work... Intuition is neither abstract thought and analysis nor formless darkness and primitive sentence. It is wisdom, the *noûs* of which Aristotle speaks (the all-pervading intelligence of Dante)." (p. 153)

Some of the most moving passages in the book are contained in the chapter, "The spirit in Man," in which the author pursues an inquiry into the causes of man's artistic achievements. Aesthetic truths, poetic truths are apprehended not by scientific genius but by man's intuitive consciousness. Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* is an edifice of beauty nurtured in a dream. The mystics and the great artists arrive at the stage of knowing, without going through the laborious bother of learning. The *Adhyas*, the *Acharyas*, the

Saiva-Samayacharyas and the other god-intoxicated souls who have gone before us but have left us an opulent legacy of song were "the heralds of the Infinite, the first fruits of the future man.... They are the new 'emergents', the beginnings of a new human species, the 'sports' in the biological expression, in whom a qualitatively new type is awakened." (p. 209) Still it may be asked whether the certainty of God which Intuitive knowledge affirms is consistent with the general character of the physical world. If the constructive philosopher could prove that this is the case then what was merely intuitive discovery becomes a logically self-sufficient fact. And this is what Professor Radhakrishnan proceeds to do in the succeeding chapters. Analysing the basic characteristics of the physical world we arrive at the primary electrons and protons beyond which analysis cannot go at present. One notices also the inter-dependence between every organism and its environment. Though science is valuable in explaining and interpreting the causal aspects of events, it finds itself up against a Chinese wall when it tackles the creative side. Why matter should exist at all, and why should the primaries be two, electrons and protons, and not any other number? Sainier is silent on these questions.

In the two last chapters of the book, "Human personality and its Destiny" and "Ultimate Reality," Professor Radhakrishnan's conclusions crystallise. What is human progress? "Human progress lies in an increasing awareness of the universal working in man. Through the exploring of Nature, the striving after wisdom and the seeking of God, the individual struggles to achieve a harmony between himself and his environment. He finds his goodness in what is more than himself." While explaining the Hindu theory of Karma, Professor Radhakrishnan compares life to a game of bridge and develops the simile with consummate art: "The cards in the game are given to us. We do not select them. They are traced to past Karma, but we are free to make any call as we think fit and lead any suit. Only we are limited by the rules of the game. We are more free when we start the game than later on when the game has developed and our choices become restricted. But still the very end there is always a choice... Even though we may not like the way in which the cards are shuffled, we like the game and we want to play... The great souls find profound peace in the consciousness that the stately order of the world, now lovely and luminous, now dark and terrible, in which man finds his duty and destiny, cannot be subdued to known aims. It seems to have a purpose of its own of which we are ignorant..... Microtome is not fate but providence" (pp. 279-80). Answering the question why spiritual Universalism is a lower description of the Universe than ethical individualism or mathematical equation, Pro-

lessor Radhakrishnan argues that though our knowledge may be clearer when the Universe is approached from the other views of life, yet "it is thus mysterious, unclear and inarticulate knowledge (of the world as spirit) that brings us closest to reality." (p. 311)

What then is the nature of the "ultimate reality"? Certain conclusions emerge. The world is an ordered whole and not an incongruent patchwork quilt; what exists relative to all else and individual existents strive towards greater cohesion with their surroundings; motion, neither irregular nor intermittent, is of the essence of existence; the changes that follow have a purpose which forge an increasing harmony and an ineffable radiance of joy; and finally the supreme type of experience, to which the mystics above have the key, transcends the axes of human reference and is so all embracing that it is meaningless to locate people who have reached the capacity for such untranslatable experience as anything apart from the wheel of cosmic process. The ideology of God, too, assumes a rational interpretation. He need be no anthropomorphic symbol, nor is it necessary to give him his cone to save ourselves on the face of reason. "The ultimate creative energy of the world is one and not many, for nature is too closely knit to be viewed as a scene of conflict between two or more powers. The first principle of the Universe possesses unity, consciousness and priority of existence." (p. 332) "The process of the world is an emergence, but not of the type suggested by Alexander. It is an emergence under the guidance of God who is immanent in the process, though the goal is transcendent to it." (p. 335) And lastly: "God, though immanent, is not identical with the world until the very end. Throughout the process there is an unrealised restfulness in God, but it vanishes when we reach the end; when the reign is absolute, the kingdom comes." (p. 340)

We are now at the heart of the enquiry — the heart in which is implicit the whole. How is one to define the relation between the God of religion and the Absolute of philosophy? Professor Radhakrishnan is precise in his answer: "While the Absolute is pure consciousness and pure freedom and infinite possibility, it appears to be God from the point of view of the one specific possibility which has become actualised. While God is organically bound up with the Universe, the Absolute is not... The Absolute is the foundation and prius of all actuality and possibility." (p. 343) Then he goes on to explain how the Indian figure of Brahma makes the creation of the Universe an act of playfulness. May is generally the expression of ideal possibilities. It is its own end and its own continuous reward. The Absolute mind has a perfect realm of ideal being, and is free creativity as well. Though the creation of the world is an accident in the never-ending activity of the

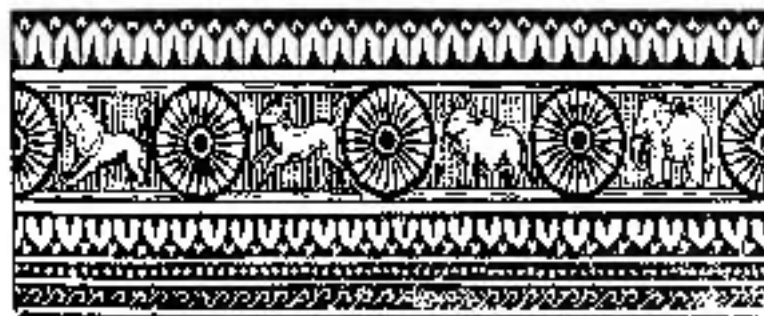
Absolute, it attributes a deep want in God. The world is as indispensable to God as God is to the world." (p. 344) And then the whole argument rounds off with this clinching and convincing: "God is the Absolute from the human end, when we limit down the Absolute to its relation with the actual possibility, the Absolute appears as supreme wisdom, love and goodness. The eternal becomes the first and last..... As creator and saviour, God is transcendent to the true process, even as realisation is transcendent to progress. This internal transcendence of God to the true process gives meaning to the disjunctions of value and makes struggle and effort real. We call the supreme the Absolute when we view it apart from the cosmos, God in relation to the cosmos. The Absolute is the preeminent nature of God and God is the Absolute from the cosmic point of view." (p. 345)

An *Idealist view of Life*, the trend of whose main argument I have tried to summarise above, must be a splendid tonic to the vast body of cynicism-ridden youths in transitional India. The book has been hailed with a chorus of felicitations by persons of the eminence of J. H. Muirhead and William Ralph Inge. Of the intensity of Professor Radhakrishnan's convictions and the persisting glow and glaring vitality of his strife it is surely banal to speak at this time of the day. That is a part of the public opinion of the cultured world. The antics of some of the Academic Councilors of the Madras University are really beneath one's notice. Other books by Professor Radhakrishnan, admirable and extraordinarily competent as they were, had more scholastic than human interest. Ever *The Hindu View of Life* was but a glorious, slight thing. For the first time, Professor Radhakrishnan has given us in *An Idealist view of Life* a book which is meant for all, and which is likely to save many, many souls from being ship-wrecked on the trellises of cynicism. Indians are eternally indebted to the Hibbert Trustees for having given an opportunity to Professor Radhakrishnan to integrate his conclusions and formulate his message.

So then, thanks to the timely intervention of the Indian philosopher, the Absolute idealist attitude still remains. The Universe is not blind destiny: life is not futile, nor religion is a meaning, it has value. There is ever concrete creative activity. The Absolute is all-inclusive and therefore full of rush and tumult and impulsion. The idealist does not picture a static Universe which is rather all-exclusive. Ideas are supreme and are always with us. The idealist view of life leaves nothing to conjecture; it learns everything at first hand, nor waits for an acceptance of it till a string of syllogisms passes its judgment. On the validity of intuitional experiences and the eternal attributes of thought, Absolute Idealism raises its philosophical structure. And in the delectable halls and arches and

done: and starts no less than in the realm of grandeur and symmetry in this exquisite series of Absolute Ideals, now recovered and polished by the perception and genius of Professor Radhakrishnan, one sees the splendours and the fascinations and the infinities suggested as yet dimly by the following lines from *The Ecstasy* :

To every form of being is assigned,  
An active principle — however removed  
From sense and observation, it subsists  
In all things, in all natures; in the Spans  
Of azure heaven, the unending clouds,  
In flower and grass, in every pebbly shore  
That paves the brooks, the imaginary rocks,  
The moving waves and the invisible air.  
Unrolled all the more, more visible,  
The more we know — and yet is experienced least,  
And least, repeated in the human Mind  
Its most apparent forms.



# ADVAITA AND BRAHMASUTRAS

B. KUTUMBA RAO

Baadarāyaṇa's "Brahmasūtras" is one of the three canons of ancient Indian spiritual tradition, the other two being the "Upanishads" and the "Bhagavadgītā". This presents the essential teachings of the Upanishads in 555 aphorisms in an analytical and coherent manner, reconciling the apparent contradictions we come across in the Upanishadic statements, and clarifying the meanings of some obscure words with cogent arguments based on logic, reasoning and scriptures.

Ācāryas of all schools of thought, excepting nihilists and atheists, commented upon this work, and interpreted the aphorisms according to their own lights. Thus arose a motley of interpretations. An eager and inquisitive student is at a loss to grasp and arrive at the correct purport of the Sūtras and read the heart of Baadarāyaṇa.

In this context, Advaitins contend that the main import of the aphorisms cannot but be the Advaita as propounded by Śrī Śaṅkara, and that it is so, can be substantiated by a close and keen examination of the meanings of some Sūtras themselves, and the wording therein.

Among all Sūtras, the Sūtra "*Ślokaṁ drishyaṁ tu upadeśo vaamadevādityaḥ*" (Br. S. 1-1-30) is a boon-yielding gem — Chintamani for Advaitins. So declares Śrī Parāmacārya of Kanchi Kāmakoti Math.

*Meaning of the Sūtra* — But the instruction here is from the scriptural vision (Śrī's vision) as in the case of Vaamadeva and others.

*The story* — Prajānara, son of Divodāsa went to Indra's beloved place, through war and valour. Indra asked him to choose a boon. Prajānara said, "You yourself choose for me a boon, which you deem is most beneficial to mankind". Then Indra instructed Prajānara as follows. "Know me alone I (Indra) am Praṇa identified with consciousness (*Prāṇaś*). You meditate upon me who am life (*caṇu*) and immortality. That one is surely this

Praana, which is bliss, ageless and deathless. The man who knows me is not harmed by any act, neither by theft nor by killing of cows (*ahimsahatya*) I killed Visvavapa, the three-headed son of Tvastara . . . etc. Even though I committed such heinous crimes, not a hair was lost" (*Kausitaki Upanishad*).

*Doubt.* Indra in his instruction "know me" referred to himself in the first person. Then he identified himself with Praana. Thus Praana he said is bliss and consciousness, etc. Who is this "me"? Is it Indra the divine being, Praana the vital air, Jiva, or Brahman whose knowledge makes one immune from all sins?

*Answer* — Bhasaratayana says that "me" here means Brahman. Indra gave that instruction not as Indra, but as one who realised Brahman and hence, became Brahman. It was as Brahman he spoke. He instructed Prajardana to meditate upon Brahman. He realised not himself, but the knowledge of Brahman, by saying "not a hair was lost."

Bhasaratayana says, Indra instructed 'from scriptural vision, or seer's vision. What is this seer's vision? "*Aham Brahma asmi*". "*Tat tvam asi*" "*Ayam Atman Brahma*", (I am Brahman, That art Thou, This Atman is Brahman) etc., which are the Upanishadic statements treasure this vision. Indra had this vision and hence he could speak as, "Know me" (Me — Brahman).

Is there any other such instance? Yes. Vamadeva, a sage, and many others spoke in this vein. "*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*" describes thus, "Whosoever among gods, Rishis, or men know that (Brahman), becomes that "He becomes all this and is in all. Sage Vamadeva saw (know) Brahman, became that, and declared "I was Manu and I was Surya" As Brahman, Vamadeva also became all and all-pervading, the immanent soul of all, and hence declared I was Manu, etc. (*Sarvagatma*) It is in this light that we have to understand Indra's instruction, Bhasaratayana says, This is Sri Shankara's interpretation of the Sutra and based on this he propounds that there is no difference between Atman and Brahman who are identical with each other.

Sri Ramanuja here differs from Shankara. Scriptural vision according to him means as follows. The non-difference enunciated in the statements "*Tat Tvam asi*", etc., is that which exists between "Santara", body and "Sastirita" the embodied one, "*antaryamin*". This is the seer's vision. According to this "Tat" refers to Brahman and "tvam" refers to Jiva as His body. Jiva stands for all this gross phenomena. He who has me or thee as his body (*Antaryamin*) and He are the same. This in essence is the meaning of the sentence "*Aham Brahma asmi*" or "*Tat tvam asi*". According to this, Indra's instruction means "Meditate upon him who has me as



His body? To get this meaning, Sri Ramanuja enunciates an axiom (śāi. "Words denotive of *śarira*, body, extend their meaning to or connect" Dehi — *śariri*. The embodied also).

Advaitins do not accept this axiom. If we accept this axiom we have to face many hurdles, they say, and many incongruities crop up.

(a) There is a Vedic injunction "*Brahmanas Yajeta*" — A Brahmin should perform Vedic sacrifices. The word Brahman, or Paramatman and this Vedic injunction, should apply to Him also. This is most blasphemous as then, 'He' should also reap the fruits of that Karma and experience the misery or happiness resulting thereof.

(b) The word "tvam" in the vocative case cannot denote the idea of "the embodied one" (*śariri*), and nowhere is it seen so.

(c) The meaning of the word "tvam" does not qualify the meaning of the word "Tat". On the other hand the latter is to be construed as an adjective to the former with the relationship of "abhedā" — non-difference (*Tadabhinnaḥ tvam asi*). Thou art not different from Him. Tvam is a *Viśeṣya* = noun. Then only the word "tvam" agrees with the verb "asi" in the second person. The word "Tat" expressing Paramatman, in the third person does not agree with "asi". "Tat" is not the body of "tvam". Similarly in the sentence "Aham Brahma asmi" Aham = Jiva, also must be the "*Viśeṣya*" as it alone agrees with the verb "asmi" in the third person. Construction of these sentences, or the words in the sentences in the reverse form is not admissible.

(d) At this juncture, we have to consider some other Upanishadic sentences. In the *Aitareya Aranyaka* (2-2-46) we have the following sentences addressed to the Being in the solar orb "Tū Yoham Soma" "Yoham Soma". He is the same as I am, I am the same as He is. Similarly Jabali declares as follows, "Oh, glorious deity, I am what you are, thou art what I am" ("*Tvam va aham asmi Bṛhaspati aham vai tvam asi*").

Here there is reciprocity between He and I, and you and I. Here Aham means 'I' = Jiva, Tvam = Paramatman (Dehi Aham — the embodied in most of all.) Here there is no trouble with the sentence "Aham vai tvam asi". Thou art me (= Thee having me as your body — or the embodied in me). "Tvam vai aham asmi" cannot be construed likewise. It must mean "I (your body) am thee"? But Paramatman can never be the body. Words denotive of body may connote the embodied one, but Paramatman the embodied one cannot connote the body. It may however be argued that the word "tvam" means Paramatman possessed of all virtues and "aham" means Paramatman having

"me" as his body. Then there can be identity between the two. In fact he is the same in both the instances. But in that case there is no use of reciprocal sentences. One sentence "My inner self art thou" is only sufficient. We cannot say reciprocity strengthens the idea of identity, because there is no doubt at all as to the identity of the "antaryāmin" and the Paramātmān. There is doubt in the case of the identity of Jīva and Paramātmān only, because of their finiteness and infiniteness in many respects. So the said axiom cannot be accepted and hence the Advaita or nondifference view of Jīva and Paramātmān has to be accepted.

Some Sūtras also are not favourable to the Viśiṣṭādvaitins "Aākāśaḥ Taḥlingaḥ" (1-1-22). This Sūtra decrees that the word "Aākāśaḥ" = space in the Upanishadic sentence, all things originate from space, merge in space—space is greater than all, and is the ultimate goal" (*Chāndogya* 1-10-1), denotes Brahman alone, because of the Brahman's indicatory marks (all things originate, merge etc.). According to the said axiom, space, one of His bodies, must also denote Him having itself as His body. Then there should not arise any doubt. Since Bādarāyaṇa framed this Sūtra, we have to conclude that he did not approve of this axiom, and the resulting interpretations thereof, and hence framed this Sūtra.

The aphorism "Sukha Viśvaprātibhāvanādeva cāp" (1-2-15) also is not favourable to them. The context is as follows. Sacrificial fires instructed Upakośala a celibate who tended them with care as follows: "Praāna is Brahman", "Bliss is Brahman", "space is Brahman" (*Chāndogya Upanishad* 4-10-4). Upakośala said, "[I know that Praāna (Sūtrātmān) is Brahman. I do not know how bliss—which is the result of contact of sensory organs and their objects, and is ephemeral and the mere material space—can be Brahman, the eternal and consciousness. The fires replied, "That which is Bliss is space and that which is space is Bliss". Here the word space is qualified by bliss. By this we have to understand that the space spoken of here is not the material space, but Brahman (the infinite, that is, possessed of Bliss (material space does not possess it) and is bliss itself. Now then the Sūtra says, the word space here means Brahman, as the space is said to possess bliss. According to the axiom, the word space can directly connote Brahman, when there should arise no doubt as to its meaning and no necessity for this Sūtra. Bādarāyaṇa evidently did not accept this. So he used the word "Viśvaprātibhāvanā" in the Sūtra.

Another Sūtra "Ātmaa iti tv Upagacchanti" (4-1-3) also becomes superfluous and unnecessary, if Śrī Rāmanuja's view is accepted.

How to meditate upon and realise Brahman? This Sutra answers "Upasādhā declares Brahman as the self and hence is to be realised as identical with Ātman and as not different from it. This is in consonance with the statement "Aham Brahma", "Ātman Brahma". This Sutra, if other view holds good, should have been as "Ātma-Sharīr" Ātman—the embodied one. It is not so.

From such arguments as these, Advaitins claim that their interpretation is in accordance with Bādarāyaṇa's views.

(Ref: Brahmasūtrasu Advaita Bhaṣya—by Sr. S. Krishna Murthy Sastry in the Advaitashiksha Maalika.)



# DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

## The Man and his Evolution

K. ISWARA DUTT

IT IS ON THE EVIDENCE furnished by history, in no niggardly measure or feeble rector, that I salute Radhakrishnan as one of the most unusual men of his time, if not of all time. Today, he is a Titan—perhaps even on a global scale—but his rise to the present patriarchal position is replete with revelations that both illustrate and establish the uniqueness about him.

There was no paucity of giants when he was yet to build himself up. Cast in different moulds but all heroic, each in his way, war-lords like the Kaiser earlier and Hitler later, ideologues like Lenin and Stalin, liberators of the stature of Churchill and Roosevelt, and luminaries in the respective realms of science and literature, Einstein and Shaw, were names reverberating across the vast spaces of the earth, when Radhakrishnan was quietly wrestling, alike with the problems of universities and the secrets of the universe. In a country contemporaneously swayed by the spiritual splendour of Sri Aurobindo, the intellectual effulgence of Rabindranath Tagore, the moral grandeur of Mahatma Gandhi, and the political dynamism of Jawaharlal Nehru, we find Radhakrishnan unobtrusively but decisively emerging as a cultural ambassador, in his own right, and in a stride as authentic as it is synthetic. If, by the time of the Armistice, at the end of the First World War, he distinguished himself as the author of the philosophy of Tagore, by the time the Second War ended, he shattered the academic calm of the universities in India as well as abroad, by his exposition of Gandhism as the only answer to human hatred and violence, without prejudice to his purely individual contribution to contemporary thought in philosophy and religion.

His arrival on the diplomatic scene in Free India was a turning-point both in his own life and in the history of the country, for it was only when the Arctic snow visibly thawed under his feet, that he found his prys, with destiny. His return to India as Vice-President-designate

was truly suggestive of a springtide. The world had not to wait long for the happy consummation of the hoary Platonist conception of philosophers being crowned kings. The rise of a philosopher with a religious background, as the Head of a Secular State, handily illustrates how rarely in a long, long way across the ages, things "by season, seasoned are to their right praise and true perfection." And while philosophy—only perhaps incidentally—is, in Browning's memorable phrase, "pedestalled in triumph", we find the man clad in his armour and embowered without the customary rappings, waving to us from the pinnacle, with an almost unknown friendliness, benevolence and compassion.

One could see that the Indian universities could not keep him within their confines for long, nor could one miss in him, even in those now Lullaby days, the spark that ignited the celestial fire. His first leap was from Madras to Mysore, but the migration from one university in the South to another, was to him something like the Vicar's from the blue heath to the brown. It was the call from Calcutta in 1921—the great Asurush Mookerjee's—*Ura!* he (Radhakrishnan) should join the University as King George V Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy—that tended to wake him up from any lingering doubts about his future eminence—I say, lingering, as he did seem to linger on assuring himself that he was the man for the place. The idea of succeeding a giant like Brajendra Nath Seal and too, while he was but thirty, was possibly holding him back. I recall what the dazzling C. R. Reddy, one of Radhakrishnan's earliest and greatest admirers and highly valued friends, told me: "I had literally no bundle came out of Mysore". It was indeed an export that meant for the South "more than elephants laden with gold, and camels bearing precious stones and rare spices", could ever fetch!

His twenty-year association with Calcutta was perhaps the most eventful period in his life, first in bringing him on the all-India stage and then gradually projecting him on the international scene. Whether as a philosopher or a cultural ambassador, or as a writer or a speaker. When he took up the Vice-Chancellorship of the Andhra University and later of the Bangor Hindu University, he was given all the facilities by the Calcutta University while for three years in succession, from 1928 to 1931, he could get leave in Calcutta so that he might hold, at Oxford, the Spalding Chair of Eastern Religion and Ethics. He felt he had given the best part of his life to the University of Calcutta and gave public expression to his feeling more than once while, on their part, the Calcutta University and the Bengalis as a people, have taken him into their bosom with a certain warmth.

Between the exit from Calcutta in 1941 and the assignment on the diplomatic front that he took up in Free India, Radhakrishnan's great work was confined to his Vice-Chancellorship of the Banaras Hindu University and Chairmanship of the Education Commission, both in the cause of the re-orientation of Indian education. But as always, of considerable significance were his exhortations to the youth and the nation. Few in our country had delivered more conspicuous addresses or more stirring ones. A voice so stirring never was heard, from the ranks of the country's academicians. It was not merely the form but the content of his addresses that came as a revelation as much to Indian politicians unaccustomed to political fervour on academic platforms as to British Chancellors only accustomed to listen to pious sermons. I remember how, on hearing Radhakrishnan as Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University, my old Liberal Chief, C. V. Chingamari was lost, both in admiration and despair, simply, if a little bluntly, said: *Let me at once tell you that I have at last come across an Indian who can bear Srinivasa Sarani in his use of the English language. As for his ideas, I would unhesitatingly describe Radhakrishnan as an academic exponent.*

Not many know that, long before it became a practice to talk in terms of a new social order, Radhakrishnan raised the cry that "a new sense of social wholeness alone can stem the rot in our present condition" and that "no State is stable unless it procures for all the members the essentials of a good life." Some may still recall that in 1934, Malcolm Hailey, Chancellor of the Allahabad University (by virtue of his office as Governor of U.P.) was red with rage, as Radhakrishnan dared to eulogise the Mahatma in terms of finality: *Gandhi's appeal will be written not only by the side of the utterances of the great national leaders like Pericles and Cicero, or Washington and Lincoln, but also of the great religious reformers, as that of one of the immortal voices of the human race in all that relates to the highest effort of men and nations.*

It was during the Second War that, in his address to the Agra University Convocation, he declared:

*Are we to stand up for Britain simply because we must avoid the worse alternative of Nazi despotism? Before it is too late, I hope, Britain will establish her good faith at the bar of history, by implementing her many pledges and declaring that India, not at some unguessed future but immediately after the war, be a free and equal country in the commonwealth of nations.*

And one heard the voice of a prophet of a new world order in his appeal to the alumni of his own University at Banaras :

*Wherever men love reason, shun darkness, turn over towards light, praise virtue, despise meanness, hate villainy, kindle sheer beauty, wherever minds are sensitive, hearts generous, spirits free, there is your country. Let us adopt that loyalty to humanity instead of a sectional devotion to one part of the human race.*

It is of the utmost significance that Radhakrishnan, for all his emphasis on the spiritual side of life and moral values, has not only not neglected, but shown supreme concern for, a new social order which alone could ensure material contentment and healthy all-round development. Let us hear his words at the Asian Relations Conference in 1946 :

*Let me tell you that there is no such thing as a spirit working in a vacuum and it is impossible for us to have any kind of spiritual life or development where our bodily health is so weak and when society is so unhealthy. Unless you build up a great social world, where all ordinary men and women irrespective of their status and economic position are given the fundamental rights which are open to all human beings, it will be impossible for us to have any kind of spiritual development.*

It was not so much because of his great standing as an educationist, or unexcelled power of eloquence but because of his advanced thinking and evangelical zeal for a new world order and his evolution as cultural ambassador, in the line of Vivekananda and Tagore, that, on the attainment of Independence, Jawaharlal Nehru happened to fix his eye on him, first as the man who alone could possibly make Stalin smile and then as the one man who could well take up the Vice-Presidency and, in God's good time, fill the enlarged stage, to the manner born.

Towards the close of the first half-century (the twentieth) and at the beginning of the second half, it was given to Radhakrishnan to be moving between the Oxford University as a Professor and the Chancellery in Moscow as the Indian Ambassador, without any strain at either end. It must be set down as one of the miracles in modern diplomacy that one who never concealed his horror of a godless system, won the confidence and respect of the Soviet. It had not taken him long to be on friendly terms with Stalin whom he used to address as 'Marshal' while Stalin was known to call him 'Professor', not contemptuously as Bismarck used to refer to Gladstone, but with due reference to his learning and wisdom. From my personal talks with Radhakrishnan, I could know that he found himself on the right side of Stalin, by just being frank and treating him as a man, not as a monster. It was

just like Radhakrishnan to have told Stalin that, in his view, Soviet Russia was two States—a Police State and a Welfare State, and that his country (India) would not like to have anything of the former but everything of the latter. It was a joy to Radhakrishnan to have had it from Stalin that they (the Russians) were what they were, because of what they had to go through, and that India was under no obligation to copy from Russia anything that did not suit her. And nothing made him happier than that on one occasion when he found the Marshal rather pale, he could ask him to take care of himself, just put him as a fellow-human being, and find him visibly moved. The typical Radhakrishnan way did the trick. It was his great triumph that he pleased Communists all over, without ever placating Communism!

Naturally none was happier than Prime Minister Nehru who had earlier been baited by the Soviet neglect of, or indifference to, the Indian Embassy at Moscow. His own appreciation of Radhakrishnan's record and role abroad found concrete expression. When early in 1952, Maulana Azad—always an intimate friend with Jawaharlal Nehru—gently raised question of Vice-Presidency of the new Republic and suggested the name an ex-President of the Congress, he was as gently told by the Prime Minister that "I have already offered it to Radhakrishnan and he has accepted my invitation." Not even the ex-President of the Congress whom the Maulana suggested could question the wisdom of the Prime Minister's choice. Indeed (let me say this in fairness to him) he joined the rest with alacrity in hailing the appointment. A politically astute man, he said to me: *He will make an ideal Vice-President. Indeed we have in him a future President.*

The first impact of the Vice-President was felt only when he took the chair to conduct the deliberations of Rajya Sabha. The dignity, ease and authority with which he handled the House were a revelation to those who were not familiar with his way and manner when, as Vice-Chancellor, he used to command "the applause of listening senates." Rajya Sabha meant Radhakrishnan, and it was because of him that the House stood with the other in commanding wide attention.

It was a tribute to his personality that he was bigger than his office, that he made it really big and that it was because of him, it came to acquire a new importance. It was to him that the Prime Minister invariably turned, for carrying to the different parts of the globe the message of India, as a Secular State with Socialist goals, and as a country pledged to Peace, on the basis of non-alignment.

In a four-week tour of the United States, Radhakrishnan spoke on a variety of subjects, ranging from global democracy to the future of modern civilisation and exhorted the American nation,



particularly the youth, to produce the creative minority which will reveal to the American conscience the ideals which have animated this great people from the time they asserted their independence down to today.

He regretted that "there are times when America's voice is not heard in clear tones" and wanted the universities to do their duty by standing as sentinels of Democracy, with the full knowledge that *Democracy means the reconciliation of differences, not the obliteration of differences.*

He also defined Democracy as "spiritual good manners." He made no secret of his apprehension that of the people who professed to believe in Providence denied God in practical life and he rebuked them for the contradictions in life so manifest in the ways of "theoretical believers and practical atheists." The keynote of his utterance was wakefulness to the challenge of stark, if ugly, realities. Warming up to his theme in a broadcast from Toronto (where he stopped to, from Washington) he raised his voice on behalf of the Asian and African nations struggling to emancipate themselves from bondage—political, economic and racial—and said:

*There is a world revolution in progress, and it is totally independent of Communism. The hungry, disgraced, demoralized inhabitants who form the bulk of the non-Communist world demand economic progress and development. If we hesitate to attack and answer these problems, others will exploit our inertia and inefficiency. What we want today is not the American way or the Russian way but the human way.*

This is the voice of a man whose place is with the great political philosophers in history who insisted on applying "the test of eternal principle" to the momentary task or the immediate problem. There can be no question of misunderstanding—or of not understanding—a man with a message: *The world needs a soul: it may not be an identity of outlook but it must be a unity of spiritual aspirations.*

Everyone who knew that, for all his regard for Rajendra Prasad as an unsullied patriot and estimable man, Jawaharlal Nehru had not thought of him but of Rajagopalachari for Presidency, also knew that in 1952 he was definitely thinking in terms of Rajendra Prasad's retirement and Radhakrishnan's succession. Yet current Congress thinking asserted itself in the manifestation of Rajendra Prasad's second-term hegemony, in a way, to the disappointment of both Jawaharlal Nehru and Radhakrishnan.

The story has not so far been told at length by any, of those exciting days when till the last minute, Radhakrishnan was hoping to be sponsored as President, with Rajkumari Amrit Kaur as his

such successor in Vice-President's gaddi. It was doubtless a great strain to Radhakrishnan to have been kept in suspense, and a greater strain it was to have been subsequently made to feel, much like Curzon in 1921, that he was dodged of his destiny. The difference was that while in such poignant moments, Curzon easily broke down at the end and literally wept, Radhakrishnan took it all, with an imperturbable equanimity and in an undisturbed composure, worthy of a philosopher's reconciliation to the ways of the world.

The aftermath was not without tensions and trials. Not accustomed to the rough-tumble of active politics, unaccustomed to the manoeuvres and machinations of seasoned politicians, and disinclined to put up with the drudgery of a second term while extended Vice-Presidency could hardly add a cubit to his stature, Radhakrishnan was in no mood to continue. His mind, a little tired of serious diversions from cloistered seclusion, turned to the academic pastures and Parnassian springs. He resigned a second term with all his might and despite untold pressure. Dhebar, Pant, Azad, Rajendra Prasad and Jawaharlal Nehru—all of them individually failed to carry conviction to him and persuade him to relax. It seemed that he was packing up.

Luckily, Jawaharlal Nehru was not the man to let him go. He knew that he would miss the presence of the one man who not only talked to him always without inhibitions but gave him wise and disinterested counsel, and who alone, among the higher hierarchy, could keep the image of India abroad, untarnished. From oral talks it came to commitments on paper—and a stage arrived when Jawaharlal Nehru and Radhakrishnan set their stenographers aside and one wrote to the other in one's own hand—and too, in the "yours affectionately"—spirit. To both, there was no relief yet. It was the feminine touch that brought it at last. It was when Radhakrishnan received a touching letter from Indira Gandhi that her father was visibly upset and that Delhi without him (Radhakrishnan) would be "unthinkable" that Radhakrishnan felt moved to the core of his being, sat up in a prayerful mood and at once wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru that he decided to place himself in his (Jawaharlal Nehru's) hands. The storms having all gone, everyone found the earth solid again.

As President he is, by virtue of what he is, the only one of his kind in the world-setting, for as the late K.M. Panikkar epigrammatically put it, Radhakrishnan is, apart from being Head of the State, Guru of the Nation. Here is a President who, with unwearying solicitude and unfailing concern for the welfare of the people, not only advises the Government but also admonishes it

when he feels he must. He has never ceased to think of the ills of the world and of his major work in life, for everything, not the Presidentship of India excluded, comes to him, next in the establishment of the greatest religions, the Religion of Spirit.

To what extent, or in what measure, Indian Presidentship can be effective in the creation of a new world order, depends perhaps less on the man who wears the Presidential mantle than on those who having found the man, are disposed or not, to profit by their own choice.

India, now so lamely dwarfed, can ask for no greater benediction than for his pre-eminent primacy in the scheme of things.

## II

Nothing stands—or can ever stand—in the way of one, born to achieve things, however difficult or seemingly impossible. Of this dictum, Radhakrishnan is a shining, indeed outstanding, example. "Do you know where your greatness lies in? — I asked him, on his efflorescence into President and, without waiting for an answer to the question which naturally amused him, I said :

*Here it is : you come from the South which is politically non-strategic, you are a Brahmin when to have been born as one is to suffer from a grave handicap in the peculiar Indian climate; as an academician you have been far removed from, or far too remote to, the seats of power; you were not an active politician, so have found yourself behind prison bars to your advantage; you have never sported a Gandhi cap; you wear no khaddar and, above all this you speak no Hindi and you have arrived where the gates of the Rashtrapati Bhavan are flung open to you. Is this not something undreamt of?*

There was something more than a smile playing on his lips; he heartily laughed. Well, the fact is that Radhakrishnan rose to be President, by sheer gravitation.

Radhakrishnan's birth in the hamlet of Tiruttani, in the religiously sensitive belt of Tirupati-Tirumalai, had a profound influence on him from childhood. In his early years he was not above war but the home was not waiting either in piety or wit. He had to look after himself since he was cut off from his parents at nine. Though he was precocious as a pupil, he was rather indifferent to studies, his mind having begun to be agitated by the far more serious problems of life, into which he was to probe later.

Nothing helped to stir his mind more than his early education in Christian institutions, for it was then and there that, because of his sharp reaction to the subtle, deliberate attacks on Hinduism,

he assiduously laid the foundations of "the counter-attack from the East" which it was later to lead, with astonishing success. By the time he took his Master of Arts Degree in Philosophy, he acquired all the confidence that he needed to influence his generation. How revealing it was that while undergoing training as a teacher, it was his proud privilege to have been invited by his Principal—it was Hensman, I think to handle the class (to which he himself belonged) in Psychology! Such academic sway continued to be his, till order rather beckoned to him as studiously, and with a ready welcome awaiting him.

Twenty years of his allegiance to Calcutta against the above background, tended to widen the basis and enliven the spirit of his cultural synthesis. There are things more enduring than dharti on the body and rise in the gullet, that unite the Andhra and the Bengali—the influence of Brahma Samaj, the cult of Swadeshi, the spirit of renaissance in art and letters. It is comforting to think that Radhakrishnan has helped his Andhra to repay, in no small measure, its debt to Bengal—the Bengal of Ram Mohun Roy and Keshab Chunder Sen, of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, of Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore.

Yet, it was Oxford that gave him his first great chance in life to command the world's attention. One of the two Honorary Fellows of the Oxford University, among Indians, it was there that, by his intimate association with it, and his incandescent exposition of Hindu Philosophy and Eastern Religions, he blazed a trail of his own, so much so that to him at any rate Oxford was emphatically *not* "the home of lost values."

Whether it is in regard to outlook on life or in the matter of emphasising its essential values in a declining moral order, nobody has so decisively been the very embodiment of Hindu *Dharma* as Radhakrishnan. It is also characteristic of him to have brought to his utterances the breath of Sanskrit and invested them with its classical dignity and authority.

The world is quite familiar with the public image of President Radhakrishnan as an Acharya of patriarchal eminence and universal veneration. Yet far more lovable is the man at the Preside, on whom sits so lightly all his greatness and to whom, nothing is more repugnant than a sense of importance. By his side all class distinctions disappear; indeed, in his presence there is no room for 'gradations' and 'degradations'. All are equal— it is a true Socialist society in a spiritual sense. Rarely do we come across another who can so readily put a visitor at ease, whether he is a dignitary or one from the proletariat.

He finds time in the course of the day, to go through a large number of newspapers and periodicals with an alert mind, so much so that nothing of any importance escapes his attention. His voracious reading is hardly confined to journals. Amidst the day's manifold engagements and pressing pre-occupations, he finds time to look into the latest books.

And it is amidst the unavoidable interviews, or despite them, that Radhakrishnan finds time, not only to dispose of such official papers as call for his attention but also his personal correspondence which is by no means slender or negligible. Scores of letters from men of different ranks in life he clears each day, dictating replies, however short, out of the humane consideration that even a mere acknowledgment from him will mean some relief to the recipient. God knows how many inquiries flow from the letters he is flooded with, each passing day, for such is his large-heartedness that no person is too humble, or no matter too trivial, for his kind attention.

Vastly receptive indeed is the mind of the man who has perforce in the course of a single day to talk about myriad things, from the tremendous to the trivial and from the grave to the gay. Both a good listener and a charming conversationalist, he is good company for those who would like to do the talking as well as for those who love to hear good talk. For, nothing is more striking about Radhakrishnan than that he, whether in conversation or speech, talks often with a deep understanding, sometimes in noble indignation, and always with clarity.

It would be too much to claim that Radhakrishnan has always been able to stand the test of his own positional wrath and moral chastisement. Possibly there were occasions, however few, when he softened on being confronted with cases of deviation from the code at levels higher up or in quarters nearer home. This is certainly something short of perfection, but we can all be sure that Radhakrishnan is the type of man who, by paying the penalty with his tears for the lapses of those whom he is sometimes obliged to condone, certainly creates a moral climate wholly uncongenial to the growth of evil. May be that his is more the Sayagnabho than usagesistral approach to wrongdoers. By nature, he is forgiving while forgiveness has its limitations. "Why does so and do like that?" is his way of expressing displeasure mingled with surprise.

It was not without sweat and toil, or without effort and discipline, that he had risen to great heights. He had his trials in life, and some very severe ones too; he had to reckon with men whose pleasure lay, at one stage, in obstructing his path and impeding his march; and with situations which chilled his spirits. But never did he allow his sense of dignity to suffer or his sense of self-reliance to falter.

He has achieved whatever he has from giving status to Honour in the world to annexing the highly coveted Order of Merit which is neither a title nor a decoration but a mark of the highest distinction within the gift of the British Empire—with a quiet strength and so unceasingly strives to bring the world nearer which is his life's ambition. As said of a great 18th century man of letters, "no one among his contemporaries gathered so large a store from the records of the past, to one teiled with such unselfishness to enrich his age." Radhakrishnan is fully conscious of his existence, but never does he live for flaunting it in our face, with a view to overpowering us.

It is not given only to the world's elite to endure adversity without bitterness and meet triumph without intoxication. I have seen Radhakrishnan in moments of depression but never found him morose. I have also seen him in moments of elation but never found him exulted. His is a face largely over furrowed by frowns. Anger, rancour and pettiness are foreign to his nature. One never hears of him the kindly smile, the soothing word, and the resting touch. He is both a chanter and a healer, for perennial in him are the springs of benevolence. I have known other great men with equal intensity and have received their affection in abundance but I can think of no one who could approach Radhakrishnan in the two sovereign qualities—which single him out from all the rest—serenity and sweetness.

As my thoughts turn to Radhakrishnan I am irresistibly reminded of Whitman's beautiful lines which are so eloquently suggestive of the Man:

An inborn grace that nothing lacked  
Of culture or appliance—  
The warmth of genial courtesy  
The calm of self-reliance.

September 1946



## REVIEWS

LIVING WITHIN THE YOGA APPROACH TO PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND GROWTH, Selection from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, compiled with an Introduction.

By A.S. Dalal.

Publisher: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1987. Price not mentioned.

The book under review, *Life Within The Yoga Approach to Psychological Health and Growth* is a very useful and a professional attempt at describing the problems of human mind and practical remedies for them through Integral Yoga. As the writer describes to us the relationship of mental health and Yoga, "the Quiescence of mental health . . . lies in a change of consciousness from one that is governed primarily by the outer consciousness of the physical, the vital or the mental to one that reflects more and more an inner or a higher consciousness." (Introduction P. xxv). Thus, the intention of the book is presenting some of the principles and purposes of Integral Yoga from the writings and commitments of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for assuring the positive mental health to human beings and making the vital mind realize the Divine Peace, Bliss and Knowledge.

The book is systematically divided into dealing with different states of mind, for progressing from the "physical" mind, passing through the "vital" mind and finally reaching the "vital physical". Disturbances of the mind are caused by impure and unboly thoughts. Anxiety and unruly thoughts result in "mental noise". "The mind must learn to be silent." We are told. There are four movements to reach a state of purified mind. They are, to observe, to watch over, control and master our feelings. Detachment from our action is an essential quality in this regard. Likewise, fear and depression cause "disturbances of the vital". Remorse and repentance are the natural responses of the vital, when it commits a mistake. How can we transform the vital mind from an insecure mind in the direction of a peaceful mind? We can do so by sincerity, aspiration and perseverance. Subconscious is "the lower basis of ignorance," and its actions are "irrational, mechanical

and repulsive." Finally, the last chapter, "Exercises for Growth and Mastery" is the most crucial and operative part of the book. Here, the writer lucidly describes the various Yogic practices. We feel, Yoga is a very concrete exercise. It involves selection, identification and desire for the liberation of the self to widen one's self to reach out the Divine self. There are methods and practices in this. Some are based on simple psychological and emotional principles, such as self-awareness, concentration and self-observation. But, at its core, the effort is purely spiritual, to seek that "inner light" around that "psychic centre". The Question is how to rouse the inner consciousness. By a process of dynamic meditation, and self-identification with "something vast", we can liberate our limited self into the vast, universal self. This is, perhaps, the best part of the book. The book is an organically knit and well-conceived, an addition to Sri. Aurobindo scholarship and to the practice of Integral Yoga. Though the book is a compilation, there is an unmistakable stamp of authenticity and conviction in the presentation of the material.

Reviewed by DR. M. MAHESWARANATH RAO.

**RABINDRANATH TAGORE . A STUDY OF WOMEN CHARACTERS** By M. Sarada.

Book No. 8903 New Delhi : Sterling Publishers, 1988, PP 148  
 Price, Rs. 100/-

The book under review, *Rabindranath Tagore : A study of Women Characters* seeks to make a social, or even socio-political and psychological study of the women in Tagore's fictional world. The writer of this book lays emphasis on the realistic and psychological portrayal of Tagore's Women Characters in his novels. The book is usefully divided into 12 chapters and provides an historical overview of the socio-political, cultural, religious and other influences on the Bengali women folk at the turn of the century, in the first chapter. In the last chapter, as a conclusion, the writer tries to classify Tagore's Women characters under various heads, such as the Heroines, Mothers and Aunts. Excluding these two chapters, there are altogether 9 chapters, each chapter dealing with one specific novel.

It is true that the writer of this book does make a very patient and perceptive study of the "inner workings, the crisis-ridden movements of four (of the characters) thoughts" (p. 128), as she puts it. Throughout this book, the writer, M. Sarada, makes a close study of the socio-cultural and religious milieu, in its state of



live and dynamic change. The writer succeeds, at least to an appreciable degree, in making us feel the inner mood of Tagore's women. There is a rich diversity in Tagore's women, both in his conception and rendering of them. As the writer says, these characters are "as varied as life itself". In any case, one will not fail to notice the same nature of events and the recurrent causes for such events, in the lives of these women. It may be a quest for economic or moral freedom, (as in *Bimla*) or it may be an interest in the cult of modernism, which is an important streak of their personality in all these women. In any case, as the writer rightly says, Tagore's women are far more complex, and vital and profound than their men who "look dull, drab and dry".

Thus, M. Sarada's presentation of Tagore's women in this book is sound and the book is eminently readable. Sometimes, one may get a feeling that there is a persistent attempt at summarising than analysing each character. But all in all, this book, said to be a pioneering venture, in this regard, bears out rich scholarship and the appended bibliography is comprehensive and useful.

Reviewed by Dr. M. MADHUSUDHANA RAO

## TRIVENI DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Report of the function in Guntur on 9th April, 1989

The Diamond Jubilee of 'TRIVENI' was celebrated in the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Guntur on the 9th April, 1989 under the presidency of Padmabhushan Prof. K. Satchidananda Murthy, Vice-Chairman, University Grants Commission.

There was a public meeting on the 9th April at 6-00 p.m. The proceedings began with an invocation.

Dr. Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao, Editor of TRIVENI, welcomed the gathering.

In his welcome address, Dr. Narasimha Rao presented a vivid picture of TRIVENI since its inception to date. He recounted his forty years' association with the late Sri Kolavennu Ramakrishna Rao, the founder-editor of the cultural and literary English quarterly, 'TRIVENI', 'who lost every thing for TRIVENI'.

TRIVENI, in its battle for survival, had to move from place to place. Started in December, 1927, it had to be published from different places—first in Madras, later in Bangalore and then for a pretty long period at Machilipatnam where Dr. Narasimha Rao had to shoulder total responsibility from its print to editorial level, ofcourse inclusive of its circulation too. After the demise of Sri Ramakrishna Rao in the year 1970, he had been editing TRIVENI. His was a heavy responsibility as printer, publisher and editor of TRIVENI.

TRIVENI had to face financial crises from time to time, the hardest being in the year 1988, when it was on the verge of being wound up. To Dr. Narasimha Rao's pleasant surprise, the philanthropist, educationist of Guntur, Sri C.V.N. Dhan came to TRIVENI'S succour with a spontaneous and unconditional offer of financial assistance to keep TRIVENI alive, when they met at A.I.R. Station in Vijayawada. Sri Dhan agreed to look after all aspects of the journal except the editorial side. The septuagenarian Dr. Narasimha Rao with failing health, felt happy and found it convenient to shift TRIVENI'S publication from Machilipatnam to the great cultural centre, Guntur. Sri Ramakrishna Rao, in his advanced age, placed his darling child 'TRIVENI' in Dr. Narasimha Rao's hands whom he deemed to be a worthy successor and now, Dr.

Narasimha Rao has entrusted its care and protection to a competent and capable successor, Sri C.V.N. Dhan who functions as a joint editor of the journal.

As the wheel of time swiftly moves on, TRIVENI is now more than 50 years old and is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee. Dr. Narasimha Rao appealed to the elite gathering to shower their blessings on TRIVENI and extend their invaluable cooperation for its longevity and prosperity.

He was very happy that the august function was being presided over by Prof. K. Satchidananda Murthy, a philosopher of international repute and an authority on Indian philosophy.

Paying rich tribute to the late Sri K. Ramakrishna Rao and hoping that the journal will receive the same appreciation and support from the readers for its upholding of high cultural and literary values, in future too, as it does now, Dr. Narasimha Rao concluded his welcome address.

Prof. K. Satchidananda Murthy, in his presidential address, traced the history of cultural and literary renaissance in India and lauded the remarkable contributions of Sri K. Ramakrishna Rao in this sphere through his journal "TRIVENI".

There was renaissance in Bengal, Maharashtra and elsewhere in India. There was no connection between various renaissances. The minor renaissances could form a great Indian symphony of renaissance. Sri Ramakrishna Rao was the first who caught the rhythm of renaissance. To know what was happening in each other linguistic areas, it was felt essential to translate the works in different languages and make them available to people through English. For example, to take a Kannada poet or a Malayalam poet and make him available in translation to people of other areas.

Sri Ramakrishna Rao started a journal in English as TRIVENI in order that there could be a kind of inter-provincial harmony, that there could be kind of "Federation of Indian Culture" to be established on the basis of being able to understand what the different peoples of India were doing in their own languages, in their own art media etc., and to see the same kind of impulse, idealism and the same great aspiration vibrate them all. This was the idea which enabled him to bring TRIVENI, he said.

Short stories in Indian languages were translated into English for the first time. Articles about different kinds of thinkers, poets and artists of different regions were published in English for the first time. History of literature, history of people, history of thought, to a large extent, history of events - nay, whatever called literature could find place in the pages of TRIVENI, Prof. Murthy observed.

TRIVENI was devoted to the triple stream of "love, wisdom and power." The great experiment started by Sri Ramakrishna

Rau wear on for sixty years. This is what Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, later wanted to try and what the Government of India is trying to do with huge resources at its disposal. Sri Ramakrishna Rau did great national service which could not be excelled by any other organisation, opined Prof. Murthy.

While underscoring "Indianness", he referred to the ancient philosophical definition of Indianness which states—"The unity of man realises the unity of mind. Indianness consists in realising the unity of man through the unity of mind."

He showered encomiums on Dr. Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao, the second architect of TRIVENI, under whose editorship for about two decades, it marched ahead in upholding high cultural, literary and moral values. One could not afford to miss the vital role Dr. Bhavaraju had played in running 'TRIVENI' even when Sri Ramakrishna Rau was alive, he remarked. He was all praise for TRIVENI for its tremendous contribution to the promotion of "Indian Unity".

Prof. Satchidananda Murthy's informative and educative presidential address was the highlight of the function.

Sri C. Raghavachary Editor of 'VISALANDHRA', described "TRIVENI" as "Open University" which produced eminent journalists such as Kotamraju brothers, Sri M. Chalapati Rau (M.C.), Sri K. Ishwara Dutt and other stalwarts. He spoke about the colourful and mighty pen of Sri Ramakrishna Rau and his super mastery of English.

He expressed his unhappiness and anguish over the steep decline of the standards of the present day journalism. Cheap money and commercialism are ruling the roost in the modern journalistic world. The proprietors of newspapers and periodicals as well as the journalists are ignoring the former two in the triple motto of "inform, educate and entertain" and are wholly and solely committed to the third item, "Entertainment". This is the sorry state of depressed current journalism which needs immediate rectification. Journals like TRIVENI committed to high cultural, literary and moral values are the need of hour, he stated.

He paid glorious tribute to the late Sri Ramakrishna Rau while extending similar eulogy to his worthy successor Dr. Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao.

Later, Dr. Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao presented mementoes on behalf of TRIVENI to Sri K. Satchidananda Murthy and Sri C. Raghavachary.

Prof. Satchidananda Murthy honoured Dr. Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao with the presentation of a shawl.

The most striking aspect of the occasion was "through out the proceedings, from the beginning to the end, pleasant and clinging 'cultural and literary' perfume pervaded".

The finale of the function was the Vote of thanks by the joint Editor of TRIVENI, Sri C.V.N. Dhan.

— Marum Balakrishna Rao.

Messages wishing the DIAMOND JUBILEE of TRIVENI have been received from the following Gentlemen. —

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Prof. L.S.R. Krishna Sastri, Andhra University

Sri Peruri Venkateswara Rao, Editor, Andhra Prabha

Dr. Dhara Ramachandra Sastri, Ongole

Sri Gunjuru Saseendra Sarma, Hyderabad

Dr. D. Anjaneyulu, Madras

Sri Gangadhar Gadgal

Sri N.S. Krishna Muru, Nellore

Sri P. Rajeswara Rao, Eluru

Sri K. Siva Rao, Tenali

Sri V. Subrahmanyam, Indian Express, Madras

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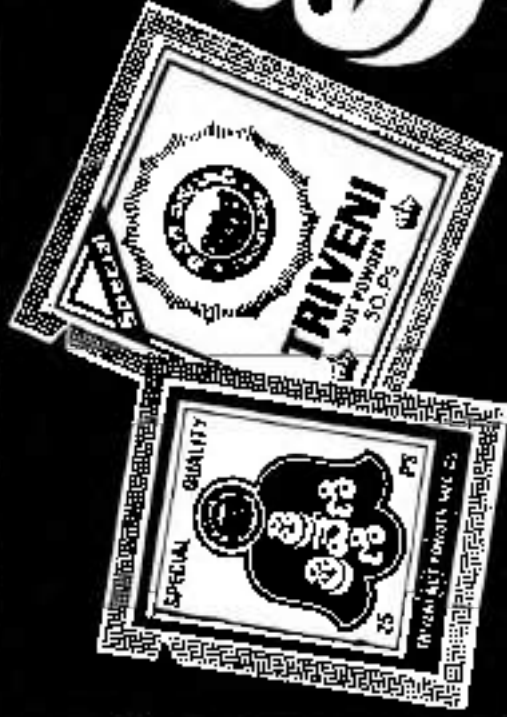
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