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TRIPLE STREAM:**DARE TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THE CROWD***I. V. Chalapati Rao ***Editor*

Democracy is not a true democracy when people do not have individuality and do not think for themselves. Dissent is the soul of democracy. Over compliance and sheepish obedience are not virtues. Nor are they a mark of inner discipline in a party or organization. Every person is expected to possess certain characteristics which distinguish or mark him out from others. In other words, one should be original and assert his will and personality. One should have belief in one's initiative. There are always those who run with the herd. Political parties and Governments have a vested interest in this so that they can sway their thinking and do things to suit their own purpose and keep themselves in power. But today there is an urgent need to train and bring the individual up from the dumb driven mass and use his potentialities to exercise his right to elect the right kind of people to run the government or any branch of society.

We must think to be free. Are we doing it, even the so called intellectuals among us? Assaulted by all the arts of mass persuasion like the news and electronic media, the individual faces a growing challenge to think about his thinking. Thinking is not a pleasant pastime but a painful exercise. It is pursuit of an idea to its logical conclusion. Peter Howard, a well-known journalist, wrote a book, 'IDEAS HAVE LEGS' in which he says 'Ideas march-Ideas rule.'

As Oscar Wilde said "Most men are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinion, their lives mimicry and their passions are a quotation." Gautam Buddha prescribed the rule of independent thinking: "Believe nothing because a wise man said it. Believe nothing because it is widely held. Believe nothing because it is written. There is nothing sacrosanct about a book. Believe only what you yourself judge to be true." Einstein said "Don't stop questioning." In The Bhagavat Gita, Krishna said to Arjuna, "Now Partha don't accept blindly what I said. Think for yourself, use your discretion and make your own choice."

Because a person is educated, it does not follow that he is capable of thinking independently. Thinking is an independent process. It is a sifting, correlating and weighing of facts in their relation to each other and the spiritual standards which govern human lives. If this active process lapses into inertia, into a readiness to adopt others' thoughts and opinions, we surrender the ability and the right to act out of our own free will. As Edward Debone said: "There is nothing more marvelous than thinking up a new idea. There is nothing more magnificent than seeing a new idea working. There is nothing more useful than a new idea that serves your purpose".

Therefore we should cultivate the habit of thinking. Out of thinking come ideas. Ideas

beget action, and action impelled by good thought brings individual and social action. When this active process slides into inertia, into a willingness to absorb others' thoughts as our own without bothering to test them against the standards of righteousness and freedom, we are surrendering our judgment. Lord Redcliff, an astute statesman, said long ago "It is the vulnerability of the modern democratic society that is our abiding danger. We seem to be losing at an alarming rate the power of independent judgment, the independent sense of value".

There is a struggle for the minds of men and women not only in the political field but also in our every day life. Catchy headlines, advertisements, slogans, attractive pictures of film stars and models and subtle suggestions that it costs nothing to buy a car, a house or an alluring trip to go round the world because you can meet the cost in easy installments, make luxuries appear like needs. Such aggressive advertisements breakdown our sales resistance - unless we think. If we think, may be our answer will be "Sure. I like it but I don't need it now. I can't afford it now. I have better use for my money. If I save, 'I can get it later,' such tempting advertisements are a warning to individuals to watch their thoughts and reject outside suggestions flashed into their consciousness. Modern psychology is used by commercial establishments and political agencies to influence our conscious thinking in many ways. Modern technology is an ally of the business and industry. One should learn to control such impulses and feelings which lure us into acceptance of subtle insidious suggestions. In our country there is no preventive legislation or the least government regulation to protect the public today. We have

to put on our thinking caps. Socrates was taken to an exhibition of glittering things and luxurious goods. When asked what he liked in them, his reply was: 'HOW MANY THINGS WHICH I DON'T NEED!'

The challenge of the present times is to think about thinking, to take possession of our own thoughts and assert ourselves to govern our lives. Thinking is a mature process requiring mellowed judgement. Youngsters who are unsure of themselves feel secure in the company of their friends when they are wearing the same kind of dress, using the same expressions, doing the same things that all the rest are doing. Adults too depend upon congenial groups for the same reason. This is herd instinct. Because hundreds of people are on a road, it does not necessarily mean that it will lead you where you want to go. You have to look at the signs and take your own direction. For this you should have a road map and know your own destination. A man or a woman, when they think, will be able to do this. It is easy to let others do our thinking for us. A vast conspiracy is going on around us to twist and distort facts to exploit us, to hoodwink us and to trap us.

Nowadays we have access to information on both sides of a public question. Diversity of opinion is popular in an educated society. It is true that a T. V. commentator or a politician or a newspaper column writer or a popular author may set forth his views on a national or international issue or on modes and politics to influence the opinions of thousands of listeners and readers. Media moguls engage such column writers and commentators to endorse their own interests. Thinking is a defense, a safe guard. Enquiry naturally leads

to know the other side of the question to search for facts and to look at more than one side of the issue - 'Why' is a legitimate question in a free society. The individual cannot be submerged in the mass as long as he learns to question. Panel discussions and leadership training courses promote alert thinkers and enquiring minds. Universities have neglected this essential aspect of education. Because of this universities are becoming happy hunting ground for unscrupulous, small time politicians.

To think is to see ahead. We should support the trend towards individual

independent thinking resisting the clamor of those who would seek to control and silence it. To think is to have vision without which a nation perishes - to think not only in terms of the present but of the future.

We feel today that we are on an escalator or on a conveyer belt which moves super fast without allowing us time to think. Thinking is no doubt a painful process but necessary for success and survival in this world. Man is not one of the dumb-driven sheep. He should dare to be different - to stand up and be counted.

THEY CALL IT PROGRESS

*O.P.Arora **

My park - my love, my life
they have turned into a parking hole.
New money, new cars, new strife
wheels crushing my lilies, roses, my soul.
Rainbow of colours, flowers or cars
smoke smearing the soot smoking the hearts
trees too scared to release the breeze
kids can't play, grandees can't breathe. .
I know, they call it Progress.

My sincere struggle to cure the manias
my innocent escape to the holy Himalayas--
my heart wept, my eyes dazed
my soul writhed. my mind mazed
nude and dry, black smoke curling in the
sky

concrete complexes, proudly raising their
ugly heads high
jeeps and buses, rushing madly through the
villages
smoke and noise distracting the sages. .
I know they call it Progress.

Yamuna, a dirty drain, Ganga many a stain
glaciers melting, oceans threatening
temperatures rising, droughts widening
rains shrinking, storms slamming.
For miles on, greens gobbled up by a SEZ
or a Realtor
for miles on, you can't hear a cuckoo or a
twitter
for miles on, you can't see a flower or a
flutter
for miles on, you can't see a smile or a
stroller...
I know, they call it Progress.

* Writer and Poet, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi.

TOO MUCH WITH THE WORLD

*K.V.V.Subrahmanyam **

Dull, drab and dreary are the arid days,
One has to pass through in some ways;
In departure lounge one lingering sways!
Hypochondria periodically sways.

The end of the tunnel shows some light,
Say the optimists with main and might.
Others may scoff, jeer and slyly slight,
Unaware of the perceiver's plight.

Think of sunlit and glittering times

* IPS Retd., Hyderabad.

Of brighter and luminous climes,
Of splendorous and booming chimes,
Of purple prose and poetic rhymes.

Life is not an empty and sullen dream,
Nor is it littered with cakes and cream,
It's an unpredictable straying stream,
Oft one doth fret, fume and scream.

Let's then ignore the bitter pills,
We swallow with the medic bills,
Along tests like e.c.g. and treadmills,
Till the corporate hospital coffer fills.

THE MAD HOUR

*N. Sarma Rachakonda **

Eyeballs gouged out of their sockets
By unthinking rockets;
High thinking brains,
Hardworking sinews,
And warm unselfish hearts,
The uncontenting tenderness
Of childhood,
And gentleness of women,
Charred, pulverised
Or deformed.

Millions of homes and hearths
Rendered desolate

* Maharanipet, Visakhapatnam.

By the fiery splendor
And blunder of bombs.

The tragedy and pomp of arm mental
power,
The sepulchral holocaust of the mad hour,
Scattering, sundering in a hundred
fragments,
The sacramental pacts of peace,
Romping in a quagmire of blood.

The red wine of youth
is wasted on a bonfire,
While those unblinded,
But inebriate with hate,
Watch with fuzzy eyes

SRI N.R.NARAYANA MURTHY OF THE INFOSYS ON EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Courtesy: The Hindu

If you look at the world ranking of universities, of institutes; India doesn't have one university or institute in the top 300 of the Shanghai Index (Academic Ranking of World Universities compiled by the Shanghai Jiaotong University). On the other hand, China has two in the top 40. If you look at the top 100, China has six or seven. China's telecom company Huawei is a big competitor in communication to Cisco and many other international companies. In other words, it has become a global level company. While we have several global players as well, we need more players who can go out of India and say, 'We will compare with the best.' Yes, there is infosys, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), etc. in one area. But China has become a leading global player in several areas. And for that to happen, you need new ideas, you need innovation, and ideas and innovation come only with education, with original thinking. That is where I believe that higher education and search become extremely important. One good thing is that a recent newspaper report said that between 1998 and 2007, while China was ahead of India in the number of research papers published, Indian research papers received greater number of citations. This is something we must encourage and build on.

I think we need to embrace autonomy, meritocracy and enhance interaction between our universities and universities outside,

particularly those that have performed much better than we have. We need exchange of faculty and exchange of students. We want students from those places to come and spend maybe a few months or a semester here. We want students from here to go to spend a semester there. We want our researchers to submit more and more papers in global conferences. We want our people to become more patent-minded. We need a system that will rank our universal parameters so that our youngsters can have an informed choice.

That would be in the area of education basically, isn't it? What about in the area of research?

We have a number of problems in this country. So our researchers will have to open their eyes towards what is happening around them. There are lots of problems that need to be solved. For example, we have to come out with mechanisms that can easily detect and plug the stealing of electricity that happens. We have to find solutions to ensure our roads, where a significant percentage of money goes as corruption, are built to last. We need to reduce carbon emissions of our automobiles. We need to increase the productivity of agriculture. There are umpteen problems. We need our researchers to look at these problems.

Industry finances about 75 percent of the R & D in Korea and Japan, 70 percent in

* Chairman and Chief Manager INFOSYS.

China and 65 percent in the U.S. In India, by contrast, the government finances more than 80 percent of our R & D expenditure. In a recent report, the Science Advisory Council

to the Prime Minister noted: "Except in sectors like pharmaceuticals and drugs, our industry does not appear to be making major investments on research and education."

REFLECTIONS ON NUNGAMBAKAM TENNIS STADIUM, CHENNAI

*V. Chiranjeevi **

Is this the stadium that launched thousand fans?
And reverberated with two thousand echoes?
Is it here that Tennis legends displayed their prowess?
Isn't here that players grunted, fretted and fumed
To decide their destiny and their prize money?
Here the walls and chairs came alive to enjoy the fare
Men, women and children of all ages
shouted their throats hoarse
To egg on their favorites
But where are they now?
Where has the excitement gone?
Can their frustrated shouting

Or delicious cries of joy be heard?
Have they gone with the wind?
Now this stadium,
The witness of the human drama,
Is drowned in silence,
Till another event comes along.
"Players may come, play and go
But I go on for ever".
Does the mute stadium proclaim thus?
Isn't it a reminder of the instability of human glory?
Life is like that,
After the fretful fever
Comes the immutable silence.
It's all din and bustle for a while,
Then nothing remains of the tale.
What for, oh, unwise! This strife
The malice and the ill will,
When everything is dust found?
Why all this rancor and animosity
Isn't it idiocy?

* Head, Dept. of English, C.S.R.College, Ongole.

MOKSHA - EXISTENCE OF EVIL

*Aurobindo Chakrabarty **

Tagore accepts the necessity of moksha or liberation as the goal of every soul. But his idea of moksha is not one of renouncing the world and becoming an ascetic; it consists, according to him, in experiencing the Divine and the Supreme Soul in every object and phenomenon of the world and life. To Tagore everything small and great, and even the most trifling phenomenon of life, is equally sacred; all experiences of sorrows and joys come from God and bear the stamp of the Infinite and so he welcomes the whole world and life in all its manifold aspects. To quote him,

'Life's fulfillment finds constant contradictions in its path; but those are necessary for the sake of its advance. The stream is saved from the sluggishness of its current by the perpetual opposition of the soil through which it must cut its way... It is only because positive truth lies in that ideal of perfection which has to be won by our own endeavour in order to make it our own, that the spirit of fight is great'.

Though Tagore is a lover of truth, peace and harmony, he does not simply deny the existence of evil and injustice in the world. On the contrary, he preaches the necessity of

fighting all evils and injustice in the world with all the power at one's command in order to reach the ideal of perfection and universal harmony. But he rules out the inhuman methods of war and rivalry. Tagore cherishes goodwill and love to all the people of the world, irrespective of their distinctions of caste, class, race, language, culture, religion, etc. In this respect, he is the greatest humanitarian of the present times. He truly believes in a philosophy of synthesis of different viewpoints and cultures. He tries to evolve a new culture of life in which good elements contained in different cultures and philosophies can be synthesized and harmonized.

Tagore considers love to be the highest gift on earth and wants that all men should develop the religion of love and friendship with the whole of humanity. To him, love is not a mere sentiment; it is the Truth, it is the Joy that is at the root of all creation. It is the light that emanates from Brahma. 'It is through the heightening of our consciousness into love, and extending it all over the world that we can attain Brahma-vihara, communion with the infinite joy.' Tagore firmly believes that if human relations are governed by love rather than by force and coercion, many social and political conflicts would be averted and greater social harmony achieved.

Tagore does not belong to any particular religious sect or creed. He confesses that his religion is essentially a poet's religion.

* Excerpts from 'A Symphony of Poetic Genius and Philosophic Wisdom in Tagore's Thought', *Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta*.

He says 'My religion is essentially a poet's religion. Its touch comes to me through the same unseen and trackless channels as does the inspiration of my music. . . . All that I feel about it is free from vision and not from knowledge. . . . And I am sure that there have come moments when my soul has touched the infinite and has become intensely conscious of it through illumination of joy.'

Tagore never felt alienated from world; the whole nature of trees and clouds, flowers and winds, rain and stars was intensely live to him and the world used to speak to him. This ethereal sensitivity turned him into an artist of a different kind. Naturally, his art always tried to reveal the infinite, the Supreme Soul, the universal Man or the Spirit of the universe. He says, 'Our spirit finds it's larger self in the whole world, and is filled with an absolute certainty that it is immortal... When a man feels the rhythmic throb of the soul-life of the whole world in his own soul, then he is free.'

Tagore totally discards a negative type of freedom. He aspires to have the joy of Paradise here and now on the earth. He says,

'I believe that the vision of Paradise is to be seen in the sunlight and the green of the earth, in the beauty of the human face and the wealth of human life, even in objects that are seemingly insignificant and unprepossessing. Everywhere in this earth the spirit of Paradise is awake and sending forth its voice. It reaches our inner ear without our knowing it.'

Thus Tagore is completely satisfied with the infinite manifestations of the joy which is at the heart of the Reality. He describes the joy immanent everywhere in the world and simply asks us to be alive to it and realize it. He says, 'Joy is everywhere. . . Joy is the realization of the truth of oneness, the oneness of our soul with the world and of the world-soul with the supreme lover. Thus Tagore is an artist and a poet in whom the philosophical wisdom of the ultimate reality is blended with an artistic imagination and spiritual realization, and thus he, like a great sage, places before us the highest spiritual ideal of life to be attained by entering into a living relationship with the world around us.

To conclude, the poetic genius of Tagore weaves a web of beauty as dictated by his heart. But his head is so much in tune with his heart that the creation happened to be an indissoluble bond of poetry and philosophy. One can discover here gems of words bathed in the springs of beauty; intertwined with words as ideas sunk in the depths of truth. 'I am the Atman. The Atman is Brahman.' This is the great truth. Since the days of the Upanishads all perennial philosophies till the present day are unanimous on this point. Tagore intuitively 'I am', but proceeds the next moment to the lot of the plain man who is never the I but only me. The I is open to realization and once the process of realization is complete, the Atman becomes Brahman.

INDIAN AUTHORS IN VERNACULAR WRITINGS

A.S. Gangane *

Since literature in Indian Vernacular Writings has a rich heritage, its translation is enjoying considerable popularity in India as well as abroad. The vernacular novels depict regional identity with a deep fascination for societal, economic and socio-cultural facets. There is a wide and growing understanding about the translated novels available in English. A number of conspicuous vernacular novels are being translated into English. In this context, Sahitya Academi, New Delhi, in its project of translation has released significant titles. Besides, National Book Trust and McMillan have been making a distinctive contribution in this line.

Predicament of woman, social restrictions, rites, rituals and customs, hostility and brotherhood in the family and outside the family, caste hierarchy, socio-economic ties and dismantled rural social structure-are the prominent facets of the five vernacular novels discussed here. The revelation of various aspects of rural ethos is the most provocative and dexterous current in the novels of vernacular writers.

Rao Bahadur's *Gramayan* (Kannada), Gurudial Singh's *Night of the Half Moon* (Punjabi), Ashapurna Devi's *Subarnalata* (Bangali), *A Saga of Sought*

Kamrup (Assamese) by Indira Goswami and *Pachola* (Marathi) by R.R. Borade are the significant novels.

Each writer raises questions which are extremely striking about the socio-economic and socio-cultural identity of village life and displays a number of fascinating aspects of rural reality.

Gramayan by Rao Bahadur is a detestable story of the village situated on the banks of Krishna River. It is a serious delineation of the decay of village civilization. It focuses a typical atmosphere of the region in the north-west corner of the Karnataka State. It is the most outstanding story of the village on the verge of deterioration of moral values.

Chimana, the daughter of Shiledar Nana, is the main focus of the novel; but she plays no role. She is an innocent and tolerant girl with beauty and charm. But she is a victim of the societal atmosphere of the village. Her rape by Padadayya in the monastery affects everyone in the village. The rape of a defenseless Chimana turns her into a mere object of fascination and pity. Chimana is possessed, abandoned, condemned and scorned. But unfortunately, rape is not treated as a social offence and the offender, Padadayya, is not punished. No social organization raises a voice of contempt against Padadayya. The entire social system, the village community, the caretaker, and the close

* Head, Dept. of English, DSM's College of ACS, Parbani, Maharashtra.

knit family seem responsible for the crime and lack the ability to punish Padadayya, the so called holy man in disguise.

Rao Bahadur raises several questions about societal and socio-cultural identity of the village. However, the fact cannot be denied that the multi-dimensional and multiple characters some times helplessly fail to balance and some times break traditions. Behind all evil plots there is a wicked man in the form of a hermit in a holy dress. He devastates the euphoria of rural ethos to fulfill his own aspirations for lust. Substantially, Rao Bahadur's keen and all pervasive observation of rural reality and its fictional projection makes *Gramayan* a classic.

Gurudial Singh's *Night of the Half Moon* is a horrible and sympathetic portrait of the Punjabi Jat family. It records the hostile families, their fate, superstition, honor and mission of life. Singh recapitulates the motif of revenge and the acts of cruel bravery to uphold the honour of the family. He is particularly adept at evoking traditional existence of the rustics in the Malva region of Punjab. He appears to be interested in the soil of Malva and gives it a certain air of fatality. The Punjabi people, realize that they have strongly imbibed and strengthened spiritual reserves besides the attitude of hate and indignation.

Consequently *Night of the Half Moon* is a delineation of the reciprocal and throbbing hostility between two families--Ghana, the lambardar and Moddan, the peasant--which is one of the prominent themes where revenge motif becomes Moodan's mission of life. His father was humiliated and

mother was threatened to strip. So Moodan is maddened by a treacherous, cultural and emotional dilemma. He is deeply moved to support revenge motif to restore honor to his family. How 'honor' to the Jat family is an essential facet for survival is evident when Moodan listens to Ruldu's self-assurance:

This land and property will all be left behind, but a man without honour and self-respect is as good as naught. His life is deadly curse..... It is not a matter of livelihood alone as far as that goes, even cats and dogs know how to scrounge for a meal. Tell me, how else a man is different from other lowly animals?

Besides, Gurdial Singh continues to reveal dispute and hostility, farming and economy, pride and prejudice, crime and punishment, predicament of a woman, Dani (wife of Moodan) and faith in God as well as superstition of the people in the Malva region.

On the other hand, Ashapura Devi's *Subarnalata* is one of the most authentic novels from the Trilogy--the first is *Prathama Pratisruti*, the second is *Subarnalata* and the third and the last of the trilogy is *Bakul Katha*. The novel *Subarnalata* revolves around the freedom of the country, the freedom of woman and individual freedom. These all are intricately related to the situations in Subarna's life. The novelist projects, to a great extent, that knowledge is freedom for man as well as for woman and the awareness of external world becomes the lingering hope of women for emancipation. To *Subarnalata*, the main character in the novel, the independence of women is linked with the independence of the country.

The novel delineates the middle class society in transition -from the village life to the city life, the contented joint family to the nuclear family, the custom-blinded rural society to the enlarged world of profound knowledge, the illiterate child-bride and mistress of the house to the professional woman and from the simple village joys to the ultimate emancipation.

Subarnalata unfolds a thinking, judging and rebellious character of a woman who constantly fights many battles against injustice to deter the society from deeply rooted vices. There is a striking contrast in her nature and that of her mother, Satyavati. Even after fighting against many critical situations, Subarnalata seems to compromise. However, her mother is uncompromising. When her husband lies to her, she leaves him and his children.

On the other hand, Subarnalata, though her husband lies about the construction of a balcony, cannot leave him and her children. Subarnalata's mother renounces everything - her husband, his home and children but Subarnalata is just painfully conscious of her individual identity because everywhere the male overpowered and ruled. Thus, Ashapura Devi projects a woman, her predicament and progress of the self, silenced by the patriarchal system.

Indira Goswami's *A Saga of South Kamrup* focuses a Sattrā (a Vaisnavite monastery founded by the Vaisnava Saints). The lands for these monasteries (adhikaras) were donated by Ahom Kings. They enjoyed immense privilege holding vast lands gifted by the kings of Assam. The novel evokes the

wretched condition of the Sattras.

Besides, *A Saga of South Kamrup*, the most provocative of the facets of rural ethos, is the painstaking portrait of the women characters, the widows of Goswami families who suffered untold miseries under the crushing social pressures and restrictions. The novel discloses the story of glory and decay of the Goswami family.

Some of the Goswamis' illicit sexual relationship with women inferior to their status, a number of rituals observed by the Assamese women, daily rituals and customs for Kamrup brahmins, ignorance and superstition of the villagers, religious ceremonies and festivities, faith in God and euphoria generated by the pomp and glory in marriages-are other crucial facets of the novel.

R.R. Borade is a renowned story writer and novelist. At present, he is the president of the Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal, Mumbai. *Pachola*, a notable classic in the Marathi canon, is the greatest literary achievement in the province of *grameen* (rural) novel. It is the familiar story of grief and predicament. Parbati, the protagonist, wife of a village tailor, Gangaram, is the incarnation of tolerance. She is a tranquil, controlled, sensible and sensitive rural woman. There develops an unexpected and lingering crisis between Parbati's obstinate husband, a traditional tailor, Gangaram and the village lord, Garad. The crisis begins on account of stitching an old and torn dhoti for Garad. Gangaram rejects to stitch. Garad feels deeply injured and insulted on Gangaram's refusal to stitch. He determines, in indignation, to devastate Gangaram's small world of

business. Substantially, Parbati anticipates her husband to beg pardon of the rich man, Garad and avoid the struggle. But Gangaram causes the crisis and plunges the entire family life into the labyrinth of hardships and sufferings. Parbati is profoundly conscious of their socio-economic constraints and psychological and emotional deprivations. She speaks the language of reconciliation to avoid the crisis, for her sensible intellect is incapable of accepting falsehood.

Parbati, passively enough, sustains the inevitable circumstances and tense situations invited by the obstinate husband and the irresponsible son. She confronts the series of misfortunes. Gangaram's death makes her plight intolerable and pathetic. Although she is plagued by tragic consequences, she fights a lone battle for sheer survival.

R.R. Boarde reveals the most

powerful aspect of Parbhati's plight. He is at his best while projecting the interior pulse and dilemma of a helpless rural woman who has an individual identity independent of an unpleasant experience. But it is substantial that the unpleasant experience in family life does not lead Parbati to frustration for she has deep roots in her kith and kin.

R.R. Borade has accomplished exceptional dexterity in maintaining the protective and gloomy mood of Parbati who reminisces in a monologue.

Thus, *Pachola* by R.R. Borade, *A Saga of South Kamrup* by Goswami, Ashapurna Devi's *Subarnalata*, Gurdial Singh's *Night of the Half Moon* and Rao Bahadur's *Gramayan* are characterized by multi-dimensions of rural reality. These vernacular writings reflect the real regional world with typical rural ethos and native traditions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMASKAR

Namaskar is to indicate one's reverence for the other. It is also an attitude of surrender. We offer Dandavat Namaskars to the deity or a saint which means: 'I surrender completely at your feet. It is the surrender of our little "self" to the Universal "Self" and, if this attitude is maintained Namaskar will be extremely helpful. Whenever you do Namaskar, feel that you are prostrating yourself before the Supreme being who has taken that form and stands before you. If it is a saint who receives the Namaskar, his attitude will not be of one receiving a Namaskar. He has already become one with the Universal and absolute Existence and he looks upon everyone in the universe as his own form. He sees only Ram in everyone, So, it is Ram in one form that prostrates himself before Ram is another form. If a devotee prays to the saint for knowledge, the saint will only feel that Ram blesses in that form is putting on the veil of ignorance and he blesses the devotee with knowledge.

- Swami Satchidanandaji.

WOMANHOOD IN AMRITA PRITAM'S 'PINJAR'

*Prof. D.P.Dingole **

Amrita Pritam [1919 - 2005] is undoubtedly the doyen of Indian literature whose contribution to the gamut of Indian classics is unique and par excellence. She is the first woman recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award [1956], the Jnanpith Award [1982], the Padma Vibhushan Award [2004] and five D. Litt. degrees from various universities in India for her life-time devotion to Indian Literature. Highly acclaimed for her heart-moving stories on the partition tragedy and hair-raising feminist issues, she has to her credit more than two dozen collections of poems, 26 novels and 23 collections of short stories.

Emerging out of her preoccupation with trials and tribulations of the Punjabi womanhood, Amrita Pritam documents the 'violation' theme most compellingly in her masterpiece, '*Pinjar*'. The tragedy of partition involved a violation of womanhood and other indignities and humiliations on a large scale. The violations included socio-cultural and religious dislocation and atrocities against women. The agony of dislocation was more for women than it was for men. Women were dislocated from their home, family, society, culture and also religion. It resulted in the loss of identity and the problems of alienation in an emotionally disturbed milieu. The violence and atrocities against women took on

additional forms like abduction, mass rape, molestation, chopping of the breasts, parading of naked women in the form of processions and even death. Amrita Pritam realistically portrays this hellish predicament of women during the partition riots in her novel, '*Pinjar*'. There are many references to all the above atrocities and acts of violence in the novel.

The novel '*Pinjar*' is set against the background of the partition riots and the massacre that accompanied 'the great-divide'. The locale of this novel is mainly a small village Chatoani and its neighboring villages like Rattowal and Sakkar, now in Pakistani Punjab. The story roughly covers a period of thirteen years i.e. 1935 to 1948. It is the story of Pooro, a young girl of Hindu moneylender's family in Chatoani village. But, it embodies the agony of India's partition that remains the consciousness and even suffering of history. Pooro was engaged to another rich Hindu money lender's son, Ramchand of the neighboring village Rattowal. Meanwhile, British India got partitioned and both these villages were included in Pakistani territory. It changes the equations of Hindu-Muslim relations in the areas. In '*Pinjar*', Amrita Pritam juxtaposes the situation 'before' and 'after' the partition. Before partition, the Hindu money lenders dominated the Muslim people of the villages. We have many references to the atrocities of Hindu money lenders against the Muslims. They even abducted and raped Muslim girls. Rashid's speech after Pooro's abduction gives a clue to this:

* P.G. Dept. Of English, People's College, Nanded.

"I suppose they cried and beat their breasts in the same way as my grandfather and my uncles must have done when my aunt was taken."

Amrita Pritam portrays how the violation of womanhood became a way of 'dishonoring' the whole community. During the days of partition riots, abduction and rape of the women of one community by the men of the other community became a common way of vengeance. Amrita Pritam highlights this plight of the weaker sex in the patriarchal society through the tragedy of its protagonist Pooro. Her parents refuse to recover her from Rashid as a defiled woman. When Pooro escapes from Rashid's confinement and returns to her family, her father refuses to accept her by saying that 'we are helpless'. Pooro had to suffer for no fault of her own due to 'social stigma'. Instead of solacing her, Pooro's mother questions her "Who will marry you?"

Thus, Amrita makes the prototype of the predicament of Pooro after her marriage with Rashid by presenting 'many pinjars like her'. She mentions the tragedy of a mad woman raped and made pregnant by the villagers. Along with the women of the village Sakkar, she pities the mad woman:

"She is neither young nor attractive; she is just a lump of flesh without a mind to go with it 'a living skeleton'.....'a lunatic skeleton' a skeleton picked to its bones by kites and vultures".

After the disturbances of the partition riots, Pooro witnesses many young Hindu girls being abducted. She recovers one such girl with the help of Rashid and sends her to the security of an evacuee camp of Hindus and Sikhs. Rashid and Pooro also find out Lajjo, the sister of Ram Chand. When Ramchand returns with an army truck to recover his sister Lajjo, Pooro and Rashid take her to him. Pooro's brother, Trilok also comes with Ramchand to take Pooro back but she refuses to return. She stoically accepts her fate and says:

"When Lajjo is welcomed back in her home, then you can take it that Pooro has also returned to you....and she sums up 'any girl that reaches destination may be, Hindu or Muslim, think that my soul is reaching its destination'."

To conclude, the violation of womanhood is a recurring motif in the partition literature. Amrita Pritam's '*Pinjar*' is a classic example of degradation of social values through exploitation and oppression of women. It is the woman's lyric cry against her existential predicament. All the forms of agonizing experiences for women derive from the author's personal world of emotional crisis in breaking relations. The autobiographical shades of spousal despair and domestic chaos enrich the intensity of her stories. For its successful depiction of pain and suffering of women during partition, the novel '*Pinjar*' has rightly been chosen for a screen adaptation by Chandraprakash Dwivedi.

WELCOME BACK, WARBLERS

*T.R. Shankar Raman **

The Greenish Warbler's migration is a brave voyage of survival and connectedness that surmounts national boundaries and differences.

Every year, as the south-west monsoon fades across our land, a sense of restlessness and upheaval brews in the high Himalayas. The grey skies of August transform into the clear blues of September and a developing chill marks the air. The landscape and trees are gathering the colors of autumn; winter is not far. Then, in the high mountains, in ravines with willow and rhododendron, in lichen-encrusted forests of fir and birch, millions of little birds prepare themselves for a great journey.

The birds are so small that they can nestle snugly in the palm of your hand, or even fit into a loosely closed fist. They are most unassuming and drab, dressed in pale greens and drab olives, or in dull browns with scarcely a dash of yellow or orange, sometimes dabbled with pale wing-bars and stripes. They merge so well with the leaves that were they not so active and restless--flitting their wings and calling regularly to announce their presence--it would be hard to even spot them. And yet these wispy little birds, weighing around ten grams, can stake claim to great achievement. Every year, millions of them migrate hundreds to thousands of kilometers--in a matter of days even--flying south from the high Himalaya, the Caucasus and

mountains of Central Asia to winter in the foothills, plains, plateaus, and hill ranges across India. And here, after a lull of many months, when the trees and shrubs are a-flutter with lively chirps and twittering song, we know that the leaf warblers are back.

Burning fat: The leaf warblers, as one may guess, have a close association with the foliage of shrubs and trees where they restlessly search for their insect prey. Their restlessness is heightened in the days that precede migration. The birds feed in the foliage, as if in a frenzy, to load up for their journey a crucial stock of fuel: a few grams of fat. That hundreds to thousands of kilometers can be efficiently traveled on a few grams of fat is one of the primal wonders of bird migration. Burning fat is more efficient than burning sugars or proteins, producing as a by-product water, another key need for those long hours on the wing.

Although many birds, including small ones like warblers, fly non-stop between their breeding and wintering grounds, the leaf warblers may make brief stopovers en route. Thus warblers heading to the southern tip of India may be recorded on passage at sites in northern India or the Deccan in August-September and then again in April-May during the return journey.

Changing lifestyles: In southern India, the most ubiquitous of the leaf warblers is the Greenish Warbler. This species has three forms that differ slightly in plumage and call, which ornithologists sometimes separate into

*Courtesy: Sri Aurobindo Action- September 2010
Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore

three species. It is found in a range of habitats from urban gardens and plantations to tropical forests, preferring the canopy of trees.

When these warblers leave the subtropical and temperate forests of the Himalayas or the mountains beyond for the tropical deciduous and evergreen forests of the south, it is not just the tree species and the habitat they use that changes. They make a fundamental change in their lifestyle. Up north, these warblers live and breed in pairs during the summer, each pair defending its territory from other pairs for its valuable trove of insect food.

Yet, when they come south for the winter, the males and females separate--each individual maintains its own territory. A female sings and defends a territory from other members of its species, just as a male does. Following the monsoon rains, insect prey are rich enough in the foliage to attract the warblers, but scarce enough to warrant staking out a territory to defend it from the warbler multitude.

The territories the birds defend are not large. A single hectare of tropical forest may pack two to four birds holding territories. By marking individuals with numbered and colored rings on their feet, ornithologists have shown how the same individuals return to the very same quarter hectare of forest after their long journey every year--a feat of fidelity and orientation that one cannot help appreciating in so small a bird.

When the warblers arrive in our forests and gardens in September and October, they arrive singing. These are territorial songs staking claim to their all-

important grove of trees or little segment of forest. During the first few weeks, the trees are busy with songs and territorial skirmishes as some warblers settle down in their winter turf and others are chased out of it. The songs then give way to simpler, short call notes serving to merely announce their presence (a boon to birdwatchers to detect and identify each species). Then, over a relatively quiet period, the warblers mould into a new set of feathers, as if to greet the New Year.

Linking worlds apart: As April arrives carrying the promise of Himalayan spring, the relentless forces of nature and instinct turn the birds northward. Once more, the birds feed briskly to load up on fat. There is a flurry of song, as if in preparation for the territorial battles to be waged shortly on their breeding grounds. And then, one day, the tree where you have watched the warbler for several months is silent, and the bird is gone again.

And yet, when the warbler departs, it leaves behind a new awareness. An awareness, stirring deep wonder and strangely uplifting, that a tree in one's garden may be linked to a specific, even if unknown, corner of the Himalaya by one individual bird. A renewed sensibility that the garden and that Himalayan corner, and a range of stop-over sites along the warbler's route are all needed to keep alive this tiny linker of worlds. The warbler's journey then seems a brave voyage of survival and connectedness, surmounting artificial boundaries and national differences in a way that transcends our best-intentioned bilateral efforts at cooperation. Softly and unobtrusively, as it has done for millennia, the little warbler continues to tie us to other lands and peoples and nations far away.

KNOW YOUR HEART

*Dr. Devi Shetty **

Q) What are the thumb rules for a layman to take care of the heart?

A) 1) Diet - Less of carbohydrate, more of protein, less oil. 2) Exercise - Half an hour's walk, at least five days a week, avoid lifts and avoid sitting for a longtime. 3) Quit smoking. 4) control weight. 5) control blood pressure and sugar.

Q) Is eating non-veg food (fish) good for the heart?

A) No.

Q) It's still a grave shock to hear that some apparently healthy person gets a cardiac arrest. How do we understand it in perspective?

A) This is called silent attack: that is why we recommend everyone past the age of 30 to undergo routine health checkups.

Q) Are heart diseases hereditary?

A) No.

Q) What are the ways in which the heart is stressed? What practices do you suggest to destress?

A) Change your attitude towards life. Do not look for perfection in everything in life.

Q) Is walking better than jogging or is more

intensive exercise required to keep a healthy heart?

A) Walking is better than jogging since jogging leads to early fatigue and injury to joints.

Q) You have done so much for the poor and needy, what has inspired you to do so?

A) Mother Theresa, who was my patient.

Q) Can people with low blood pressure suffer heart diseases?

A) Extremely rare.

Q) Does cholesterol accumulate right from an early age or do you have to worry about it only after you are above 30 years of age?

A) Cholesterol accumulates from childhood.

Q) How do irregular eating habits affect the heart?

A) You tend to eat junk food when the habits are irregular and your body's enzyme release for digestion gets confused.

Q) How can I control cholesterol content without using medicines?

A) Control diet, walk and eat walnut.

Q) Can yoga prevent heart ailments?

A) Yoga helps.

Q) Which is the best and worst food for the heart?

A) Fruits and Vegetables are the best and worst is oil.

* The world famous Heart Specialist of Narayana Hrudayalaya, Bengaluru.

Q) Which oil is better- groundnut, sunflower, olive?

A) All oils are bad.

Q) what is the routine checkup one should go through? Is there any specific test?

A) Routine blood test to ensure sugar and cholesterol are ok. Check BP, Treadmill test after an echo.

Q) What are the first aid steps to be taken on a heart attack?

A) Help the person into a sleeping position, place an aspirin tablet under the tongue with a sorbitrate tablet if available, and rush him to a coronary care unit since the maximum casualty takes place within the first hour.

Q) Is there a relation between heart problems and blood sugar?

A) Yes a strong relationship since diabetics are more vulnerable to heart attacks than non-diabetics.

Q) How do you differentiate between pain caused by heart attack and that caused due to gastric trouble?

A) Extremely difficult without ECG .

Q) What is the main cause of a steep increase in heart problems amongst youngsters? I see people of about 30-40 yrs of age having heart attacks and serious heart problems.

A) Increased awareness has increased incidents. Also sedentary lifestyles, smoking, junk food, lack of exercises in a country where people are genetically three times more vulnerable for heart attack than Europeans and Americans.

Q) Many of us have an irregular daily routine

and many a time we have to stay late nights in office. Does this affect our heart? What precautions would you recommend?

A) When you are young, nature protects you against all these irregularities. However, as you grow older, respect the biological clock.

Q) Will taking anti-hypertensive drugs cause some other complications (short/long term)?

A) Yes most drugs have some side effects. However, modern anti-hypertensive drugs are extremely safe.

Q) Will consuming more coffee / tea lead to heart attacks?

A) No.

Q) Are asthma patients more prone to heart disease?

A) No.

Q) How would you define junk food?

A) Fried food like Kentucky, Mc Donalds, Samosas, and even masala dosas.

Q) You mentioned that Indians are three times more vulnerable. What is the reason for this, as Europeans and Americans also eat a lot of junk food?

A) Every race is vulnerable to some disease and unfortunately Indians are vulnerable to the most expensive disease.

Q) Does consuming bananas help reduce hypertension?

A) No.

Q) Can a person help himself during a heart attack (Because we see a lot of forwarded emails on this)?

A) Yes. Lie down comfortably and put an

aspirin tablet of any description under the tongue and ask someone to take you to the nearest coronary care unit without any delay and do not wait for the ambulance since most of the time, the ambulance does not turn up.

Q) Do, in any way, low white blood cells and low hemoglobin count lead to heart problems?
A) No. But it is ideal to have normal hemoglobin level to increase your exercise capacity.

Q) Sometimes, due to the hectic schedule we are not able to exercise. So, does walking while doing daily chores at home or climbing the stairs in the house, work as a substitute

for exercise?

A) Certainly. Avoid sitting continuously for more than half an hour and even the act of getting out of the chair and going to another chair and sitting helps a lot.

Q) What are the things one needs to take care of after a heart operation?

A) Diet, exercise, drugs on time, control cholesterol, BP, weight.

Q) Are people working on night shifts more vulnerable to heart disease when compared to day shift workers?

A) No.

MAN AND NATURE

*Mary Krupa Bai **

Oh NATURE
What a BEAUTY you are
With colorful blossoms in all seasons
With different creatures in all atmospheres
With rocks in marvelous mountains
With valuables in forests
With lakhs of lakes in excellent areas
With greenery in all gardens

BUT

Man has become UGLY
By cutting down green trees
By polluting waters
By creating unnatural scentless flowers.

BUT

Oh NATURE
What a BEAUTY you are.

* S.P.M.H Degree kalasala, Machilipatnam.

AD

*Shambhu Badal **

Open
Open
The Bazaar is open
The Bazaar is free
Means free market is open
Say the market is open
Implies open market has got off

Market
Is big
Is bigger
Is biggest
Wherever you feel like going
Go
Whatever you feel like doing
Do

Scissors-needles-threads
Water-land-jungle
Mills- factories-trade

Food- flats-females
Cars-helicopters-planes
Weapons-explosives-bombs
Goons-robbers-killers
Slaves-bondmaids-managers
Schools-colleges-universities
Kinship-caste-religion
Pundit-Maulavi-Padre
Poets-authors-theoreticians
Divas-artistes-media
Legislative-executive-judiciary
In their own ways
Are available in the market

You have money
Or black money
Or credit card
What more!
As you wish

Mobile phone you have
Believe, you have everything.

* Suraj-Ghar, Jabra road, Korra, Hazaribag.

THINK POSITIVELY

*K. Vivekanandam **

Say to yourself every morning,
Today is going to be a great day,
I can handle more than I think I can
Things don't get better by worrying about

I can be satisfied if I try to do my best
There is always something to be happy
about.
I am going to make someone happy today.
It is not good to be down-hearted
Life is great, make the most of it.
As far as possible be an optimist.

* Retd. Lecturer and writer, Hyderabad.

ANGER - THE GREATEST ENEMY

*Siluveru Sudharshan **

All of us, except for a rare few, have experienced what anger is. We meet it at home, in the street, office, assembly and frequently within ourselves. Many try to rationalize their anger. Some so called intellectuals speak approvingly and justify anger. In political battle, anger has become a weapon to stir the masses and bring a revolution. Leaders of labour and other lower classes use anger to threaten and bargain with 'do this or face the consequences' approach. In the world of criminals, anger becomes a status symbol.

This kind of mentality and attitude has a great harmful effect on the society. Anger can be defined as momentary madness. Some define it as extreme displeasure. In spiritual language anger is the outcome of strong unsatisfied desire. Whatever the cause or the definition, we must remember that anger causes more harm to oneself than to others.

Anger is a sudden impulsive and forceful emotion with destructive potential. In human beings it springs due to rajasic nature. Soothing words are the water hydrants needed to quench this fire. An angry person loses wisdom, loses balance and loses control over his thoughts and emotions. He becomes over-active and is controlled by ego. He loses the power of discrimination and becomes aggressive. Balance of mind lost, there by

inner peace also vanishes. Anger destroys friendships, disturbs families and relations and breaks partnerships leading to disturbance of one's own physical health. Riots, arsons, wars, suicides, murders are all a result of unbridled anger making the world ugly. People try to control children with anger but it does not do any good in the long run.

This anger goes into their minds and lies in wait to produce future behavioural changes. Anger is destructive of life, worldly or spiritual. Uncontrolled anger is akin to insanity. To utilize anger masterfully and deliberately to control a situation is a science and a difficult art.

How does anger arise?-when a man unduly dwells on any object, he develops an attachment for it. This gives rise to a desire to possess it which in turn breeds anger. Anger leads to delusion; from it the failure of memory leading to the ruin of discrimination and finally man perishes (The Gita II 62&63). Bhagavadgita describes lust, anger and greed as the three gateways to hell, leading to the ruin of the self.

How to control anger? It is possible through methodical and sustained self effort. We have to change our attitude by restructuring our priorities. Spiritual sadhaks must be more forcefully motivated in overcoming anger.

Anger is our prime enemy. We commit many sins propelled by 'KAMA' and

* Writer and Scholar, Hyderabad.

'KRODHA', desire and anger. It originates from 'RAJAS' and has to be rooted out at that point. By forsaking the evil passions one will become tranquil and thus be endowed with an inner atmosphere against 'RAJAS'.

There are two types of anger; our anger against somebody and somebody's anger against us. We must address our mind and say "my mind, if you must be angry with that which causes me harm, then get angry with anger itself. It does great harm, destroys the cherished values of life and righteousness. It ruins my pleasure and salvation. While angry I live through hell even before death. I have no enemy greater than anger". This truth must be repeatedly reflected upon.

Another type is avoiding being provoked by others' anger. Regard those who get angry with us as our benefactors and be thankful to them for their services. They reveal our faults and thus strengthen our non-

attachment. For this they sacrifice even their own peace of mind. We should really be all the more grateful to them.

The greatest remedy for anger is delay. When angry, we are advised to count up to ten before we speak. If very angry, count up to a hundred. The idea is to put a brake on the flow of anger.

Anger, desire and greed lead to ruination of life. Anger is a quality of the demonic part of human nature. Rogues' gallery consists of arrogance, self-conceit, harshness and ignorance. All these move hand in hand. It is a powerful gang. We must be determined, courageous, innovative and skilful in dealing with members of this gang.

He who is not perturbed by adversity, who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is a man of steady wisdom.

BABA'S MUSEUM AT PUTTAPARTHI

*G.Somaseshu **

A worthy place of love and conscience
clean
Fostering unity -an inspiring sight!
A global hermitage with message bright
Transforming all seekers with love serene;
The birth of various creeds you see on
screen

* Retd. Principal, RPGT Colony, Hindupur,
Anantapur (Dist.).

Baba's Leelas Divine you watch with delight
His omniscient grace and godly light
Caring all with compassion-nowhere seen.

His thrilling words and melodious voice
You hear forgetting all your worldly woes
A mighty haven you find at his lotus-feet;
This edifice, a relic of heavenly choice
Where godly figures befriend you so close
A wondrous place to feel devotion sweet.

THE MOUSETRAP - JUST AMAZING

Courtesy: Sri Aurobindo Action- August 2010

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. "What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered. He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed this warning: "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it." The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about in the house!"

The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap..... Alone.....

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house-the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey.

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see

it. It was a venomous snake whose tail was caught in the trap.

The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital. When she returned home she still had a fever. Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup. So the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient:

But his wife's sickness continued. Friends and neighbours came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the former butchered the pig.

But, alas, the farmer's wife did not get well... She died.

So many people came for her funeral that the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them for the funeral luncheon.

And the mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and you think it doesn't concern you, remember---

When one of us is threatened, we are all at risk. We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

AN ANGEL CALLED FATHER

*Ravi Thakur **

My best Hero
And fast friend
My favourite philosopher
And dependable guide
Who never said 'no'
To any of my demand
Would ever tolerate
And pardon my follies
Desired me to become
Nay - a good professional
But the best human being
My first Guru
Who taught me
The Art of living
The secret of success-

* Principal, Hanamkonda.

'Conviction and Hard work'
The meaning of Life-
'Accepting as and how it comes'
the goal of life-
'Selfless Service to others'
The most beautiful ornament of Life -
'Humility'
the greatest virtue - 'Pardon'
the spice of Life - 'Adventure'
the Essence of Life-Spirituality'
the symbol of Life - 'Forward movement'
and virtual State of Death-'Inaction'
these precious gifts
No other riches can match
Treasured for ever in my heart
Are bestowed upon me
By an Angel called -
'My Father'.

PINK AND YELLOW

*D. C. Chambial **

April may be,
to some,
a cruel month.

Dawns with balmy,
beauteous words in rainbow
stolen from the Sun.

Tickle psyche into ecstasy
weave songs fresh:
cuckoo's honey pink and yellow.

Sink with feeling heart,
touch tendons, laugh and weep
on sandy shores of sphere.

*Editor, "Poetcrit", Maranda, (HP).

WOMEN IN THE NOVELS OF NAYANATARA SEHGAL

V. Lakshmi Prasanna *

In the Postcolonial Indian novels, one of the aspects vibrancy found by the readers, is the patriarchal dominance and the sufferings undergone by Women Characters. Nayanatara Sehgal's novels are no exception to this. In many of her novels, women characters suffer from the atrocities and humiliations at the hands of men characters. But a few of these women characters rebel against this oppression, contrary to the established norms of the society.

In Nayanatara Sehgal's novels women characters display their independent thinking setting up individual standards as contrary to the existing patriarchal law. The novelist prioritises the need for this type of attitude among the modern women. The society of the day finds that women had a less important role to play in the family life.

Irrespective of the character, emotions and morale of the male characters, these women characters are bound to obey the meaningless laws of society, which are framed by men. They are always ready to find fault with women. She has always been either dependent upon men or considered beauty dolls, meticulously observed by the Society in terms of her adherence to the Patriarchal Laws.

Oppression against women: If one

observes the women characters in some of the novels of Nayanatara Sehgal such as, *The Day In Shadow*, *Storm In Chandigarh* and *Rich Likes Us*, one finds the different images of women as conceived by the novelist. While men characters are proud of their relationship either before or after marriage, women characters for example, are expected to abide by the wishes of men. In the novel *Storm in Chandigarh*, Saroj has no idea to reveal anything about her own marriage. Saroj's husband Inder's attitude towards her is to be noted in terms of his brutality to her. He never considers her as his life companion. Out of ignorance, and not realizing the cruel view of her own husband, Saroj reveals to him her pre - marital relationships. Inder considers this to be a moral lapse.

A few days later, Saroj undergoes severe humiliation at the hands of her husband. In fact we can see that Sehgal has included similar relationships between the male and female characters in her other novels. The relationships between Sonali and Kachru at their University, Saroj and Skinny at college, Rashmi and Neil and Devi's affair with Michael in *A Situation in New Delhi* are cases in point.

Another character, Rose, has a very bitter experience, and experience shared by many widows in India. She dies in a very pathetic condition and this marks the image of women as characterized by the novelist. Smriti, the protagonist of the novel, *The Day*

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in *Shadow*' faces sufferings at the hands of her husband Som. Smriti thinks that getting a divorce from her husband is the only option for her to overcome this suffering and mental torture. However, she finds little solace once she gets the divorce. She now has to face a different set of challenges as a divorcee in a male dominated society.

Nayanatara Sehgal's art of characterization is clearly visible in the novel, '*A Situation in New Delhi*' wherein, Madhu, a university student, is raped in the office premises with scant regard to her feelings or emotions. In all of these novels mentioned here, it is very evident that the men characters exploit the innocence and vulnerability of the women characters. The dominance of the men characters leads to a feeling of suffocation and oppression of the women characters.

Nayanatara Sehgal has not confined herself merely to portraying the women characters as the ones who undergo suffocation and humiliation. They have also their role in rebelling against the atrocities and indignity meted out by men characters against them. As part of displaying this rebellious mood against the humiliation, Sehgal has symbolically selected divorce as a tool to liberate the women from atrocities, unmindful of the future consequences these women characters are bound to face in this patriarchal society.

REBEL WOMEN: Sehgal's novels reveal the fact that the novelist is aware and has a great concern for the dangerous conditions in which these women characters live. Some of these women characters are strong enough to rebel against their male counterparts and exhibit their emotional balance and social

independence without compromising on the injustice committed against them. For example, in the novel, '*Plans for Departure*', Anna Hansen, a Danish girl, also gets projected as the one to stand against the age-old male dominance and stands in a row along with Sonali. Anna identifies that there is every need to address those patriarchal laws which are becoming a hindrance to their very growth.

It is exactly here that one searches for a different identity for women. She has rightfully started the process in her novels through the claims, protests, protection and finally fighting for equal rights along with men. In her novel, '*Mistaken Identity*', the novelist has a woman character, Rani of Vijaygarh, who is much neglected and humiliated by her husband and then craves for identity. In this process she comes across a lover in Yusuf, a Communist.

This character is bold enough to talk straight to her son, Bhushan, saying that she prefers her personal feeling and interests rather than the royal life as wife of the King. The decision from this character comes after the third marriage of the King. She thinks it proper to come out of the shadow of her life with the King and after neutralizing the power of her husband and family, marries the Communist lover, Yusuf.

Yet another example is that Rashmi and Nita of '*This Time of Morning*'. Rashmi also tries to establish her identity in the patriarchal society. Here Rashmi rebels and takes the steps to liberate herself from the bondage of her husband, Dalip by turning towards another character, Neil. Rashmi's progressive thoughts about the tradition and

marriage and the matrimonial bondage etc., paves the way for her to lead an independent life. Again, it is this progressive thinking that makes her develop an extra pre-marital relationship with Kalyan as part of rebelling against the system of maintaining chastity prior to marriage.

In '*Rich Like US*', Sonali, unlike the other monotonous women characters seen in other Indian novels, rebels against the society's views on high caste feminism. Here the oppression is not out of male dominance, but through the authoritarianism of the government. Like Sonali, Simrit is also a strong woman having independent thoughts and she rebels against her husband and leaves him after more than one and half decades of her married life. She then allows the entry of Raj into her life. In the process of self discovery, she takes the first step for a divorce and acknowledges Raj as a 'green world lover'

CONCLUSION: To sum up, Nayanatara Sehgal's novels have some definite purpose to serve. The novelist leaves strong impressions about the duties and individuality and how one can lead a dignified and respectable life. Though the women characters appear to be contrary to one another, the ultimate message that the novelist wants to portray is that they represent all the important shades in a woman's life.

Thus, Nayanatara Sehgal has been successful in portraying the women characters in her novels in identifying their place, role and the individuality in this male dominated society. The novelist also emphasizes the need for women to make concrete plans to live independently and lead a free life, liberating themselves from the clutches of matrimonial bondage. In this process, the women characters also redefine the patriarchal laws framed by men in this society.

LO! BLACKMAIL ON PROWL

*P.Purnachandra Rao **

Beware of :-

Passions, aroused and orchestrated,
Emotions manufactured and masqueraded,
Slander and libel scripted craftily.
'Hit list' collectively prepared venomously

Yester-year zeros catapulted as heroes
Enacting scene after scene coughing out ethics;
Making blackmail an art by itself.
Hate, shying to hate, getting wounded in its pride
Civility wailing inconsolably in search of a hide out,
'Goebbels' turning in his grave lain on lies
Virus, nibbling nobility to smithereens

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ISN'T MAN A SOCIAL ANIMAL?

*Dr. Katta Rajamouly **

Let us survey the nature and temperament of man in the modern context. It will be very surprising and startling to learn the results of our survey. Man is selfish by nature and partial by temperament, specifically in the modern context. He faces various social problems like corruption, deception and exploitation. For the question: "What do you not like in today's society?" Every student's direct and simple answer is that he or she does not like corruption in today's society. It is quite obvious to say that corruption is rampant in every sphere.

Day by day it is occupying the most crucial position as an issue to be talked about in the summit meets and as the topic for group discussion by the students today. Similarly deception and exploitation are in the lead. Corruption, deception and exploitation are complementary to each other in their role in disruption and destruction of society. It is man alone who is responsible for the prevalence and diffusion of the most unwelcome corruption confronting the society today as per the ultimate analysis of a cross-section of society. He is particularly comfortable to be the promoter of corruption. The evils are man-created in the way rules are man-made.

When we go through the annals of history of man, there was not much corruption

in the past. Now-a-days corruption is rampant and prevalent in every sphere, and is all pervasive like the Supreme power. It prevails to demean the values of the man today. It is lava spurting from the heart of a volcano to spoil society. It causes colossal losses, hinders progress and sabotages the bridges of understanding in the maintenance of so-called values of man. As a result, man is causing harm to man. Why it is so, is a complex issue and a million dollar question. However, the reasons for the prevalence of corruption are well known. It is attributed to one's over selfishness. Man today is growing so selfish that he wants to become rich overnight since he compares himself with others regarding the financial status. The root cause of corruption is man's greed for money rather than man's need for money. For his riches in this internet generation, man is revered and respected very highly as a king with others as inferiors, subordinates and slaves. He feels good when he is well off. So he is in pursuit of the sole financial goal. All his most possible efforts to become rich are seriously made in the reach of his coveted goals and vested interests. Thus man-to-man relationship is characterized by the power of finance. Desire for material possessions: gold, money, buildings and all kinds of luxuries serve as a vital force to turn man greedy.

Today's man is in quest of money to maintain financial relation with his fellow beings in contrast with the ones in the yester years and earlier generations. It is not at all surprising to learn the fact that a man who was below

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the poverty line became a tycoon in the utmost financial heights and shook hands with Bill Gates. The mystery is unearthed as in the fable of a man becoming a tycoon on the appearance of God in the wake of his prayer to Him. The man, whose bread is buttered, tells the tale of his adventures in Real Estates Business to come to the level of a multimillionaire. Now-a-days business is far-fetching and over beneficial. In the field of business today, nothing is sinful and every thing is delightful for it presents avenues for man to become rich overnight if not in a fortnight. The price of a thing varies from person to person and from situation to situation, depending on the customer's status, class, caste, power, strength, etc. Credit goes to the customer when he deals with the salesman, referring to a man of his acquaintance, who is politically popular, physically strong and financially sound. He triumphs in his deal without fail. Business in most cases involves a snake in the grass and so the customer must be vigilant as not to be deceived by the salesman's tactics. Businessmen maintain different kinds of qualities of an article: high quality, second quality, third quality and so on. The qualities of a particular article are beyond the customer's assessment and comprehension most of the time. In hotels and restaurants food quality is to be assessed by the customers to be free from deception. Food items served to all the people do not have the same quality and variety. A degree of difference in quality and variety is maintained to suit the status of customers. In such circumstances, the customers are deceived due to their sheer innocence and mere ignorance. So man today adopts business relation with his fellow-being and exploits him in the indispensable situation and in the real need.

Today's man grows with the awareness of political power. He jumps into the arena of politics mostly for safeguarding his properties and promoting his status to his imaginable heights to be a public character. His political might bestows on him the right for owning everything or doing anything according to his choice. People in different fields become victims in various fields: transfers of government employees, sanctioning loans, granting visas, giving permits, etc. The political might becomes a personal right to reach selfish goals and fulfill vested interests. In fact, political leadership is not for individual goals or interests but for the welfare of all the people of various sections in society. People should enjoy their fundamental rights to make true Abraham Lincoln's sense of government which is 'of the people, for the people and by the people'. Now it is in the other way in the changed circumstances. It is 'off the people', to 'buy the people' and 'far (from) the people'. People are exploited for the lack of political background or backing even in the democratic set up. Man in today's society craves to capture political power to deceive his fellow beings or his brethren by means of mean politics. He lacks insight in the spell of money as Maxim Gorky refers to the man in this age of advanced technology: "You can fly in the air like birds and swim in the sea like fish, but you don't know how to walk upon the earth like men."

Society is like a large family to protect the interests of man and make sure that he does not destroy his fellow beings in any aspect as he is a social being to safeguard the prestige of society. The contemporary society is sick because of multifarious politics: family politics, street politics, vote bank politics,

union politics, religion politics, sports politics, business politics, institution politics, etc. All kinds of politics may broadly be classified into local, regional, national and international politics. Politics today, entering the life of man, deprives him of peace and harmony since they have 'poly' 'tricks' by which man spoils himself to be called a political animal rather than a social animal.

In a truly democratic set up, a genuine leader is fairly elected by the people for the welfare of humanity at large. The right society elects the right representatives but today's society is full of wrong doers and evil mongers with lobbies of their own to exploit the voters in various ways. In such circumstances, the citizens of a country cannot prosper to be its worthy citizens. When the leader is so, so is the society or a man in the street.

The youth today are exposed to false media. As a result, they swerve from the path of rectitude. By hook or crook, they want to reach their goals: admissions in institutions, getting through examinations with a good score, employment, political recognition, personal identity, etc. There is no hesitation on the part of the youth in resorting to malpractice of any type. The youth are solely responsible for the building of a better society. Instead, they grow with no heed to principles. Rapes, murders, kidnaps etc take place in broad daylight. A girl is forced by an urchin or unruly youth to love him or else she is attacked with acid. They invent styles and fashions for false attractions. All their actions are squarely cinematic and seemingly heroic in achieving goals.

Man as a social being should have love

and concern for society. He should feel a social responsibility for mutual welfare and reciprocal progress to establish an ideal society. Troubles and problems of a man are shared by all in a positive gesture. He lives and lets others live to make society healthy to flourish with culture and civilization to his credit. As a result, good society is built on the foundation of human values and humanistic virtues. But the man today is crazed with the spell of money. He feels that money is everything and it bestows on him power, prestige, name and fame. In this mission, he exploits his fellow men for his own welfare, forgetting his love and concern for man and society at large. As a result, human relations and social concerns are lost. Man feels insecure as man-to-man relationship is not fair. Safety has become a topic of serious discussion today. When a woman moves all alone in the street at midnight and goes back home safely, the freedom we got at midnight attains the sense of real achievement and democracy gets the true meaning of the term.

Real society knows no discrimination, no disparity and no difference between man and man. All should live in such a way that no one's feelings and sentiments are hurt. Today's society harbours disparities and differences against human principles. There are rifts between the two opposing attitudes like the high and the low, the haves and the have-nots, the weak and the strong, the natives and the non-natives. People lack respect and reverence for other's faiths and beliefs due to false discriminations.

Man is a social animal by virtue of insight for his link with society as a sign of his wisdom. On the contrary, man today, in spite of his insight, grows selfish to turn human

values topsy -turvy even in the age of internet generation. All virtues have been replaced by vices like indifferent attitude, hypocrisy, sycophancy, partiality, opportunism, lack of appreciation, intolerance, prejudices, back stabbing, self boasting, false eulogy, adamant nature, lack of realization, no confession in reality and jealousy as blemishes on the part of society. Man is devoid of the serenity, peace and equanimity of mind in the role of society

today as he voices no concern for the welfare of society. In fact, society like a mother presents its members due rewards and recognition; peace and harmony when man is social in concern, human in relation and humanistic in approach. All are guests to one another and every day is a happy occasion for every one. Then man is acclaimed to be a social animal in the social sense.

VITAL FUNCTIONS

*M.G.Narasimha Murthy **

In the divine presence of god Brahma,
Gathered life's main functionaries -
Breath, Speech, Sight and Hearing,
Mind and Semen, the source of being,
Each conscious of its own use and influence.
As arguments about their superior role
Seemed endless and of no avail,
They humbly prayed to the Creator
To explain which was of the utmost
importance.
"Of all the vital powers of living beings,"
Brahma said, "the greatest is the one
"without which the body can never survive."
In order to know their inherent strength,
The vital organs resolved to depart by turns
And return to their abode after twelve months.
Speech was told by the other organs,
"Although dumb, we could breathe and see,
"Perceive with the mind and with semen
procreate."

While Sight had left, the body survived;
It could still breathe and speak,
Hear, understand with the mind
And with semen perpetuate life.
When Hearing was away, the body lived
Since Breathe, Speech and Sight,
Mind and Semen supported life.
The mind was given a similar reply -
Although insensible and unable to think,
The other organs functioned as ever before.
When Semen departed for a year,
Procreation ceased, yet life remained.
When, at last, Breath was about to leave,
Like a spirited horse dragging the pegs
To which his feet are firmly tied,
It wrenched the other vital organs
And their strength soon diminished.
Realising its supremacy and their dependence,
Together they prayed to Life-breath
To be their vital link and source of strength,
Sustain and save them from the jaws of death.
Life-breath responded and the body
flourished.

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PRONAB KUMAR MAJUMDER: ON TIME BARD

*P.V. Laxmi Prasad **

Sri Pronab Kumar Majumder has carved a place for himself in Indo-English poetry with a large bulk of poetic output to his credit. Hailing from the land of Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Micheal Madhusudhan Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Swami Vivekananda, Majumder is currently a distinct poetic figure voicing the great muse of poetry on the cosmic element, Time. An administrator, an accomplished bilingual poet and an equally accomplished translator, short-story writer and dramatist, Majumder is a widely published and anthologised poet in India and abroad. He is a poet of many excellences, for he sees life from multi-dimensional aspects like Time, Philosophy, Love, Life, Landscapes, and Ecology and Environment. Yet, Time and Life are dominant and inseparable themes of his poetry. As readers find his poems based primarily on the cosmic element Time, it is creditably said that he is probably the first and the only Indian English poet who has composed as many poems on Time as no others have done. Time is everything for him as he sees life from different vicissitudes of Time. Further, he has timed every poem to sheer beauty, perfection from thematic varieties to metrical compositions. By metaphorical personification, the poet looks at Time from different perspectives, different angles, and settings of everyday life and cosmic eternity as though Time stands sentinel in its creating and killing activities through ages. In all his poetry, Time plays the lead role that it runs

like machine, flows like water and dances like a peacock. The extent of Time and its reflective capacity is philosophically explored in poems that mask his creative genius and stamp out his poetic output. It is said that "an inch of Time cannot be bought by an inch of gold". As such, Time occupies the centre-stage of writing in all his poems, going by how the poet views Time. Time wounds, heals forces, dominates, withdraws, creates, kills, silences, and begets man in his creative life. Elsewhere, the poet feels that Time awards, rewards, reaps and punishes man in his relentless pursuit of fulfillment. He is just a player of what Time holds for him. In the timeless 'eternity of Time', Majumder creates a global setting for his poetry-writing. As earth moves round the sun, life also revolves with the passage of Time. Similarly, just like the changing seasons mark the passing of time, the passing events of life change with changing times. These events, says Majumder, are philosophically composed in relation to Time which is the ultimate decider of life for any living-being. The mystifying nature of Time and its bearing upon our mortal existence is seen in one of the poems titled "Time Never Returns to Console"

"Time name returns to give you back
What you failed to harvest while on track
A life is a segment of time, an eternal voyager
A man dwells in life a short times, an actor."

Time is the architect of both the creation and the destruction. Man, being a short time actor plays his part and leaves the world to mingle with the passage of time.

* Lecturer, Karimnagar.

"Reflection of time leads the poet to the contemplation of life drama in which Time steals the show of every action and activity of the universe." (Srinivasa Rangaswamy) As such, the poet has for his poems, effectively used symbols, metaphors and personification to convey his ideas in an abstract way.

"Time is the best teacher
Of human creature"

"Time over races imagination
Imagination follows time's expression"

Now overtime prevails
Time falls behind E-mails"

As Time is the prime mover of his poetry, Majumder leaves no stone unturned and uses it to creation, perfection and to his absolute power of creativity.

"Life is time's follower
Time is life's conveyor
One is unlimited whole
Another is Soul"

The poet shows a co-relation of time and life and presents his ideas in the lines:

"History records life
Life grasps time
History is a type
Time overshadowing prime
Time is dead in history
Life is running story."

"Stride of man against Time
Struggle of man with Time
Are but too transitory
Man is buried every moment
In the graveyard beneath Time."

A soulful and insightful Majumder traces the fleeting capacity of Time in one of his poems:

"Time Present and Time Past
Are both present in Time future
And Time future contained in Time fast,"

The way the wonderful phenomenon of past, present and future are intertwined in the poem is absolutely significant. It is worthwhile to quote that 'Time Guides' controls and decides destinies for all living beings. The transient nature of Time and its influence on man is poetically explored from different settings

On the immortal nature of Time, the poet again reflects this aspect with awesome thoughts:

"Time is deathless soulless a general faith
Really time cannot avoid process of death
Both young and old time may have lost
Unoccupied life sustains at time's cost"

In the words of Ruth Wildes Schuler, the outstanding American poet and critic: "Much of Pranob Majumder's work revolves around time. He portrays it as fleeting and the individual man has little chance of making a lasting impression on the universe. He is here and gone; yet the earth still turns in its eternal rotation. Man, like time, is just a passing phenomenon."

If at all there is one outstanding poem that encapsulates the readers to ever-green charm, it is '*What Time Grants*' where in lines of universal significance are composed in the poem.

"Life is never a game of victory and defeat,
Somewhere spent moments perfectly fit"

"As days shining in joy and happiness
Alongside bad days of sorrow and sadness"

"Time creates and kills in its score
Time grants both bane and bonanza"
(*What Time Grants*)

Time is both the giver and the punisher. It is never taken to be liberal all the time. It gives testing times, moments of patience and finally rewards. Whatever happens in the world is part of Time's glory and wonder it's unrivalled/position is unique and supreme. The poet conveys the eternal message of Time that it acts as a mode of transport in which human beings are its carried passengers. Time de-boards them on reaching their destination. Similarly, it takes away the dead people in its carriage of corpses.

"Time is conveyor
Life is passenger
Time de-boards deads."

Man is a phoenix in that he must necessarily die to himself time and again in order to be reborn to a higher state of existence (Bernard Jackson). The poet holds that the concept of Birth and Death is seen as a timeless inevitability. Time blows its whistle for man when the end is in sight of him. The poet brings out the omnipotent Time as the dictator of entire universe:

"The cosmic world is dictated by Time
Every bit is Time-relative."

Time is the suzerain of all creations.

Everything moves according to its directions. All the world is a puppet in its hands. All things of universe, whether living or non-living, are Time's eternal slaves and they have to dance to its tunes. The poet holds that Time is ever alert, vigilant and watchful. All events and actions are closely monitored under its surveillance. It hides resources of life in itself.

"Time is treasures
of resource of universe"

Time is a solitary eternal crusader. It never returns to its position. It always moves ahead and the life has to follow its pace because life is a part of Time. The poet contends that when Time starts destroying, it never cares for who is innocent or who is guilty. It only kills in the Time of destruction. It never pays any attention to the cries of innocents (Swagata Ray).

Time only leaves evidence of its arrival and departure in the life of human-beings. These evidences are remembered as a past experience and become a fitting lesson for future generations. One of the characteristic features of time is that it always rules over active lives. It works upon people who have dreams hopes and aspirations. It never entertains dead ones because dead people carry no hopes, dreams and aspirations. Time is active in something alive. Time is dead in a dead person because a dead person is outside the influence of Time. "No one knows when Time took birth. No one knows about its source or origin or anything about its destination. Even if human beings can measure Time through mathematical calculation, it is in fact beyond any calculation. It is just an illusion that they trapped time. As they calculate, they

lose themselves in its maze and start chasing it again"(Swagata Ray).

"Time was never born
Time is a passage
Between one end of infinity and another"
"It comes flowing from
No where to go nowhere"

The poet highlights that Time is beyond human reach. On the one hand, it creates everything and on the other, it destroys everything. Time has got both creative and destructive capacities. It is omnipotent and life has to follow its path. So the poet is very much conscious about Time and presents its fundamental and intellectual structures. Human beings are trapped within the clutches of time and with the passage of time, they have to decompose and decay. Time is the creator of mind. Time is also the destroyer of mind. Here

time and mind share a relation in which time runs faster than the human mind. Time is never born and time will never die. It is life which has to die after a certain period of time (Dr. Mojibur Rahman).

Time as a vast spectrum has created its universe for Majumder to write invincible poetry on it. He not only philosophises Time but also mystifies it at micro and macro levels of universe. Majumder shows how Time locks and unlocks moves and unmoves, makes and mars life in this universe. Time keeps on rolling throughout Majumder's 13 poetry collections. A typical Majumder is one whom I consider Time's Timeless Bard to the core of entire collections. The poetry of Majumder concludes that everything in the universe is time-bound, time-controlled and time tuned.

SUMMER FIRE

*Dr. V.V.B. Rama Rao **

Horrible it is that the sun should flare up thus
Making every room and even every corner
under the roof
Scorching and unlivable
Slices of summer used to be unequal earlier
But they are equal almost everywhere
A stop in the cycle of seasons
Has come to be a sign of the flames to
come
With no respite at morn eve or midnight

'Why this is hell, nor am I out of it,'
Declared the learned Faustus
It is not the sizzling in weather alone
Can we find fault with the all-seeing Sun
For the scams that are spewing all around?
There are crashes, collapses and
catastrophes
Is it because of the life-giving planet?
No, surely not
All things are falling apart
There are all kinds of heat, all around
Is it a warning for corrupt man without
compunction!

* Retired ELT Professional, now living in Noida.

REVITALIZING OUR VALUE SYSTEM

Courtesy: Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta

The social scenario has changed beyond recognition in the last few decades. Earlier, we used to treasure the pearls of wisdom, the age-old values, and had concern for our elders and superiors. We used to solemnly chant the verses

'Pita svargah, pita dharmah' and 'Janani janmabhumischa svargadapi gariasi' etc., because these sayings used to invigorate us, make us feel proud of our cultural heritage. But, now we find an erosion of values in every sphere of life, starting from the social institution like family to international and global domains. The tall talks are meaningless and ineffective because no more we cherish the values like magnanimity, tolerance, sacrifice, compromise, sharing, feeling of universal brotherhood and so on. We are appalled by the degradation of values which were once considered sacrosanct.

Let us start from the small unit of society--the family. Of the many influences modern society exerts on individual character, perhaps one of the most significant one is the changing pattern of family structure. The modern nuclear family is very different compared to the extended family of the past in which three or more generations lived together under one roof. No doubt, such a set up had both the positive and negative aspects. However, that family setup used to train the young ones to inculcate the values of respect, submission, tolerance sharing and caring. The narrowness of the nuclear families

concerns everyone, but has its most pronounced effects on children and old people. Children are deprived of the stabilizing wisdom of their grandparents as they hardly get to enjoy their company. It is true that in the early years, children are incapable of appreciating fully what they derive from the elderly members of the family. But infancy and early youth are the times when the foundations of character are laid.

It so happens that in pursuit of material gain and creature comforts, the young people sometimes regard old people as hindrances to their joining the rat race. Their personal tranquility gets disturbed because of their unhealthy aspirations. They lead stressful life and mostly become the victims of cardiac ailments, ulcers, diabetes, etc. In addition, stress causes neuroses and other pathological, psychological malfunctioning. These ill effects contribute to the decline of physical and mental health.

The effects of the collapse of traditional values are indeed horrifying. We are unfortunate that nowadays we are made to live in a cold society where the bond of love and a feeling of belonging is missing due to the growing individuality of adult members of the family. These days most of the young parents do not spend quality time with their children who are virtually left in the care of the creche, maids, etc. or left on their own. Old people are put into old-age homes where they sadly vegetate away. We forget that we

should have no compulsion but willingness to care for them as a sign of natural gratitude and love. Those who fail to be grateful to their parents lack a human quality and can never become good parents in future. Indianness teaches the importance of gratitude to parents. When the selfishness of the aged people is revealed to children, they start distrusting the

adults and even human beings and become asocial or antisocial afterwards.

The need of the hour is to adhere to the basic values to revitalize our value system, so that we can make this world a better place to live in.

OH MASS-QUIT-OH!

*Sharat Babu **

Not long ago, just a few days ago
Hearing your buzz- oh smallest of creatures!
It seems you had no other country to go
So chose ours as your abode, with all the
features
Fit for your habitat, how well you settled
down
Taking all garbage and drainages to be your
own.
The stagnant waters, vacant coconut shells
And dark corners indeed were your secret
dwells
No one ever knew how your progeny you
spread
To the towns and cities, with them you
hurried
Where you grew and grew like never before

The stuff in plastic packs was always in
store
In and around the bins. Found all around
the fences
Were stinking stocks of plantain peels,
greasy essences,
Vegetable vestiges, murky meat and all
Wrapped up and tossed, for which boars
did brawl
Indebted to the plastic sacks, their inventors
are you
And to the city -dwellers, the lovers of
covers, aren't you?
You said you visit us during day with a
mystery gift,
Known as 'DENGUE' to lift the lives of
olds and kids in swift'
You said your good name was 'Tiger
Mosquito'
Kudos! You're working wonders with your
sting-stiletto.

* Research Scholar,
Kakatiya University, Warangal.

FACE TO FACE WITH GOD

*R.K. Chitrapu **

I closed my eyes and felt sleepy
I just slipped into a dream like trance.

I was traveling, rather floating in the air. I did not have any body, just glowing and transparent and flexible as rubber. No shape and traveling at an unimaginable speed. There was no road or tunnel but I was flying as if going through a winding tunnel. I was scared to death and started thinking what would happen to me if I hit the side of the imaginary wall. The tunnel was absolutely dark. I could see nothing. There was only a deafening roar, a whistling sound. I had no ears but could feel the sound.

The tunnel through which I traveled finally ended. Blinding light but yet unimaginably cool, a sort of a peace descending on me as if from heaven.. There, right in front of me a light... just a light. I felt as if someone, kind, loving and serene, was looking at me. I felt flooded with love from all sides. I was really engulfed in a fire of love. It looked as if he was asking something. I felt like staying there forever.

I did not know how long I was there. Suddenly the events in my past life started flashing before me on a sort of a screen within me. When there was any event where I hurt some one by word or deed, I was unwittingly looking at the other person and I was feeling as if God was observing my reaction to the facial expressions of the other person. I

wondered if he was observing me to see if there was any sign of repentance in me on seeing the other person. There were incidents where I was hurt by the other man's actions. I felt God was observing me to find out whether I was bearing any grudge or hatred for him. I could feel events of my life, good or bad, all rolling before my eyes with in a fraction of a second.

I felt as though God, the Divine light, was asking me lovingly and affectionately. "Is there anything you want to ask me?"

I blurted out. But no voice came out. I could not talk. Again the light seemed to be telling me. "You cannot talk. Here the method of communication is not the same as on the earth."

Before I could say anything it looked as though he was asking me "Are you wondering where you are and who I am? You are no longer the body you were. You have no body and the body you think you were is there down below. Looking down I felt like shouting and yelling. My wife, children and near and dear were crying. I wanted to console them and tell them. "Do not cry I am here". The divine light again was telling me "They cannot hear you or see you. You crossed the borders of the material world and entered the celestial world, Moved away from mortality to immortality. The body you left behind will be consumed by fire. Those who loved you or to whom you were attached will light the fire to your body and they will watch till the

* Novelist and Short Story Writer, Hyderabad.

body is completely consumed by fire. Some of them may remember you for some time. In the course of time they will forget you. You played your role in the drama and you will have to wait here till you are given another role to play."

"I just want to stay in your presence engulfed by love and serenity".

"You are finding fault with me my child? It is not in your hands. You have to pay for the sins you committed and be rewarded for the good you did to humanity. In this world of mine there is no question of reducing the gravity of the punishment for the sins you committed because you did something good. They are different and there is no question of balancing."

"Oh! I do not want to go back to the earth, it is hell out there. There is no peace; there is no humanity any longer there. In the short span of life I lived in the body you gave me, watched the world becoming cruel day by day. A mother kills her child, husband kills wife, son kills father, in the name of religion people are being butchered, climatic conditions are changing, making life on earth so uncomfortable, and if allowed to continue, the entire creation would be extinct. Why did you make the world so difficult to live? Why don't you have mercy on the human beings?"

His immediate remark was "Are you trying to find fault with me for your doings?"

"How dare I question you and your actions?"

"With your divinity as creator of this earth and father of all the creation, what have you done to us? Tsunamis, Volcanic eruptions, heat waves, cold waves, tornados, earth quakes, epidemics and the incurable diseases,

don't you have mercy on your creatures?"

I could see a smile on his face. "Go back in time a few million years... I created a heaven for you, my creation in the shape of earth. What a back drop? Stars, Moon, Sun, the Milky Way... on the ground the mountains, mighty rivers, mountain springs giving pure water to drink, greenery all around, fruits to eat, open space to play. Nature was as peaceful as could be, beauty at its best. I gave you the seasons to enjoy the life and what not. The flowers like carpets of colors, the earth moving in the space, the moon around it together circling the earth, the birds chirping, the music of nature singing lullaby to you. I gave the greatest gift I could give, Life. I gave in abundance what a human being wants for a comfortable living. I gave enough time to you to do what you can do to make your life happier. More than all these I gave you all a creative brain thinking that you would make use of it and make the earth a competitor to heaven. You do not use even 10% of the capacity of the powers I granted you and what have you done with it? What little you use of it, is always for destruction of my creation.

You are acting against my plan for you. You have mercilessly destroyed the forests, polluted the rivers, thrown the ecological balance into wilderness, used up all the natural resources, invented the weapons of mass destruction and killed millions of your own humans. Do you remember the fateful day when you dropped the atomic bombs on the innocent people and burnt the whole lot of things and the human beings alike? It looked as if the earth was on fire. I felt ashamed of my creation. I wanted to destroy it myself... suck the whole of my creation into the black hole.

I had a second thought. Why not give a chance to rectify by yourselves? You blame me for the diseases? What a shame? You should know you are responsible for all the diseases and epidemics spreading like wild fire. I created a companion for you, to enjoy a happy family life and have children and the joy of bringing them up. I laid down the norms of life for a happy life. I told you in Dwapara Yuga how to live your life and be detached like a drop of water on the lotus leaf. You have thrown the morals out into the wilderness and started behaving worse than animals. So I need a check on that. I wanted that you should be brought to your senses in line with the moral standards I set for you. I wanted to be put fear in your mind. Instead of realizing why these happened, you started finding out medicines for the diseases. Even those drugs are spurious or adulterated! But you never gave up your over-indulgence in the forbidden acts against the morals."

"I understand what you are saying but why should deformed, dumb and mute children be born on earth? Why should they suffer? Don't you have any sympathy or mercy for them?"

"However, there are certain rules and secrets of life and death which should not be divulged. They should remain with me."

Throughout the communication I did not observe any sign of anger or disgust. The divine light was as it was... the same, love and affection engulfing me. I felt ashamed why I asked him these stupid questions.

Again the same communication "My child, if you can't get your doubts cleared from me, from who else can you?

Much against my will I asked him "Why did you bring in this religion in this world of your creation?"

"Did I bring in religion? I am one. I am the creator. Do not attribute the creation of religion to me. I only explained the way of life and how I want you to live. I also said when innocents are harassed and the evil takes charge of the proceedings on the earth I will come and punish the guilty and save the good people. The time is fast approaching."

Another small light entered the scene. I was wondering who it could be.

"Your divinity, I committed a very serious mistake. This man's time has not yet come to leave his mortal body. A mistake in identity. He was to come here later and he is yet to suffer on the earth for the sins he committed".

There was no anger, just a smile "Send him back before his mortal body is set on fire as otherwise it would add more problems for you".

I did not realize what happened. As if sucked by the gravitational pull I went speeding, faster than when I left the body and got lodged into the body. I felt the body. Heavy breath...

There was commotion all around. He is alive... not dead... joy... all over.

I did not know what had happened. How long was my meeting with the divine I did not know.

(Imagination let loose based on some research papers on Near Death Experiences).

A GALAXY OF GREAT EDITORS OF PRE-INDEPENDENCE INDIA

*I.V. Chalapati Rao **

Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao was the "Morning Star" of Telugu Journalism. He started '*Andhra Patrika*' as a 'Weekly' in Bombay and later on shifted it to Madras as a 'Daily' with photographs, arts, cartoons and cultural features. He supplied 800 free copies to libraries to promote the reading habit. He was a staunch Gandhian and took part in the Satyagraha Movement and courted arrest. Another notable contribution of his was BHARATI, a literary and cultural monthly, which is for ever remembered for its excellence. Alas! These two memorable ventures no longer exist. For his philanthropy and countless benefactions to worthy causes he got the titles of '**Desoddharaka**' and '**Viswa Data**' (the latter was conferred by Gandhiji himself).

'KRISHNA PATRIKA' a popular Telugu Weekly, edited by Mutnuri Krishna Rao, and 'TRIVENI' Literary and Cultural periodical in English founded and edited by Kolavennu Ramakotiswara Rau made their qualitative contribution to the Indian Renaissance of letters. The latter having been started in 1927 realized its laudable objective of introducing the literatures and leading writers of each of the Indian languages to the others through the medium of English. Thus it has served the purpose of national integration and became

the harbinger of today's Sahitya Academy (Delhi) and the P.E.N.

Among the editors who dominated the north and shone in the Hindi heartland in PreIndependence India, special mention must be made of C.Y. Chintamani who edited '*The Leader*' in Allahabad, Kotamraju Punnaiah who edited '*Sindh Observer*' of Karachi, Kotamraju Rama Rao and M. Chalapati Rao who edited 'National Herald' of Lucknow, and Iswar Dutt who sub-edited 'Leader' and '*The Hindustan Times*'.

Chintamani, reigned for 32 years during which period he closely identified himself with '*The Leader*' in Allahabad and brought the paper to international standards. He was respected by Motilal Nehru, Madanmohan Malavia and Sachidananda Sinha. When he threatened to resign on a point of difference of opinion, Madanmohan Malavia, the Director, himself resigned saying "The paper will run without me but it cannot run without Chintamani".

Kotamraju Punnaiah was another stalwart who shone in the journalistic field for 32 years and became famous as Editor of '*Sindh Observer*'. He lost his job temporarily because his capitalist boss was afraid of the British government and did not like to publish Jawaharlal Nehru's tours and speeches which smacked of socialism. Soon Punnaiah was reinstated when there was a change in regime.

* Editor, Triveni.

A locality of Sindh was named 'Punnaihpur' in recognition of his contribution to the development of the Sindh Province.

Nehru's '*National Herald*' of Lucknow was edited by Kotamraju Rama Rao who wrote firebrand editorials against the British Government and was imprisoned. His autobiography is titled '*Pen Is My Sword*'. He was followed by another outstanding and scholarly editor, M. Chalapati Rao who edited '*National Herald*' for three eventful decades. When Devadas Gandhi of '*The Hindustan Times*' tried to tempt him by offering a salary of Rs. 2000, he politely declined the offer saying "My monthly expenditure is Rs. 700 only. What will I do with 2000 rupees?" Besides journalism he was known as an author of a few popular biographies - '*Jawaharlal Nehru - a Biography*', '*Govind Vallabh Pant - his Life and Times*', '*Fragments of a Revolution - Gandhi and Nehru*' and '*All in All*'.

K. Iswara Dutt too shone in the north as well as in the south in '*Swarajya*', '*The Hindu*', '*The Hindustan Times*', '*The Pioneer*', '*The Week End*' and '*The People's Voice*'. He too became famous as author of a few books - '*The Street of Ink*', '*Sparks and Fumes*', '*My Portrait Gallery*' and '*And All That*'.

Kolavennu Ramakotiswara Rau's '*TRIVENI*' was started in 1927. Gandhiji himself was a regular reader of '*TRIVENI*' and Jawaharlal Nehru a frequent contributor. C. Rajagopalachary, Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastry, Dr. Pattabhi and other freedom fighters were

associated with it. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was chairman of the Advisory Committee. Sri Audrobindo's poem appeared in the first issue. The writer of this article has the good fortune of editing this journal during the last 20 years and the Journal celebrated its platinum Jubilee in 2003.

Andhra Kesari Tanguturi Prakasam's paper '*Swarajya*' strongly supported the freedom movement and he used to criticize the government fearlessly. He was assisted by Khasa Subba Rao, Kripanidhi and Kotamraju Rama Rao. The paper had to close down as he could not pay the salaries regularly to his assistants. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya edited '*JANMA BHOOMI*' which used to contain powerful articles.

'*The Swatantra*' of Khasa Subba Rao was famous for its bold editorials and articles by great patriots and scholars. Khasa was a powerful writer, an ardent patriot and a man of integrity. '*London Times*' described him as 'an ascetic among the journalists'. He never hesitated to tender his resignation to save his self-respect. Sri P. Vaman Rao his son-in-law is now perpetuating his memory by editing a periodical under the title '*New Swatantra Times*'.

Narla Venkateswara Rao participated in Salt Satyagraha and was also arrested. He was one other luminary in Telugu journalism with long experience in editing '*Andhra Prabha*' and '*Andhra Jyoti*'. He blazed new trails in journalism as an innovator of a new style of writing... simple language and coining new words. He made a mark for himself with his bold criticism and original book reviews.

SPIRITUAL ASPECTS IN SELFLESS SERVICE

*K.N. Rao **

Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age, revealed to us different angles of life, which surely drive us to lead a spiritual life ending in the awakening in Truth as promised by Him i.e., "I have come to awaken". One such spiritual aspect in His 'Discourses' is "Selfless Service". For removal of old sanskaras gathered in the past and stored in the mind, there are several ways, says Meher Baba. Selfless service is one among them.

"While meditation on the personal and impersonal aspects of God requires withdrawal of consciousness into the sanctuary of one's own heart, concentration on the universal aspect of God is best achieved through selfless service for humanity. When a person is completely absorbed in the service of humanity, he is completely oblivious of his own body or mind or their functions, as in meditation and therefore new sanskaras are not formed. Further, the old sanskaras that bind the mind are shattered and dispersed. Since the individual is now centering his attention and interest not upon his own good but upon the good of others, the nucleus of the ego is deprived of its nourishing energy. Selfless service is therefore one of the best methods of diverting and sublimating the energy locked up in the binding sanskaras."

"Selfless service is accomplished when there is not the slightest thought of reward or result, and when there is complete disregard of one's own comfort or convenience or the possibility of being

misunderstood. When you are wholly occupied with the welfare of others, you can hardly think of yourself. You are not concerned with your comfort or convenience or your health and happiness. On the contrary you are willing to sacrifice everything for their well-being. Their comfort is your convenience, their health is your delight, and their happiness your joy. You find your life in losing it in theirs. You live in their hearts, and your heart becomes their shelter. When there is true union of hearts, you completely identify yourself with the other person. Your act of help or word of comfort supplies to others whatever might be lacking in them; and through their thoughts of gratitude and goodwill, you actually receive more than you give."

"Thus through living for others, your own life finds its amplification and expansion. The person who leads a life of selfless service is therefore hardly conscious of serving. He does not make those whom he serves feel that they are in any way under obligation to him. On the contrary, he himself feels obliged for being given a chance of making them happy. Neither for show nor for name does he serve them. Selfless service is completely achieved only when an individual derives the same happiness in serving others as in being served himself. The ideal of selfless service frees him from the sanskaras of craving for power and possession, of self-pity and jealousy, of evil deeds activated through selfishness."

Selfless service and meditation are both spontaneous when they are inspired by love..."

* Courtesy: The Avatar, November, 2010

MY IMPRESSIONS ON VASUDEVA REDDY'S 'MINOR GODS'

*Prema NandaKumar **

My first encounter with Vasudeva Reddy was two decades ago which was rather rugged. I had received his book on Jane Austen from Triveni for review which I had filed duly and it had been published. I was not quite surprised when the then editor C.V.N. Dhan sent me an angry letter from Dr. Reddy. My experience then and now (and I have breezily passed the half-a-century of reviewing mark three years ago!) is that while authors are usually silent when they are praised, they do feel upset even by a breath of criticism. So when I saw the signature I knew I was in for punishment. I had taken exception to Dr. Reddy's relying too much on twentieth-century interpretations that murdered to dissect the fine novelist. I wasn't happy with such critics at all, and I thought an Indian should bring an integral view to whatever he did and this included writing. Inspired by Sri Aurobindo and trained by K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, it was not easy for me to digest when a critic quoted by Dr. Reddy asserted Emma suffered from latent lesbian sexual frigidity. After some sharp lashings, Dr. Reddy concluded his letter with a parting shot: "As she has said one lives and learns, I humbly wish her a longer life."

Naturally I wrote to him a part-apologetic, part-explanatory letter. Those

were the golden days when I never allowed my table to remain cluttered with my correspondence. There was no acknowledgement for a month. Then came a sweet letter from him saying he had been out of town and hence the delay in replying to my letter. I felt deeply touched when he felt he should not have written the letter to the editor:

"But I request you to understand the feelings of a person who spent nearly a decade over the thesis as a private candidate without a guide when he miserably failed to get a word of sympathy from the university scholars and professors. I did my research purely with academic interest though this Ph.D. is of no use to me in Govt. service.

As a matter of fact I don't relish much of the modern criticism on Jane Austen. A novel of Jane Austen by itself, gives aesthetic joy, while the modern criticism on Jane Austen infected by psychological theories is in fact spoiling that pure delight."

Here was a Sahridaya, then! He also wrote that my father had advised Mr. Mehta of Guru Nanak Dev University to study Dr. Reddy's novel, *'The Vultures'* along with Raja Rao's *'Kanthapura'*. He sent me a copy of the novel too. Years have passed by and we have both tenaciously held on to reading and writing books. Dr. Reddy has been publishing volumes of poetry: *'Melting Melodies'*, *'Pensive Memories'*, *'Gliding Ripples'* to name a few. It was a pleasure when

* Well known Writer and Scholar, Srirangam, (Tamilnadu).

he was in Srirangam recently and spent a little time with me in my home. An hour went by as we conversed on men and matters. I was delighted when he gave me his second novel, *'Minor Gods'*. The conclusion has not yet been set down he said. When one writes on the star-crossed life of India's rural folk, how can anyone attempt a full-stop?

If *'The Vultures'* was the still, sad song of rural India, *'Minor Gods'* is the documentation of the manner in which the vile and the vicious have sowed dragon seeds all over. What struck me first was Vasudeva Reddy's gaze which takes in the richness of nature and conveys it in pellucid English. We are close to Tirupati in the hilly range, the native land of the novelist. The real India is *Krishnaiah, Chenna, Chinnah*. Native intelligence, native wisdom and native humor are caught effortlessly in the narrative. Native poetry too!

"When there is money, people flock; when there is no money they never come. Chenna, it is an old truth. When the tank is full of water, countless frogs come, sing and dance. But as soon as the water disappears and tank gets dry, the frogs his modern friends automatically vanish."

Aptly titled, *'Minor Gods'* brings before us all those evil persons who infest the countryside with their moral turpitude. Mandal Presidents who demand Rs.10,000 from teachers for getting transferred to the place they fancy, Bhadraiah the money-lender, spoilt sons of the rich destroying reputations and lives of young girls with ease, and the ugly presence of liquor. A familiar wail this from all-suffering womanhood:

"You know the nature of my husband. He doesn't work in the field. The small bit of land, which is the only piece we have, remains uncultivated. Whatever I earn he spends on liquor. Every night he comes home fully drunk. If I protest he abuses me and even beats me. I do not know why I should live and for whom I should live. If it were not for my boy, I would have ended my life long back."

There is then the spiraling price-rise. One pair of bulls costs Rs.25,000 and how many farmers with small-holdings can afford that? Priority in getting water goes to the landlord and not to these cultivators of negligible patches of land. The specter of dowry is around all the time. Is there no escape from these kshudra devatas who are bent upon destroying the hard-won freedom of India and its millennia-old valuable culture?

We cannot accuse Dr. Reddy of exaggerating the tragic atmosphere. Right now truth is certainly stranger than fiction. Our politicians have learnt the fine art of seducing the electorate with freebies of every kind and they do it with a shamelessness that is destroying the very foundations of our freedom. The poisonous weed of "agents" can be a suffocating parthenium during election time:

"Tomorrow night if we distribute money to all the families in the two colonies, we are sure to win. Day after tomorrow on the Election Day let us supply two barrels of country liquor from dawn to dusk. It will guarantee our success."

There are then the chicaneries of the polling booth. In this murky world, one is not

surprised when the expected happens and the upright young man Pratap gets killed. But does evil alone prosper? Is there no hope for man? Have they named the power of retribution as a woman, Mahakali in vain? Dr. Reddy brings in a Sankarabaranam-like scene to give us hope that justice gets done somehow, anyhow. Girija kills Rajendra with a broken bottle and drowns herself in the farm well. Bhadriah's cup of victory is snatched away from him in this gruesome way.

There is a natural law which we observe and live according to it. If we want rice, we sow paddy. If we want jasmines, we plant a jasmine sapling. We know that paddy yields paddy and the jasmine sapling yields jasmines. We do not sow black gram for getting paddy or plant datura to get roses. But we tend to forget this natural law when we

enter the moral world which operates in the same manner. In the moral world, retribution skips generation, perhaps. But it is sure to come. Hence the Biblical adage: Those of you who are left will waste away in the lands of their enemies because of their sins; also because of their fathers' sins they will waste away. (Leviticus 26:38-40)

Minor Gods is a cry of anguish from a seasoned watcher of the Indian clime. To get back to the beginning. I am glad I have lived long, and I wrote as I did about Dr. Reddy's work of criticism twenty years ago. He has been meant for a more purposive work in the Indian context. Instead of wasting his time in the dry deserts of criticalogy, he has been wandering freely in the green farmlands of creative writing. Three cheers for my friend!

Meditation: "Meditation is a medium of establishing a dialogue with the inner self, by effecting a detachment from external stimulus and silencing the inner dissonance. Inner self is the pure consciousness brought about by the in action of the senses and the mind".

Dhyana: "Only when the mind has been trained to remain fixed on a certain internal or external location, then comes to it the power of flowing in an unbroken current, as it were towards that point. This state is called dhyana. The meditative state is the highest state of human existence".

- Vivekananda

A WAITING GRANDSON

Courtesy: The Hindu

Little Harsh was only four when his grandfather Assistant Sub-Inspector Tukaram Ombale was shot dead as he tried to overpower Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab during the 26/11 attack. Two years later, Harsh, now six, still believes his beloved grandfather, to whom he was deeply attached, will return any day.

"Whenever we speak of the incident, or when mother gets very emotional, Harsh says, 'baba[grandpa] is there; he will come. He thinks he is going to come from somewhere. That father has gone out and it's taking long. He expects him,' Ombale's daughter Vaishali told *The Hindu*.

Ombale has four daughters- Pavitra, Vandana, Vaishali and Bharati. Harsh is Pavitra's son. "He comes over from my sister's place quite often as only his presence brings the house alive," said Vaishali. Ombale would shower gifts on his doting grandson and listen to his prattle on the phone. Since 26/11, that

call has stopped, but Harsh still imagines he is answering his call. "He would pick up the receiver and speak into it as if he is having a conversation with father," Vaishali said.

As time has passed, there are some indications that perhaps Harsh accepts that his grandfather is not coming back. "For Diwali, father would buy him clothes and crackers. We do all that for Harsh, but this Diwali he refused. He said, since baba is not there, let's not do anything."

Time has not lifted the pall on the household. Vaishali said she was doing her training through correspondence as she must look after the house. Her mother, who was so shaken after the loss, "is doing better," she said.

How many unfortunate souls are languishing in sorrow because of separation from their near and dear?

Realisation: *"There are two ways of realisation: One is to expand your ego to infinity and the other is to reduce it to nothing. The former is by knowledge and the latter is by devotion. The devotee says 'I am nothing, O'God! You are every thing'. The man of knowledge (Jnani) says 'I am God'.*

- Swami Ramadas

JUST TWO RUPEES (A Short Story)

*G.S.Lakshmi **

"Did I ask for hundreds? Thousands? Just two rupees. Isn't it so? Why do you harangue me for that? "

On hearing the loud voice of his mother, Nookaraju woke up and sat on the cot suddenly.

"Yes. Just two rupees? As if that doesn't matter. Children ask only that for their pocket money, same for their books, for pencils. If you go on adding up all the twos four times doesn't it come to eight? If you add up tens won't it be hundred? Your son calculates the same way. When the prices are rising daily, I find it hard to account for the money given by your son everyday. But you have become an old woman. You don't go out of the house. We are paying for your food, coffee and tiffin. Then why do you need just two rupees. What do you want to do for yourself?"

Nookaraju heard his wife Pankajam demanding with a drawl. He closed his ears because of the rudeness of his wife and got off the cot. When the wife gave him coffee, he enquired what the matter was? Her voice changed to a polite tone at once as she said:

"Oh, what's there? It seems your mother wants two rupees. With the money you gave me, I paid the school fees, and bought

books and pencils. I don't have any more money. But why does your mother need money when food, coffee and tiffin, and everything taken care of? "

Pankajam raised this point quietly.

Yes. Why does mother need money? Nookaraju checked the time. It's already eight. It's time to open the shop. He was preparing hurriedly to go to the shop.

Then his mother said, "Raju, see. I asked your wife for just two rupees..."

"What's this? I am in a hurry to go as it's getting late already. But why do you need money at all?"

As he was saying these words, he put on his sandals and came out of the house. His conscience was pricking him to go back and quietly convince her, but the galloping time is pulling him forward.

It was the first week of the month. The shop was crowded. Nookaraju was terribly busy and didn't seem to have time even for breathing. After eleven, the crowd thinned somewhat. He wanted to have a sip of water from the bottle and raised his head. Then he saw Ramamurty garu coming to the shop. Nookaraju's face brightened. It is a relief for him to talk to Ramamurty garu as it keeps him off financial affairs. He is so busy with his work that he doesn't know what's

* Writer, Hyderabad.

happening in the world outside. It's only by talking to Ramamurtygaru that he learns about the ways of the world.

Ramamurty garu is a retired government officer. He lives happily in his son's house playing with his grand children. He must have served in an important job. That is why he's full of self esteem and pride. If he is reminded of the days of his service, he used to say,

"Oh! Those days were different. We were all the time interested in sincere work and earning a good name. Where was the time to think of anything else? Now, I'm completely free. When I wish to speak to anyone, I feel I'm wasting their time." He laughed loudly.

"Why bother Sir? You didn't do business like us? You have worked as long as you could. You get pension. You are living happily with your son."

"I'm telling you a truth of life Nookaraju, listen to me. Granted each person's life is his own. However, some are born to receive and others to give. Doesn't time go on changing? It doesn't remain the same. Our generation believed that children should look after their parents. We did that. But when the time of our sons came, we had to pass on our pension to them as payment for living in their house. What can we do? The present time is like this. If one looks at it from their side, perhaps it can be justified, but our generation is unable to reconcile to it."

He spoke on this troublesome topic in a light hearted way.

Ramamurty garu was probably fond of good food. When he remembers the past, he says, "In those days any new snacks in the market must be bought and fed to the children. Then we had no time to eat. Now, if you have even time, there is no one to give us." He laughed off.

As he talked about the good and bad, and the trends in the world, he handed over the shopping list made out by his daughter-in-law and the account book to Nookaraju. While packing the required groceries, Nookaraju used to ask questions and Ramamurty garu answered them. This became a routine for both of them.

Receiving the shopping list, Nookaraju asked, "What's the news?"

"What's there? How are your children studying?" enquired Ramamurty garu.

"What studies? I don't know how they're going to support us after their education. School fees are sky-rocketing. Books, dresses, pocket money add up to a lot;" said Nookaraju.

"Oh! So you give pocket money to your children?" he asked.

"Just one or two rupees. Their friends buy something or other; they're also tempted to buy. If they can't they would feel bad. "Nookaraju justified his action.

"It's true. Shall I tell you something. My grandfather used to say that children and old people are alike. That means their psychology is the same. They feel like eating

something or other all the while. Fickleness and silliness increase with age. Not only children, but older people, if they have a rupee, would like to give it to God in a temple. Isn't it so?" he asked.

Immediately, Nookaraju thought of his mother. Did she ask for two rupees in the morning for the temple? To shake off such thoughts, he got immersed in the shopping list. He wrote down the prices, totalled them, and wrote the account in the book.

"Nookaraju", Ramamurty garu said slowly, "Add two rupees to one of the items", he said hesitantly.

Surprised, Nookaraju raised his

head. Ramamurty garu saw him and bent his head.

These words came from a semi-dead man who was embarrassed:

"There isn't anything. Didn't you say a new variety of biscuits has come? I'd like to taste them. That's all. Just two rupees."

Nookaraju who was listening felt as if he was slapped on his cheek. Tears welled up in his eyes. He thought that it is not a sin if all sons like him are killed and buried deep.

Nookaraju hung his head burdened with the sin.

MINI-HISTORY OF ENGLISH IN INDIA (After 1947)

*I.K.Sharma **

They who had not written ten straight lines
in their school notebooks, attempted
to draw the fate-line of the land

by collecting dimwits of the plain
and crowing among high hills,
low fields and city streets

with brushes of paint in hand
yamuna and the snow-white ganga face

of the troubled beauty, cornered her;

but the wise heads of the old calendar
who knew the gap between a bee and a
beetle
peeled the paint off, added:

salvation lies in opening the bosom
and with new strength joining the vast body
of letters here and elsewhere,

reminded: a comma is the way of life,
a dot is dusk, midnight.

* Poet, Jaipur.

DEVELOPING SCIENTIFIC TEMPER

*Dr. C. Jacob **

I have been wondering since long why a majority of people have not developed scientific temper in their way of thinking even though science is fast advancing! Even the educated people! Why do they fail to think, "Why I am born, why as a man but not as a woman, why in this country, why in a particular tribe or race or why in this age, why not long back or some years here after, why not as a lion or a lamb or a serpent or a tree or a plant or a rose? Likewise, why I am born in a rich family, why not in a poor family and so on?"

Coming to the point direct, human beings suffer from many diseases and die. So also animals, plants, trees, fish, birds and other beings from many diseases and die. When natural calamities like earthquakes, cyclones, floods and tidal waves occur, hundreds of thousands of human beings, animals and birds die without any difference. Why? Human beings pray to god to save them from calamities. But what about animals and trees? They do not. Do prayers and fasting save mankind? No. Then why do they still pray? Here it is apt to recall what Bertrand Russell, the Nobel Laureate said in his book, *The Impact of Science on Society*? "We were told that faith could remove mountains. But no one believed it; we are now told that the atomic bomb can remove mountains and every one believes it".

Imagine for a while how many kinds of pests are damaging our crops. Ask a modern rayot what kind of pests destroy which kind of crops. He narrates a long list of pesticides which I do not myself know. Why do they resort to medicines instead of praying to God? We humans think only about ourselves, our diseases and deaths when we are affected with a disease. In the olden days if men died of cholera or any other contagious diseases, they thought that because of their sins God had smitten them with such deadly diseases. But now we believe that diseases occur due to harmful bacteria because it is scientifically proved. When once the cause is known it is not difficult to find a remedy or how to prevent them. What I wish to impress upon here is, this kind of scientific thinking is necessary for every human being in every aspect.

Traditional beliefs have become stumbling blocks for human progress. One false belief causes great harm. If they are many, imagine how much devastation takes place. With the advent of the scientific era man has started enjoying the fruits of scientific inventions. Not only those who do not believe in the existence of God use the fruits of scientific inventions medicines, machines, tools, the power of electricity, magnetism, heat, energy, pressure, coldness and a host of elements or powers that are governed by natural laws are weighed with beliefs, superstitions and irrational thoughts and views,

* Retd. District Judge, Narsapur (W.G.Dist.).

we will know to which side the balance swings.

As long as man is carried away by unfounded beliefs, traditional or scriptural, diseases in animal kingdom and plant kingdom, failure of crops, storms, earthquakes and other natural calamities occur due to angry gods, divine displeasure or evil spirits, but those who have a scientific outlook on social, economic and political aspects will enjoy a better quality of life than those who do not have such knowledge.

Lastly through Act.51-A of Indian Constitution expects from and enjoins upon every citizen that he should as of duty develop the scientific temper, humanitarian outlook, the spirit of equality and reformation. Democracies may come and go, new kinds and forms of Governments may come and go, but man remains as a beast as long as he shuts scientific knowledge from entering his mind. In other words, 'Adam remains the same though he changes his clothes'.

THE MOON IS DEAD!

*Premendra Mitra **

Stop for a moment and let me hear
The wail of the night-wind across the
desolate town.
And shivers of the trees on the lawn.
A pigeon plaintively croons from her cote in
the tower;
Or is it the night mourning the dead moon?

Yes, the moon is dead!
The sky has drawn a shroud across her
face-

A dark cloud-fabric-
The huddled town-shape stands bleak in
sorrow;
The night-wind wails:
Touch me not now,
There's a wound in my heart no caress heal;
No, do not speak; only hear.
The shriek that rises from the depths of
despair
No kiss can smother.

How can I tell you what I and the earth
know?
That flesh our flesh-the moon is dead!

* Famous Bengali.

SPARROW MAN CALLS FOR REVAMP OF URBAN POLICIES

*K. Venkateswarlu **

Mohammad Dilawar, the indefatigable saviour of house sparrows, has called for a revamp of city policies across the country to focus on conservation of whatever is left of urban bio-diversity.

Glass-clad monstrous concrete inanimate buildings topped by grotesque cell towers have come to symbolize human-centric urban development leaving very little space for equally important other forms of life-trees and birds, Mr. Dilawar, who is one of the Time's Hero of Environment 2008 awardees, laments.

He told *The Hindu* during a visit to the city recently that sparrows were the best bio-indicators of urban life and environment. Death of these common birds meant death of cities sooner or later. "When you cannot spare a perch for these humble creatures that survived hundreds of years coexisting with man, then something is wrong with you and your policy."

Ideally cities should have space for all denominations of people and all forms of life, only then it could be called vibrant, he emphasized. "But much like our democracy, where the common man has no say, these

common sparrows too have been marginalised. And they are disappearing fast. A day is not far off when you will find them on the IUCN red list of endangered species."

What are the reasons? Rapid urbanization, concrete buildings, loss of trees, use of catapults, packaging of food grains, old kirana shops giving way to malls and mobile phone towers emitting radiation have all contributed to the drastic fall in numbers, the 'sparrow man' said. A faulty conservation policy that focuses more on glamorous big cats in the wild also meant less attention and virtually funds-less campaign for other equally important species.

Conservation efforts: Is there hope for stemming the tide and saving the sparrow? "Why not?" We have shown with our nesting boxes that it is indeed possible, to reverse the trend. Awareness, a little policy intervention of making it mandatory to provide space in some corner of buildings, planting hedges, protecting trees, banning catapults as well as use of pesticides and ensuring availability of grains could do wonders. Mobile phone towers need to be restricted. We also need to mainstream conservation efforts and make it, more common man-oriented eliminating that elitist touch," he says. It was to address this concern, Mr. Dilawar launched Nature

* Courtesy: 'The Hindu' Date: 5.12.2010.

Forever Society that uses multi-media channels including website for networking bird lovers and building awareness. "Our leaders talk of 'sadak', 'bijli', 'pani' and not of

environment. The day we make environment central to all our policies, we will save cities and save India."

ON THE EVE OF DEEPAWALI

*Dr. Suresh Ch. Pande **

On the eve of Deepawali
Blurred recast, of
Pre-historic dawn
A.M.-4:30 onwards
Bleak Sky returned
To blackish overcast.

Darkness overshadowed light
Under invisibility cloak
Wind puffs blew rain drops
Lightening cracked like
Crackers unnumbered
Hail stones pattered
For hours... to hook
At farthest nook.

While news spake
Evenly poised
On DADAGIRI
Being whisked
Whispered anew
To let off hurly-burly
Set in on GANDHI GIRI

Festooned lanes glowing
Like glow-worms
Dampened interiors smell musty
Phooey!
O funny Festive Folks!
Phooey!

On the eve of Deepawali
The lunar dark-half night
Dispelled by rows of light
Foretold
An unforeseen concord
Envisaged by telescopes
Lined in sign TAURAS
In pentagonal entente
To hail emperor ZODIAC.

Astronomers from ARIES
On verdant MANORA peak
Wholly untouched
Like lotus leaf
By prosaic world
Of political chicanery
Assembled to predict
A Unique rigmarole
Of astrological events
On the eve of Deepawali.

* Govt. College, Phool Chadur, Anandpur,
Nainital.

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

It had been some time since Jack had seen the old man. College, girls, career, and life itself got in the way. In fact, Jack moved clear across the country in pursuit of his dreams. There, in the rush of his busy life, Jack had little time to think about the past and often no time to spend with his wife and son. He was working on his future, and nothing could stop him.

Over the phone, his mother told him, "Mr. Belser died last night. The funeral is Wednesday."

Memories flashed through his mind like an old newsreel as he sat quietly remembering his childhood days.

"Jack, did you hear me?"

"Oh Sorry, mom. Yes, I heard you. It's been so long since I thought of him. I'm sorry, but I honestly thought he died years ago," Jack said.

"Well, he didn't forget you. Every time I saw him he'd ask how you were doing. He'd reminisce about the many days you spent over 'his side of the fence' as he put it," Mom told him.

"I loved that old house he lived in," Jack said.

"You know, Jack, after your father died, Mr. Belser stepped in to make sure you had a man's influence in your life," she said.

"He's the one who taught me carpentry," he said. "I wouldn't be in this business if it weren't for him. He spent a lot of time teaching me things he thought were important. . . Mom, I'll be there for the funeral," Jack said.

As busy as he was, he kept his word. Jack caught the next flight to his hometown. Mr. Belser's funeral was small and uneventful. He had no children of his own, and most of his relatives had passed away.

The night before he had to return home, Jack and his Mom stopped by to see the old house next door one more time.

Standing in the doorway, Jack paused for a moment. It was like crossing over into another dimension, a leap through space and time.

The house was exactly as he remembered. Every step held memories. Every picture, every piece of furniture. . . Jack stopped suddenly.

* Sri Aurobindo's Action-September 2010.

"What's wrong, Jack?" his Mom asked.

"The box is gone," he said.

"What box?" Mom asked.

"There was a small gold box that he kept locked on top of his desk. I must have asked him a thousand times what was inside. All he'd ever tell me was 'the thing I value most,'" Jack said.

It was gone. Every time about the house was exactly how Jack remembered it, except for the box. He figured someone from the Belser family had taken it.

"Now I'll never know what was so valuable to him," Jack said. "I better get some sleep. I have an early flight home, Mom."

It had been about two weeks since Mr. Belser died. Returning home from work one day Jack discovered a note in his mailbox. "Signature required on a package. No one at home. Please stop by the main post office within the next three days," the note read.

Early the next day Jack retrieved the package. The small box was old and looked like it had been mailed a hundred years ago. The handwriting was difficult to read, but the return address caught his attention.

"Mr. Harold Belser" it read.

Jack took the box out to his car and ripped open the package. There inside was the gold box and an envelope. Jack's hands shook as he read the note inside.

"Upon my death, please forward this box and its contents to Jack Bennett. It's the thing I valued most in my life." A small key was taped to the letter. His heart racing, as tears filling his eyes, Jack carefully unlocked the box. There inside he found a beautiful gold pocket watch.

Running his fingers slowly over the finely etched casing, he unlatched the cover. Inside he found these words engraved:

"Jack Thanks for your time! -Harold Belser."

"The thing he valued most...was...my time."

Jack held the watch for a few minutes, then called his office and cleared his appointments for the next two days. "Why?" Janet, his assistant asked.

"I need sometime to spend with my son," he said. "Oh, by the way, Janet... thanks for your time!"

READERS' MAIL

In your article on the art of letter writing, you have described in your inimitable manner, the sad demise of the art of "intimate communication - personal touch and emotional satisfaction." Although the mobile phone, electronic mailers and networking websites are valuable gifts of modern technology, they have unfortunately killed the fine art of letter writing. Appropriate examples, witty and wise, such as Gandhiji's saying that he would first see "the man of letters" (the postman) and then Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, enhance the charm of your writing. Your earlier article 'GET BACK TO GRADUALNESS' is a similar description of the bygone days when we could "enjoy the emerald beauties of nature and share the reflections of Kalidasa, Wordsworth and Thoreau who could say "Let Shakespeare wait. I have an appointment with this dew-drop." Your exquisite comments and apt examples are deeply moving and memorable.

- M.G. Narasimha Murthy, Hyderabad.

About Triveni-Your editorials-the last one on "The Universal Message of The Vedas" infuses light and spirit. The readers are grateful to you.

- Dr.B.Parvathi, Waltair.

A. Krishna Kumaran's 'Raja Yoga' is a very useful article giving valuable information about yoga. All people especially

the youth should practise yoga for physical fitness and mental alacrity.

- S. Narayan, Bangalore.

Mr. Somaseshu's Marlowe article is scholarly. Marlowe's plays are not inferior to Shakespeare plays. Particularly his Dr. Faustus is a great tragedy-a master piece.

- A. Chakrabarty, Calcutta.

Rajiv Khurana's 'Celebrate Failure' is a message to the present day students who get into depression very often when they fail in their examination or in their trials for a job. Failure is stepping stone to success.

- N.R. Verma, Patna.

Sir, I think it is my privilege to find a place amidst the writers of Triveni as a poet which has a wide readership all over the country.

- Smt. Bhavana S.Chari.

Your editorial on 'The Vanishing Art of Letter Writing' acts as an eye-opener to the present generation people who are losing grip over language skills and proper etiquette required for communication in various contexts.

- G. Somaseshu.

BOOK REVIEW

College Teachers and Administrators - A Hand Book, Prof. I.V.Chalapathi Rao, Sri Yabaluri Raghavaih Trust, 2nd Ed, 2010, ISBN 81-85-194 10-6, pp 192, **Price:** PaperBack Rs 150/- US\$ 15/-, HardBound 300/-US\$ 30/-

Prof. I.V.Chalapathi Rao is highly renowned as an erudite and venerable personality now in his late eighties. He has a wealth of experience as a distinguished academician, a thoroughgoing administrator and an eminent educationist. The book under review is the second and improved version of its first publication in 1992, which is quite well known in scholarly circles. Educational Administration has to come to be a course offered by institutions like Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. The course has come up as an answer to the demand in the context of the emergence of international players vying with our own institutions. It is important to remember that education has higher values to reflect, impart and propagate in this country, whose basic asset down the millenniums is humanistic stance. This compact volume covers the entire gamut of education and training right from the evolution of education in India up to the pragmatic aspects in the current scenario.

There are twenty-six sections which include an analysis of Objectives of Higher Education, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Teaching Methods, Curriculum Design and practicalities like Lesson Planning, Examinations, and Distance Education etc. The author has rendered immensely valuable service in covering all facets of education and academic administration. He has given valuable Reading Lists too at the end of the

sections.

Prof. Rao goes to the heart of the matter when educational expectations and administrative skills are analyzed and discussed. Here is a statement he has made to convince the reader of his commitment to values: *India lives today in spite of visible degeneration in its political and social life because (these) spiritual and cultural values are still kept alive in the national consciousness.* Prof. Rao quotes Arnold Toynbee: *"At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is an Indian way. Here we have the attitude and the spirit that can make it possible for human race to grow into a single family and in this atomic age this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves".*

The author has taken great care to drive home his points in the sections by highlighting them in bold print. This is a must read for serious scholars and educational planners and administrators.

- Dr. VV.B.Rama Rao, retired ELT expert and a writer.

Visions Of Deliverance By Syed Ameeruddin edited by Krishna Srinivas. Published by Sayeeda Ameeruddin International Poets Academy, Chennai-600014 Price: Rs.300/- U.S. \$30

The poet dedicates this work to the poets of the world. The book begins with "A Prayer- for my Grandson". He is the poet's

"little angel", his "spiritual family tree". His doting love for his grandson takes the poet into a great thought process of man's past history, of past religions and cultures and hopes for the future of the world. "What lessons of sanity and oneness of Man can we impart to our generations to come?"

He wishes the young citizen to be rooted in Vedic lore of "Sarva Jana Sukhaya!" And then as a representative of Man's spiritual quest, he is going to be a pilgrim "with an infinite goal". The book has other poems, "A New Love", "Moonlit Meanderings", "Voyage", and "My Beloved" and so on: In "My India", the poet laments, "India, where all your grandeur gone!"

What happened to the lilting lure of Vedas and Upanishads? The whispering radiance of Yogis, Munis, Rishis; soul filling breeze of the benign Bodhi; mellowing, sobering, sustaining melodies Ramayana, awe inspiring, harmonizing drum beat!; of Mahabharata."

There are other interesting poems, "Birthday Song- for My Son", "New Year", "Love Times", "and Turkey", and so on. The readers should be thankful to the poet for the poem "Glaucoma- A Highway Robber". The poet warns, "Neglect not", "waste not time, rush and hush to your eye care corner". "What is needed is an early detection, a visual vigilance, a devote perseverance".

The poet dedicates this poem to Dr.B.Sridhar Rao, a Glaucoma specialist of world renown. "Ocean Rhapsody" is lyrical "Drumbeats of Dampatya" is dedicated to Mrs. Ameeruddin.

The last poem, "Vision of

Deliverance" speaks of the grandeur of life, of cosmic life. "The Sat-chit-Ananda-salam-salam-salam, the peace of eternal bounty. The resplendent radiance of ever after and here after. The realization of Supreme Fulfillment".

Thus we see the thoughts in the book extending from human love, society, country to the highest goal of human life- Moksha- Eternal Deliverance. The book makes for a very interesting and enlightening reading.

**- Ms. A.Satyavathi
Hyderabad**

* * * * *

Poem as Crystal compiled and edited by **K.Srinivasa Sastry**. Published by **Yugadi publishers**, 303, Amulya Apartments, Tarnaka, Hyderabad. Price: Rs.100/- U.S. \$10

This volume of poems has three sections, Agony, Continuum and Ecstasy. "Agony" is a very sad narration of the death of his one year old son. The narration is very touching, very realistic- the parents' anxiety, the "family doctor's" casual attitude, the doctors who couldn't diagnose the child's problem and finally the death of the child. The sorrow leads the author to explore the various philosophies, and delving into the various philosophies of life gives him some solace. The Bagavadgita gives him some relief. Hence the poet concludes:

"In Agony is ecstasy
And the source of the two
Is the self
Who is one and undivided."

**- Ms. A.Satyavathi
Hyderabad.**

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I greatly appreciate your self-sacrificing labours for conducting your periodical TRIVENI. It is what you call it, really a journal of Indian Renaissance. It is a fine specimen of our cultural enterprises.

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Annie Besant

Triveni is a splendid production and easily the best magazine in India.

K.M.Panikkar,
Editor, 'Swarajya' (Madras) and 'Hindusthan Times' (Delhi)
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