

ORISSA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS

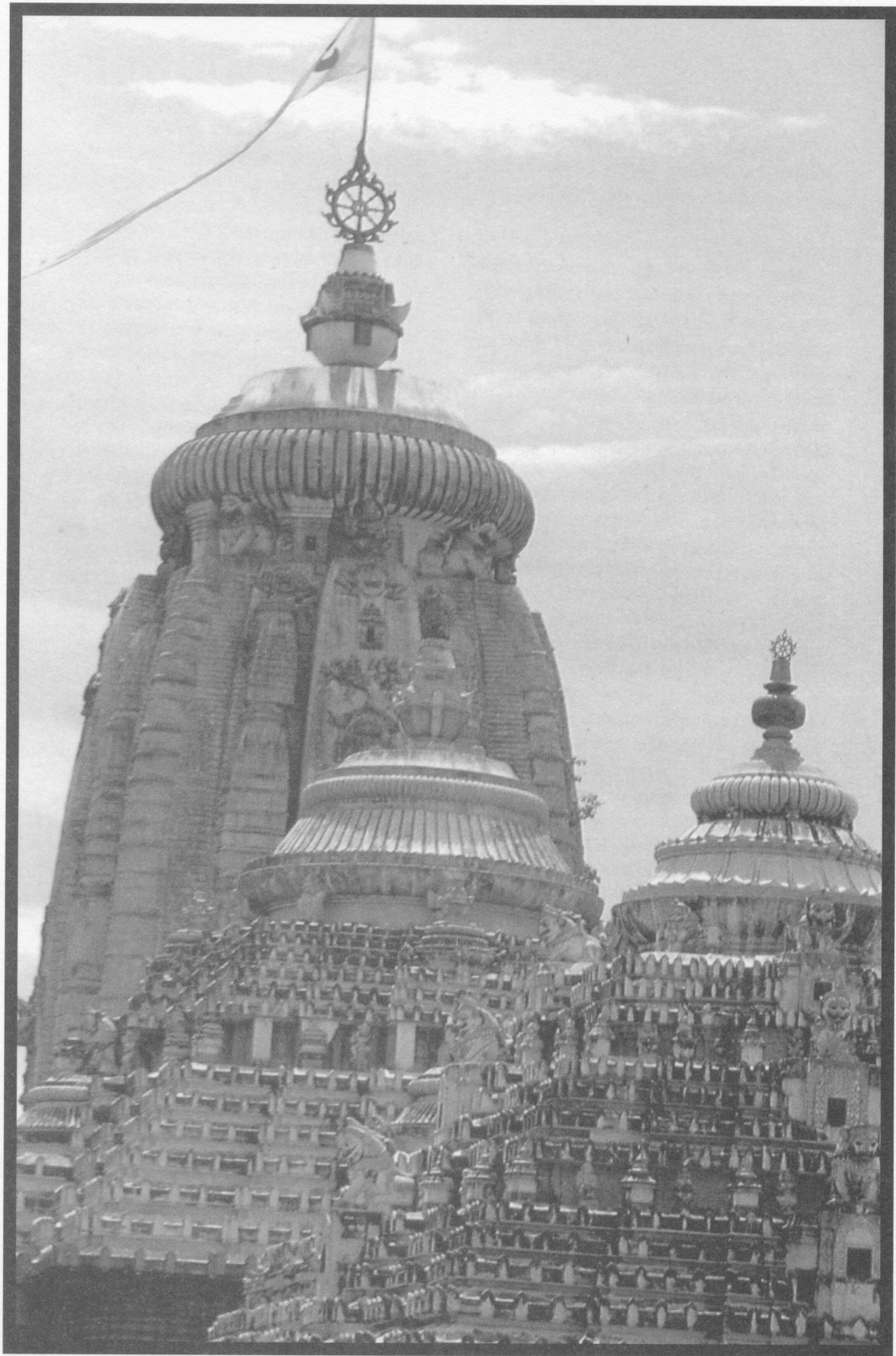


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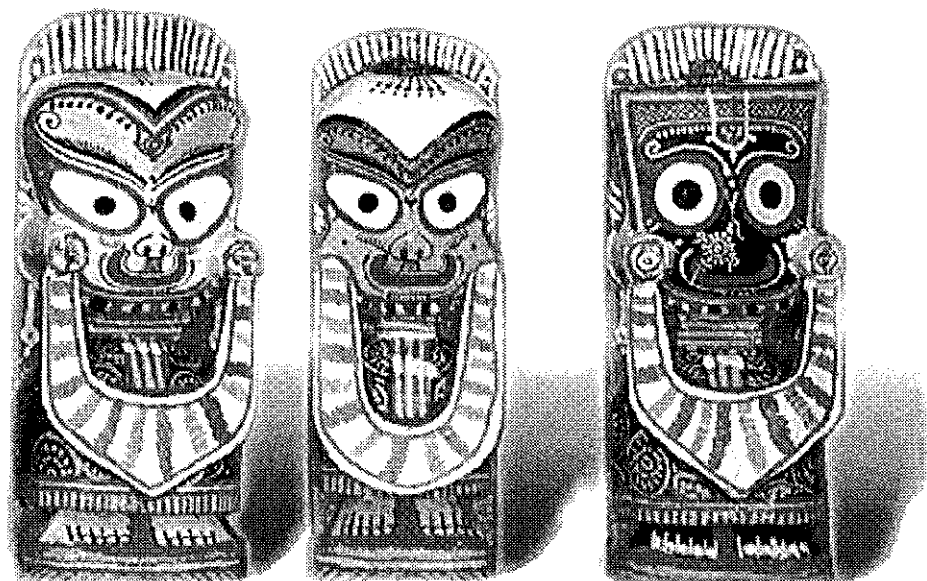
Souvenir Issue

Twenty-ninth
Annual Convention
Monterey, California
July 3 - 5, 1998





Journal Of The ORISSA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS Souvenir Issue 1998



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ଅହୋଦୀନାନାଥଂ ନିହିତମତଳଂ ନିଷ୍ଠିତପଦମ୍
ଜଗନ୍ନାଥଃ ସ୍ବାମୀ ନୟନ ପଥଗାମୀ ଭବତୁମେ

Oh Lord Jagannatha, Please be my guiding light.

29th Annual Convention
July 3-5, 1998
Monterey, California

Orissa Society of Americas

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1997-1999

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Souvenir Issue

1998

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Message from the Convener

Welcome to the 29th OSA convention. We feel privileged to host this occasion here in California in the beautiful Monterey Bay. We appreciate your participation and support. This year essentially a new group of young Oriyas are managing the whole program. Old timers like me were there only to support and encourage them at all steps to go forward. We also had significant participation of the second generation in developing ideas and also in managing the programs. As you will see the talent pool is increasing just like the software engineers. We have to provide forum for them to come out and shine like stars and I assure you that given the right opportunity this new generation will manage and uplift our organization to new heights.

We have arranged many programs this year along with many break times. We know the convention is an occasion for social and cultural activities and we have tried our best to provide forum for all. Our society is growing rapidly and hence it is difficult to accommodate everything everybody wants. We have put time limits on all programs particularly those designated for everybody. Hence if we caused some discomfort for anybody please excuse us.

Other than that please enjoy all our programs and also the beautiful nature in Monterey.

Saroj Behera
Convener

Message from OSA President

On behalf of the Executive Council and the Board of Governors, I welcome you all to the 29th convention of the Orissa Society of the Americas. We are grateful to our friends from California for their hospitality and their hard work to host this convention. We are looking forward to the next couple of days of Oriya festivities, where we can revel in our Oriya pride, and identity, as we immerse ourselves with Oriya art, culture and tradition in sunny California.

As we approach the new millennium, we are on the threshold of change in many spheres. It is time to ponder on OSA's future course and leadership. I would like to see our youth play an active role in the organization so that they can soon lead the organization. Our biggest challenge is to achieve a sense of cohesiveness amongst all members in our community, including our second-generation youth, our new immigrants, and our women, children and elders. We all share unique experiences and unique talents. The challenge lies in pouring forth our contributions selflessly for the betterment of our organization, to make it ever so strong and functional.

We must recognize the important role that OSA has played in the past 29 years in providing us a sense of community. It has granted us the foundation to affirm our cultural identity, by nourishing the soil where the seeds of our culture germinate. I urge you all to support OSA with all your mind, heart and soul, so that it can propel us into the new millennium effectively. Please move beyond being a cynic or a skeptic and ask yourselves what you can do for OSA, not what OSA can do for you. Those of you who are not members please join us and give us your strength and input to make our organization blossom. We need your commitment and support.

As we try to establish ourselves in our new homeland, we must expand our roots deeper so that we have a stronger sense of who we are. Like president Woodrow Wilson said "A man's rootage is more important than his leafage." Only by knowing our identity and heritage can we become empowered and enlightened. In trying to bridge our two worlds it is imperative that we keep our cultural identity alive while we adapt into our new environment. Just like the bold beautiful patterns of our Sambalpuri sarees, we must keep our unique Oriya culture vibrant and distinct in the diverse tapestry of American culture. It is our duty to ingrain a strong sense of cultural awareness amongst our children. As Hodding Carter, a nationally known journalist and commentator, once said "There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children: one of these is roots, the other is wings."

For the progress made within the last year, please see the status report in the last section of this journal. Let me again remind you that success of OSA depends on the degree of your involvement in OSA affairs. One or few persons, no matter how much motivated, will not be able to carry out OSA's missions. On a pessimistic note, I had appealed on several issues in my last President's report. Only one or two responded. OSA is on the web now at <http://www.orissasociety.org>. It is a text-dominated site with its constitution, history, list of officers, outreach activities, selected articles from OSA Journal, cross-link to other related sites, etc. Please visit the site at your leisure and send your comments to orissasociety@yahoo.com

Gopa Patnaik
President, OSA

From the Editor

I would like to talk about three areas: The OSA as an organization; The 29th annual Convention; and this annual souvenir issue of the Journal of OSA.

OSA - The Orissa Society of the Americas is twenty-nine years old. It was started in 1969 at an evening get-together of a few Oriyas in Boston. Some of us, students then, read about it in the Samaj in Orissa and were quite excited. We even wrote letters to the founders congratulating them. I am told that not many Indo-ethnic organizations in North America are as old as the OSA. That's the good news. Here is the not-so-good news. After this long existence, the OSA is neither rich in terms of its funds, nor is perceived by its members and many non-members as providing much value. Despite our desire to draw the second generation to its leadership, we have failed so far. Something deeper is missing, and that is, our general lack of passion for it and hence commitment (some people equate it to the general apathy to our language and to our rich cultural heritage). It appears like most of us show a detachment towards the OSA. Harsh words, but sadly true. It's time we take some concrete steps and here are three suggestions. 1. Let's set some simple objectives on what value/deliverables OSA provides to the expatriates and execute them with vigor; 2. Let's examine why many new arrivals over the last 10 years are not members and how can we draw them to become one; and 3. Let's hand over the leadership to our many young people who are doing so well professionally (this requires a resolve that we actively promote them and not ourselves).

This Convention - The 29th annual convention is in the beautiful Monterey, California. This is the second time, California has hosted the annual event after the last one at Stanford University campus in 1987. Then we had barely 20 families in the San Francisco bay area. Now we have close to a hundred, thanks to the growth of high-tech industries in the area. At every large Oriya gatherings we are meeting new arrivals. It is also an oddly pleasant feeling when you randomly run into Oriyas at shopping malls and Indian stores. Many youngsters have worked hard to make this convention a success. This experience will enrich them about the larger parent organization, the OSA. They will enjoy meeting many wonderful families from across the country coming to the convention. I also hope that both the northern and southern California Oriya community will create local OSA chapters to complement all the other major chapters of OSA. With California's Oriya population being one of the largest, it's time that a formal chapter-structure be established.

This Journal - This Journal of OSA has been a pleasant experience to compile despite lots of hard work. I was quite overwhelmed with the response of articles, especially from our youth. The number of Oriya poems, stories, and essays I received, assures me that our love for Oriya remains strong. As you will find in these pages we have divided the journal into eight key sections - On Spirituality, The Way we Are, Voices of our Future, Oriya Folk Tales, From Orissa with Love, In Memorium, From the Oriya Kitchen, and Organizational Tidbits. Several new ideas have been introduced - a few pages on authentic Oriya cuisine which is impossible to find anywhere else; a section to show our respect to the stalwarts of Orissa who passed away recently; Oriya folk tales; and some unique writings by eminent Oriya writers for this journal. I hope you will find this journal a pleasant and proud thing to have in the family.

A special thanks to Berkeley-based Prabin Badhia, a young and talented artist from Bolangir. Without Prabin's help, this magazine could not have taken the artistic look it has. He is a rare young man of self-less service, utmost modesty, and incredible talent.

I would also like to thank all the members of the editorial group for their untiring and enthusiastic help.

Happy reading.

Jnana Ranjan Dash,
Editor, Journal of OSA, Souvenir Issue
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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ON SPIRITUALITY

Message	Swami Chinmayananda	12
War and Peace with Values	Swami Chidananda	13
Atman The Self Within	Sudhansu Mishra	15

THE WAY WE ARE

Query in the Twilight Zone	Babru Samal	18
If You Love It, They Will	Sweta Padma Dash	19
Nija Ghara (Oriya)	Parashar Mishra	20
Sirjee	Mamata Misra	21
An Evening at Puri Sea Beach	Debu Panda	22
Mu Eka Manushya (Oriya)	Bijoy Mishra	23
Meridian	Rupesh Nayak	24
Bandhanaru Mukti Paibara Pratikhyare (Oriya) ..	Uttara Das	24
What's There in a Name Anyway	Ajit Mohapatra	25
The Path I Have Taken	Sanat Mohanty	26
Fight All You Can	Smruti Ranjan Biswal	26
Shari (Oriya)	Bhabani Das	27
Amruta Utkala (Oriya)	Sanghamitra Maharana	28
Gaibaku Mote Kahibuni (Oriya)	Bishnu Priya Mishra	28
I Want A Grandmother!	Sura Prasad Rath	29
Bhatruhanta (Oriya)	Jhinu Chhotray	30
Letter To A Child	Srikanta Mishra	31
Orissa: Role of Govt., Residents, and NRIs	Purna Mohanty	32
Reminisces	Ranjita Mahakul	35
Kiye Tume Biswa Shrasta (Oriya)	Shantilata Mishra	36
Kahi Janile Katha Sunadara (Oriya)	Suchismita Sahoo	37
Sanjibani (Oriya)	Bigyani Das	38
OSA: Today & Tomorrow	Devi P. Mishra	41
Mother Earth and Earth Day Celebration	Alekh Dash	42
Oriya Parba Parbani O Ame (Oriya)	Madhusmita Acharya	43
Bhabasrota (Oriya)	Sneha Mohanty	45
ORNET: A Cyber Orissa	Ashutosh Dutta	46
Yoga Philosophy	Binod Nayak	48
Independence Day: 1947	Lalu Manasinha	50
A Unique Sled Dog Race in Alaska	Debendra K. Das	53
The Guru	Prasanna K. Pati	56
Fall	Tarun Tripathy	60
Tu Mora Maa (Oriya)	Mamata Mohanty	61
Gobinda Kopa Gurutara (Oriya)	Narayan Rath	62
Book Review - "Best of Two Worlds"	Editor	64

VOICE OF OUR FUTURE

Don't Be Sad	Bagmi Das	66
Spring	Sriya Chhotray	66
Storm	Pratik Dash	66
My Village Experience	Smriti Panda	67
Ellora Patnaik	Editor	69
Mix and Match	Sonali Sahoo	70
Apples	Suman Panda	70
Guess It Now!	Sagar Sahoo	70
My Trip to India	Barnali Dasverma	71
Searching For Truth	Gitanjali Senapati	72

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOICE OF OUR FUTURE

Orissa.	Chandan Misra	73
Marrying a non-Oriya: Experience of Unity.	Pragati Misro	74
Village Life in Orissa: Personal Observation.	Somesh Dash	76
Dilemma.	Shilpa Chhotray	78
Mud.	Sucharita Lira Mishra	78
Emigrant Historiography.	Arati Misro	79
Oriya In Me.	Shalini Patnaik	80
Poverty and Human Courage.	Satya Bikram Das	81
My Thread Ceremony.	Suchit Dash	82
Oriya Activism 101.	Sarita Mishra	83
Raghurajpur: Orissa's Village of Artists.	Niharika Mohanty	85

ORIIYA FOLK TALES

The Story of the Girl Belavati.	Upendra Narayan Dutta-Gupta ...	88
Lessons From Panchatantra.	Kiron Senapati	93

FROM ORISSA WITH LOVE

Darkness.	Jayant Mohapatra	96
Dharmapada: Nirvul Thikana (Oriya)	Manoj Das	97
Duiti Kabita (Oriya)	Manorama Mohapatra	99
Nua Atithi (Oriya)	Suprava Patnaik	100
Samudra Kula (Oriya)	Debdas Chhotray	101
Gopa Ubacha (Oriya)	Radha Mohan Gadnayak	102
Sharat (Oriya)	Sitakanta Mohapatra	102
Dia He Uttara (Oriya)	Mayadhar Manasinha	103
Janha Rati (Oriya)	Ramakanta Rath	103
Sorisha Phulara Patha (Oriya)	Sachi Routray	104
Has Lajja Gone with the Wind?	Richard Schweder	105
Information Technology in Orissa	Chitta Baral	106
Sundara Pruthibi (Oriya)	Urmila Das	110
Inauguration of Kalinga Hospital	Lalu Manasinha, Mana Ranjan Pattanayak	111
SEEDS: Report to the Community	Lalu Manasinha	113

IN MEMORIUM

Radhanath Rath	118-121
Malati Chowdhury	122
Biju Patnaik	123
Pranabandhu Kar	124
Sanjukta Panigrahi	125
Girija Das Mahapatra	126-127
Sanatan Mahanto	128

From The Oriya Kitchen	129
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Organizational Tidbits	135
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Note : The Cover Page is designed by Prabin Badhia

Bhaktakabi Madhusudan Rao

(1853-1912)

Madhusudan Rao was known as “bhaktakabi” or the “devotee-poet”. He spent his life as a teacher and educator and created many quality text books in Oriya for school children of all ages. He was the first Oriya headmaster at Ravenshaw Collegiate School, Cuttack in 1891. His immortal poems conveyed the essence of our scriptures (Upanishads) in simple verses. We present here a few lines of Bhaktakabi Madhusudan.

ଯାହା ମୁଁ କରଇ ଯାହା ମୁଁ କହଇ

ଯାହା ମୁଁ ଚିନ୍ତଇ ମନେ

ଜଗତର କର୍ତ୍ତା ପରମ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର

ଜାଣୁଛନ୍ତି ପ୍ରତି କ୍ଷଣେ ।

ମୋ ପାଶେ ଅଛନ୍ତି ଦିବସ ରଜନୀ

ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ ପରାପୁର

ଏ କଥା ସୁମରି ହୃଦୟେ ତାହାଙ୍କୁ

ପୂଜିବି ମୁଁ ନିରନ୍ତର ।

(ପରମେଶ୍ଵର: ଶିଶୁ ଗୀତ)

(The Lord knows my every step, my every word, and my every thought. Knowing this eternal truth that he is omnipresent, I seek Thy grace.)

କି ସୁନ୍ଦର ଆହା, କି ଆନନ୍ଦ ମୟ ଏହି ବିଶାଳ ସଂସାର,

ଧନ୍ୟ ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ, ମହିମା ତୁମ୍ଭର, ଅଟେ ଅନନ୍ତ ଅପାର ।

ସୁର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରତାରା ତୁମ୍ଭର ଆଜ୍ଞାରେ ବରଷନ୍ତି ଜ୍ୟୋତିରାଶି,

ତୁମ୍ଭର କୁସୁମ ପ୍ରତି ପ୍ରଭାତରେ ହସଇ ଆନନ୍ଦେ ଭାସି ।

(ହୃଦ: ଶିଶୁ ଗୀତ)

(Oh, how beautiful and blissful is this universe! Thy infinite grace makes the sun, moon, and stars shine eternally and flower bloom happily.)

ମୁହିଁ କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ଉର୍ମି, ତୁମ୍ଭେ ମହା ସିନ୍ଧୁ

ଉର୍ମି ସିନ୍ଧୁ ଏକାକାର,

ଅନନ୍ତ ମଙ୍ଗଳ ସଂକଳ୍ପ ସଂଭୂତ

ମୁହିଁ ତୁମ୍ଭ ମହିମାର ।

ବିହଙ୍ଗମ ମୁହିଁ, ଅନ୍ତରୀକ୍ଷ ତୁମ୍ଭେ

ତୁମ୍ଭ ବିନା ନାହିଁ ପ୍ରାଣ,

ତୁମ୍ଭର ସ୍ଵରୂପେ କରିବି ବିହାର

ତୁମ୍ଭ ବିନା ନାହିଁ ପ୍ରାଣ ।

(ଆତ୍ମ ସମର୍ପଣ: କୁସୁମାଞ୍ଜଳି)

(I'm a tiny wave while Thou art the ocean and the wave merges into the ocean. I am a bird and Thou art the expansive sky on which I fly. I have no existence without You. I am ever blissful by Thy grace.)

ଅଖିଳ ବ୍ରହ୍ମାଣ୍ଡ ପତି ମୋ ଜୀବନ ସ୍ଥାପୀ

ହେ ପରମ ପିତା ମାତା ପ୍ରଭୁ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଯ୍ୟାମୀ

ଧନ୍ୟ କରୁଣା ତୋହର

ହେ କରୁଣା ସିନ୍ଧୁ ତାର ନାହିଁ ପଟାନ୍ତର ।

ସଙ୍କଟ ପୁରିତ ଘୋର ଭବସିନ୍ଧୁ ଜଳେ

ଏକ ମାତ୍ର କର୍ଣ୍ଣଧାର ତାରୁ ତୁ ସକଳେ

ପ୍ରଭୁ କରୁଣା ବିଧାନ

କରିଅଛ ମରଣକୁ ଅମୃତ ସୋପାନ ।

(ହୃଦ: ଛାନ୍ଦ ମାଳା)

(Oh, The Lord of the Universe, Thou art my father, mother, and the lord of my heart! Amazing is Thy infinite grace. Thou art the savior of all from this world of confusion. Oh, the compassionate One, lead me from death to immortality.)

ଅଛନ୍ତି ସର୍ବସ୍ଥଳେ ଜଗଦୀଶ୍ଵର,

ଦୟାମୟ ଫେଡ଼ିବେ ଦୁଃଖ ମୋହର ।

ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମର ଦୟା ଆହା କିବା ଉଦାର,

ଲଘୁ କରଇ ଦୁଃଖୀ ହୃଦୟ ଭାର ।

ଜନମାଏ ସନ୍ତୋଷ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ମନେ,

ମଣ୍ଡଇ ହୃଦ-ରାଜ୍ୟ ଶାନ୍ତି ରତନେ ।

(ନିର୍ବାସିତର ବିଳାପ: କବିତାବଳୀ)

(God is omnipresent and He will relieve me from all the sufferings. His grace will give me peace and contentment.)



On Spirituality



*Earth is round
Earth moves
Not seen but true*

*Sky is blue
Sunset is golden
Seen but false*

*Energy in the atom
Vitality in the sun
Gravitational force
Not seen but true*

*Double moon
Mirage waters
Dreams and hallucinations
Seen but false*

*World we see but not true
Truth we see not, but true*

Swami Chinmayananda

WAR AND PEACE WITH VALUES

The Debate on Right and Wrong

SWAMI CHIDANANDA
Chinmaya Mission San Jose, CA

Today's world is confused more than ever on the issue of morality. With different cultures mingling with one another, their value systems merge at times and stand out in contrast at other times. The common ground consisting of values like, "Do not injure; do not steal; do not kill," or "Speak the truth; serve others; work hard," etc. is unquestionably respected. The differences are looked at with increased acceptance, often with much difficulty though. Semitic religions have great difficulty in accepting idol worship. Hindus have much difficulty in accepting beef eating, if not meat eating itself. We raise hue and cry over human rights in some countries and keep quiet when people with certain citizenship are treated differently than others with other citizenship. It is wrong in the society to evade taxes, but all right (or even respectable) to turn our backs on the hungry or the homeless who might be suffering right in front of us. Legal, social, and religious moralities have come under much questioning in modern times, especially for profound thinkers around the world. This article probes into such questions as, "What is the most basic criterion to decide what is right?", "Is rightness of an action subjective or objective?", "Is rightness relative or absolute?" etc.

What is Right?

Does the nature of an action decide if it is right or not? For example, can we say physical injury is always wrong? If that were so, even surgery would be wrong. Can we then say the motive behind an action decides its virtue? The surgeon cuts open a patient's body with the motive of helping the latter. If we generalize this motive aspect, we would settle for the stand that the end can justify the means. Moralists like Mahatma Gandhi were strongly against such a philosophy and maintained, "Right means to right end!"

What is Sin?

Religion calls it sin. Law calls it crime. Simple language calls it just wrong. How do we determine it? Yudhishthira said in the Mahabharata, "Helping others is merit; harming others is sin." Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda said, "Sin is not in action; it is in reaction!" By reaction is meant the thoughts within oneself disapproving one's action. Self-insulting action is sin while an action which makes us pat ourselves on the back is merit. Being true to our own values leads to freedom from moral conflict. Swamiji also pointed out, "A man is punished by his sin, more than for his sin!" Religion, state or the society may or may not do anything about a man's

wrong action. Irrespective of that, the man will suffer for his own conscience bites him from within. Sometimes, if there is no sorrow or remorse, he loses the freedom or flexibility which he enjoyed while relating to people before committing the self-insulting action.

Understanding Dharma:

Hindu thinkers called merit and sin as dharma and adharma respectively. The literal meaning of dharma is "that which supports or holds together." The word therefore can mean order, righteousness, duty or true nature. There was dharma in the kingdom of Sri Rama. Yudhishthira's character was full of dharma. Respecting his parents is the dharma of a son. To fight bravely is the dharma of a soldier. Sweetness is the dharma of sugar. Philosophically, these different meanings of the significant word dharma are all interrelated. Tying them up together for our present context, we may say one must always act as per one's true nature (play the role to which one is suited best); that is one's duty; that is right for one; and that will bring order in one's life. "Dharmo rakshati rakshitah!" said Manu, the ancient Hindu law-giver, "The divine law protects its protectors."

The Gita uses the word "svadharma" a lot. It means "one's own dharma." Lord Krishna says, "It is better to die while performing one's own dharma than to attempt para-dharma (somebody else's dharma). The para-dharma may look very attractive in the beginning. It will give great pain eventually. So, finding who we are and acting accordingly is very important. Somebody wrote a book titled, "God made you an original; do not die a duplicate!" It is all right for a lion to pounce upon a deer and kill it. The lion has no conflict in doing so. A deer can not act violent like that! Otherwise a lot of inner turmoil will be the outcome.

Cardinal Values:

Satya(S), Ahimsa(A) And Brahmacharya(B) meaning truthfulness, nonviolence and self-control are regarded as the most basic values in the Hindu culture. (SAAB!) Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji regards them as primarily related to the planes of the intellect, the mind and the body.

Self-control:

The body, the mind and the intellect (BMI) are the three equipments which condition us. The urges and appetites of the (sense organs in the) body are powerful. Self-control(brahmacharya) is proper handling of these forces

at work. Neither overdoing nor denying to oneself any pleasure is the essence of this value. One must introspect honestly and find out one's needs and work towards fulfilling them through right means where one does not get one's bread at the cost of another's. All physical indulgences are included such as sleep, eating, talking and even watching television. "There is enough for everybody's need; never enough for everybody's greed!" remarked Gandhiji once. Being true to one's need leads to least conflict in one's bosom. Overindulgence on one hand and suppression on the other cause a distortion in one's psyche. Moderation is the teaching given to the average mind. Abstinence is for the rare few.

Non-injury:

The mind is the seat of emotions. Everyone has emotional needs. As before, handling these needs maturely leads to the practice of non-injury. Hurting others is the violation of this virtue. Violence hampers our spiritual growth. "Anger is punishing ourselves for the fault of others," said Swamiji. Hatred is a self-destructive emotion. Insecurity of the false ego in us makes us offend others. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." As we practice non-injury, we learn to "live and let live."

Truthfulness:

The intellect is the seat of understanding. When our words and actions are in accordance with our understanding, there is an integration within. An integer is a whole number. The truthful person is a whole. J. Krishnamurti said, "Wholeness is holiness." The untruthful one is fragmented. Intellectual honesty is meant by this third value. White lies where a statement may be made with no false information and yet truth be cleverly hidden are also not admissible from a rigorous point of view. White lies cause problems in their own way. This applies to "lies for self-protection" and to "lying for others' sake" etc. An average man compromises for he sees a choice between bad and

worse. An advanced man goes for the plain truth. Fearlessness accompanies the truthful one.

Pure Virtue:

Virtue is a state of mind. Specific actions that are then appreciated as morally right are a reflection of that state. Sri Nisarg Datt Maharaj said, "Clarity leads to charity." Defining virtue as a set of actions is a simple model that masses can comprehend. This model has led to various forms of organized religion (or state or society). Everybody knows the sad limitations of organized virtue. Hypocrisy is the unavoidable outcome of the poorly envisioned life. An honest seeker typically first conforms to the righteousness as the popular propaganda defines it. Eventually she sees its lopsided nature and its incompleteness. Going deeper, she then roots out the basic cause of evil in human life which is no other than the ego, the self. Spiritual ignorance sustains this ego. The seeker practices true spirituality and becomes selfless. Hypocrisy ends in the virtuous state of mind. Conformity based on fear or desire for respect no more rules her behavior.

The Journey's End:

The journey of human life starts with insensitivity to dharma where the seeker rests satisfied with a little approval here and a little praise there. This is a state of postponed conflict. As he wakes up, he is in much conflict, a state of sensitivity. As he enquires deeply and resolves his egoism, he gains total understanding of life where there is no conflict. Fragmented living where ideas of right and wrong are used by us to our advantage ends in this living wholistically where truth alone prevails. Satyam-eva Jayate!

— Swami Chidananda is the resident acharya of the Chinmaya Mission, San Jose since last 5 years. He regularly teaches vedanta classes in the San Francisco bay area and maintains an extremely busy schedule giving spiritual discourses all over North America.



Atman The Self Within

SUDHANSU MISHRA

Asoto Maa Sada Gamaya

Tamoso Maa Jyotir Gamaya

Mrityor Maa Amritam Gamaya

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti

Lead us from falsehood to truth

Lead us from darkness to light

Lead us from death to immortality and bliss

Om Peace, Peace, Peace

According to Kathopanishad, after the universe was created the creator had one final task to complete. For this task he summoned an angel. The creator told the angel "I have saved the best for the last. I have here the real meaning of human life, the treasure of life. Because this treasure is valuable, I want you to hide it. Hide this treasure so well, human beings will have a hard time finding it."

The angel said, "I will do so my Lord, I will hide it on the top of the mountain."

"The treasure will be too easy to find it there," said the Creator.

The angel then said, "I would hide the treasure in the desert wilderness. Nobody will find it there easily."

"No, too easy" said the creator.

The angel could not find an answer after that and became silent.

After a while the Creator's face lit up. He said, "I know the place. Hide the treasure of life within the human being. Go and hide it there. The last place where the human being will look for ultimate reality is within them. They look for all diverse external objects, but rarely look for the greatest treasure of all within themselves."

This treasure and search for it is described in the Upanishads. The Upanishads say the ignorant person is a victim of repeating the cycle of birth and rebirth over and over again. They spend the lifetime running after things and when death comes they are empty-handed. The wise person sees the endless pattern of birth and rebirth and looks within for that which is eternal. According to the Upanishads, that which we seek within is the Atman, the

pure Self. It dwells in the innermost chamber of the heart. It existed in the beginning of creation, exists now and continues to exist in future.

The mystery of life and death is revealed in the Kathopanishad. In 119 mantras the Kathopanishad narrates the dialog between a young man named Nachiketa and the king of death Yama. Yama tests Nachiketa how strong his desire of truth is. Nachiketa is determined to know Atman, real Self. He wants to know about life, about death, and about life after death.

Nachiketa's story begins in the Kathopanishad. His wealthy father Vajashravas was performing a special sacrifice. In this sacrifice Vajashravas was required to give all his wealth, possessions to the priestly Brahmins. Nachiketa's father could not part with all his wealth despite the assurance that the knowledge of Brahman, the supreme Self will follow the sacrifice. Kathopanishad tells us that he gave cows as sacrifice, but only the old and sick cows. He kept the good cows himself. Nachiketa after seeing that only the old and sick cows are given away, he thought that will bring misery to his father. In order to help him, Nachiketa reminded his father that as his son, he was his property and he should be included in sacrifice.

Nachiketa asked, "Father, to whom will you give me"? First his father ignored him. But Nachiketa repeated the question three times. After third time Vajashravas got angry and told his son, "I will give you to the ruler of death, Yama". Nachiketa cheerfully accepted his father's wish.

When Nachiketa arrived at Yama's place, he was not home. After three nights Yama returned from his duties of taking care of the dead. He apologized to Nachiketa for being a bad host to keep him waiting for three days. To compensate for his inhospitality Yama offered Nachiketa with 3 boons one for each night of his waiting.

Nachiketa for his first boon asked Yama to make his father kind at heart, remove his anger and any worry that he may have due to absence of his son. Yama granted that.

For his second boon Nachiketa asked Yama to show him the fire sacrifice and all the rituals and ceremonies that go with it. He wanted to know the nature of sacrifice that one can do to attain the heaven where there is no hunger, thirst, pain or suffering. Yama granted the second boon. Then he asked Nachiketa for the third boon.

Nachiketa in a deep meditative mood said to Yama, "Some believe that when man departs from the world he is gone for ever. There is another view that he is born again. He actually does not die in the real sense.

He remains in a subtle plane with his subtle body.

There is yet another belief that one who dies, lives.

Which of this is true? What is the mystery of death?" He requested Yama to give the secret of death as the third boon.

Yama did not want to give the mystery of death to Nachiketa without testing the eagerness and sincerity of his disciple. He told Nachiketa to ask any other boon except that one. Yama offered Nachiketa with all temptations that human beings face. He offered him a life span of as many years as he wishes to live, with the pleasures of the heaven, horses elephants, and all luxuries of life. But he did not grant him the wishes of his third boon. He did not want to divulge the secrets of death.

Nachiketa was not interested in all this. He showed his sincere wish to learn about the secret of death. He said he did not want the perishable objects, which will decay and die. He persisted in knowing the highest knowledge and wisdom from Yama.

Yama was finally convinced with the sincerity of Nachiketa's desire to learn the truth about death and life after death. Kathopanishad describes secrets of immortality, death and life.

World is full of objects and temptations. People want them and spend their entire life chasing after them. A person identifies with the emotions that go with the objects. The root cause behind this passion is Desire. Human beings become attached to things and relationships. Thoughts and emotions are influenced by Attachments. This creates suffering because none of this is permanent. But human beings keep trying peace in this way lifetime after lifetime. Yama tells Nachiketa that those who are after possessions are like children who play with toys. They are never satisfied with one possession. They are caught up in the snares of death. They travel the path of birth and death again and again. Ultimately they realize their miserable attachment. They finally bottom out and finally prepare for escape from the cycle of birth and rebirth.

The treasure of human life is the real Self, which is found within. The journey to discover the real Self is the goal and purpose of life. After realizing the real Self one can realize God.

The treasure according to Vedanta is Atman, the real Self or the Absolute Reality existing in the Individuals. Atman is identical to Brahman, which is the pure consciousness. Atman that is a manifestation of the Supreme Being ultimately merges with the Brahman after many births and rebirths.

Like the space inside a glass jar merges in to the space outside the jar when it is broken, Atman the consciousness merges with Brahman. Brahman is the absolute existence, knowledge and bliss. It is not subject to death and decay.

Then who are we as humans, carrying such a trea-

sure? We are mere existence in this world as in a dream. When we dream the world within the dream and the people in the dream are real as long as the dream lasts. When we wake up that reality disappears. The worldly existence according to Vedantic philosophy is Maya, an illusion. That which is subject to pain and pleasure, sorrow and misery, time and space is Maya. Through this Maya we shape our lives to grow. We can wake up from this Maya to realize Atman.

Atman the real Self, is separated by some barriers called the mere Self. The real Self is imperishable where as the mere Self is the sufferer, enjoyer of pleasures. The mind composed of mere Self has four main faculties. They are Ahamkara, Budhi, Manas and Chitta. Ahamkara or the ego defines you as I, me and mine. The second is Budhi, which is knowledge and intellect. It is the higher mind, which has the knowledge to discriminate and decide. The third aspect of mind is Manas. Manas is the lower mind that is involved in making plans, action and production of data. The fourth is called Chitta, which is the storehouse or the data bank of all the rest of faculties. It is a reservoir of the past and present. This is the storehouse of Samskaras that are carried to the next life. It is necessary to train the mere self in order to know the real Self. Kathopanishad describes the relationship between the real Self and the mere self by giving the example of a chariot. The owner of the chariot is the Atman, the real Self. Budhi is the charioteer or the driver. It uses manas, the lower mind as the rein to control the senses, which are the horses that pull the chariot.

Atman is not the mind, not the intellect, not the ego or the Chitta.

Mano, Budhi, Hankara, Chittani Naham

Chidananda Rupah Sivoham, Sivoham

Aham Nirbikalpo Nirakara Rupo

Bibhur Byapya Sarvatra Sarvendriani

Sada Me Samatvam Na Muktir Na Bandha

Chidananda Rupah Sivoham Sivoham

I have no form or shape. I am all pervading and master of all senses. I am equal in all. I am free. I am the pure consciousness, Supreme bliss and joy. I am Siva, I am Siva.

The Bhagbad Gita states about Atman and Self in Chapter 2. It describes Atman as that which is never born and never dies. It is unborn, eternal, perennial. The body is like a garment, which is discarded when worn out. Weapons do not destroy Him, fire does not burn Him, and wind does not hurt Him. He is eternal, all permeating, absolute and unmoving. He is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent.

—Sudhansu Mishra lives in Minneapolis with his wife Indu after his retirement from Honeywell Corp. He is a student of Vedanta and a disciple of Veda Bharati of Rishikesh, India.



The Way We Are

Query in the
Twilight Zone
A young baby
And all his life
A demanding father
A loving grand father
And the rest I did
For my kids and family



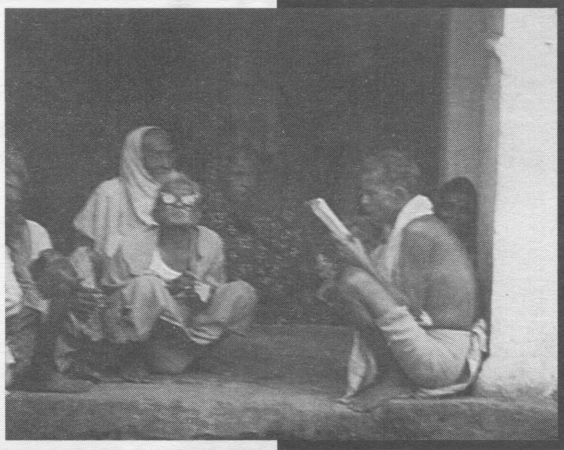
Waiting for your direction
To tell me
Where to go
and what to do
At the twilight zone of my life

Robert Samuel from an album "Hawaiian Soul" by the same name

Query in the Twilight Zone

BABRU SAMAL

Tell me
The priest
In the twilight zone of my life
What lies ahead of me?
There
Some where, I am going to go
After I sleep for the last time
On the multitude wrinkles on my face
Is written the epitaph of
My dreams and despair
My success and failure
My trip through the life
Like a leaf in the rapids
There you see all of me
A crying baby,
A rebellious child
A sensuous lover
A demanding father
A loving grand father
And the toils I did
For my kids and family
And
Shape my world as I thought it to be.
Still I don't know
What lies ahead of me?
What happens to me?
When I die
Where do I travel and how
Do I meet my friends?
Do I meet my forefather?
I am powerless
Toothless
Hairless
Still inside me
The emotions swell
Like ever lasting spring.
My stories are buried
by the sands of time
I am here
At the end of the road
Listening to the holy words
Waiting for your direction
To tell me
Where to go
and what to do
At the twilight zone of my life.



Babru Samal lives in Moore Park, California with his wife Jayashree.

If You Love It, They Will

SWETA PADMA DASH

If you really love something, won't you share it with your kids? If you really have something precious and valuable, won't you protect it for your children and then pass it on to them for the next generation?

The answer for these questions for most of us will be a resounding yes. Then why have we, the Oriya community, been so unsuccessful in sharing our love for the Oriya language with our children? Is it because we don't love our language or take no pride in it? Or is it because we do not think our language is good enough to protect, preserve, and pass on to our next generation?

We call ourselves Oriyas - the people from Orissa who speak Oriya. Our language is the most important criteria that makes us distinctive from other Indians. As a matter of fact, the states in India were created based on language - Bengal for the Bengali language, Karnataka for the Kannada language, etc.

Can culture be preserved without the language?

History has taught us one fact - preserving one's language helps preserve a strong cultural identity. Many American Indian tribes have proven this - those tribes who lost their language also lost their cultural identity with time. We have seen many Bengali families in Orissa maintain their language even after several generations. By keeping their language, they have been able to preserve a distinct culture.

Some people argue, "Our kids are American, why should they learn Oriya?". One could answer it this way, "By learning Oriya, will our kids be any less American?". The idea of assimilation has lost its cause to pluralism in America. The melting pot of the 1950s and 1960s has given way to the salad bowl of the 1980s and 1990s.

When we don't expose our kids to our own culture, they grow up with a sense of void or emptiness. As they mature into adulthood, they start searching for that unique identity. Especially in college, our children see other Indian kids and feel a sense of commonality. That is followed sometimes by blindly imitating what other Indians are doing. Knowing their own Oriya culture from the beginning could negate that sense of void. They could appreciate other cultures better without following it blindly.

As they say, "First you need roots to make yourself strong, then you need wings to fly as high as you can." We need to provide our kids with strong roots, so that they can soar high in life.

Why deprive our kids from this privilege?

We sometimes say, "don't write in Oriya in the OSA Jour-

nal, because our kids can not read it." We also say, "Don't talk in Oriya at the OSA Convention, because our kids can not understand it." This almost sounds like we want to protect our kids from the menace of the Oriya language. They don't need protection from our own language, rather they should be exposed to it. Even if they can not read it, at least they should be able to recognize it as Oriya alphabets just by looking at it. If they can not understand it, at least they should know it's Oriya when they hear it.

Do we want our great-grandchildren to say one day, "I know my great grandparents were from India, but they spoke some funny language which I know nothing about." How about this statement, instead, "I know they were from Orissa. They spoke Oriya, and I know how it sounds like."

Recently I met a twenty-six year old girl whose father was Portuguese and mother was American. Her father never thought of teaching her the Portuguese language. She said to me how she wished she knew her father's native language. She felt that by knowing Portuguese, she would have part of her father with her for ever. A common myth in our community is that early teaching of spoken Oriya would adversely affect our kid's ability to speak English in school. Many examples prove this to be wrong. Rather, kids who speak Oriya early have an advantage to easily pick up other languages like Spanish or French in their high school years. Of course the European children grow up fluent in multiple languages without getting confused.

From us to them

If we observe people who have taught their kids their own language, one thing stands out in every instance - their deep love for the language and their pride in it. When we love something like football, cars, computers, or money, don't we share it with our kids? Our kids somehow always pick up our interests without us explicitly teaching it to them. It is the natural process of observation. Forcing does not work. If we love our language Oriya, we will share it with our kids with great pride.

When I was a little kid, my mother used to recite Oriya poetry to me. She never thought I was too young to understand it. She loved poetry and recited it all the time. Her sheer enjoyment in the sublime rhythm of say, a Gadanayak poem, transcended any age barrier between us and transmitted to me a sense of pure joy. When I grew up, I also found myself loving poetry. I am thankful to her for that privilege.

One day I asked one of my kids who loves 'Pakhala' this question - what if he never knew what was 'Pakhala', if I would have never exposed him to the wonderful taste of this typical Oriya dish? His answer was, It would have been a

very sad thing. In fact it would be a tragedy not to expose our kids to our soft rhythmic language, our circular alphabets, our idiosyncratic expressions, our unique food and festivals, our folk tales, and many other aspects of our culture.

Is it easier said than done?

Language is learnt naturally by 'listening', this is an universal truth. This says that we parents must speak it at home. Our children must hear it often to be able to speak it.

The learning process happens unconsciously, in a natural way between us parents and our children. There is no deliberate effort involved. The bottom line - we do not need to force the Oriya language or culture on our kids. We ourselves must love it enough to share it with pride.

If we love it, they will.

— Sweta Padma Dash lives in San Jose with her husband Jnana Ranjan Dash.

ନିଜ ଘର

ପରାଶର ମିଶ୍ର

ଜୀବନ ନିଃସଙ୍ଗ ଲାଗେ ବୋଲିତ
ଗଡ଼ାଯାଏ ପିଲାଙ୍କ କଳରାଜରେ ଉଠୁ ପଡ଼ ହେଉଥିବା ଘର
ଉପରେ ନିରାପଦ କଂକ୍ରିଟର ଛାତ
ବାରିପଡ଼ୁ ବେଢ଼ି ରହିଥିବା ମଜଲୁତ ଉଚ୍ଚା ପାଚେରୀ ଆଉ
ସାମ୍ନାରେ ବିରାଟ ଚାଲାବନ୍ଦ ଲୁହାର ଫାଟମ ।

ଅମ୍ଭାୟ ସୁଜନଙ୍କୁ ପୁରୁଷ ପଣିଆ ଦେଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ
ବାହାର ଲୋକଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ଦୂରରେ ରହି ବାହାରିବା ମାରିବା ପାଇଁ
ବିଦ୍ରୋହ, ବିପ୍ଳବ, ଷଡ଼ଯନ୍ତ୍ର ଓ ବିପଦରୁ ସହଜରେ ଖସିବା ପାଇଁ
ନିଜ ମୁହଁକୁ ନିଜେ ଦେଖୁ
ନିଜ ପ୍ରେମରେ ନିଜେ ପଡ଼ି ନିରୀହ ବନିବା ପାଇଁ
ଘରଟିଏ ଲୋଡ଼ା - ନିଜ ଘର ।

ନିଜ ପାଇଁ ସବୁ କିଛି ଲୋଡ଼ା: ପୁଷ୍ପ, ଶାନ୍ତି, ସୁବିଧା
ନିଜ ଘରକୁ ଏମିତି ଟେକି ଦିଆଯାଏ ସହର ମଝିରେ ଯେ
ଫାଶାର ଫାନ୍ଦ ଭିତରେ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ପରିସରର
ପରିସୀମାରେ ନିଜ ଔଷଧ୍ୟ ନିଜ ଅସ୍ଥିତ୍ୟର ଅହଂକାର
ବିରାଟ କାୟା ମେଲାଇ ବସିଥାଏ
ରାଜକୀୟ ଠାଣିରେ - ନିଜ ଘରେ ।

ଘର କାହାର ବିଷୟ ବା ଗଡ଼େରେ
କେଉଁ ଘର ଅବା ଦୁଃଖ, ବିପଦ, ଆଶଙ୍କାମୁକ୍ତ?
ପିତାମାତାଙ୍କ ହିତୋପଦେଶ
ପତିଙ୍କ ଅହଂ, ଗର୍ବ ଆୁ ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କ ଚାତୁରୀ
ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କର ଔଷଧ୍ୟ ଓ ବାବାରେ
ତୋ ଶାସନର ଲମ୍ବା ଡାଲ
କେତେ ଦିନ ଅବା ଶୁଦ୍ଧନିତ କରିବ ପ୍ରତିଟି ଦୃଶ୍ୟକୁ
ତୋ ନାଟକର ପ୍ରତିଟି ଅଭିନେତା, ଅଭିନେତ୍ରୀକୁ?

ଘର ଭିତରେ ରହିଥିଲେ
ବିପଦ, ସଂକଟ କଣ ଦୂର ହୋଇଯାଏ, ଶେଷ ହୋଇଯାଏ କି
ଦୁଃଖର, ନିର୍ଯ୍ୟାତନାର
ମାୟାଗ୍ରସ୍ତ, ମୋହଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ଜୀମନାର, ଆବଶ୍ୟକତାର?
ଅସମ୍ଭବ ଜୀବନର ଅନ୍ୟନାମଲ ଲୋଭ
ଲୋଭରେ ଆଖି ଖୋଲିଲେ - ଅସହାୟତା, ବ୍ୟାକୁଳତା
ଘରଭିତରଗାୟାବ - ଭୟ, ଆଶଙ୍କା, ଦୁଃଖ ପରିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ।

ସମୟ, ସୁବିଧା, ସୁଯୋଗ ଦେଖୁ
ତାଲି ଆସ ପାଚେରି ଡେଇଁ ନିବୁଜ ଘରଭିତରୁ
ଖୋଲା ଆକାଶତଳକୁ
ଝଣକର ଲଂଗଳା ପାଦରେ ମାଟିର କମନାୟତାକୁ
ଆପଣାର କର ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶାଳ ପବନ
ନିର୍ମଳ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟଲୋକ ଓ ଶୁଭ୍ର ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଲୋକର ଆମ୍ବାୟତାକୁ ।

ପ୍ରତିଟି ଘଟଣା ଓ ଦୂର୍ଘଟଣାସହ
ନିବିଡ଼ ଭାବେ ସଂପୃକ୍ତ ହୋଇ - ତୋ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞା, ତୋ ଅନ୍ତଃଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ
ବିବର୍ତ୍ତନଶୀଳ ଉଜ୍ଜାୟା ଓ ମନୀଷାରେ
ବଦଳାଇ ଦେ ମଣିଷର ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ସଂଜ୍ଞା
ବନ୍ଦକର ହାଣ୍ଡକାଟର ଲଢେଇ
ହିଂସା, କ୍ରୋଧ, ଦୂଶାର କ୍ରିୟାପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା
ରୂପାନ୍ତରିତ କର ପ୍ରତିଟି ମଣିଷକୁ ଉଦାର ମନରେ
କୋମଳ, କମନାୟ, ପ୍ରାକୃତୀକ, ସହଜ, ସରସ ଓ ସୁନ୍ଦର କରି

— Parashar Mishra lives in Toronto, Canada.

Sirjee

MAMATA MISRA

I had heard about Sirjee from my sister. I decided to see him in action one fine October morning. My sister and I followed him to the parking lot of his workplace at Shiri Fort, New Delhi, where Sirjee holds his school every morning. Sirjee has a regular job from 10 to 5, the job that earns him a living. During this time his name is D.C. Mishra. But during the school hour, every morning before his regular job starts, he is affectionately known as Sirjee by a bunch of kids.

Some children were already waiting when we arrived. Their little faces lit up when they saw us. A cloud of dust was rising in one corner of the parking lot. A sweeper with a broom emerged from behind the cloud and announced that the parking lot was not available for school that day as he had to do his duty there in preparation for some upcoming event. He directed us to an adjacent area partially enclosed by a brick wall. As we were walking in that direction, a girl of about ten came and touched my feet saying "Namaste Madam." A few others followed her. Our association with Sirjee had given my sister and me the new status of "Madam."

We settled down in the "classroom," which was an unpaved open area adjacent to a one-room house with a covered porch, where some clothes were hanging from a loosely tied string. In one corner of the open area was some white residue of soapy water on two square flat rocks. My curious survey of the place led me to believe that the place was the living quarters of the sweeper, which he had generously donated for an hour to be used as the classroom of the day.

Sirjee sat on the porch and took out a stack of notebooks and a bundle of pencils out of his bag. The children had settled comfortably on the unpaved floor of dust and weeds facing Sirjee. There were about 35 kids, with an even distribution of boys and girls, ranging in ages two to twelve, all sitting quietly. Obviously, the toddlers were not there to study but were under the care of their older siblings, who were in Sirjee's class. Perhaps this was one of the reasons why their older siblings were not in school, I mean regular school, in the first place.

School started with everyone sitting in meditation and chanting "Om." Then they repeated the pledge one line at a time after Sirjee. "God, we are good boys and girls. We will not lie. We will not steal. We will not gamble. We will be respectful to our parents." After the pledge, the students waited patiently for their turns while Sirjee called their names one by one, not for attendance but to talk to them and hand them out their individually planned lessons he had carefully prepared the night before. The chil-

dren were of different ages and at different learning levels. Some children were learning their numbers, some were doing single-digit addition and subtraction, some were doing more difficult addition and subtraction with regrouping, some were learning their multiplication tables, and some were doing long divisions. Some students were learning their alphabets while others were reading books.

Therefore, every evening, Sirjee had to examine the work done in class by each student and prepare the next day's worksheets for each student appropriate for his or her level. This work could easily add up to about two hours every evening.

Sirjee distributed the lessons and worksheets and explained to each student what he or she needed to do and how. It was surprising to see the students at work. The noise level seemed to be less than that of a regular classroom. The toddlers were also scribbling on their older siblings' notebooks. Sirjee kept on working with one child at a time for the whole hour keeping a diverse group of 35 kids including toddlers gainfully occupied. The class was attentive. The children were not distracted by the street noises, not even those of the children playing on the street. On the contrary, the street people including the children were stopping to peek at the class. To justify my "madam" status, I helped the class when the line was getting long near Sirjee. I found that the children were getting correct answers about 90% of the time. As rewards for their good work, Sirjee would give them a smile, a gentle pat on the back, or words of encouragement. Not a single child's work remained unacknowledged, unappreciated. No wonder these children kept coming to Sirjee's school.

Sirjee's class ended with the pledge followed by a quiet time of one minute. When the class was dismissed, each child came to say goodbye with "Sirjee, namaste," "Madamjee namaste," or "Auntiejee, namaste," before leaving. These children may lack food, clothing, or shelter, but there was no lack of manners in them.

When I visited, Sirjee's school had been in operation for about a year. Fourteen of his students had "graduated," i.e., moved on to attend regular school. One of them was making highest scores in his class, Sirjee informed us. On the dusty grounds of Delhi, breathing the dust and smoke of Delhi street air, the street children are learning basic skills from Sirjee. But more important, these children are learning basic human values — love and respect, kindness, caring, and sharing. Sirjee teaches them all this by example.

Sirjee's work is an example of how one individual can make a difference in the lives of many. Without incor-

poration, fundraising, or publicity, Sirjee has set out to do a difficult job and has been successful at it. His work is his hobby. His teaching method does not require bells and whistles, only a notebook and a pencil for which he pays from his own pocket, and lots of attention for each child for which he pays with his own time from his own heart. The children who couldn't sit still even for five minutes a year ago, sit attentively for an hour in Sirjee's class, learning whatever Sirjee teaches. Perhaps Sirjee has been successful at this work because he understands that every child can learn, and his medium of teaching is the human language — of love, of touching hearts, of giving and ap-

preciating. Perhaps he knows that in our willingness to give that which we seek, we keep the abundance of the universe circulating in our lives.

Sirjee's full name is Durga Charan Mishra. He lives in Delhi with his wife Jyotsna and children Bapuni and Priya. His supportive family members join him at "school" on holidays. The author had visited his "school" in October 95 and was inspired enough to write this article.

— Mamata Misra is a community volunteer living in Austin, Texas with husband Jayadev Misra.

An Evening at Puri Sea Beach

By DEBU PANDA

The sea starts roaring
With its puissant waves
As her beloved sun sets down
Turning the entire ambience into gold.
I can feel the sanctity of the bells and conch shells
Played at the distant temple
As murmuring of birds mingles wonderfully
With the evening prayer;
And the lord of universe readies himself
For going to bed.

The afraid children enjoy
Their race with the playful waves
And the tired pilgrim enjoys the aroma of sacred sand
with all his senses;
The poor traders count their little earnings
And the fisher-men return with their tiny boats
After the long working hours.
I still keep watching at the incessant waves
With unbounded thoughts
As the moon appears at the sky
Declaring the end of another day
At lovely Puri beach.

— Debu Panda lives in Bellevue, Washington with his wife Renuka.

ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ବିଜୟ ମୋହନ ମିଶ୍ର

ପ୍ରକୃତିର ଆଦିମ ଅନ୍ତରରୁ
ସୃଜନର ପରମ ବିନ୍ଦୁରୁ,
ନର ମୁହିଁ, ନାରୀ ମୁହିଁ,
ବୃକ୍ଷ, ବାଲୁତ, ଯୁବକ, କିଶୋର ମୁହିଁ ।
ଜଗତର ଚେତା ମୁହିଁ,
ବିଜୟର ଜେତା ମୁହିଁ,
କରୁଣର ଶ୍ରୋତା ମୁହିଁ,
ସମାଜର ବାଣୀ ମୁହିଁ ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

ଜଗ ବିକାଶର ଇତିହାସେ,
କାହିଁ ବା ଶୋକ କାହିଁ ବା ଉଦ୍ଧାସେ,
କେବେ ବା ଆନନ୍ଦେ କେବେ ବା ପରିହାସେ,
ଗତିଛ ସମାଜ ମୁହିଁ ନାଚେ ମୁଁ ଉଲ୍ଲାସେ ।
ମାୟାସିଦ୍ଧି ମୁହିଁ, ପ୍ରଗତିର ଦୀପ୍ତ ମୁହିଁ,
ମମତା ଲୋଭ ଶୁଧା ମାନ ଜର୍ଜରିତ,
ଅସହିଷ୍ଟ ଅଳିକ ଦୁର୍ବୋଧ୍ୟ ମୁହିଁ ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

ପୃଥିବୀର ବକ୍ଷ ଚରି ସୃଜିଲି ମୁଁ ଖେତ,
ସମୁଦ୍ରର ବକ୍ଷ ଚରି ଭସାଏ ବୋଇତ ।
ଭାସମାନ ମେଘ ଦେଖି ହେଲି ମୁଁ ବିସ୍ମିତ,
ଆକାଶର ବକ୍ଷ ଚରି ଉଡ଼ାଇଲି ଯୋତ ।
କଲି ପୁଣି କମାଣ ମୁଁ ଧ୍ବନି ପ୍ରତିଧ୍ବନି,
ସଂସାର କବଳ ଦୀକ୍ଷା ମନେ ଉନ୍ମାଦି,
ବୀର ମୁହିଁ, ଭୀତ ମୁହିଁ, ଅଭିଶପ୍ତ ମୁହିଁ,
ନିହତା, ବନ୍ଦୀ, କ୍ଷତ, ଉଦ୍‌ଗାରଣ ମୁହିଁ,
ଧରାବୁକେ ମୁଁ ଅସାମ୍ୟ, ଅସମାପ୍ତ ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

ବେଦର ଯାଜ୍ଞବଲ୍କ୍ୟ ମୁହିଁ,
ଦର୍ଶନର କପିଳ ଗୌତମ ।
ବାଲ୍ମୀକୀ ହୋଇ ସୃଜିଲି ମୁଁ ରାମ ହନୁମାନ ,
ବୃକ୍ଷ ହୋଇ ଅବତରି ହେଲି ଭଗବାନ ।
ଦୟା ଧର୍ମ ଦାନ ଶୁଣ ସତ୍ୟ ଆଚରଣ,
ଯାଶ୍ରୁ ଶ୍ରୀଞ୍ଜ ହୋଇ କଲି କ୍ଷମା ଆଚରଣ ।
ଗଣିତ ସଙ୍ଗୀତ କଳା ତାରୁ ଭାଷାକୃତି,
ଗଢ଼ିଲି ତୋଳିଲି ମୁହିଁ ସୃଜନୀ ଶକତି ।
ପଣ୍ଡିତ ମୁହିଁ, ଗୁଣୀ ମୁହିଁ, କବି କଳାକାର,
ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ମୁହିଁ, ଲବ୍ୟ ମୁହିଁ, ବିଜ୍ଞ ଆଶୁସାର ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

ମାୟାବୀ ରାବଣ ମୁହିଁ ସୀତା ଅପହରି,
କରେ ଯୁଦ୍ଧ, ଭୟ ନାହିଁ, ସାମନ୍ତ ସଂହାରି ।
ଧୃତରାଷ୍ଟ୍ର ମୁହିଁ ଅଶ୍ବ ପିତା ଅଟେ ସ୍ନେହସିଦ୍ଧି,
ଶକୁନି ମୁହିଁ ଦୁର୍ଯ୍ୟୋଧନ ଖଳେ ପଶାଲିଦ୍ଧି ।
ଆଲୋକଶାସ୍ତ୍ରର ନେପୋଲିୟନ୍ ମୁହିଁ କଲି ରାଜ୍ୟବିଜୟ,
ଲୋଭୀ ମୁହିଁ, ଲିପ୍ସୁ ମୁହିଁ, କରେ ଜନକ୍ଷୟ ।
ହିଂସୁକ ମୁହିଁ, ଇର୍ଷାସିଦ୍ଧି, କ୍ରୋଧୀ ଆତ୍ମରତ,
ବଣିକ ମୁହିଁ ସେବାପଣେ କିବା ଛଳରତ ।
ଜାତି ମୁହିଁ, ବିଦେଷ ମୁହିଁ, ବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଦେଶ ଆଚାର,
ମନ ଅଭିମାନେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ମୁହିଁ, ନ କରେ ବିଚାର ।
ଅର୍ଥୀ ମୁହିଁ, କାମୀ ମୁହିଁ, ବ୍ୟର୍ଥୀ ମୁହିଁ, କି ବା ବ୍ୟଭିଚାର,
ସ୍ୱାର୍ଥୀ ମୁହିଁ, କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ମୁହିଁ, ବିକଳ ମୁହିଁ, କରେ ଅଜ୍ଞାନାର ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

ନାରୀ ମୁହିଁ, ଜଗତର ମାତା ମୁହିଁ,
ଶିଶୁର ବୃକ୍ଷ ମୁହିଁ, କିଶୋରର ବିଦ୍ୟା ମୁହିଁ,
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ମୁହିଁ, ସତୀ ମୁହିଁ, ଦେବକୀ ଯଶୋଦା,
କୃତୀ ମୁହିଁ, ମ୍ୟାରୀ ମୁହିଁ, ପୁତ୍ର ବସୁନ୍ଧରା ।
ସ୍ନେହୀ ପାଞ୍ଚାଳୀ ମୁହିଁ, ଭକ୍ତ ମାରାବାଇ,
ସଂସାରର ଇଚ୍ଛାତ ମୁହିଁ, କେବେ ପୁଣି ଛଳନାମୟୀ ।
ଧର୍ମ ମୁହିଁ, ଶୁଧା ମୁହିଁ, ପୁଣି ପ୍ରେରଣା ।
ଉତ୍ସୁକ ମୁହିଁ, ସୃଷ୍ଟି ମୁହିଁ, ବ୍ୟଥା ଓ ଯାତନା,
ଯୋଷିତା ମୁହିଁ, ସଞ୍ଚିତା ମୁହିଁ, ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ବା କଳନା ।
ଆକାଶର ତାରା ମୁହିଁ, ନଦୀର ଧାରା ମୁହିଁ,
ନିଦ୍ରାର ସୁସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ମୁହିଁ, ଯୋଗର ଶକ୍ତି ମୁହିଁ,
ଲାବଣ୍ୟ ମୁହିଁ, ଧ୍ୟାନୀ ମୁହିଁ, ନାରୀ ମୁହିଁ ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

ଇତିହାସ ପୃଷ୍ଠାପରେ ସମୁଦ୍ର ମୁହିଁ,
ଧରଣୀର ବୁକୁପରେ ପଥକ ମୁହିଁ,
ପିରାମିଡ୍ ଅଜନ୍ତା କୋଶାଳର ବିକାଶୀ ମୁହିଁ,
ସଜବାଜ ଆସର ଭୋଜନର କରଣୀ ମୁହିଁ ।
ସାହୁକାର ମୁହିଁ, କ୍ରୀତଦାସ ମୁହିଁ, ଅନ୍ୱେଷକ ମୁହିଁ -
ଗବେଷକ ମୁହିଁ, ସାର୍ଥକ ମୁହିଁ, ପୁଣି ଲାଞ୍ଚିତ ମୁହିଁ -
ଶାନ୍ତ ମୁହିଁ, ଉଗ୍ର ମୁହିଁ, ଭାବୁକ ମୁହିଁ, କଳଙ୍ଗ ମୁହିଁ -
ନିୟନ୍ତାର ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଯୋଗେ ସତେ ମାନସାଙ୍ଗ ମୁହିଁ ।
ଶଙ୍ଖରର ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ମୁହିଁ, ଗୁରୁର ଗୌରବ ମୁହିଁ,
ଶବ୍ଦର ତରଙ୍ଗ ମୁହିଁ, ବହିର ଆଲୋକ ମୁହିଁ,
ଜନନୀର ରୂପ ମୁହିଁ, ପ୍ରକୃତିର ସାକ୍ଷୀ ମୁହିଁ ।
ମୁଁ ଏକ ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ।

- Bijoy Mishra lives in Boston with wife Subarna. He is a regular writer in the OSA Journal.

Meridian

RUPESH NAYAK

Part-I

I am a little water droplet
I used to wander in the sky... all around
Now all I know is I am falling...

I don't know how I am born..
I don't know where I will land..
All I know is I am falling.

I see the earth from far
I see the earth from close
I don't know why they look so different
All I know is I am falling.

The air asks me to stop
Don't know why I am not stopping
All I know is I am falling.

I am trying to hold the cloud,
All I know is I am falling, faster....

But I never knew, why I am falling,
I always wonder why do I fall?
Why to fall downwards...?
Why I can't fly up.... like a bird...
Why I don't have the wings to fly....?

Part-II

I am falling... still falling...
All drops have to fall...
So I am falling...

I also know, if I never fall,
Oceans will be dry...
No cloud will ever be born...
So is another drop...

I give life to trees...
Fill the ocean.... flow the stream...
I am the water drop... don't see where I am going...
I fall on rich... I fall on poor...
I fall on mountains.... I fall on rivers...
For me the whole world is same....

I don't need to know why I am falling...
If it is ok for me to fall....
I am falling,
Dancing left and right... whistling to the bees..
I enjoy falling.....

Hey.... The hurricane...is taking me up...
Take me where You can... I will fall..
I will definitely fall...
I like falling...

—Rupesh Nayak lives in Santa Clara, California

ବଂଧନରୁ ମୁକ୍ତି ପାଇବାର ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷାରେ

ଉତ୍ତରା ଦାସ

ଜୀବନକୁ ଭଲପାଇ ଶିଖିବାର ସମୟ
ଯେମିତି ଦୌଡ଼/ରେସ୍‌ରେ
ରହିଗଲା ଅନେକ ପକ୍ଷରେ
ହାରିବାର ଆକାଶିତ ଲକ୍ଷରେ,
ନିଜକୁ ବି ଆଦରି ନେଇ
ସେମିତି ବଂଚିବା ଭିତରେ
କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି ମନ ଚାହୁଁ ହେଉଯାଏ ॥

ଅନେକଙ୍କୁ ଆପଣେଇ
ଅକୃତଜ୍ଞତାର ପୁରସ୍କାର ପାଇବା ପରେ
ବାଧ୍ୟତାର ଆତ୍ମଗ୍ଳାନି ସଂପର୍କଠାରୁ ବିଚ୍ଛେଦର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମଣରାଜ ଟାଣି ଦୂରେଇଯାଏ
ଏବଂ ଅନୁଭବ କରେ
ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୋଷତାର କୋମଳ ଝର୍କ
ଆଉ ତାର ନିସର୍ଗ ଭଲପାଇବା
ସିଏ ଏକା ଆପଣାର ଲାଗେ ॥

ଜଣାଳ କଷଟି ପଥରେ ନିଜକୁ ପରଜୁଥିବା ନାୟିକା ଅସଫଳ ଅଭିନେତ୍ରୀ ପଦବୀ ପାଇବି
ରଂଗମଞ୍ଚରୁ ପଳାଇ ପାରେ ନାହିଁ
କାରଣ ନାଟକରେ ଏଯାବତ୍ କୁଳମାତ୍ସ ବି ଆସିନି
ମୃତ୍ୟୁର ପାପଦେବତା ମାନଙ୍କ ଗଳାରେ
ଛଳନାର ପ୍ରେମମାଳା ଦେଇ
ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିବି,
ନା ଅଶନିଶ୍ୱାସୀ ହେଇ ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷା କରିବି
ଶେଷ ଦୃଶ୍ୟର ଶେଷ ଅଙ୍କ ସରିବାଯାଏ ॥

ତାପରେ ?
ତାପରେ ମୁଁ ମୁକ୍ତ ବଂଧନ ମାୟାରୁ
ସେତେବେଳେ ମୋ ନିଶ୍ୱାସ ଅଶାନ୍ତିର କୁହେଳିକା ହେବ
ଅଥବା
ପ୍ରଶଂସିତ ହସ ପାଶୁତାଏ ଆଖିରେ ଝଲସି ଭଠି
ଛାତିର ଝରିନରେ ଶେଷ ଶବଦ ଆଜି ନେବ
ସେ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ ଶୁଭଲଗ୍ନ ମୋ ଭାଗ୍ୟର ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୀବ ଦେହରେ
(ତମ) ଅହଂକାରରୁ ରୂପାନ୍ତରିତ ଲୁହର ଅର୍ଘ୍ୟ ସବୁ ଅଜାତି
ତମେ କଣ ଲୋଟିଯିବ ଆଜୁଳତାରେ ?
ଅବା ଇର୍ଷାର ଗଙ୍ଗାଗିରି ମଉଳି ମାଟିରେ ମିଶିଗଲା ବୋଲି
ଗର୍ବର ନିଆଁବାଣ ଖଣିବ ଭୁଲରେ
ଅଥବା ଖୁସିର ଘୋଷଣା ଜାଳିବ ??

—Uttara Das lives in San Ramon, California with her husband Binay Das.
She is a frequent writer and a book of her poetry has been recently published
in Orissa.

What's There In A Name Anyway: My Own Experience

AJIT MAHAPATRA

ORISSA:

While in Orissa I was always known as "Ajit" among my friends and no one ever bothered to query about my middle name or last name. They were just not interested. Those are the days my friend

IIT KHARAGPUR:

When I joined IIT, Kharagpur for my M.Tech, IITians suddenly developed a habit of calling me "Mahapatra Yaar". I could not know why all of a sudden they transformed me from "Ajit" to "Mahapatra Yaar". I was not quite happy with this transformation. [Let's not talk about those bad guys who opted to call me "GHASSI" because they thought that the Agricultural Engineers were destined to deal with "Ghass" (grass) only, nothing else !!]

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY:

When I arrived in Budapest in the winter of 1984 I found myself being called "Ayit". I had a hard time explaining to every Tom, D and H that I'm not "Ayit" but Ajit. But they simply laughed it off.

Later on I discovered that in Hungarian language "j" is pronounced as "y" and "dsz" as "j". So if I wished they should pronounce my name correctly then I should spell my name as "Adszit". The spelling itself frightened me. I didn't dare to change.

On my very first day at the University in Budapest, our pretty, young Hungarian language teacher (I can assure you Hungarian women are the MOST beautiful in

Europe) could not at all pronounce Mahapatra. It was next to impossible. But she was quite comfortable with my middle name "Kumar" and started calling me Mr Kumar!!

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA:

For Zambians recalling any one of my three names was too tough. So they called me "Doc" (for Dr). I wonder what would they be calling me if I did not have a Ph.D. Perhaps "Master", hope not "Mastra" !!

I am sure my mother would not have liked me being called "Mastra". She would have said why didn't I become a "Mastra" in our village school instead of coming all the way to Africa.

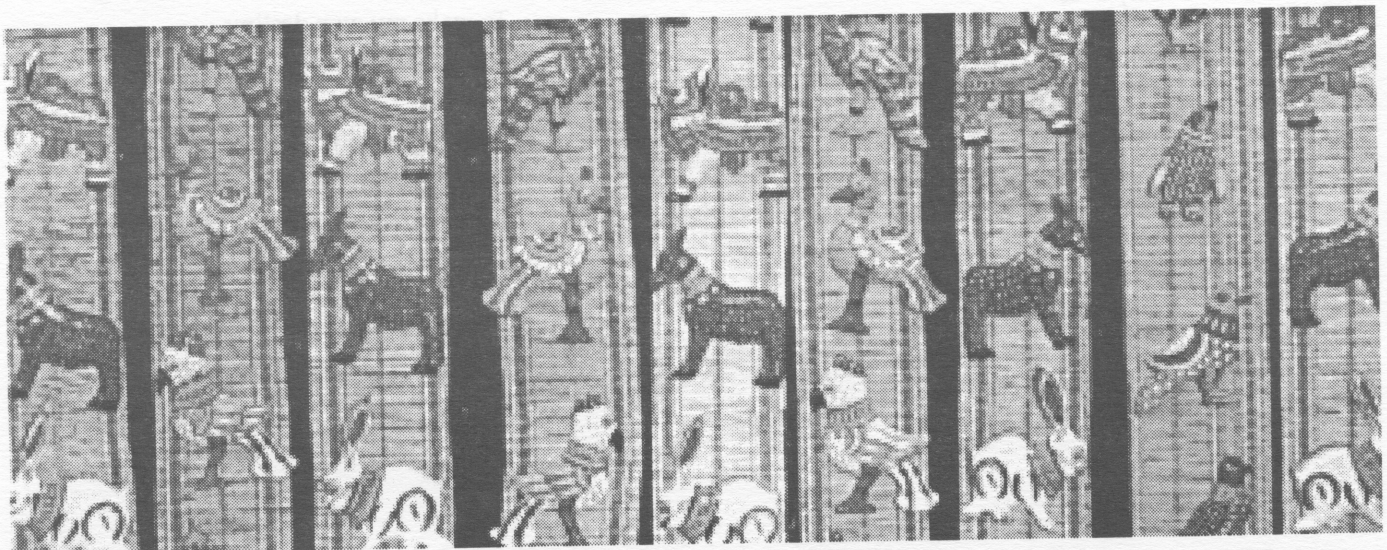
GABORONE, BOTSWANA:

But here in Botswana people have no problems with Mahapatra. Within a week everybody in the college knew me as Mahapatra and could pronounce it exactly. May be there is some similarity between Oriya and Tsetswana language !!

And for Mr Tsiako, the Registrar of our college, pronouncing "Mahapatra" was child's play. He was taught by another Mahapatra in some university in USA !!!

So it was a long way from "Ajit" to "Mahapatra yaar" to "Ayit" to "Kumar" to "Doc" to "Mahapatra" !

- Ajit Mahapatra or - Doc Adszit Kumar Mahapatra Yaar - teaches at the Botswana College of Agriculture in Gaborone, Botswana, Africa



Fight All You Can

SMRUTI RANJAN BISWAL

When the Trigger is clicking and you are of the aim
and death horns on the national Highway
yours hands are tied and feets are bolted
and devils are dancing in front of your eye.

Fight All You Can
it it easy to blow
it is only hard to make the life flow

When ankle strikes the ground
and elbow digs the dust
and retina resisting to open
to see the hazy distant light post

Fight All You Can
it it easy to die
it is hard to stop life's cry

When somebody stirs your heart
to flame the eager passion
and you are seeing the thunderstorm barrier
and the damn hell warrior

Fight All You Can
it it easy to forget
it is hard to love the grogeous margarette

When the clappings are slowing down
and the solemn silence is spreading over
and the umpire gives the sign
to face the deadly over

Fight All You Can
it is easy to be bowled
it is only hard to keep the ball rolled.

Fight All You Can till you get the booz
Because you are born to win , not to loose...

—Smruti Biswal lives in New Jersey.

The Path I Have Taken

SANAT MOHANTY

Looking back I wonder now
What did I miss? Where would I be?
This was the road I chose somehow.
What was it that beckoned me
to take this path in life's maze?
Was it a flower growing yonder
or a companions inviting gaze?
What if I'd chosen the other, I wonder.
Who else would I have met?
Would I be a different me?
What new worries would I fret?
Was it a missed opportunity?

I had looked at the other way
- a beaten path - saw street lamps glow.
All along there milestones lay
and pointers saying where I should go.

But the swaying woods were calling me
to cut and carve my own way through.
To make my own destiny
and go exactly where I wanted to.

Each step now is a labor of love.
I decide when I walk or pause
to gaze at the patterns of stars above
unhurried by the pressures of time or cause.

— Sanat Mohanty lives in Minneapolis, MN



ଶାରୀ

ଭବାନୀ ଶଙ୍କର ଦାସ

ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହୁଏ
ଲମ୍ବି ଆସନ୍ତା ଆକାଶର ହାତ
ଭଜା ନିଜା ମେଘର ତୋରଣ ତେଇଁ
ପାହାଚର ଗୋଟିଏ ଶିଖର ଛାଡ଼ି
ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ ଶିଖରକୁ
ଅନନ୍ତ ସେ ଆକାଶର ହାତଦ୍ୱୟ ଧରି
ଝୋଲନ୍ତି ମୁଁ ଦୋଳି ।

ଝୁଲୁ ଝୁଲୁ ଉଡ଼ନ୍ତା ସେ ପକ୍ଷୀଟିରେ ତାକି
କହନ୍ତି ମୁଁ କଥା ସେମାନଙ୍କ
ହୃଦୟକୁ ଦୁଇହାତେ ଜାବୋଡ଼ିବା
ଧରିଥିବା ଶିଶୁଟିର କଥା,
ଲହଡ଼ ଭାଙ୍ଗିବା ବୟସ ଯାହାର
ମମତାର ବନ୍ଧୋଜୁ ଯାଇଛି ବାହୁଡ଼ ।

କଥା ମୁଁ କହନ୍ତି ତାହାର
ବାହୁଡ଼ା ପଥକୁ ଯେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଯାର
ଆଦରରେ ଅନାନ୍ତି ଓଟାରି
ପ୍ରିୟତମେ ଦେଇଛ ମେଲାଣି
ପଥହରା ବନ୍ଧୁ ତାର ଗାଉଅଛି କେତେ
ସଂଗ୍ରାମର କେଉଁ ଅବା ଅନିତ୍ୟ ଜୟନ୍ତୀ ।

କୋମଳେ ଆଦରି ପାଖୁଡ଼ା ତାର
ଗନ୍ଧ କହୁ କହୁ କହିଥାନ୍ତି
ବ୍ୟର୍ଥ କେଉଁ ପ୍ରଣୟୀର କଥା

ଆଦର ଯାହାକୁ କୁହ
ଶବ୍ଦ ସବୁ ଯେ ପ୍ରାଣରେ ବନ୍ଧା
ତନ୍ମୟୀ ସେ ଅତୀତର ସତ୍ତ୍ୱ ସ୍ୱରେ
କିଏ ସେହୁ ଅସମର୍ଥ
କିବା ସେହୁ ନିର୍ମମତା
କି ମହାନ ଶବ୍ଦ ଟିଏ
ପଚାରନ୍ତି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଝଞ୍ଜାଟେ
ଆଗୋ ବନ୍ଧୁ, ଦୁଇ ବନ୍ଧ ବାନ୍ଧିବାକୁ ଲୋଡ଼ା ?

ଗନ୍ଧ ସବୁ ଶୁଣି ଯାରି
ଶାରୀ ମୋର ଗାଇଥାନ୍ତା ଗୀତ
ମୁମୁର୍ଷୁର ନିଶ୍ୱାସରେ, ନିଃସହାୟତାରେ
ଅନ୍ଧତାରେ ସ୍ଥିତ ହସି
ଆଖିକୁ ଓଟାରି ଇଶ୍ୱରାରେ କହିଯାନ୍ତା
”ହାତେ ତୁମ ଆସିବିନି ମୁଁ ଗୋ
ଅନନ୍ତ ଆକାଶୁ କେବେ
ଲମ୍ବା ହାତ ଆସିବିନି ଲମ୍ବି
ପାହାଚ ତୁଠାରୁ ତୁଠକୁ
ତୁମକୁ ଗୋ ଖେଳିବାକୁ ହେବନାହିଁ ଦୋଳି
ସମୟ ଲେଉଟି ଯିବ
ଆସିଥିଲା ଯେଉଁ ବାଟେ ପୁଣି
ତୁମେ, ମୁଁ ବସିଥିବା ଅନନ୍ତେ ଅନାଇ
ଶେଷ କିମ୍ବା ଆରମ୍ଭର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଆଡ଼େ ଚାହିଁ ।”

— Bhabani Das lives in Bozeman, Montana.



ଅମୃତା ଉତ୍କଳ ସଂଘମିତ୍ରା ମହାରଣା

ଗାଈବାକୁ ମତେ କହିବୁନି ବିଷ୍ଣୁପ୍ରିୟା ମିଶ୍ର

ତୋ ମମତାରେ ରଣୀ ମୁଁ
ତୁ ମୋର ପ୍ରଥମ ଦୁନିଆ
ପ୍ରତୀକ ତୁ ତୋ ସମୟର
ଜାତିର ଐତିହ୍ୟର
ତୁ ଯେ ଦେବଦତ୍ତା, ଆର୍ଯ୍ୟବାଳା
ଅମୃତା ଉତ୍କଳ ।

ଶିଶୁର ସାରଳ୍ୟ ନେଇ ଯଦି କେବେ ଗଢେ ଭାବର କୋଣାର୍କ
ମନ ଧାଏଁ ଆତ୍ମାର ଅରଣ୍ୟେ
ଆଖି ଖୋଲେ ମହାନଦୀ ପାଣିର ତରଳ ମୁଣ୍ଡରେ
ଏତେଦୂରୁ ପହଞ୍ଚିଯାଏ
ନଇପାଠା, କଳମ ଲଗା, ଓଷ୍ଠଗଛ, ବାଦାମ କିଆରୀ
ଆମ୍ବତୋଟା ଓ ଧାନଗଦାର ଫେଣାଫେଣି ବାସ୍ନା ଭିତରକୁ
ଛୁଆଁପତର, ଖିରି ଖେଚୁଡରେ
ପୁରି ଉଠୁଥିବା ମଗୁଣୀର ଗୁରୁବାର ସକାଳ ହାତଠାରି ତାଙ୍କେ
ଗୋବରଲିପା ପିଣ୍ଡରେ ଝୋଟି ଚିତା ହସେ
ଗେଣୁଫୁଲ, ସୋରିଷ କ୍ଷେତର ନେସାନେସି ଗାଁରେ
ସୁନାବୁଦା ମୂଳେ ଘୁମେଇ ପଡିଥାଏ ଶୀତ
ନଇଧାରେ କାଶତଣ୍ଡା ଦୋଳିଖୋଳି କହେ
ସବୁକିଛି ଆପଣାର ଏଠି ।

ସବୁ ମୋହର ଶେଷ କୋହ ଓହ୍ଲାଏ କାଳିଆ ଆଖିରେ,
ବତବାଣ୍ଟ ଧୁଳିରେ, ତା ଅଭଡ଼ାରେ
ବାରମାସେ ତେର ପରବ
ଆରିସା, କାକରା, ମଣ୍ଡାର ମହୋତ୍ସବ
ମନରେ ଭାସିଆସେ ତୁଳସୀ, ତମନ ବାସ୍ନା
ଗୁରିଯାଏ ଗୁଣ୍ଡିଚା ଯାତର ଭିତ
ଦେଉଳେ ପାରାଙ୍କ ଭିତ
ଆଉ ଘଣ୍ଟ, ବେତମାଡ଼
ସବୁ ସେମିତି ନିଜର ନିଜର ଲାଗେ
ସ୍ମୃତିର ଫସଲ ମଧ୍ୟେ ନରମ ମାଆର ପଣତ
କେମିତି ଏକ ଅଛଣ୍ଡା ଗଣ୍ଡି
କେବେ କିଏ ପକାଇଲା କାହିଁ ଖୁଆଲ୍ ନାହିଁତ ।

କେତେ ଦିନ ତୋର ଦେଖାଲୋ ସଜନୀ
କେତେ ଦିନେ ତୋର ଦେଖା
ଯେତେ ଯେତେ କଥା ଅକୁହା ରହିଛି
ସେତେ ବେଶି ହୃଦେ ଲେଖା ।

କପାଳରେ ଥିଲେ ବରଷକୁ ଥରେ
ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଉତ୍ସବେ ଦେଖା
କିବା ଟେଲିଫୋନ୍ କଥାଲୋ ସଜନୀ
ଛ, ଛ, ଇ-ମେଲ୍ ବୁଥା ।

ମଜା କଥା କହି ମନ ମଜାଇବି
ମଜାଇ ଦେବି ତୋ ମନ
ମରମ ବେଦନା ସଖୀ ତୋର ବିନା
କହି ମୁଁ ପାରେନି ଆନ ।

ଝିଅ ଏ କାହାର, ହସି ଧରେ ସୁର
ତାହାଁ ଲୋ ତୁ ରଂଗମଞ୍ଚ
ଶବଦ ହଜଇ କୋଳାହଳେ ସହୀ
ସୁରେ ତାର କି ରୋମାଞ୍ଚ ?

ରଂଗମଞ୍ଚ, ମନୁ ପରଦା ଉଠିଛି
ନାହିଁ ତ ପାଟିରେ କାର
ମମତା ଝରାଏ ମହଲ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଲେ
କଥା ବାରତା ବିଭୋର ।

ଚାଲ ହେବା ତୁନି, ଶୁଣିବା ସଜନୀ
ବାଳା ଗୀତ ସୁମଧୁର
ନରମ ବୟସୀ ନରମି ଯାଉଛି
ନୟନ ତା ଛଳଛଳ ।

ସଜଳ ନୟନା ମା'କୁ କହିବ
କକୁଳ ଝରା ମାନ
"ଗାଈବାକୁ ମତେ କହିବୁନି କେବେ
ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଫଙ୍ଗସନ" ।

— Sanghamitra Maharana lives in Sunnyvale with her husband Smarasakha.

— Bisnupriya (Tiki) Mishra lives in St. Louis, Missouri
with her husband Surya Mishra.



I Want a Grandmother!

SURA P. RATH

I never had the pleasure of enjoying the grandmother on either side of my parents. The last of four siblings in my family, I have always wondered how unplanned my arrival must have been for my forty-or-fifty-something parents; however, more than the anxiety that they might not be around to see my accomplishments in life, the passing away of my two grandmothers before I was born has traumatized me. Grandfathers, I have not thought much about; and I don't know why. Next to the missing grandmothers, the pressure of being on par with the older brother and sisters has weighed some on me.

Grandmothers in India are known for their superb story-telling ability. Give them a few minutes before nap time, and they will immediately concoct a byzantine tale, making up details as though they were eye witnesses to everything that happens in the story. And the stories may be about kings and queens, princes and princesses, ghosts and goblins, robbers and saints, moon and stars. In her stories, the princes are divinely handsome and the princesses soft like butter; the swords are of gold and the shoes of silver; the plants plot with people and the animals dream; the flying horses are always ready to help the star-struck lovers elope into the sunset.

Children growing up with the privilege of listening to grandma's fantastic tales, I guess, develop a balanced view of life in which the sordid realities of daily living are sweetened by a rich fantasy life. How negatively life is affected for someone deprived of the grandmother's imaginative nourishment, I know of no such study, nor am I qualified to undertake one even if I wanted to do so. The question is better left to the behaviorists to grapple with.

When children demand for a story, the Grandmother often begins with: what would you like to hear—the truth (fact), or the falsehood (fiction), or the story of my life? Unbeknownst to her, the question itself has two contradictions. Fact, which is the first choice on the grandma's menu of offerings, comes from the Latin *facere* (=something done or made); fiction, the second choice, comes from *ingere* (something shaped or made). Both words have one meaning in common: fact and fiction, truth or falsehood, both are made, fabricated or created or what you will. The second contradiction lies in the third choice she offers: her life story (autobiography). The life story, by necessity, must be true and factual; if it is tinted, it is also tainted, and thus is false. Grandma better make up her mind what she wants to tell. Her advantage is that by the time the inconsistencies in her story sink in, the grandchild is already asleep and in a dreamland.

But I think the contradictions are neither accidental nor unintentional. In fact, the crafty storytellers they are, the Indian grandmothers deliberately and skillfully plant

inconsistencies along their narratives to test the evolving intelligence of their grandchildren. When the child is smart enough to catch these clues and question the grandma, the story session comes to an end, and her task is over until the next one is ready to sit on her lap. Then the grandma becomes the target of the youngster's humor and jokes. In the Indian context, it's like Santa Claus and his escapades through furnaces and chimneys. Growing up with a grandma is a growing up ritual, a bildungsroman. Once you are grown up, the grandma/santaclaus is done with.

The grandma, like Saint Nicholas, is herself a myth. She is rich in imagination, richer in love and affection; but a trickster and juggler, she never reveals where she gets all her "things." One begins to wonder how she must have tricked the grandpa into doing all her bidding. She is a magician, an illusionist with muddy feet and turmeric colored hands. She is known to show up everywhere, in towns and villages, at fairs and festivals, at hospitals and cemeteries.

Back to me. Never having had one, I now want a grandmother, one who will tell me tales of fantasies, truths and half-truths, and sometimes tall tales about her own life, real or fabricated. I want her to keep telling her stories—as opposed to histories, which I can read from books—just until the time I am smart enough to catch her fibs.

And then I want her around to listen to my jokes about her, so I can impress others with my wit and intelligence by telling how backward and orthodox and traditional and conservative grandma is. I want her to be the target in my shooting gallery, and my children's too so they may have the satisfaction of feeling how advanced they are in reference to this stone-face remnant from the dinosaur days.

I want a grandmother who won't, can't get tired or sick, who never complains about the pain or fear of death. I want her to smile, look cheerful, eat all the vegetarian and non-vegetarian diet, and stand and walk tall. I want her never to bother about osteoporosis or hip fractures. I want her to be able to take care of herself and, on occasion, even watch my children at home when my wife and I have to go out on a social outing. I want her to do this just for the satisfaction of spending time with her great grandchildren, and even ask for more such opportunities.

I want a grandmother who never misses grandpa, who probably has become a prince in one of her stories.

Least of all, I want her to keep telling her stories anytime her services are needed, and the stories shall be or sound like new stories.

I want my grandmother here, now.

—Sura Rath lives in Shreveport, Louisiana

ଭାତୁହନ୍ତା ଝିନୁ ଛୋଟରାୟ

ହେ ୧୯୯୫ ।

ପଦାର୍ପଣ କଲ ଯେବେ ଧରଣୀ ବନ୍ଧରେ
ତୁକୁ ଆମ ଫାଟୁଥିଲା ଆନନ୍ଦ ଉଲ୍ଲାସେ
ନବୀନ ଆଶା, ନବୀନ ଉଦୀପନା ସବୁରି ମନରେ
ଅବଶ୍ୟ ନବବର୍ଷ ଉପଗତ ଆଜି ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ ଝୁଲୁ ଧରି କରେ ।

ଅତିଥିକୁ ସ୍ବାଗତମ୍ କରିବାରେ ବିଧିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବେ
ତୁଟି ନ ଥିଲା ଆମର ଆମେ ଗାଣିବାରେ
ଜାଳିଥିଲୁ ଶତ ଦୀପ ଏ ମନ ମନ୍ଦିରେ
ସମ୍ମାନିତ କରିଥିଲୁ ତବ ଆମ ଏ ହୃଦୟ କନ୍ଦରେ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ହାୟ !

ଏ କି ହେଲା ???
ଆମ ଆଶା ଓ ସ୍ବପ୍ନର ଶୁଭଙ୍ଗରୀ ପଞ୍ଚାନବେ
ରହିଗଲା ଆମ ପାଶେ ଚରଦିନ ପାଇଁ
ଭୟଙ୍କର ଭୟାନକ ଭାବେ ।

ଯଦି ତୁଟି ଆମ ଥିଲା ଅଭ୍ୟର୍ଥନେ ତବ
ପାରିଥାନ୍ତ ଅବା ନେଇ ଅନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତିଶୋଧ
ଦେଇ ନଥାନ୍ତ ନାହିଁ ତବ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦ
ଥିଲା ଥାନ୍ତ ପୂର୍ବ ପରି ଭାବିଥାନ୍ତ ମନେମନେ
ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ପାଇଁ କି ତବ
ଥିଲୁ ବୋଧେ ଆମେ ଅପଦାର୍ଥ ।

କିନ୍ତୁ ଏ କି କଲ ???

ସ୍ବାର୍ଥପରତାର ବଶବର୍ତ୍ତୀ ହେଇ
ନିଜକୁ ଶକ୍ତିଶାଳୀ, ଚରସ୍ବରଣୀୟ କରିବାର ପାଇଁ
ସଂସାର ଉଜାଡ଼ି କାର କି ଲାଭ ପାଇଲ ?

ମନେ ତ ରହିବ ନିଷ୍ଠେ

କିନ୍ତୁ ବାପୁଜୀଙ୍କ ସ୍ମୃତି ସହ
ହତ୍ୟାକାରୀ ନାଥୁରାମ ଯେପରି ଜଡ଼ତ
ଭାତୁହନ୍ତା ଉଣେଇଶ ପଞ୍ଚାନବେ ରହିଥିବ
ଚରକାଳ ଆମ ପାଶେ ସେପରି ଜିବିତ ।

(ଆମ ଆଦରର ଗେହୁ ଭାଇ 'ଜିତନି' ର ଆକସ୍ମିକ ଅକାଳ ବିୟୋଗ ଉଦେଶ୍ୟ ରେ ଲିଖିତ)

— Jhinu Chhotray lives in Cleveland, Ohio with husband Santanu. She is a regular contributor to the OSA Journal.

Letter to a Child :

Why Learn the Language(s) of Our Roots ?

SRIKANTA MISHRA

Seems like it happens almost everyday. As I come home from work, you run to give me a hug and say, "Bapa, guess what happened at school today...". Gently disengaging myself to put down my briefcase, I reply, "Odiya re kaha, Maa". Without skipping a beat, you carry on, "Guess kara aji ame school re kana kalu .." And so it continues, this daily ritual of sharing and bonding, with me and your Mama speaking to you mostly in Oriya while your replies are mostly in English.

Perhaps you wonder regarding this constant refrain about speaking to us in Oriya. In my weaker moments, I think about this struggle, too. What are we getting out of such an exercise? What is the relevance of Oriya in your (American) world? Why should you learn the language of our roots? Are we talking about the same roots here?

As you must have noticed, your Mama and I continue to speak to each other more in Oriya than in English. Maybe it is because we grew up speaking Oriya with our parents and relatives. Perhaps we find it easier to express many of our feelings in Oriya. Or, it could be that we are simply trying to set a good example for you.

However, the world of our childhood (and all of its unique "Oriya" aspects) is something you will never experience. Yes, you will have Indian and Oriya roots - but they will mostly come with an American flavor. Hard as it is for me to admit, Oriya seems to have very little relevance in your external world.

But learning to speak in Oriya will probably help you reciprocate better to our expressions of affection, sadness, joy and the like. Maybe you will enjoy Orissa's cultural treasures (dance, music, folk tales, literature, etc.) a little better. Perhaps you can even take part in grown-up conversations, and be transported to another "land before

time"! I hope this will all be part of a unique Indian identity for you.

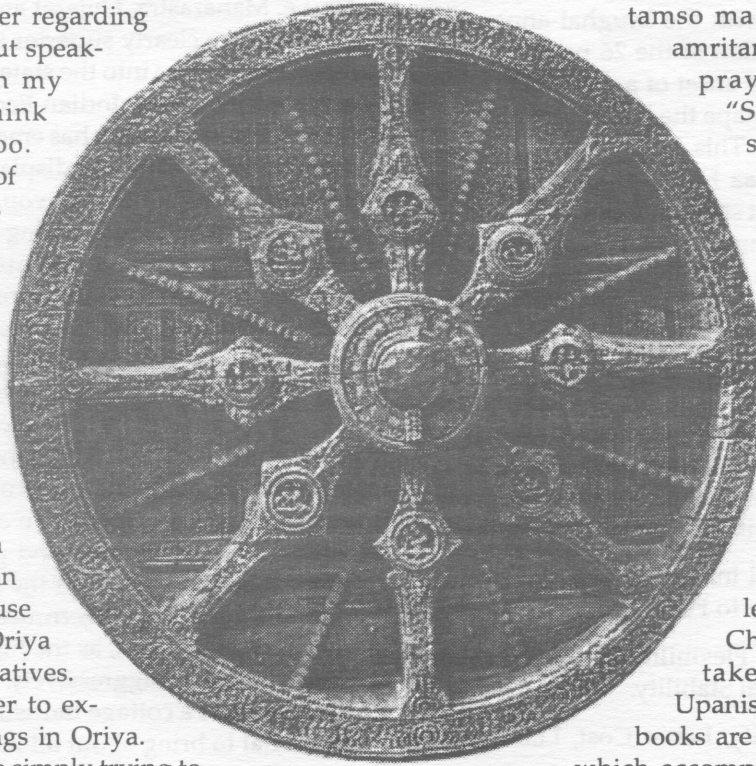
In all likelihood, you will never have the need to read and write in Oriya. But there is another Indian language that I would encourage you to learn in greater detail. Can you guess which one? Let me give you some hints. It is the most ancient and the most beautiful of all Indian languages. In fact, you know a little bit of this language already. Remember "Asato ma sadgamaya,

tamso ma jyotirgamaya, mrutyorma amritamgamaya" from your daily prayers? How about "Sarvamangala mangalye, shive sarvartha sadhike" which Mama sang during Durga Puja?

These verses (and many many more), which were written hundreds of years ago, are all in Sanskrit. In fact, the Indian fables which you enjoy so much in the Amar Chitra Katha books and the Panchatantra CD-ROM are originally in Sanskrit. The moral teachings that you learn through stories in your Chinmoy Mission classes are taken from the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas. These books are in Sanskrit, too. The songs which accompanied Sanjukta Panigrahi's beautiful Odissi dances are mostly in Sanskrit. So you see, Sanskrit opens a window into India's mythology, ancient literature and rich cultural heritage which no other language can match. That is why I think learning Sanskrit will help you appreciate all these things even better.

Almost a thousand years ago, at the invitation of King Yayati the Second, our ancestors migrated to Orissa from North India. As priests and teachers, they helped spread the knowledge and wisdom of ancient Sanskrit scriptures before books were invented. Wherever they are today, I am sure they will be watching with pleasure when you start discovering the beauty of Sanskrit.

- Srikanta Mishra, Editor of the 1997 Souvenir Issue of the OSA Journal, lives in Austin, TX.



Orissa - Role of her Government, Residents and Non-Residents

PURNA C. MOHANTY

Introduction:

Orissa - our motherland and the darling of our hearts is proud of her history with ups and downs. The Golden Years from the 7th century AD to the 13th century AD, when Orissa was a glowing center of superb artistic expression, of commerce, of pilgrimage and of civilization, constitute the brightest part of the history. From the 13th century onwards starts the last phase of Orissa's history, beginning with the Mughal annexation and ending with the unification of the 26 princely states with the Indian republic - the onset of a new era [1]. This was a long time, enough to shape the habits and attitudes of Oriyas, as we see it today. This part of the history will certainly explain "why Orissa has remained one of the underdeveloped and dormant states in India and has failed to cope up with the developing world". We celebrated our 50 years of Independence in 1997 with pomp and grandeur. And the painful fact of backwardness still holds good for Orissa.

Investor-Friendly Analysis:

So what did go wrong in all these years? Let us get some facts and figures on Orissa, her neighboring states and other industrialized states of the country. The factors, which determine the flow of investments, are as follows:

Infrastructure: Physical Infrastructure, Power Supply, Power Quality, Proximity to Ports, Industrial Zones.

Government: Support, Flexibility, Polity, Administration, Law & Order, Political Stability.

Labor: Labor Availability, Labor Cost, Labor Relations, Work Culture.

Social: Proximity to Markets, Input Availability, Urbanization and Social Infrastructure.

The Commerce Net India has analyzed the industrial climate of all the states in India and has rated the states for benefit of the prospective investors [2]. The states, Maharashtra and Gujarat, have emerged as the most industry-friendly states in India with 1st and 2nd place respectively, whereas Orissa's place is all the way down at 22nd. The bar-chart presentation, below, illustrates the comparative view of Orissa with other states. A higher number of a bar indicates a lower rating of that state. The bar charts are self-explanatory.

First, we have compared Orissa with her neighboring states in Figure 1. This is important to do, because we

try to become better people, when good people surround us. We are slightly better than Bihar and West Bengal; but Andhra Pradesh is ahead of us. The government of West Bengal is highly stable. The government flexibility and law & order situation in Andhra is much better than the same of Orissa. But the power supply and quality of Orissa and West Bengal are better than the same of Andhra and Bihar.

Now let us compare Orissa with the industrialized states, i.e. Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka in Figure 2. These states are clearly superior to Orissa in all aspects of attracting industries into the state. The quarterly survey of Center for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) in February 1998 states that Orissa has emerged as the most favored destination for investments displacing Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamilnadu [3]. But when you look at the project classification in Orissa, manufacturing-related projects form the bulk of the proposed investments followed by power and infrastructure. The status of the projects shows that the total investment in Orissa is spread across 125 projects as against Maharashtra's 512 and Gujarat's 322. The success rate of industries in Orissa is abysmally low as compared to the same of her industrialized counterparts. It is evident from the above facts that, given the high availability of raw materials in the state, the Government of Orissa finds the least resistive path to attract investments into the state in the areas of manufacturing and power. Instead, the Government should re-prioritize the kind of investments that they should seek. The government should consider Information Technology (IT), as the highest priority sector and should pursue this aggressively. The Government needs to consider IT as a cottage industry in the state, which has the potential to bring about all round development in the state.

Why has Orissa become a laggard state in all these years, given the potential of a highly successful hi-tech state? Who are to take the blame? All of us - the Government, the residents and the non-residents. The Government is responsible because they lack vision. Why? Because either the residents (i.e. the people who vote in the state) failed to elect the right government or Orissa's politics does NOT have good people. Sam Pitroda has rightly pointed out, today in India, politics has become a profession, and professionals (engineers, doctors, scientists, economists, businessmen...) are not in politics [4]. We need people from all walks of life to run Government. We should not allow uncultured and illiterate politicians to govern us. Because we do, we end up doing the social service. Many social service organizations have mushroomed in the state and

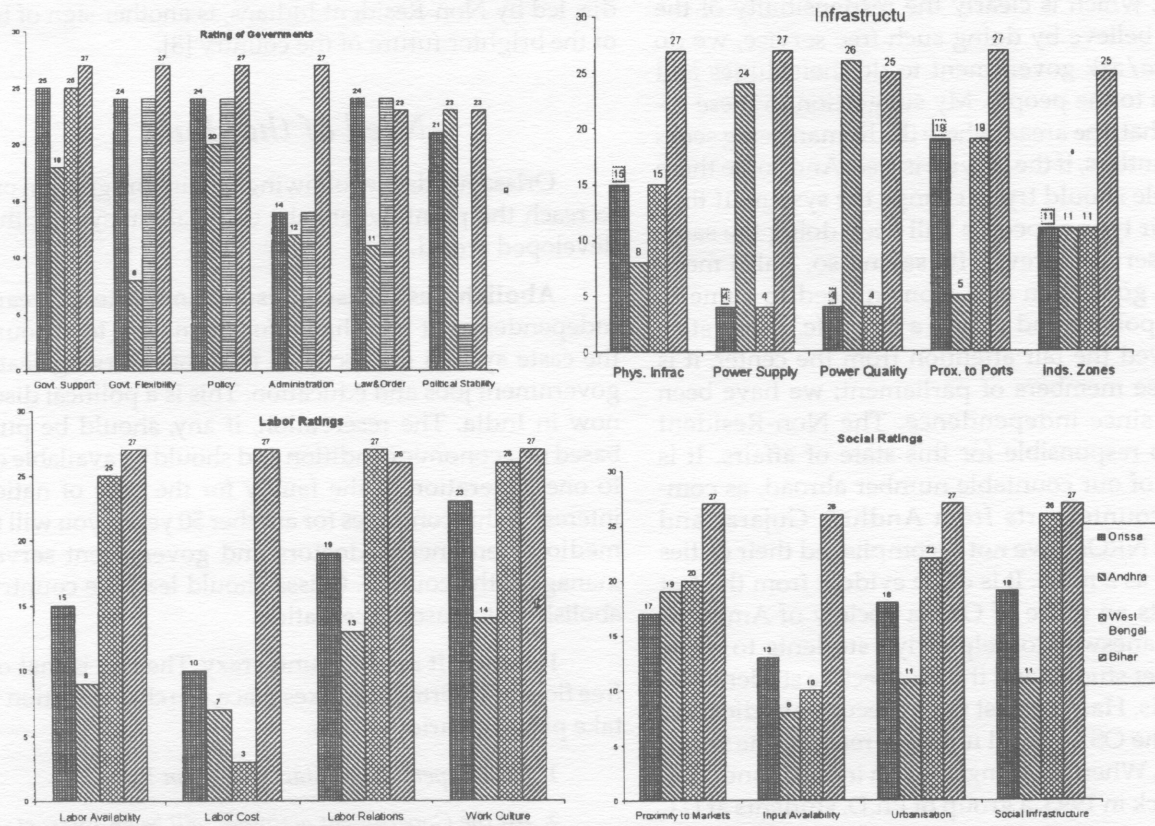


Figure 1. Where do we stand? Orissa Vs Her Neighbors
(From Left to Right: Orissa, Andhra, West Bengal and Bihar)

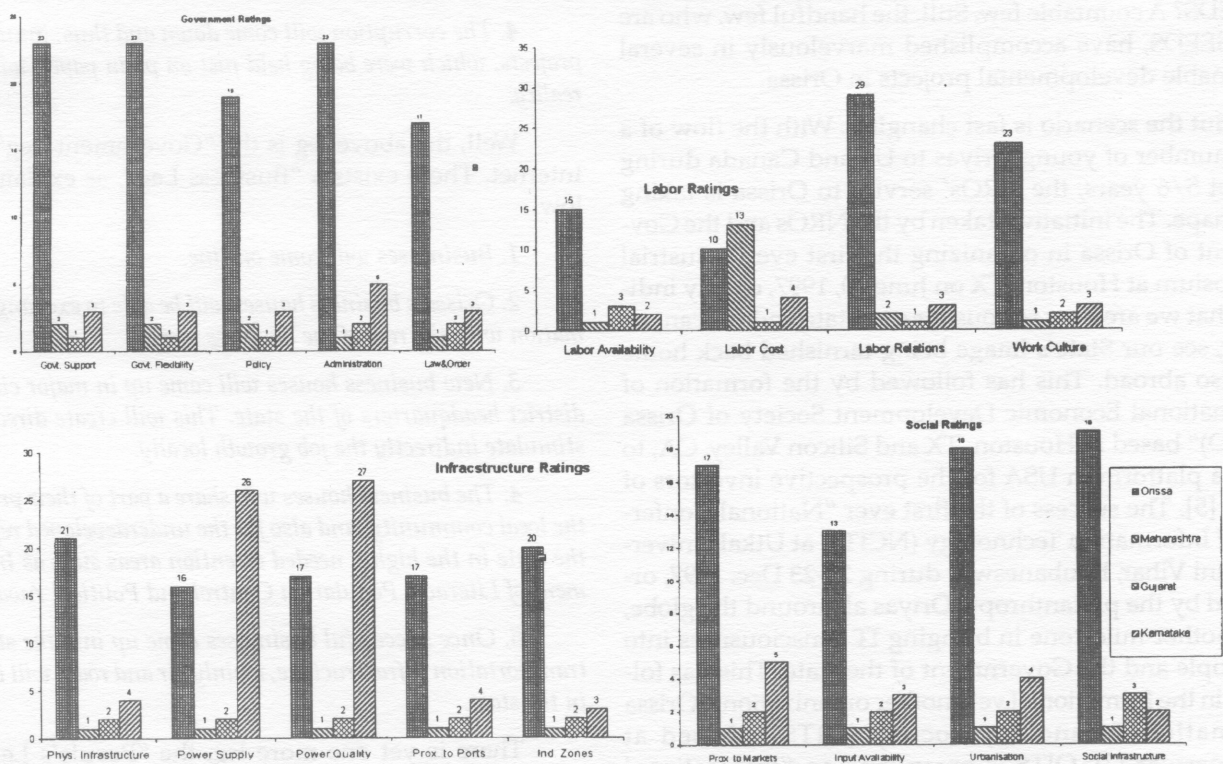


Figure 2. Where do we stand? Orissa Vs Her Industrialized States
(From Left to Right: Orissa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka)

abroad and they address the fulfillment of basic needs of human beings, which is clearly the responsibility of the government. I believe by doing such free service, we do not allow/force/ask government to do their duties and responsibilities to the people. My suggestion to these organizations is that, the areas, where the human being seeks service, are countless, if the service is free. And some these few good people should try to change the system. If they don't, then their type of people will keep doing the same kind of social service forever. By saying so, I also mean that some few good men and women need to come to state/national politics and give it a new life. If our state have not received the fair attention from the center, it is because of those members of parliament; we have been electing them since independence. The Non-Resident Oriyas are also responsible for this state of affairs. It is partly because of our countable number abroad, as compared to our counterparts from Andhra, Gujarat and Karnataka. The NROs have not accomplished their duties towards Orissa as a mass. It is quite evident from the fact that, there exists an office of Orissa Society of Americas (OSA) at Bhubaneswar to help Oriya students to come abroad for higher studies and the prospective students are not aware of this. Had the past OSA executive bodies had been creative, the OSA would not have reached the financial crisis today. When the hunger death in Kalahandi was in the media back in 1993, a group of Ph.D. students at UT, Austin started an organization called, SEEDS in order to start a new form of social service in the state [6]. Five years have passed by. And how many of us have got involved in SEEDS? A countable few. Still, the handful few, who are with SEEDS, have accomplished marvelously in several sustainable developmental projects in Orissa.

But the scenario is fast changing. With the flow of a large number of young Oriyas to US and Canada during the last 5/6 years, the NROs' service to Orissa is taking new shape. The initiative, taken by the NROs and the Government of Orissa in organizing the first ever Industrial Symposium at Houston, TX on June 30, 1997, clearly indicates that we are now serious for our State and we can, no longer, see our State's image being tarnished back home and also abroad. This has followed by the formation of "International Economic Development Society of Orissa (IEDSO)" based at Houston, TX and Silicon Valley, CA, to act as a platform in USA for the prospective investors of Orissa [5]. The success of the first ever "National Conference of Information Technology (NCIT)" at Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar during 21-23 Dec. 1997, organized by the philanthropic Oriyas all around the globe, was another milestone in bringing IT consciousness into the people and the Government of the state. This has followed in the formation of yet another organization, "Orissa Information Technology Society (OITS)", based at Bhubaneswar [7]. OITS is organizing an "International Conference on Information Technology (ICIT)" at Bhubaneswar during Dec. 21-23, 1998. On the national

arena, the emergence of a new political movement in India, led by Non-Resident Indians, is another sign of hope of the brighter future of the country [8].

Need of the Hour:

Orissa needs the following 2-point program in order to reach the point, where she can walk in sync with the developed world.

Abolish Caste-based Reservation: After 50 years of Independence, it is a shame for the nation to encourage the caste system indirectly in form of reserving seats in government jobs and education. This is a political disease now in India. The reservation, if any, should be purely based on economic condition and should be available only to one generation of the family for the sake of national interest. If this continues for another 50 years, you will find mediocre engineers, doctors and government servants managing the country. Orissa should lead the country to abolish caste-based reservation.

Internet: It might sound crazy. The fact is that once free flow of information takes place, the chain reaction will take place in various ways.

1. *Newspapers in the State will go on-line.*
2. *All the Government activities will be on Internet.*
3. *The ministers, the bureaucrats and the politicians will be made accountable for their words and actions.*
4. *The corruption will come down and thus, innumerable projects, which were being held just on plain paper, will be the reality.*

Well, the above leg is the "Government Leg" of the Internet. There exists a "Business Leg", as explained below:

1. *Businesses will come on-line.*
2. *Orissa's business houses will be able to exchange information with the rest of the business world.*
3. *New business houses will come up in major cities and district headquarters of the state. This will create directly and stimulate indirectly the job growth locally.*
4. *The business houses will share a part of their profits for the local community, and also for the underdeveloped regions of the state in the highly needed attention areas such as Improvement of Literacy, Population Control and Political Awareness.*
5. *Once successful businesses come up into the state, the transportation infrastructure, mainly air and road, will improve in the state.*

There is yet one more leg, the "People's Leg", the most powerful leg. As Sam Pitroda has pointed out, the whole meaning of the Internet will have to be different for a country like India. It has to be channeled towards ad-



dressings basic human need [4] with the free access to information on health, politics etc. The priority of the student-mass will change. Orissa already has more than her prorate share in the Government jobs in all-India level (IAS, Clerical etc.). The students need to focus their energy towards the evolving Information Technology (IT).

Such is the power of Internet. If we want to leapfrog the other developed Indian states and stay in sync with the developed nations, the Government should invest into high-speed and reliable Internet and make it affordable at least in all major cities and state headquarters of the state to the public. First, the Internet should go to all premier colleges of the state, and then to the people in the form of STD-PCO, which caters the need of telephone/fax now. If the Government finds that, we do not have the infrastructure yet to take Internet to interior areas, then think of introducing wireless technology. The whole point is that we need to reach there in a time-bound way, no matter what.

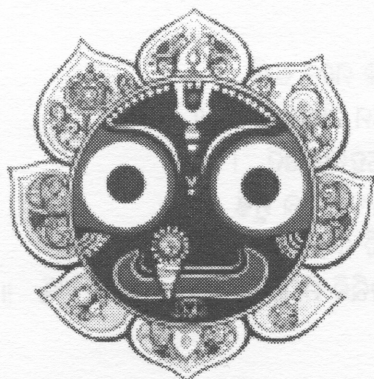
Conclusion:

Lastly, I strongly believe that if we can chip in our personal time and spend it in a well-defined channeled effort collectively, we will see a better Orissa in our lifetime. Let us work together towards this and maintain the true pride in our culture and motherland.

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– Purna C. Mohanty lives in Santa Clara with his wife Shelly.



REMINISCES

RANJITA MAHAKUL

Away we are drifting,
into a hapless mold,
Ravishing a bite from Eve's
as Adam, we're often told;
In leisure we know ,
what the shadows hiss,
Thoughts barren hinges
on reflections uphold;

The Crown beatifies the glory,
that beams proud in The Himalayas,
Engraved in the intricate spaces,
we shine-n-sparkle as India-ORIYAS;
Land laden with Grace,
hands raised in NAMASKAR,
One hand tolls the bell
other renders the Namaz;

Soldiers, saints have taken,
here a bow in abundance
Enriching the giant culture,
through its timeless existence;
Nature responds to the Devdasi,
dancing engaged in a trance,
As though notes of the flute,
flow from the God's entrance;

My courtship with the MAHANADI,
brews stronger than before,
When the rollicking waves kiss,
my ankles in gay splendor;
Birds rush towards the dusk
chirping to their tiny abode,
Soul abandons it's burdens
on the sands of your shore...

– Ranjita Mahakul lives in Akron, Ohio

କିଏ ତୁମେ ବିଶ୍ଵ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞା ଶାନ୍ତି ଲତା ମିଶ୍ର

ଅନେକ କରନ୍ତି ଯୁକ୍ତି ।
ତୁମର ତ ନାହିଁ ଶକ୍ତି ॥
ଦେବାକୁ କାହାରେ ମୁକ୍ତି ।
ମିଛେ ଦେଖାନ୍ତି ଲୋକେ ଯାହା ଭକ୍ତି ॥

ଏ ମନ ମାନେନା ।
କାହାରି ଶୁଣେନା ॥
କିଛିବି ବୁଝେନା ।
ଅବା ବୁଝି ନବୁଝିବାର କରେ କି ଛଳନା ?

ତୁମ ପଥର ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ଦର୍ଶନେ ।
ଯେବେ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଜାଗେ ଏ ମନେ ॥
କରୁଣା ସାଗର ନାମ ।
ସଥାର୍ଥ ଲାଗେ ତତ୍ତ୍ଵଶେଷେ ॥

ଜାଣେନା, ଚିହ୍ନେନା, କିଏ ତୁମେ ବିଶ୍ଵ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞା ।
ମତେ ଗତିବାରେ କିହିଁକି ଛାର ପ୍ରବେଶ ॥
ଭାବୁଛି କେବଳ ତୁମେ ନିଶ୍ଚେ ଦୁରଦ୍ରଷ୍ଟା ।
ପ୍ରଣମୁଛି ନିତି ଭାବି ମୁଁ ତୁମକୁ ଜଗତର ଜଣେ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ॥

ଅନେକ ପୁଣି କୁହନ୍ତି ।
ତୁମର ତ ନାହିଁ ସ୍ଥିତି ॥
ତୁମେ ପଥରରେ ଗଢ଼ା ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ।
ଅଚଳ ଅଥର୍ବ ତୁମେ, ତୁମର ତ ନାହିଁ ଗତି ॥

ଜୀବନ ତରାଏ ଯେବେ ।
ମନେ ପଡ଼େ ତୁମେ ତେବେ ॥
ସତେ କି ଅଛ ମୋ ପାଶେ ।
ଦେବା କୁ ଯାହାସ ଯେତେ ॥

କେତେ ଜୁଜର୍ମେ ମୁଁ ଲିପ୍ତ ।
ଯେତେ ପାଇଲେବି ଏ ମନ ସଦା ଅତୃପ୍ତ ॥
ଦୋଷ ଦୂର ମୋର ମାର୍ଜନା କରି ।
କ୍ଷମି ଅଛ ଏ ଯାବତ୍ ॥

ଯଦି ମିଳେ ମତେ ଶାନ୍ତି ।
ଗାଈ ତୁମେ ନାମେ ଗିତୀ ॥
କାହାରି ହେବନି କ୍ଷତି ।
ସେଇ ହେବ ମୋର ମୁକ୍ତି ॥
ସେଇ ଯଦି ଦିଏ ଶକ୍ତି ।
କାହିଁକି କରିବି ମିଛେ, ତୁମେ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି ଯୁକ୍ତି ॥

– Shantilata Mishra lives in Rochester, Minnesota with her husband Prasanna Mishra.

କହି ଜାଣିଲେ କଥା ସୁନ୍ଦର

ଶୁଚୀସ୍ମିତା ସାହୁ (ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା)

କଥା ତ କଥା ମଧୁର କଥା

କଥାରେ ଥିଲେ ମହୁ

ମୁହଁରେ ଆସେ ଖୁସିର ହସ

ପଦଟେ କହୁ କହୁ

ସତ କଥାଟି ଏମିତି କୁହ

ବୁଝିବ ଶୁଣୁ ଶୁଣୁ

ଆଣିବ ନାହିଁ ମନରେ ଭାଗ

ଜାଣିଲେ ପଛେ ଜାଣୁ

କାହାକୁ କିଛି ଦିଅ ନ ଦିଅ

ମୁହଁରେ ରଖ ହସ

ମୁହଁରେ ଥିଲେ ଖୁସିର ହସ

ଭୁଲିବ ଭୋକ ଗୋଷ

ହେଉ ସେ ଦୁଃଖ ଶତ୍ରୁ ଦୁମର

ମିଠା କଥାଟେ କୁହ

ଭୁଲିବ ସିଏ ମନର ଭାଗ

ଏକଥା ଜାଣି ଥାଅ

କହି ଜାଣିଲେ କଥା ସୁନ୍ଦର

ବାସି ଜାଣିଲେ ମଥା

ମଧୁର କଥା ଅମୃତ ପରି

କଥାରେ ଅଛି ଲଥା

କହିବ ଯଦି ସତ କଥାଟି

ନ କର ମନ ଉଣା

ସତ କହିଲେ ସତକୁ ବାଧେ

କାହାକୁ ନାହିଁ ଜଣା ?

କଥାରେ ତିହ୍ନା ହୁଅଇ ଲୋକ

ମୁହଁର ନାହିଁ ଲୋଚା

କଥା କହିବା ନ ଜାଣିଲେ

ସିଝିବ ନାହିଁ ଖତା

ହସି କହିଲେ ମଧୁର କଥା

ସଭିଜ ମନ ଛୁଟୁଁ

ହସତ ଗୋଟେ ଅଦେଖା ତୋର

ସଭିଜ ବାସି ଦିଏ

ଜାଣିଲ ଯଦି ଏମିତି ମନ୍ଦ

କରେ ମଧୁର କଥା

ହସି କହିବ ସଭିଜ ମନୁ

ଯେମିତି ଯିବ ବାଧା

ମଧୁର କଥା କହିବ ଯେବେ

ନରଖି ମନେ ବିଷ

ଯେମିତି ହେବ ମନ ଦୁମର

ଯେମିତି ହେବ ହସ

– Suchismita (Sraddha) Sahoo lives in Fremont, California with her husband Ashish.

ସଂକୀର୍ତ୍ତନୀ

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ବାସ୍

ବାହାରେ ପ୍ରବଳ ବରଫ ଝଟି ।

ଘର ଭିତରେ ମୋ ଦଶ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସର ଝିଅ ମିନିର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଶୁଣି ମୋ ମନ ଭିତରଟା ଯେମିତି ବରଫ ପାଇଁ ଗଳା । ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କରିଥିଲା ମିନି ଇଂଲିଶ୍‌ରେ "ମାମା, ହାଏ ଆଉ ଭଲ ଲିଭିବି ?"; ଅର୍ଥାତ୍ "ଆମେ ମାନେ କଣ ପାଇଁ ବଞ୍ଚୁଛୁ ?" । କିଛି ସମୟ ପରେ ନିଜର ଉତ୍ତର କଟାକ କଣ୍ଠରୁ ଯଥାସମ୍ଭବ ସାଧାରଣ କରି ଏଭଳି ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ତା ମନ ଭିତରେ କାହିଁକି ଉଠିଲା ବୋଲି ମୁଁ ମିନି କୁ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କଲି । ଉତ୍ତରରେ ଏ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ତାର ଏକ ସାଙ୍ଗ ପଚାରିଥିଲା ବୋଲି ସିଏ କହିଲା । ଯାହାହେଉ ମୁଁ ଚିନ୍ତିଆ ହେଲି । ଏମିତି ଏକ ଛୋଟ ପିଲାଟିର ମନରେ ଏତେ ଗଭିର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଆସିବା ମୁଁ ସମୟ କରୁ ନଥିଲି । ଏ ବୟସ ପ୍ରଜାପତିର ବୟସ । ନାତି ନାତି ତେଇଁ ତେଇଁ ଖେଳି ବୁଲିବାର ବୟସ । ଝରଣାର ଜଳ ଭଳି ସଦା ଚଞ୍ଚଳ ହୋଇ ବହିସିବାର ବୟସରେ ଏମିତି ଦର୍ଶନ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଶୋଭା ପାଏନି ।

ମିନିକୁ ମୁଁ ବୁଝାଇ କହିଲି, "ଆମେମାନେ ବଞ୍ଚୁଛୁ କିଛି ଅନ୍ୟ ମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ, ଯେଉଁ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆମେ ଭଲ ପାଉ ; ଯେଉଁ ମାନଙ୍କର ସୁଖ ଦୁଃଖରେ ଆମେ ସୁଖୀ ଅଥବା ଦୁଃଖୀ ହେଉ । ନିଜ ପାଇଁ କେବଳ ବଞ୍ଚିବାରେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଆସନି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଆମେ ନିଜେ ଦୁଃଖୀ ଥିଲେବି ଆମେ ଭଲପାଉଥିବାମଣିଷ ମାନଙ୍କର ସୁଖ ଦେଖୁ ଶୁଣି ହେଉ । ଏ ଉତ୍ତରରେ ମିନି ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟ ହେଲା । ସେ କେମିତି ତାର ଭଉଣୀ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବହୁତ ଭଲ ପାଏ ଓ ଦୁଃଖୀ ଥିବା ସମୟରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ କଥା ମନେ ପକାଇ ଶୁଣି ହୁଏ ତାର ଉଦାହରଣ ଦେଇ ନିଜକୁ ବୁଝାଇଲା । ତା ପରେ ଚାଲିଗଲା ତଳମହଲା କୁ ନିଜ ଭଉଣୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଖେଳିବାକୁ ।

ଉତ୍ତର ସିନା ମୁଁ ମିନିକୁ ଦେଲି, କିନ୍ତୁ ନିଜେ ତା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ଖୋଜିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରି ଠିକ୍ ଉତ୍ତର ପାଇଲିନି । ବେଳେବେଳେ ଏମିତି ଜଟିଳ ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୋଇଯାଏଯେ ଲଜ୍ଜାହୁଏ ଆଖି ସବୁଦିନ ପାଇଁ ବନ୍ଦ କରି ଦିଅନ୍ତି କି ? ଶରୀର, ମନକୁ ନିତିନିତି ଏତେ କଷ୍ଟ ଦେଇ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ଅର୍ଥ କଣ ? ଏତେ ଦୁଃଖ ପୁଣି ମନୁଷ୍ୟ ଜୀବନରେ କାହିଁକି ଆସେ ?

ମନେ ପଡୁଥିଲା ମୋର ଦୀର୍ଘ କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ତଳର ରୀତୁ ଅପା କଥା । ଯିଏ ମତେ ଦିନେ ଏମିତି ଏକ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ପଚାରି ଥିଲା ଓ ବିଷ ମାଗି ଥିଲା ; ଦଉଡି ଦେଇ ମରିବାକୁ ତାକୁ ଡର ଲାଗୁଥିଲା ; ନିଜକୁ ଯୋଡି ଜାଳି ମାରିବାକୁ ବି ସିଏ ଡରୁଥିଲା । କାଳେ ତାଙ୍କ ଘରେ ଓ ସାହିରେ ନିଆଁ ଲାଗିଯିବ ; କିନ୍ତୁ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲା ମରିବାକୁ ।

ସେତେବେଳେ ରୀତୁ ଅପା ବାହାଘରର ଚାରିମାସ ପରେ ଶାଶୁଘରୁ ଫେରିଆସି ଆମ ଗାଁରେ ତା ବାପ ଘରେ ରହୁଥିଲା । ରୀତୁଅପାର ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଓ ଶାଶୁଘରର ଅନ୍ୟମାନେ ତାର ବାହାଘର ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଅନ୍ଧସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ରହିବାର କାହାଣୀ ଜାଣିପାରିଥିଲେ । ଆମ ଗାଁରେ ବି ହଠାତ୍ ଖବରଟା ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲା ଓ ରୀତୁ ଅପା ସହିତ ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡାର ସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ନିତିନିତି ଅଭିନବ କାହାଣୀ ସବୁ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳିଲା । ଦୁଇ ତିନି ଦିନ ପରେ ରୀତୁ ଅପାର ବାପା ଓ ମଉସା ଯାଇ ତାକୁ ଆମ ଗାଁକୁ ନେଇ ଆସିଲେ । ଗାଁରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ନିଆଁ ପାଣି ଅଟକ କରାଗଲା । ରୀତୁ ଅପାର ବାହାଘର ପରେ ତାର ଦୁର୍ଗୁଣର କାହାଣୀ ଯେତେସବୁ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳିଥିଲା ; ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡା ସହିତ ତାର ସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଷୟରେ ଜଣାଯିବା ପରେ ସେମିତି ସବୁ ଦୁର୍ଗୁଣର କାହାଣୀ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ମିଳିଲା ।

ଆମ ଘରେ ବି ମତେ ବୋଉ ରୀତୁ ଅପା ଘରକୁ କିମ୍ବା ତାଙ୍କ ଆଖି ପାଖର କାହା ଘରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ମନା କରିଦେଲା । ରୀତୁ ଅପା ମୋ ଠାରୁ ବୟସରେ ପାଞ୍ଚବର୍ଷ ବଡ଼ ଥିଲେ ବି ମୋ ସହିତ ଏକା ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ପଢୁଥିଲା ଓ ମୋର ଘନିଷ୍ଠ ବନ୍ଧୁ ଥିଲା । ପାଠରେ ସିଏ ସେତେ ଭଲ ଚାଲୁ, କିନ୍ତୁ ଓଡିଆ ଝିଅମାନଙ୍କର ଯେଉଁ ତଥାକଥିତ ଭଲଗୁଣ ସବୁ ରହିବା ଉଚିତ୍, ଯଥା : ଲଜା, ନମ୍ରତା, ଉତ୍ତମ ରୋଷେଇ ଜ୍ଞାନ, ଝୋଟି ଓ ମୁରୁଜ ପକାଇବା ଜ୍ଞାନ ଓ ଛୋଟ ପିଲାଙ୍କର ଯତ୍ନ ନେବା ଜ୍ଞାନ, ସେ ଗୁଣ ସବୁ ରୀତୁ ଅପାର ଥିଲା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ତା ବାହାଘର ପରେ ଆମ ସାହିରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ତା ସୁଗୁଣକୁ ଶୁଣିଲେ ଓ ଆମ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଉଦାହରଣ ଦେଇ ବୁଝାଇଲେ । ନିଶାଶୁଡ଼ୀ ପାଞ୍ଚଦିନ କାନ୍ଦିଥିଲେ । କାରଣ ନିଶାଶୁଡ଼ୀଙ୍କର ଶାଶୁ ଶୁଣୁର ଦିଅର ନଣନ୍ଦ କେହି ନଥିଲେ ; ହେଲେ ତାଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଥମ କନ୍ୟାର ଜନ୍ମ ପରେ ରୀତୁ ଅପା ସେ ପିଲାଟିର ଏତେ ଜତ୍ନ ନେଇଥିଲାଯେ ନିଶାଶୁଡ଼ୀଙ୍କୁ ନଣନ୍ଦର ଅଭାବ ଜଣା ପଡିନଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡା କାହାଣୀ ଜଣା ପଡିଯିବା ପରେ ରୀତୁ ଅପା ଯେତେବେଳେ ନିଜ ବାପ ଘରେ ଆସି ରହିଲା, ନିଶାଶୁଡ଼ୀଙ୍କୁ ନେତ୍ରୀ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ଓ ତାଙ୍କର ଝିଅ ତଳି ଯିଏକି ଛାଇ ଭଳି ରୀତୁ ଅପା ସହିତ ଆଗରୁ ଲାଗିରହୁଥିଲା, ତାକୁ ମନା କରି ଦେଇଥିଲେ ରୀତୁ ଅପା ଘରକୁ ଯିବାକୁ ।

ମୋ ମନରେ ବିଦ୍ରୋହ ଉଠିଥିଲା । ନିଆଁ ପାଣି ଅଟକ ହେଲା ରୀତୁ ଅପାର ପରିବାରକୁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡାର ପରିବାରକୁ କାହିଁକି ନୁହେଁ ? ଉତ୍ତରରେ ମୋ ଜେଜୀମା କହିଥିଲା, "ରୀତୁ ଖରାପ କାମ କରିଛନ୍ତିବୋଲି ତା ଯେତେ ତାର ପ୍ରମାଣ, କିନ୍ତୁ ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡା ଯେ ଏ କାମ କରିଛି ତାର କିପ୍ରମାଣ ? ତାଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ନିଆଁ ପାଣି ଅଟକ କଲେ ନିତିଆ ଯାଇ ଯାଜପୁରରେ ମାନହାନି ମକଦ୍ଦମା କରିଦେବେ ।"



ସେ ସମୟରେ ଏତେବେଳେ ଯଦିଓ ମୁଁ ବୁଝିନଥିଲି, ତେବେ ଏ ଭଳି ଭୁଲ୍ ପାଇଁ ଦଣ୍ଡପାଇବାର ପକ୍ଷପାତି ଭାବନା ମତେ ଭଲ ଲାଗିନଥିଲା । ଆଜିକାଲି ଆମେରିକାରେ ବ୍ୟବହୃତ ହେଉଥିବା ଡି. ଏନ୍. ଏ. ପରୀକ୍ଷା ଭଳି ଚମତ୍କାର ପରୀକ୍ଷା ପ୍ରଣାଳି ବିଷୟରେ ଜାଣିଥିଲେ ହୁଏତ ମୁଁ ଜେଜେମା ସହିତ ଯୁକ୍ତି କରି ଥାନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଜେଜେମାର ଯୁକ୍ତିକୁ କାଟିବା ସେଦିନ ମୋ ପାଇଁ ସମ୍ଭବ ହୋଇ ନଥିଲା ।

ଏ ଘଟଣାର ଚାରି ମାସ ତଳେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ବାହାଘର ବଡ଼ ଯାକ୍ତମକରେ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ମୁଁ ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ପତ୍ନୀ ପାଇଁ ଛୁଟିରେ ଗାଁକୁ ଆସିଥିଲି । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ପରିବାର ଏତେ ଧନୀ ନଥିଲେବି ସୁଛଳ ଥିଲେ ଓ ଯଥାସମ୍ଭବ ଆତମ୍ଭର ଆୟୋଜନା କରିଥିଲେ । ମେଟ୍ରିକ୍ ଫେଲ୍ ହୋଇ ଘରୋବାବସିବ କଣ, ଭଲ ପାତ୍ରଟିଏ ମିଳି ଯିବାରୁ ତାର ବାହାଘର କରି ଦିଆଗଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ବର ବି ଥିଲେ ବଡ଼ ସୁନ୍ଦର । ରାମ ସାତାଙ୍ଗ ଯୋଡ଼ି ବୋଲି ସମସ୍ତେ କହୁଥିଲେ ।

ହେଲେ ବାହାଘରର ଚାରି ମାସପରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ଯେତେବେଳେ ତାର ବାହାଘର ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଅନ୍ଧସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ରହିବାର ତତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଜଣାପଡ଼ିଲା, ତାର ସ୍ୱାମୀସନ୍ଧିହୀନ ହେଲେ ଓ ସେଥିରୁ ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡାର କାହାଣୀ ଜଣା ପଡ଼ିଲା । ଶାଶୁଘର ଲାଜରେ ମୁଣ୍ଡଟେକି ପାରିଲେନି ; ବାପଘରକୁ ଖବର ଆସିଲା ଓ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଆମଁ ଗାଁକୁ ଫେରି ଆସିଲା ।

ମୁଁ ଖାଲି ଛୁଟିରେ ସେତେବେଳେ ଗାଁରେ ଥିଲି । ମତେ ଏ ସବୁ ନିଆଁ ପାଣି ଅଟକ ବଡ଼ ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନା ଲାଗୁଥିଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାକୁ ଭେଟିବାର କୌଣସି ସୁଯୋଗ ନଥିଲା । ସେଦିନ ଥିଲା ନରୀଦଦାଙ୍କ ବାହାଘର । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାବେଳେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଘୋଡ଼ିଭାତ ଖିଆରେ ମଜିଥିଲେ ଓ ବରଯାତ୍ରୀ ଯିବାର ଆୟୋଜନ ହେଉଥିଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ପରିବାରକୁ ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରାଯାଇ ନଥିଲା । ଆମ ପରିବାରର ସମସ୍ତେ ନରୀଦଦାଙ୍କ ଘରେଥିଲେ । ଏହି ସୁଯୋଗରେ ମୁଁ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖା କରିବାକୁ ଗଲି । ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ତାଙ୍କ ଭିତର ଘରେ ଥିଲା ଓ ତା ବୋଉ ବନ୍ଧ ଉପରେ ବସିଥିଲା । ମୁଁ ଘର ଭିତର କୁ ଯିବାପରେତା ବୋଉ ଆସି ପିଣ୍ଡାରେ ବସିଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ମତେ ଦେଖି ବହୁତ କାନ୍ଦିଲା । ମୁଁ ପର୍ବରୁ ଭାବୁଥିଲି, ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ସତରେ ଅପରାଧୀ, ମୁଁ ତାକୁ ଭଲପାଏ, କିନ୍ତୁ ତା ମାନେ ନୁହେଁ ଯେ ତା ସହିତ ନିତିଆ ପଣ୍ଡାର ସମ୍ପର୍କକୁ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରିବି । କିନ୍ତୁ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର କାନ୍ଦୁଲା ଓ କରୁଣ ମୁହଁ ଦେଖି ମୁଁ ବୁଝି ପାରୁ ନଥିଲି ସତରେ ଏଭଳି ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ଦୋଷ ବି ତାର ବିବଶତା । ମୁଁ ତାକୁ ଆଶ୍ୱାସନା ଦେଇ କହିଲି, “କାନ୍ଦନା, ଭଗବାନଙ୍କୁ ଡାକେ, ସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ହୋଇଯିବ ।” ହେଲେ କଣ କେମିତି ଠିକ୍ ହେବ ମୁଁ ଯାଣି ନଥିଲି । ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଆଗରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଲକ୍ଷ ଥିଲା, ଆତ୍ମହତ୍ୟା । ବିଷ ଖାଇ ଆତ୍ମହତ୍ୟା କରି ଏମିତି ଲଜ୍ୟାକର ପରିସ୍ଥିତିରୁ ମୁକ୍ତିଲାଭ କରିବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲା ସିଏ । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ମତେ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରିଥିଲା ତାକୁ କେଉଁଠୁ ଚିହ୍ନେ ବିଷ ଯୋଗାଡ଼ କରି ଆଣିଦେବାକୁ । ତା ମନରେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ଆସିଥିଲା ତା ଜିବନକୁ ନେଇ ; କେଉଁ ସୁଖ ଆଶାରେ ବା ସେ ବନ୍ଧୁ ରହିବ ? ମୁଁ ତାକୁ ବୁଝାଇବା ଭଳି କହିଥିଲି, ଯଦିଓ “ସେ କାହିଁକି ବନ୍ଧୁବ” ସେ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନର ଉତ୍ତର ମୁଁ ଯଶିନି, ତାର କିନ୍ତୁ ବନ୍ଧୁ ରହିବା ଉଚିତ୍ । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଯଦି ମରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ତେବେ ଦଉଡ଼ି ଦେଇ ବି ନିଜ ଦେହରେ ନିଆଁ ଲଗେଇ ମରିପାରେ, ଯେହେତୁ ବିଷ ପାଇବା ମୋ ସାଧ୍ୟରେ ନଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଡରୁଥିଲା । ଦଉଡ଼ି ଦେଇ ମରିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟାକରି ଯଦି ନମରେ ତାହେଲେ ହତହତା ହେବ ଓ ଦେହରେ ନିଆଁ ଲଗାଇ ଲଗାଇ ନିଆଁ ଯଦି ବ୍ୟାପିଯାଇ ତାଙ୍କ ଘର ପୋଡ଼ିଯାଏ, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ତାର ମନରେ ଭୟ ଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ମରିବାର ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଉପାୟ ଜିଜ୍ଞାସି ନଥିଲା ବିଷ ପିଇବା ଛଡ଼ା । ଯାହା ବି ହେଉ ବିଷ ଯୋଗାଡ଼ କରିବାର ସାମର୍ଥ୍ୟ ମୋର ନଥିଲା । ସମୟ ବି ମୋ ପାଖରେ କମ୍ ଥିଲା । କାଳେ ବୋଉ ମତେ ଖୋଜି ପକାଇବ, ସେ ଉଭୟେ ମୁଁ ସେଦିନ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ପାଖରୁ ବିଦାୟ ନେଇ ଆସିଥିଲି । ତା ପରଦିନ ଶୁଣିଲି ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଗାଁରେ ନାହିଁ । ପ୍ରଘଟ ହେଲା ତା ବୋଉ ଓ ବଡ଼ବୋଉ ମିଶି ତାକୁ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ବସାଇ ଦେଇ ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଗାଡ଼ିରେ ବସି ରାତ୍ର ଅପା କୁଆଡ଼େ ଗଲା ଯାଣିନଥିଲି । ପରେ ଜାଣିଲି, ତାର ମାମୁଁ ଙ୍ଗ ସହିତ ସିଏ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ଚାଲି ଯାଇଛି ।

ତା ପରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ବିଷୟ ଗାଁରେ ପ୍ରାୟ ସମସ୍ତେ ଭୁଲି ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ଏମିତି ନାଁ ପକାଇଥିବା ଝିଅଟା ବିଷୟରେ ଜାଣି ବା ଲାଭ କଅଣ ; ନିଜ ଗାଁକୁ ଲାଜ । ତିନି ଚାରି ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ବୋଉ ମତେ ଖବର ଦେଇଥିଲା ଯେ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ପୁଣିଥରେ ବାହା ହୋଇଛି ଓ ତାର ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ ହୋଇଛି । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ଠିକଣା ବି ମତେ ଦେଇଥିଲା । ମୋ ବୟସର ପରିବୃତ୍ତି ସହିତ ଧୂରେଥିଲେ ଯେବେ ମୁଁ ସଂସାରକୁ ଚିହ୍ନିଲି, ବିଭିନ୍ନ ରକମର ଅଭିଜ୍ଞତା ଲାଭ କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇଲି, ସେତେବେଳେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଉପରୁ ମୋର ଗଭୀର ଧାରଣା ଦୂର ହେଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାଭଳି ସରଳ ଝିଅଟା ପାଇଁ ଯେ ପୁରୁଷ ପ୍ରଧାନ ସମାଜ ଶାସନରେ ଅନ୍ୟାୟ କରା ଯାଇଛି, ସେ କଥା ବୁଝିବା ପରେ ମତେ ଦଞ୍ଜୁଣ ଲାଗିଥିଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ସ୍ନେହର ଏତେ କରଜ ମୋ ଉପରେ ଥାଇବି ମୁଁ ଯେ ତା ପାଇଁ କିଛି କରି ପାରିନି, ତା ବିରୁଦ୍ଧରେ ହୋଇଥିବା ଅନ୍ୟାୟର ପ୍ରତିବାଦ କରିପାରିନି, ସେ କଥା ଚିନ୍ତା କରି ମୁଁ ଅସ୍ଥିର ହେଉଥିଲି । ବମ୍ବେରେ ପଢୁଥିବା ସମୟରେ ମୁଁ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାକୁ ତା ବୋଉ ଦେଇ ଥିବା ଠିକଣାରେ ଦୁଇ-ତିନଟି ଚିଠି ଲେଖୁଥିଲି ଓ ଚିଠିର ଉତ୍ତର ବ ପାଇଥିଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତାରତ ଆମ ଗାଁକୁ ଆସିବାର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ନଥିଲା । ତେଣୁ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ସହିତ ମୋର ଏ କୋଟିଏ ବର୍ଷରେ ଥରେ ବି ଦେଖା ହେଇ ନଥିଲା । ଏବର୍ଷ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଆମେ ଆମେରିକାରୁ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ବାଟ ଦେଇ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଯିବାକୁ ଶିର କଲୁ, ମୁଁ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାକୁ ଭେଟିବାର ଯୋଜନା ବି ରଖିଲି । ତା ଘରର ପୁରୁଣା ଠିକଣାରେ ଚିଠି ପଠାଇ ଦେଲି । ଯଦିଓ ସିଏ ସେ ଠିକଣାରେ ରହୁ ନଥିଲା, କିନ୍ତୁ ଚିଠିଟି ପାଇଥିଲା ଓ ତାର ନୁଆ ଘରର ଠିକଣା ଓ ଫୋନ୍ ନମ୍ବର ଦେଇ ମତେ ଚିଠି ଲେଖୁଥିଲା ।

ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଆମେ ହୋଟେଲରେ ରହୁଥିଲୁ । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାକୁ ମୁଁ ଫୋନ୍ କରି ଜଣାଇଲି । ଅସିତଙ୍କର ଯେଉଁଦିନ ମିଟିଙ୍ଗ ଯିବାର ଥିଲା, ସେ ଦିନ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଆମକୁ ତାର ଘର ଦେଖାଇବାକୁ ଓ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ବୁଲାାଇବାକୁ ନେଇଗଲା । ତାର ସ୍ୱାମୀ ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଓ ଦୁଇ ପୁଅ ରବିନ୍ଦ୍ର ଓ ଭୂପିନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କ ସହିତ ପରିଚୟ କରାଇଦେଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ସ୍ୱାମୀ ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ ପିଉସା ହରିୟନାର ବାସିନ୍ଦା ଥିଲେ । ଛୋଟବେଳୁ ବାପା ମା ଛେଉଣୁ ହୋଇ ନିଜ ଚାଟାଙ୍ଗ ପାଖରେ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଚାଟାଙ୍ଗର ଛୋଟ ଇଲେକ୍ଟ୍ରୋନିକ୍ସ ବ୍ୟବସାୟରେ ସିହିଯ୍ୟ କରିବାରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତରହି ଯାଇଥିଲୁ

ପରିଣାରେ ଫେଲ୍ ହେଲେ ; କିନ୍ତୁ ବ୍ୟବସାୟରେ ବହୁତ ଉନ୍ନତି କଲେ । ସେମାନେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାଙ୍ଗ ମାମୁଙ୍କର ପଡୋଶୀ ଥିଲେ । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ମାମୁଁ କଟକ ମେଡିକାଲରେ ରାତ୍ରଅପାର ଗର୍ଭପାତ କରାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ପ୍ରତିବେଶୀ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ଜଣାଇଲେ ଯେ ଅନ୍ଧଦିନର ବିବାହ ପରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ସ୍ବାମୀ କ୍ୟାନସର ରୋଗରେ ଦେହତ୍ୟାଗ କଲେ । ଏ ଖବରରେ ରାତ୍ରଅପା ଶୋକବିହ୍ୱଳା ହୋଇ ଜବାତି ହୋଇ ପଡିଗଲା ଯେ ତାର ଗର୍ଭ ପାତ ହୋଇଗଲା । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେ ତାର ମନ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ କରାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ ନେଇ ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । କିଛି ସତ କିଛି ମିଛ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏ କାହାଣୀ ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ୍ର ମନରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ଭଳି ପୁଃସ୍ତୁତୀ ଝିଅଟା ପାଇଁ ଅନେକ ଜରୁଣା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିଥିଲା । ସେ ଜରୁଣା ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ସରଳ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟ, ମାଧୁର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଓ ବିନମ୍ରତାର ପ୍ରଭାବରେ ପ୍ରେମରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇଗଲା । ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ୍ର ରାତ୍ର ଅପାକୁ ବିବାହ କରିବାର ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ଦେଲେ ଓ ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ମାମୁଁ ହଁ କରିଦେଲେ । ସେ ଦିନଠାରୁ ରାତ୍ରଅପା ପୁଣି ହେଲା ବିବାହିତା । ମାମୁଁଙ୍କର ଅଧା ସତ କାହାଣୀକୁ ପୂରା ସତ କରି ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା କରି ବି ରାତ୍ରଅପା ନିରୁପାୟ ଥିଲା ଯେହେତୁ ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ୍ର କିଛି ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ଚାହଁ ନଥିଲେ । ଅତଏବ, ରାତ୍ରଅପାର ନବ ଜୀବନ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଲା ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ୍ର ସହିତ । ଦୁଇ ପୁଅଙ୍କର ଜନ୍ମ ହେଲା । ସଂସାରର ମୋହମାୟାରେ ରାତ୍ରଅପା ତାର ପୁରୁଣା ଗାଁ କୁ ଓ ପୁରୁଣା ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ଭୁଲି ସିବାକୁ ଚାହଁଥିଲା । ବେଳେବେଳେ କିନ୍ତୁ ନିଜ ଘରକୁ ଚିଠି ଲେଖୁଥିଲା ଓ ଫଟା ପଠାଉଥିଲା ।

ରାତ୍ରଅପା ପ୍ରଥମେ ମତେ ତା ଘରକୁ ନେଇ ବୁଲାଇ ଦେଖାଇଲା । ଆଗେ ସେମାନେ ଉଡା ଘରେ ରହୁଥିଲେ । ଏ ଘରଟା ତିନିବର୍ଷ ତଳେ ତିଆରି କରାଇଥିଲେ । ତା ଘରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଡୁମ୍ପା ଗାବରାଣା ଥିଲା ଯିଏ କି ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ଚାନ୍ଦା ଓ ପାଉଁରୁଟିର ପକୋଡି କିଛି ରଖିଦେଇ ଚାଲିଗଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାର ସ୍ବାମୀ କେତେ ଭଲ ସତେ । ରାତ୍ର ଅପାକୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ରାଣୀ କରି ରଖୁଥିଲେ । ସିଏ ଗାଗାଙ୍କ ବ୍ୟବସାୟରେ ମିଶି ପଡିପାରି ନଥିଲେ ବୋଲି ଉଦ୍‌ବିଗ୍ନ ଓ ଭୂପିନ୍ଦ୍ରଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପଡାପଡିର ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରିଥିଲେ । ସେମାନେ ବି ଚମତ୍କାର ପିଲା ଥିଲେ ; ପଡାପଡିରେ ତ ଭଲ କରୁଥିଲେ, ଖେଳକୁଦ ଓ ସାହସିକତାରେ ବି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସୁନାମ ଥିଲା । ରାତ୍ର ଅପା ମତେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର କେତେ କେତେ ଡ୍ରପିଂ ଓ କେତେ ବିଶେଷ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ସହିତ ଫଟା ସବୁ ଦେଖାଇଲା । ରାତ୍ରଅପାର ସୁଖ ସଂସାର ଦେଖି ମୁଁ ବିହ୍ୱଳ ହୋଇଯାଉଥିଲି । ସେ ବିହ୍ୱଳତା ଭିତରେ ପୁଣି କୋଡିଏ ବର୍ଷ ତଳର ସେ ଛବିକୁ ମନେ ପକାଉଥିଲି ; ରାତ୍ରଅପାର ସେ କାହୁଁ ମୁହଁକୁ ଓ ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୁ ; ତାର ସେ ବେଦନାସିଦ୍ଧ ହୃଦୟର ଆତୁରତାକୁ ଓ ଜୀବନକୁ ଶେଷ କରିଦେବାର ବ୍ୟାକୁଳତାକୁ । ତାର ସେ ଆକୁଳ ନିବେଦନ ମତେ ଶୁଭୁଥିଲା, "ରାଣୀ, ମତେ ଚକିଏ ବିଷ କେଉଁଠୁ ଯୋଗାଡ କରି ଦେଇ ପାରିବୁ ?" ତାର ସେ ଜୀବନ ଦର୍ଶନ ପୁଣି ମୁଁ ଶୁଣି ପାରୁଥିଲି, "କାହିଁକି ମୁଁ ବଞ୍ଚିବି କହ? କେଉଁ ସୁଖର ଆଶାରେ ମୁଁ ବଞ୍ଚିରହିବି ?"

ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ୍ର ପିଉସା ତାଙ୍କ ଦୋକାନକୁ ଚାଲିଗଲେ । ରାତ୍ରଅପାକୁ କହିଗଲେ ମତେ ନେଇ "ଲୋଡସ୍ ଟେମ୍ପଲ୍" ବୁଲେଇ ଦେଖାଇବାକୁ । ମୋ ଝିଅ ପାଇଁ ଉପହାର ଦେଇଗଲେ ହରିୟନା ହ୍ୟାଣ୍ଡଲୁମ୍ବର ଜରିକାମ କରା ଏକ ଫୁକ୍ । ପ୍ରେମଚାନ୍ଦ୍ର ପ୍ରତି ମୋ ମନ କୃତଜ୍ଞତାରେ ଭରିଯାଉଥିଲା, ଜରି କାମକରା ଫୁକ୍ ପାଇଁ ନୁହେଁ, ରାତ୍ରଅପାର ଜୀବନକୁ ଏ ପ୍ରେମର ସଂଜୀବନୀ ପାଆଇ ରଖାଇଥିବାରୁ ; ଏ ନୂଆ ଜୀବନ, ଖୁସିର ଜୀବନ ଦାନ ଦେଇଥିବାରୁ । ଜଣେ ପୁରୁଷର କର୍ମ ପାଇଁ ରାତ୍ରଅପା ସେଦିନ ବିଷ ପିଇବାକୁ ଚାହୁଁଥିଲା, କିନ୍ତୁ ଆଉ ଜଣେ ପୁରୁଷ ଆଜି ତାକୁ ଅମୃତ ପିଆଇଛି । ଜୀବନର ଅମୃତ ; ସୁଖର ଅମୃତ ଓ ପ୍ରେମର ଅମୃତ । ଏମିତି ସଂଜୀବନୀ ଯିଏକି ସହସ୍ର ଗରଳଧାରାର ପ୍ରଭାବକୁ ବି କାଟି ଖିଲ ପାରିବ ।

ରାତ୍ରଅପା କଥା ମନେ ପକାଇ ମୁଁ ବହୁତ ଆନନ୍ଦିତ ହେଉଥିଲି । କିନ୍ତୁ ତା ଜୀବନ କାହାଣୀର ଭାବନାରୁ ମୋ ଜୀବନର ବାସ୍ତବତାକୁ ଯେବେ ଫେରିଆସିଲି, ଦୁଃଖ ଓ ଆଶଙ୍କାରେ ପୁଣି ମୋ ମନ ଆତଙ୍କିତ ହୋଇଉଠିଲା ।

ଏ ସମୟରେ ତଳଘରୁ ଦଉଡି ଦଉଡି ଆସୁଥିଲେ ମୋର ତିନି ଝିଅ । କିଛି ସମୟ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଏମିତି ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱର ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ ପଚାଉଥିବା ବଡ଼ଝିଅ ମୋର ବହୁତ ସହଜ ଦିଶୁଥିଲା ଓ ଶୁଲିଖୁଲି ହୋଇ ହସୁଥିଲା । ହିନ୍ଦି ସିନେମା "ଦିଲ୍ ଟୋ ପାଗଲ୍ ହୋ"ର ଗୀତ ଗାଇ ସେମାନେ ନାଚୁଥିଲେ, ଟିକି ଟିକି ରଙ୍ଗାନ୍ ପ୍ରଜାପତି ଭଳି । ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଦେଖି ମୁଁ ବି ଭୁଲିଗଲି ମୋର ଅବସାଦ । ହୁଏତ ଏ ଖୁସିର ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତ କ୍ଷଣିକ ; ତା ପରେ ପୁଣି କେତେ ଦୁଃଖ ଆସିବ, ଆଜ୍ଞାନ କରିବ ମନକୁ ଅପ୍ରାପ୍ତିର ଅସ୍ଥିରତା, ଶାରୀରିକ ଅସୁସ୍ଥତା କି କେଉଁ ବନ୍ଧୁର ବିଶ୍ୱାସଯାତକତା । ଏ ଜୀବନକୁ ବଞ୍ଚାଇ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରତି ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ ଦୁଃଖ ; କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେଉଁ ଭାବୀ କ୍ଷଣିକ ସୁଖର ଲାଳସା ; ଆଶାର ସେ ଟିକି ଆଲୁଅ ଟିକକ ମନ ଭିତରେ ସଂଚାର କରେ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ମୋହ ; ସୁଧା ସଂଜୀବନୀ ହୋଇ କାଟିଦିଏ ହତାଶା ଗରଳର ପ୍ରଭାବକୁ, ଆଉ ମଣିଷ ବଞ୍ଚିବାର ବେଞ୍ଚ କରି ଚାଲୁଥାଏ । ମଣିଷ ପୁଣି ଦୁଃଖର ଅକ୍ଷର ଭିତରେ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖେ ସୁଖ ଆଲୋକର, ସେ ଆଲୋକ ପୁଣି କେବେ କେବେ ବାସ୍ତବ ହୁଏ, ଯେମିତି ରାତି ପରେ ଦିନ ଓ ଶାତ ପରେ ବସନ୍ତ ଆସେ । ମୁଁ ବି ସେମିତି ପୁଣି ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖିବାରେ ମଜ୍ଜିଗଲି ଓ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନର ଅବସାଦକୁ ଭୁଲିଗଲି । ତା ପରେ ହାତ ହଲେଇ ମୋ ଝିଅ ମାନଙ୍କ ମେଳରେ ନାଚୁଥିଲି "ଦିଲ୍ ଟୋ ପାଗଲ୍ ହୋ" ଗୀତର ତାଳରେ ।

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OSA: Today's Relevance, Tomorrow's Directions

DEVI P. MISRA

After only twenty-nine years of existence since its creation by a few early settlers from Orissa; the OSA, our parent organization in USA and Canada seems to be at the crossroads as we are rushing towards the millennium.

The conventions used to be like an annual get-together - a "get to know you" like picnic or chit-chat session. The evenings have always been entertaining and succeeded in emphasizing our cultural background and heritage. Within the last five years, there have blossomed some issue oriented discussions. Yet we are way behind in defining OSA's goals and objectives if we take a comparative look at parallel organizations amongst our immigrant compatriots from India.

We have about twelve hundred families and many students spread out in the USA and Canada. Yet at every convention, only 100 families show their interest to attend the convention. The attendance is less if the location is not convenient. Many of the families are not even in the OSA directory. Why the disconnect?

Is the disconnect existing because we come from one of the most backward states of India? Is it because we lack a sense of pride being Oriya; because we are not cohesive in assimilating from our past towards building a well coordinated and better future? Or is it because of a lack of direction?

Immigrants from Orissa can be divided into the three categories: a) those migrating between 1950 and 1970 b) those migrating between 1980 and beyond and finally c) the children (or the younger generation) of immigrants. Our pattern of response to our parent organization is different for all three categories, contributing to an attitude of inertia towards OSA.

1. OSA and its Membership.

As mentioned above, not all Oriyas in the U.S. and Canada are members of OSA; in particular, many who came after 1980. Many a times, the students shrug to pay small amounts to become a member and shun active participation. Somehow, some people do not see OSA as THEIR organization and do not take pride in it. These days, this attitude seems to have a majority following.

2. OSA and the younger generation.

Many of the children accompany parents and are active participants only if they are in cultural and entertainment events. Otherwise they feel disconnected particularly in their teen and grownup years. In general, they cater to different attitudes and philosophies, growing up in a bicultural environment; one at home, the other outside.

The younger generation, children of immigrants should have a directory of their own with their separate OSA events which they can coordinate and orchestrate themselves. Let

their ideas flourish!

3. OSA: Beyond the 80's, Immigrants, and ORNET.

The immigration beyond 1980 includes extremely motivated younger immigrants who do not maintain a close relationship with OSA interests. The majority maintain an informal relationship through ORNET. When ORNET was started, one did anticipate intense brainstorming about subjects pertaining to and about Orissa in general. Unfortunately, ORNET like its big brother, INTERNET is mostly interpersonal and informal communication at the best yet not the exchange of ideas and innovation it is supposed to be.

4. OSA: the 50's Generation and JSA.

Those who migrated in the 50's, 60's, and 70's are in this decade, moving into their 50's and beyond. They are well into middle age with children grown and out of the house. This group increasingly started to lose identification to their roots in Orissa and started in 1992, a parallel and increasingly vocal organization, the Jagannath Society of America (JSA).

More and more this group does not see the need for attending the OSA convention. If one ventures to know, OSA in 28 years, has a balance fund of \$40,000. In only 6 years of existence, JSA has a balance of \$60,000 and which is growing. This proves without a doubt that this age group can fund if they so desire, an unlimited amount to JSA and do so religiously. However, they would hardly support any deserving cause related to OSA or Orissa. In JSA, the pride of funding is there but not in OSA or towards organizations needing support in the poverty-stricken state of Orissa.

Future Directions:

In the last few years, some members, through individual efforts have been helping organizations in Orissa in inspirational ways. We must encourage young and older immigrants and their children to be interested in OSA and Orissa. If generations of Jews, 50 years after the war can vouch for the goodness of Israel, why cannot we as a group, make strides to preserve the culture (through music, dance, etc.) heritage of Orissa here in the States?

Certainly the members of OSA, can exhibit the same benevolence in funding OSA and organizations in Orissa with the same unlimited vigor to which they donate to JSA. The JSA can, in addition to its current good works, use ten percent of its balance towards developing and sustaining Oriya culture and tradition. At every OSA convention, there should be sincere fundraising events for causes espoused by OSA for causes in Orissa.

- Debi Mishra lives in Huntsville, Alabama with wife Sarojini.

Mother Earth And The Earth Day Celebration

ALEKHA K. DASH

Does the concept of Mother Earth and its preservation belong only to the Western world? Secondly, April 22nd is officially celebrated as Earth day in the world. Does this celebration have any connection or parallelism with the Earth Day celebrated by Oriyas for generations?

If anyone asks the first question to a Hindu, the simplest answer he or she will receive is no. The concept of Mother Earth may be new to the Western world, but for a Hindu it is very ancient. A true Arya starts his or her day with a prayer to the Mother Earth. The two major components of this prayer are:

1. to apologize to her for all the exorbitant work he or she will be performing on her for the entire day, and,
2. to appreciate her willingness to offer all of her wealth for the prosperity of her children.

The following few lines are often used during a morning prayer, clearly indicating the importance of Mother Earth in the day-to-day life of a Hindu.

*"Brhma Murari Tripurantakari Bhanuh Sashi
Bhumisute*

*Budhasha Guruscha Sukra Sani Rahu Ketabaha
Kurbantu Sarbe Mama Suprabhatam*

*Tuam Dhare Sarvabhutana Khyamajuktamm Sa
Nityasha*

Sarbakarma Karishyami Murtika Dehime Mahi".

To an Aryaputra, nothing in this world can be compared to a mother's love and affection. A mother will love and cherish you when everyone else gets tired of you, and she will embrace you with caring devotion when everyone else gives up on you. After all, everything we eat, wear, ride in, and play with is a gift from Mother Earth. A mother's devotion and affection is not only described and accentuated in the Sanatan Dharma but has also been documented in various other religions and cultures. Kipling's work is a fair example of this: "if I were hanged on the highest hill, mother o' mine, O mother o' mine, I know whose love would follow me still. If I were drowned in the deepest sea. I know whose tears would come down to me. If I were damned of body and soul, I know whose prayers would make me whole, mother o' mine, O mother o' mine".

One of the greatest epics of the world, Ramayan, has also pointed out the importance of Mother Earth during a despondent situation. As an example, during the "Agni parikya" Sati Sita said "Oh! dear mother please give me a little space in you so that I can be with you for ever". Above all, this is the only mother who will offer her lap for our last sleep irrespective of our color, race, sex, and religion. Protection of the earth from crisis is also customary to Hindus. According to the Hindu scriptures, Vishnu, the god of preservation, has come to earth in various forms (reincarnations) to preserve mother earth from various exigencies. Varaha Avatar is a typical example of such a reincarnation.

Throughout the world, April 22nd is celebrated as the official Earth Day. This concept originated in the USA in the fall of 1963, during the presidency of John F Kennedy. But if we look back to our own heritage and history of Oriya culture, we can find that Earth Day celebration is nothing new to us. Oriyas celebrate Earth Day every year over a period of three days in the month of June. However, we have named it differently as compared to the rest of the world. We claim this occasion as the Raja Parba, or simply, RAJA. This is recognized as the national festival of Orissa. For generations, men and women of Orissa celebrate this festival in honor of their Mother Earth (called the MAA BASUDHA in Oriya). This is one of the festivals of Orissa which belongs to Oriyas only. Asadha Sankranti is usually called the Raja Sankranti. The day before the Sankranti is called the Pahili Raja, and the day after the Sankranti is called "BHUMI DAHAN". This day is also called "BASUMATI SHOWER". According to the old beliefs, during this period, Mother Earth becomes Rajasula. Perhaps, the name Raja has originated from the word Rajasula. On these days, Mother Earth is allowed to have enough rest. Digging, planting, and other agricultural activities are totally restricted during this period. In her honor, people celebrate these days with great enthusiasm. Singing and dancing with new clothes is very common. In honor of our great heritage and our Mother Earth (Sarbam Sanha Basudha), let us celebrate Earth Day in harmony, keeping in mind to implement the most important resolution of the day, the "three R's" i.e. Reduce, Recycle and Reuse.

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ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀ ଓ ଆମେ

ମଧୁସୂତା ଆଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟ

ସାରାଦିନର ଅକ୍ଳାନ୍ତ ପରିଶ୍ରମ ପରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ମୁଁ ରାତ୍ରି ଭୋଜନ କରିବାକୁ ଯାଉଛି ହଠାତ୍ ମନେହେଲା ଆଜି ଯେମିତି କଣ ମୁଁ ପାଶୋରି ଯାଇଛି । ଭୁଲିଯାଇଛି ମୋର ଆଜିର କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟ । ମନେ ପକାଇବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲି । ହେଲା ନାହିଁ । କିଛିମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲା ନାହିଁ । ଯାଏ, ଦିନରାତି ଯନ୍ତ୍ରବତ୍ ଖଟିବା ପଳରେ ମୋ ସ୍ମରଣ ଶକ୍ତିର କଣ କ୍ଷୟ ଘଟି ଯାଉଛି ? କାହିଁକି କେଜାଣି ମତେ ସେମିତି ମନେ ହେଲା । ଘରେ ବାହାରେ ମୋର ଯାହା କରଣୀୟ ସବୁତ ମୁଁ କରିଛି । କୌଣସି କାମରେ ଅବହେଳା କରିନାହିଁ । ତେବେ କଣ ଆଉ ମୁଁ ଭୁଲିଲି ? ଭାବ ଭାବ ଚାଲିଗଲି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ଆସିଥିବା ଏବଂ ମୋ ରୋଷେଇ ଘର କାନ୍ଥରେ ଟଙ୍କା ଯାଇଥିବା "କୋହିନୂର ପ୍ରେସ" କ୍ୟାଲେଣ୍ଡର ଆଡ଼େ । ତାରିଖ ମିଳାଇ ଦେଖିଲି । ଓହ୍ଲୋ, ଆଜିଯେ ଶିବରାତ୍ରୀ ଥିଲା । ମୁଁ ଭୁଲିଗଲି କେମିତି ? ସାଧାରଣତଃ ମୋର ଏମିତି ଭୁଲ୍ ବହୁତ୍ କମ୍ ହୁଏ । କହିବାକୁ ଗଲେ ଏମିତି ଭୁଲ୍ ମୁଁ ହେବାକୁ ଦିଏ ନାହିଁ । ଯେତେ କଷ୍ଟ, ଯେତେ ପରିଶ୍ରମ ପଡ଼ୁ ପଛେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଘରେ ପାଳନ କରା ଯାଉଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ପର୍ବ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ କାନାଡ଼ାରେ ରହି ମଧ୍ୟ ମୁଁ ପାଳନ କରେ । ତା ମାନେ ମୁଁ କହୁନାହିଁ ଯେ ବାରମାସରେ ତେର ପର୍ବ ସହିତ ସମସ୍ତ ଓଷାବ୍ରତ ମୁଁ ପୁରା ଓଡ଼ିଆଣୀ ହୋଇ ପାଳନ କରୁଥାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ ମୋ ପ୍ରାଣପଣେ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରେ ଯେପରି ମୋ ପିଲାମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱକୁ କଳନା କରିବାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ଏ ପାଷ୍ଟତ୍ୟ ଦେଶରେ ଯେ କେତେ ଅଛି, ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ଅନେକ ମତାନ୍ତର ଥାଇପାରେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେସବୁ ବିଷୟରେ ଆମ ପିଲାମାନେ ଅବଗତ ହେଲେ କ୍ଷତିର ସମ୍ଭାବନା କ୍ଷୀଣ । ଲାଭକଥା ସେମାନେ ବିଚାର କରିବେ ।

ମନେପଡ଼ିଯାଏ ମୋର ପିଲାବେଳ କଥା । ଗଣେଶ ପୂଜା, ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ପୂଜା, ବିଷୁବ ସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତି, କୁମାର ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣିମା, ରଜ, ପ୍ରଥମାଷ୍ଟମୀ ଇତ୍ୟାଦିର କଥା । ସେସବୁ ପୂଜାପର୍ବରେ ଘରେ ଖେଳି ବୁଲୁଥିବା ଅପାର୍ଥିବ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଓ ସାହିକ ଅନୁଭବର କଥା । ହୃଦୟର କେଉଁ ଅଳିମରେ ଆଜି ହୁଏତ ସେସବୁ ଧିରେ ଧିରେ ବିଲୁପ୍ତ ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଆମେ ତାକୁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣରୂପେ ବିଲୁପ୍ତ ହେବାକୁ ଦେବାକି ?

ଗଣେଶ ପୂଜା, ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ପୂଜାରେ ଖଇ ଉଖୁଡ଼ା, କାକୁଡ଼ି, କଦଳୀ, ରାଶିଲତୁ ଭୋଗ କରିବା, ରାତି ଅନିଦା ହୋଇ ମୂର୍ଖି ସଜାଇବା, ଚତା ପକେଇବା, ଏସବୁରୁ ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣୀୟ ଆନନ୍ଦ ମିଳେ ସେଥିରୁ ଆମ ପିଲାମାନେ ବଞ୍ଚିତ ହେଉ ନାହାନ୍ତି କି ? ସକାଳ ସାତଟାରେ ଉଠି ନିତ୍ୟକର୍ମ ସାରି କାମକୁ ବାହାରିବା ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତେ, ଭୋର୍ ପାଖରୁ ଉଠି ଖଇଉଖୁଡ଼ା, ରାଶିଲତୁ ନହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ପଳମୁଳ ଭୋଗ ଲଗାଇ ପୂଜାସାରି ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କୁ କଣ ଖୁଲ ବା ତାଙ୍କର କର୍ମକ୍ଷମାକୁ ପଠାଇ ହୁଅନ୍ତା ନାହିଁ ? ରାତିରେ କାମରୁ ଫେରି ଖେଚେଡ଼ି, ବିଲାତିବାଉରଣ ଖଟା ଟିକେ କରିପାରିବା ନାହିଁ ?

କୁମାରପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣିମାର ଉତ୍ସବ କୁମାର କୁମାରୀମାନଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଆଶିର୍ବାଦ ଅର୍ପୁଣ ପୁଲକ । ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନାବିଧୌତ ରଜନୀରେ ସେମାନେ ମତୁଆଲା ହୋଇ ଗାଇ ଉଠନ୍ତି, "କୁମାର ପୁନେଇଁ ଜହ୍ନଗୋ ପୁଲବଉଳ ବେଣୀ ..." । ତୁଳସୀ ଚଉରାମୂଳେ, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଆଲୋକ ତଳେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କୁମାର କୁମାରୀମାନେ କରିଥାଆନ୍ତି ଚାନ୍ଦପୂଜା । କୁମାରୀ କନ୍ୟାମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଏ ପୂଜା ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ତେରିରେ ପୂଜା କଲେ ବୁଢ଼ା ବର ମିଳିବ ବୋଲି କଥିତ ଅଛି । ସେଥିପାଇଁ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଉଦୟ ହେଉ ନହେଉ ଶୁଣି ସେମାନେ ଭୋଗ ତାଲା ସଜାଡ଼ି, ଚାନ୍ଦଚକଟା କରି ପୂଜାରେ ବସି ଯାଆନ୍ତି । ତାପରେ ପରସ୍ପରକୁ ଚାନ୍ଦଚକଟା ଖୁଆଇ ବନ୍ଧୁତ୍ୱକୁ ସୁଦୂର କରିଥାନ୍ତି । ନାଟ, ଗାଇ, ହସି, ଖେଳି କଟାଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତି ସାରା ରାତି । ଏ ପାଷ୍ଟତ୍ୟ ଦେଶରେ ସେସବୁ ସମ୍ଭବ ନୁହେଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରାଲୋକ ତଳେ ନହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଘର ଭିତରେ ଠାକୁରଙ୍କ ପାଖରେ ଚାନ୍ଦଚକଟା କରି ଭୋଗ କରିବା କଣ ଅସମ୍ଭବ ? ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କୁ ନୂଆ ଜାମା ପିନ୍ଧାଇ, କୁମାରପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣିମା ବିଷୟରେ ଦୁଇପଦ ବୁଝେଇ ଦେଲେ କ୍ଷତି କଣ ?

'ପ୍ରଥମାଷ୍ଟମୀ' ଘରର ପ୍ରଥମ ପିଲାଟି ପାଇଁ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । 'ପ୍ରଥମାଷ୍ଟମୀ' ରେ ହେଉଥିବା ହଳଦୀପତ୍ର ଏଣୁରି ପିଠା, ବାସନା ଚାଉଳର କ୍ଷୀରି ସିନା ଏଠି ମିଳିବା ଏତେ ସହଜ ନୁହେଁ । ଚକୁଳି ପିଠାଟିଏ କରି, ପୋଡୁଆଁ ପିଲାଟିକୁ ନୂଆଜାମା ପିନ୍ଧାଇ ପୂଜା କଣ କରି ହେବନାହିଁ ? ସେମିତି ରଜ ଦୋଳି, ରଜପାନ ସିନା ଏ ଦେଶରେ ଅପୂର୍ବ, ହେଲେ ଓଭର୍ରେ ପୋଡ଼ପିଠା ଖଣ୍ଡେ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର ପୋଡ଼ାଯାଇ ପାରିବ । "ବରଷକେ ଥରେ ଆସିବି ରଜ, ଆସିବି ରଜଲୋ, ହୋଇ ନୂଆ ସଜବାଜ ..." ଗୀତ ପଦକ ଯେ କେତେ ସୁମଧୁର, କେତେ ସୁଲଳିତ ॥ ସେ କଥା ମନେପଡ଼ିଲେ ମନ ପୁଲକିତ ହେଇଯାଏ ।

ମହାବିଷୁବ ସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତିରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ ତାପ ଯୋଗୁଁ ପଣା, ପାଣି କରି ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀ ତୁଳସୀ ଚଉରାମୂଳେ ପୂଜା କରିବା ସହିତ ଅତିଥି, ଅଭ୍ୟାଗତ ତଥା ପଥଶ୍ରାନ୍ତ ପଥିକ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ବିତରଣ କରିଥାନ୍ତି । ସାଧାରଣତଃ ମହାବିଷୁବ ସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତି ବା ପଣାସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତି ଏପ୍ରିଲ ମାସରେ ପଡ଼େ । ଯେଉଁଠାକି ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ବୈଶାଖ ମାସ । ଏଠି ହୁଏତ ସେତେବେଳକୁ ଶୀତର ପ୍ରକୋପ କମି ନଥାଏ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏପ୍ରିଲ ମାସରେ ଘରେ କଣ କୌଣସି ଥଣ୍ଡା ପାନୀୟ ସେବନ କରାଯାଇନଥାଏ ? ତାହେଲେ ପଣାସଂକ୍ରାନ୍ତି ଦିନ ପଣା ଚିକିଏ କରି ମିଳିମିଶି ପିଇଲେ କ୍ଷତି କଣ ?

ମନେ ପକାଇଲେ ଦୁଃଖ ଲାଗେ । ଅତୀତରେ ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀର ସେଇ ବିଶେଷ ଦିବସ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ଆମମାନଙ୍କ ମନରେ ଯେଉଁ ଅପୂର୍ବ ପୁଲକ ଏବଂ ଅପାର୍ଥିବ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଖେଳି ବୁଲୁଥିଲା, ସେଥିରୁ ଆମ ପିଲାମାନେ ବହୁତ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ନିଷ୍ଠୁର । ବନ୍ଧୁବାନ୍ଧବ, ସାଙ୍ଗସାଥୀଙ୍କ ଗହଣରେ ଆମେ ହଜିଯାଇ ସେସବୁ ଦିନ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ପାଳନ କରୁଥିଲୁ । ମନରେ ନଥିଲା କୌଣସି ଗ୍ଳାନି । ଆଜି ଆମେ ସେସବୁକୁ ପଛରେ ପକାଇ ନିଜ ନିଜ କର୍ମ ପଥରେ ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲିଛୁ । ପଛକୁ ଫେରି ଚାହିଁବାକୁ ଆମର ସମୟ ନାହିଁ । କିନ୍ତୁ ସତରେ କଣ ଆମ ମାନସପତ୍ରରୁ ସେଇ ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ସ୍ମୃତି ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଆମେ ଯୋଛ ଦେଇଛୁ ? ସେଇ ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ପାଥେୟ କରି ଆମେ ଆମ ପରିବାର ଭିତରେ କିଛି ଆନନ୍ଦ ଆଣିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରିବା ନାହିଁ କାହିଁକି ?

ହୁଏତ ଆମ ଆଇ, ଜେଜେମା ଯେତେ ପ୍ରକାରର ଓଷାବ୍ରତ କରୁଥିଲେ ଯେଉଁଭଳି ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀ ପାଳନ କରୁଥିଲେ, ସେସବୁ ଠିକ୍ ସେଇଭଳି ପାଳନ କରିବା ଆମ ମା, ମାଉସୀ ମାନଙ୍କ ପକ୍ଷରେ ସମ୍ଭବ ହୋଇନାହିଁ । ହେଲେ ଆମ ମା, ମାଉସୀ ମାନେ କଣ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଘରର ସମସ୍ତ ସଂସ୍କାର, ସମସ୍ତ ସଂସ୍କୃତିକୁ ଭୁଲି ପାରିଥିଲେ ? କିଛି ସେମାନେ ରକ୍ଷା କରିଥିଲେ ନିଷ୍ଠୁର । ସେମାନଙ୍କଠାରୁ ଭଣ୍ଡା ହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଆମେ ମାନେ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କଲେ, ଅଳ୍ପ କଷ୍ଟ କଲେ ସେଇ ସଂସ୍କାର, ସେଇ ସଂସ୍କୃତିକୁ ଅନ୍ତତଃ ବଞ୍ଚେଇ ରଖିପାରିବା । ସମସ୍ତ ବାଧାବିଘ୍ନ ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ଆମେ ଆମ ପରିବାର ଭିତରେ କିଛି ଅନୁକୂଳ ବାତାବରଣ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିପାରିବା । ତାହାଲେ ଆମ ପିଲାମାନେ ତାଙ୍କ କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟପଥରେ ଆଗେଇ ଗଲାବେଳେ ଚିକିଏ ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଫେରି ଚାହିଁବେ । ତାଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟର କେଉଁ କନ୍ଦରରେ 'କୁମାରପୁଷ୍ପିନୀ' କିମ୍ବା 'ରଜ' ର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଲୁଚ ରହିଯିବ । ଘାଣ୍ଟ ତରକାରୀ, ଯୋଡ଼ପିଠା, ଏଣୁରିପିଠା, କଜୁଳିପିଠା ଇତ୍ୟାଦିର ସ୍ୱାଦ ସେମାନେ ଅନୁଭବ କରିପାରିବେ । ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଆମଠାରୁ ଶୁଣି ଶୁଣି ସେସବୁ ବିଷୟରେ ଅବଗତ ହୋଇପାରିବେ ।

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପର୍ବପର୍ବାଣୀ ଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ଧାର୍ମିକ ଚେତନା ସହିତ କେତେକ ସାମାଜିକ ମୂଲ୍ୟବୋଧ ଲୁଚ ରହିଛି । ଆମ ପିଲାମାନେ ସେଇ ମୂଲ୍ୟବୋଧକୁ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ କରିପାରିବେ ବୋଲି ମୋର ଆଶା ଓ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କାର ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଯେ କେତେ ଭଜ ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ସନ୍ଦେହର ଅବକାଶ ନାହିଁ । ସବୁ ସମୟରେ ଆମେ ତାର ପରିପ୍ରକାଶ କରିବାକୁ ସମର୍ଥ ନହେଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ହେବାର ସତ୍ତ୍ୱକୁ ଆମେ ଭୁଲିବା କେମିତି ?

– Madhusmita Acharya lives in Toronto, Canada with her husband Ashok Acharya and two daughters.





ଭାବସ୍ରୋତ

ସ୍ନେହ ମହାନ୍ତି

ଅସ୍ତରାଗ ଲିଭଗଲା ପରେ
 ନୀରବ ନିଃଶବ୍ଦ ।
 ଅକ୍ଷରରେ ମନ ଖୋଜିହୁଏ
 ଯନ୍ତ୍ରେ ସାଇତା ହଜିଥିବା ମଣିଟିଏ,
 ଭାବସ୍ରୋତେ ବୁଡ଼ିଯାଏ, ଅମାନିଆ ମନ,
 ଶିଳି ଶିଳି ପବନ ସତେ କି
 ଓଲଟାଇ ଦିଏ ଅତୀତର କେତେ ପୃଷ୍ଠା ।
 ସେଇ ମାନଙ୍କର ବାଲ୍ୟ ଲୀଳା
 ଶୂନ୍ୟ ଜୀବନରେ ସୁଖର ଅଞ୍ଜଳି ଭରିଦିଏ ।
 ଏକାନ୍ତ ତପସ୍ୟା, ତ୍ୟାଗ, ନୀଦ୍ରାହୀନ ରାତ୍ରୀ
 କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ମଂଜୀରୁ ବୃକ୍ଷ, ପତ୍ରର ଗନ୍ଧଳୀ ।
 ସୁବାସିତ ପୁଷ୍ପ, ମଧୁର ଫଳଟିଏ ।
 କାମନା ସରିଛି ଏବେ
 ଭାବନା ମୋ ଏକା ଶାନ୍ତିଦ୍ୱାର
 ପୁଣି ଇଚ୍ଛା ହୁଏ, ଜଡ଼ ଯିବାକୁ
 ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସଂସାରରେ
 ଶୁଣିବାକୁ କୁଆଁ କୁଆଁ ଧ୍ବନୀ
 ଦେଖିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛା ହୁଏ, କୁନି କୁନି ତଳ ତଳ ଆସି
 ସେମାନଙ୍କ କୋଳରେ
 ଅସରନ୍ତି ସ୍ନେହର ଝରଣା ଝରିଯାଏ
 ସେଇ ନିର୍ମଳ କୋମଳ ମନ ଟିଏ
 ପୁଣିଥରେ ପୃଷ୍ଠା ଓଲଟାଇ ଦିଏ
 ମନେହୁଏ, ସତେ କିବା ସେମାନେ ଫେରି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି
 ମୋ କୋଳକୁ, ଅଳି, କୋଳାହଳ
 ହଠାତ୍ ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣମୀ, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରୋଦୟ ରେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଆଜିଲା ପରି
 ସବୁ ସତେଜ୍, ଜୀବନ୍ତ, ବିଭବମୟ ।

– Sneha (Dolly) Mohanty lives in Huntington Beach, California
 with her husband Nirod Mohanty. She is a frequent writer and has
 many publications to her credit.

ORNET - A Cyber Orissa

ASHUTOSH DUTTA

ORNET known as Oriya NET has been a unique medium of communication in cyberspace over the past 7 years for many of us. It has been a common platform for people of Orissan origin all over the world to discuss things mostly relevant to Orissa's development, share views and opinions about many different things of common interest. It has been a common thread for the people of Orissa in the Internet, where the members feel as part of one family. It not only contains politics, humour, "looking for", matrimonial, religion, culture, criticism, science, but also beams with rich poetry, weekend thoughts, business articles, and daily news. It is needless to mention that ORNET has been extremely helpful to many - who look for their lost friends; who need to get information about a specific area while traveling; who need travel-company for their family members, etc. While ORNET has helped many personally, it has also paved the way for many different charitable organizations like SEEDS, initiated by Priyadarshan Patra(Oregon). Thanks to support of the members in ORNET, SEEDS (www.seedsnet.org) has become a viable charitable institution and has already undertaken some successful projects in Orissa. Discussions in ORNET have led to many important things like Orissa's beautiful home page, currently maintained by Debasmita Misra (Oklahoma) at www.cs.columbia.edu/~deba, many critical discussions related to OSA's activities, OSA's Who's Who, computer conference in Bhubaneswar, to name a few. It has been possible to bring together about 800 members and their families through this common medium. While the members get involved in this directly, there are hundreds if not thousands in the tribal areas of Orissa who are getting the benefits through this electronic medium and from the by-products of ORNET. Ornet has thus been a boon of Internet and has helped to provide a new dimension to Orissa at large.

History of ORNET goes back to February of 1991. Nobody knew at that point that it was going to bring forth something so fruitful when Subrat Mohapatra(California) sent a mail to soc.culture.indian asking for the interested Oriyas who would be attending the forthcoming convention in Chicago. Subrat really wanted to get the email addresses of as many Oriyas. He was able to get 30 emails in response to his query. Then he started a private email list, and started the idea of having an electronic email sub-list so that issues pertaining to Orissa can be discussed. It was then Mihir Mohanty (California) came up with the name of ORNET. When we were thinking of making this list a bit more

automated, Chitta Baral (Texas) and myself started to think about the technicalities. Within a month ORNET was born as a "listserv" mailing list and was managed by me at Columbia University. Since then it has changed to a majordomo mailing list.

As Internet has taken an exponential growth over the years, we have seen the impact on ORNET which is now an automated majordomo mailing list with more than 800 members spanning all over the world and is still growing. It has been a household name in many Oriya families. Although ORNET is meant for people of Orissan origin, it extends its membership to others also. It consists of members of different ages, different generations, and of different background.

Like any other organization, there have been times when misunderstandings have cropped up between its members on some issues, but things always come back to normal within days. At times members have thought of converting this to a bulletin board, but many have preferred this to be an automated mailing list. This is however a moderated mailing list; that means only members can send mails to this and take part in the discussion. There are some guidelines for the new members, and there is a procedure for the prospective members also, which are described below. Please sign up as a member if you are not a member already, and encourage your friends/relatives to do so. Be a part of this cyber culture which will prove beneficial to yourself, your family, your community, and to Orissa at large. And the best part is that it does not cost you anything to be a member and you can enjoy the services of this network.

Guidelines:

Ornet is a list of ORISSANS all over the world. The articles and discussions are mainly pertaining to our motherland (ORISSA), our problems, solutions, news etc.

This medium consists of men, women, and children of all ages. So please be considerate in your type of posting. Usage of slangs is never appreciated.

A request to post your own constructive original articles - Please DO NOT use this medium for any kind of personal conflict or misunderstanding.

If you are a new member to Ornet, please come forward to introduce yourself with your name, background, and your origin in Orissa.



It is like any other Majordomo listserv. The process is automatic and does not require anyone's intervention.

ORNET is currently maintained by Ashutosh Dutta at Columbia University, New York. Questions regarding any problems related to ornet can be sent to owner-ornet@cs.columbia.edu.

FAQ(Frequently Asked Questions):

Q. Where do I send mail to reach all the members of ORNET?

A. Send your mail to ornet@cs.columbia.edu and your article gets distributed to everyone. You can do that only after you become a member of Ornet, since this is a semi-moderated list.

Q. How do I become a member of ORNET?

A. Please send mail to: majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu and on the body of the message (not the subject) add one line:

SUBSCRIBE ORNET your_email_address (Your Name)

i.e

To: majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu

Subject:

CC:

SUBSCRIBE ORNET subrat@xyz.com (Subrat Mohapatra)

Q. What is digest mode and How do I subscribe to ORNET in digest mode?

A. To subscribe to ornet in the digest mode, you get about one mail per week from ornet where all the postings of ornet are appended together as one single mail.

Send your email to:

majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu and on the body of the message add one line

SUBSCRIBE ornet-digest your_email_address (Your name)
i.e

To: majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu

Subject:

CC:

SUBSCRIBE ornet-digest subrat@xyz.com (Subrat Mohapatra)

Q. How do I delete my name from the list?

A. send mail to majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu

In the body of the message just say

unsubscribe ornet

Q. How do I get the list of the members of ornet ?

A. Send mail to majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu and on the body page add one line,

who ornet

Q. How do I get a list of important automatic commands about Majordomo?

A. send mail to majordomo@majordomo.cs.columbia.edu and on the body page add one line

HELP

– Ashutosh Dutta lives in New York city. He is an active member of the OSANY and was its former president. His dedication and contribution to OSA is exemplary. He is extremely modest in this article, but without his single-minded efforts, Ornet would not have been a reality.



Yoga Philosophy

BINOD NAYAK

To the uninitiated, the word yoga usually projects an image of “physical exercises” (gymnastics, postures) that can bring good health to the practitioner. While these physical exercises, also known as Hatha yoga, should not be confused with gymnastics, the Hatha yoga itself should not be confused with all that is there to learn about yoga. In reality, Hatha yoga forms only a small but important part of the “yoga system” of mental and physical disciplines whose origins can be traced back to the 5000 year old Indus valley civilization.

The validity of yoga over the millennia is a testament to the profundity of its underlying principles. Its evolution over the millennia has produced a wide variety of yogic disciplines that can be confusing to the uninformed. While, the yogic disciplines appear to be different on the surface, the underlying philosophy (darsana) possess a unity that is the subject of this article.

What is Yoga ?

The word yoga has been derived from the Sanskrit root word yuj which literally means “to join.” It is cognate with the Sanskrit word yukta and English word “yoke.” The most appropriate meaning of the word in the context of yoga philosophy is “union.” In the broadest sense of the term, yoga in its varied forms teaches a set of mental and physical disciplines for attaining union of the self (jivaatmaa) with the supreme being (paramaatmaa).

The scope of this article is limited and hence we do not plan to delve into some of the esoteric and sometimes incomprehensible philosophical underpinnings of yoga philosophy. No attempt has been made in this article even to explain various philosophical interpretations of jivaatmaa and paramaatmaa. In the present context, it suffices to say that the aim of yoga is to eliminate the illusion (maayaa) that the material world (prkriti) creates over the self or the spirit within (purusa). By destroying the bond that maayaa creates, the “conditioned” spirit or the self becomes free and ultimately unites with the pure spirit (achieves liberation — moksa, mukti or nirvana). We will discuss these concepts somewhat in more detail in the section on yoga philosophy or yoga darsana.

A Brief History of Yoga

The origin of yoga can be traced back to the Indus valley civilization which reached its zenith anywhere between 2500 to 2000 BC. The excavations at the two ancient cities of Mahenjo-daro and Harappa in the Indus valley have identified that the non-Aryan civilization that flourished almost 5000 years ago resorted to phallus worship and worship of Shiva. The figurines of yogis, yoginis and

Shiva in the yogic postures of aasana and meditation found at these sites attest to the fact that, yoga, even if in its rudimentary form, was practiced in the Indus valley civilization. As we know today, these non-Aryan yogic concepts were later integrated into Vedic (Aryan) yoga philosophy. For example, the non-Aryan phallus worship of the Indus valley civilization was later fused with the Aryan (Vedic) God Rudra that evolved over the millennia to Shiva or Yogesh (Lord of Yoga) — the third God of the Hindu triad. Moreover, the non-Aryan roots of yoga later evolved into an elaborate yogic system called Tantric yoga.

It is believed that the Aryan invasion of the Indian subcontinent was responsible to a large extent in destroying the Indus valley civilization. However, the non-Aryan roots of the Indus valley civilization found its expression in the synthesis of the Hindu culture in later years. It is postulated that yoga as a mental and physical discipline was practised in India over several millennia when Patanjali for the first time codified its underlying principles in approximately 200 pithy slokas (aphorisms) in his monumental work Yoga Sutra (sutra literally means a thread). The greatness of Patanjali lies in the fact that he was successful in classifying, systematizing and validating the diverse yogic disciplines that existed in India and threaded them together as a garland of slokas in the Yoga Sutra.

Life of Patanjali is shrouded in mystery. It is hypothesized that he lived in India anywhere between the 2nd century BC through the 5th century AD. Perhaps there was more than one author who lived during this time and wrote under the pseudonym Patanjali. Mythology has it that Patanjali is Ananta (Adisesa), Lord of Serpents (on whom Lord Vishnu reposes at the time of pralaya), caused his own appearance (swayambhu) on earth by falling (pata) in the form of a tiny snake into an oblation (anjali) offered by yogini Gonika. Gonika was praying for a worthy son to whom she could impart her wisdom of yoga. Patanjali not only became a master of yoga, he was a great grammarian (author of Mahaabhaasya, the “great commentary” on Panini’s grammar) and also the author of a treatise on Aayurveda (the secret of “aging” or “life”).

Yoga philosophy owes much to its Vedantic roots. The Saankhya (analysis, discrimination) philosophy (one of the Vedantic philosophies) is regarded as the oldest philosophy of India. The Bhagavad-Gita (the sixth book of the great epic Mahaabhaarata) remains as one of the most important texts on Saankhya philosophy. It is believed that Bhagavad-Gita which predates Yoga Sutra was composed in the 5th century BC. The eighteen chapters (adhyaayas) of Bhagavad-Gita discuss in great detail some of the central concepts of Saankhya (yoga) philosophy, such as the Karma yoga, Jnana yoga and Bhakti yoga. While there are a lot of similarities between the teachings of

Bhagavad-Gita and Yoga Sutra, the approaches to yoga espoused in these texts are fundamentally different. The following section on yoga philosophy will highlight some of these differences.

Yoga Philosophy (Darsana)

The word darsan is not exactly synonymous with the word philosophy. It is derived from the root word *drs* (to see, to visualize, to comprehend) emphasizing visualization through the "mind's eye." Therefore yoga darsana is an aid to "visualizing" the underlying concepts of yoga as a discipline.

The Saankhya and the Yoga philosophies (darsanas) posit that the world is real. However, it is through ignorance (*avidyaa*) which leads to illusion (*maayaa*) that the pure spirit (*purusa*) identifies itself with matter (*prkriti*) and hence enslaves itself to an endless cycle of "becoming." Moksha, Mukti, Nirvaana or liberation can only come after freeing the pure spirit by cutting this net of illusion in which the pure spirit is entangled. In the view of Saankhya philosophy, it is through metaphysical analysis, contemplation, devotion and practice of detachment (*nirlipta*) that the conditioned spirit can be set free.

According to the yoga philosophy of Patanjali, the identification of the pure spirit with the "thought process" (*chitta*) - envelopes the "spirit within" in an illusion (*maayaa*). The bond of *maayaa* enslaves the — *purusa* — the pure spirit to *prkriti*— the material world. How can the pure spirit be free from the clutches of *maayaa* and unite with the universal spirit? Can the rational thinking be used to liberate the spirit that has been enslaved? According to Patanjali, the rational thinking itself is a product of the material world - *prkriti* - while the truth, i.e., the pure spirit (*purusa*) is beyond the material world. Therefore rational thinking cannot be used as a tool to free the spirit within.

At the outset of Yoga Sutra, Patanjali states in a pithy sloka, "yogah cittavrtti nirodhah", i.e., yoga is the cessation of the constantly fluctuating thought process. When the fluctuating thought process ceases, the spirit within (the ground state) rises and pervades the entire being. Otherwise the spirit identifies itself with the constantly fluctuating thought process, thus entrapping itself in endless "becoming" — *maayaa*. Patanjali is credited with synthesizing the Saankhya philosophy with "technical" disciplines such as concentration, meditation (inclusive of *praanaayaam*) and ecstasy to arrive at a yoga philosophy which is different in its approach to attaining the liberation of the self. In Patanjali's view, even contemplation and meditation leave traces of "seed" (*bija*) that hinder the practitioner to achieve a state of supra-consciousness. In Yoga Sutra, he teaches the techniques that could transport the practitioner to a state of *nirbija samaadhi* (seedless supra-conscious condition) that is even beyond the realms of meditation.

Yoga Disciplines: A Brief Taxonomy

Over the millennia, the rich body of mental and physical practices of yoga system was responsible in spawning a wide variety of yoga disciplines. A taxonomy of all forms of yoga found in India is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that the yoga philosophy has been greatly influenced by three major philosophies, i.e., Saankhya philosophy, Buddhist philosophy and Tantric philosophy. All the important yogic disciplines have their roots in one or more of these philosophies. For example, Karma ("right" action), Bhakti (devotion) and Jnana (knowledge) yogas have their roots in Saankhya philosophy while Hatha (force) and Kundalini (coil) yogas are closely allied with the Tantric philosophy.

Of all the yoga disciplines, Hatha yoga has the maximum number of followers in the West. Its emergence as a separate yoga discipline is attributed to Gorakha Nath (12th century AD) who is credited with the authorship of a text called Hatha Yoga. The phrase "Hatha yoga" literally means "union through force." It stresses mastery of the body as a means of liberating the spirit within. With this in view, it emphasizes yogic postures (*asanas*) such as *padmaasana*, *sarvaangaasana*, and *sirsasana* and control of breath (*praanaayama*) as means to attaining the goal of freeing the conditioned spirit from the bondage of *maayaa*.

The yoga system of Patanjali is a grand synthesis of various yogic philosophies and practices and was named by Swami Vivekananda as Raja Yoga (king of yogas). It is also known as *Astaanga Yoga* because it has eight separate components: (a) *yama* (restraint of behavior), (b) *niyama* (spiritual observances), (c) *asana* (practice of postures), (d) *praanaayama* (expansion of vital energy through the control of *praana* or breath), (e) *pratyahara* (withdrawal of the senses), (f) *dhaarana* (concentration), (g) *dhyana* (meditation) and (h) *samaadhi* (complete union or absorption).

Conclusion

The esoteric concepts of yoga with many shades of interpretations are a constant roadblock to understanding its underlying concepts. It is hoped that this short article has been successful in arousing your interest in exploring some of the deeper meanings of yoga. It is a truism that the practice of yoga remains an arduous task. This is because the yoga discipline has the lofty goal of integrating the body, mind and spirit with the ultimate aim of freeing the spirit within. Very few people become a "true yogi." However, understanding and practicing of even a small fraction of this perennial discipline and philosophy can bring about immeasurable nourishment to the body and mind.

- Binod Nayak lives in Maryland with wife Bandita. He was a former editor of the OSA Journal.

The Independence Day, 1947

A personal retrospection

LALU MANSINHA

The familiar red, white and blue Union Jack wafted at the top of the white flagpole. The entire school was assembled in the field. Our Principal, a florid Englishman, addressed the assembly of students and teachers, then raised his hat and said a brief prayer for the new nation, just born. He then pulled at the ropes and gingerly lowered the Union Jack. An unfamiliar flag, a saffron-white-green tricolor with a wheel at the center, slowly rose up the pole and unfurled at the top. The new flag of India fluttered in the gentle wind in the morning sun. After a hiatus of more than two millennia the *Chakra* (wheel) of Emperor Ashoka once again symbolised the nation, the government and the people of India. It was a moment for the history books. The date was August 15, 1947. My brother Lalit and I were in the assembly on that day at Stewart School in Cuttack.

The Principal did not realise then, and many may not agree even now, that a former student of Stewart School had brought the 300-year-old British Empire to its knees. He was not in Cuttack that day, not even in India. The student was Subhas Chandra Bose.

By 1940 Subhas Bose, unlike Gandhi, Nehru and other leaders of the Congress Party, had given up hope that the British could be persuaded to leave India without an armed struggle. This was the time of the Second World War (1939 – 1940). He secretly traveled from Calcutta to Kabul in 1941 to seek help from the adversaries of Britain in the war. With the help of German, Italian and Soviet embassy officials he went to Berlin. Once there he persuaded the German foreign office to permit him to start the Free India Center and accord the Center and its staff diplomatic status. He then started regular shortwave broadcasts to India, carrying the message of freedom. He also persuaded the German government to fund and train the India Legion, an army unit. Under his direction the poem *Jana Gana Mana* was adopted as the national anthem of India and the salutation *Jai Hind* was first adopted by the Free India Center in Berlin in 1941.

In spite of his achievements he was disillusioned by lack of strong German support for his vision of a free India. At about the same time the Japanese were unhappy with the leadership of the Indian National Army in Singapore, commanded by General Mohan Singh. In 1943 Bose embarked on the travel to the far east in a German U-boat as far as Madagascar. He then transferred to a Japanese submarine in the high seas and reached Malay in 1943. Apart from the living conditions on the submarines, there was the ever present risk of being spotted and sunk by British-American aircraft and naval vessels.

The reason the Japanese government welcomed Subhas Bose with enthusiasm was for two reasons. One was Subhas Bose was a past-president of the Congress Party, a leader of stature in India. The second was his immense personal charm and charisma. Bose traveled tirelessly, visiting Indian communities in all parts of Asia under Japanese military control. Indian communities in Japan, Philippines, China, Indonesia, Malay, Thailand and Burma pledged him support for the cause of India's freedom. Within a year Bose became a true leader of the war-time NRI community in East and Southeast Asia.

With Japanese support he formed a Provisional Government of India. Japan ceded control of Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government. The INA under the command of Subhas Bose increased to 40,000 men and women. In a major sociological innovation, the INA formed a frontline women's regiment.

Subhas Bose and the Indian National Army (INA) have played a crucial role in the achievement of freedom in 1947. It is fascinating to trace the roots of the INA to Indian expatriate groups in United States and Canada. The INA was founded by the political organisation among the Indian expatriates in Southeast Asia known as the India Independence League (IIL). A newspaper called *Ghadar*, published from San Francisco was the original inspiration for the IIL. This contribution of NRIs in US, Canada is only beginning to be recognised. In 1941, even before Japan entered the war, Col. Tsutomu Tamura of the Japanese embassy in Bangkok and two young Indian revolutionaries, Pritam Singh and Amar Singh, executives of the IIL had signed a detailed agreement on Japanese help and support for the 'forthcoming battle for independence'. By the time Subhas Bose arrived in Penang in mid 1943 from Germany, the Indian National Army, with General Mohan Singh as the commanding officer, had already been formed by the IIL.

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Independence Day was a day of celebration and merriment as no other. Part of the joy that day was simply emerging from the long dark nights of the Second World War. The war had been over for two years. But its devastation of the economy was still palpable, and would continue for at least a decade.

After the flag ceremony at our school we all went over to the Killa Maidan, the expansive parade grounds, to watch the official ceremony. We were engulfed by cheering, happy, flag waving, joyous throngs everywhere, waving flags, shouting: *Jai Hind; Nehru Gandhi Zindabad; Bharat*

Mata ki Jai; and so on. The Governor of Orissa, and the Chief Minister took part in the official flag hoisting ceremony. The police band awkwardly played the unfamiliar national anthem, *Jana Gana Mana* and *Vande Mataram*. There was a march past and the Governor received the salute. The various military, police and para-military units marched throughout the city. A small group of school students made up the tail end of the parade. Huge flag waving crowds lined the streets, cheering us on. All buildings along the parade route were festooned with flags. After four hours of marching I came home dropped onto bed and, bone tired, dropped off into a deep stupor.

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Historically, empires have collapsed through bloody conflict from within or without. In 1947, for the first time, an empire was relinquished without violence. At the stroke of midnight on August 14-15, 1947, the Indian Empire became India, a sovereign nation. That the transfer of power in Delhi took place in harmony is a tribute to the belief in *Ahimsa* (non-violence) by Gandhi. That, however, is not the whole story. The actions by Subhas Bose three years earlier had led to the *threat* of insurrection and mutiny by the Indian Army and Navy against the British in 1946. Some 40,000 Indian soldiers had volunteered for the INA during the war. Although the INA was no longer in existence at the end of the war, the immense personal popularity of Netaji Bose made certain that support for his cause must be widespread in the British/Indian military after the war in 1945. This threat was one of the major factors that convinced the British government to leave India.

When the Second World War started in 1939 Orissa had been a separate province for barely three years. The province was rural, agrarian, and forested, barely touched by the twentieth century. Our family was typical of the middle class: no electricity, no gas, no phone, no radio, no TV, no refrigerator, no car, one bicycle, one sewing machine. Most manufactured items were unaffordable. We did not consider ourselves as poor; yet every *paisa* had to be guarded.

In 1939 there was only one college in Orissa, Ravenshaw. Utkal University was yet to be founded. The largest town, Cuttack, was not yet a city because the population was less than 100,000. Jackals and hyenas and troops of monkeys were a common sight within Cuttack. We had a small garden in the back and we were always on the lookout to fight off the monkey troops who came to raid the fruits and vegetables. In the countryside wild animals abounded. Encounters with bears, tigers and elephants were not uncommon. The day I was born, a tiger attacked and carried off a student.

Then in 1941, in a series of stunning military operations, Japan defeated American, Dutch, French and British forces in Asia and was poised to attack Australia and India. After the fall of Burma to Japan, the invasion of India was considered inevitable. Suddenly it was our war.

A naval attack by Japan and a landing on the Orissa coast loomed as a distinct possibility. British/Indian army units moved into Orissa. Warplanes flew overhead quite often. In Cuttack and other urban areas air raid shelters were constructed, to be used in case of Japanese bombing attacks. Grey uniformed Air Raid Police (ARP) practiced various drills in case of air-raids. Military trains carrying troops and equipment overloaded the rail system. There was a US military base in Dhenkanal, and other large units at Charbatia. A US military plane got lost and landed by mistake on a field near Athgarh. The confused crew fired a few rounds, set a few houses on fire. They knew no Oriya, and no one could understand their American English. My father was summoned to translate, and to reassure them that they were not in enemy territory.

There was the fear of the war. The fear of Orissa being a battle zone became widespread. Several Japanese were captured on the Orissa coast. It was assumed that they were the scouts for the invasion. At one time a rumour that Japanese units had landed near Berhampur spread like wildfire. The population panicked and started fleeing. It turned out to be a rumour.

The prolonged war affected our daily lives too. Diversion of commodities to the front lines caused serious shortages of food and other items, causing severe inflation. The rise in the prices were severe enough to bring about rationing of staples such as rice, wheat, cooking oil, sugar, kerosene etc. In Bengal the mismanagement of the economy caused a severe famine, which effected Orissa too. With continuously rising prices the suffering of the fixed-salary middle-class was quite severe. The inflationary disruption of the Indian economy that was started by the Second World War continued beyond the end of the war in 1945, into the mid-fifties, well after independence. Many houses were dark because of the shortage of kerosene to light lanterns. Petrol shortage forced innovations. Buses were refitted with bulky furnaces to burn coal. The coal-gas was as fuel instead of petrol. Much of the bus was taken up by this contraption. The bus had to carry the coal to burn. One of my painful memories is a trip in mid-summer from Sambalpur when I was sitting right next to the coal furnace.

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There was a great belief in *Ahimsa*, non-violence, as propounded by Gandhi and the Congress Party. Yet, the news that an Indian army of liberation (Indian National Army, INA; also known as the *Azad Hind Fauj*) had been formed electrified the country. I was too young to remember whether we learnt of the INA during the war or just after. Wartime censorship would have kept such news from the state-controlled newspapers and radio. I suspect clandestine broadcasts must have conveyed the news. Netaji Bose became a presence in our lives. He was our Commander-in Chief.

My grandfather, Banamali Behura, a former police

officer, taught me and my brother Lalit that the INA salute was different from that of the Indian Army. It was a salute to the heart. The right hand, with the palm flat and down, went smartly in front of the heart, rather than the forehead. So we two paraded around the house and smartly gave the INA salute, shouting *Jai Hind*. Some five decades later I had the opportunity to give the INA salute again, this time in public, but in faraway Canada. Since I have not seen any other reference to the INA salute, I think Grandfather simply invented it.

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After marching through the jungles of Burma, the Japanese army and the INA went on the offensive and in April 1944 laid siege to Imphal and Kohima. What the INA was hoping for was that large numbers of colonial Indian Army troops would rally to the cause of freedom and switch their loyalties to the INA without any actual fighting. This did not happen. Due to censorship the British/Indian Army had never heard of the Netaji Bose and the plans of liberation of India by the INA. They were astounded to find Indian soldiers fighting on the side of the enemy, the Japanese. The British/Indian Army treated the INA with all the contempt deserved for traitors. But from the captured INA soldiers the British/Indian Army troops were astonished to find out that the INA considered them (the colonial Indian troops) as traitors to India, serving the British overlords and helping to suppress free people in India, as well as around the world. Even as the INA soldiers were being taken away to prisoner of war camps, they spoke with inspiration and enthusiasm of Netaji Bose and their hopes for a free India. These conversations between the captors and the captives initiated the self-examination and soul-searching in the British/Indian military, even as the INA ceased to exist.

Japanese-INA offensive was repulsed and Netaji moved back with the retreating Japanese. He died in an air crash on Taipei at the end of the war.

The soul searching in the Indian military culminated in a mutiny in the Indian Navy in Bombay in 1946. With the loyalty of the Indian military in doubt, the British concluded that they could no longer deny India freedom. Although persuading Britain to transfer sovereignty to India was accomplished without armed conflict, the transfer itself was not bloodless. Without sufficient forethought the British decided to partition India. The blood of thousands who died due to communal violence remains as another stain on the record of colonialism in India.

And so it came to pass that a former student of Stewart School, Cuttack, brought an end to the three centuries old British occupation of India.

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I am acutely conscious of the ironies of this report. The fact that I am writing in English, sitting half a world

and half a century away from the events I describe is itself an indictment of independent India and, in an equal measure, of many expatriates like me. In the fifties and the sixties thousands of idealistic young people from independent India traveled to the west to study, with the avowed intention of returning with new knowledge and skills to benefit India. Unfortunately the western democracies have experienced a sustained post-war economic boom that has lasted half a century and is without parallel in history. Unlike any other previous period this economic progression has been based on science and technology and has created an enormous and continuing demand for skilled personnel in the developed countries. As a consequence, millions of competent scientists and engineers were tempted with offers of salaries and working conditions and a sense of dignity and equality that was not available in India. They stayed on as expatriates in the west.

The peaceful transfer of power from Britain to India, which appeared to be so beautiful in 1947, has become a millstone. India inherited the entire bureaucracy of government, designed by the British for a slower, more placid and dictatorial times. The structure of government of India has been unable to cope with the rapid rate of development of science and technology. And so a million or more of citizens of India are providing the infrastructure to run the western economies, indeed the economies of the very same colonial powers. This is the absurdity of our recent history, and indeed, all history. That galaxy of my childhood heroes, Nehru, Gandhi, Bose, Azad, Ambedkar, Rajgopalachari, Radhakrishnan, Patel would have looked at askance at the fruits of freedom. Is this what their zeal and sacrifice has wrought?

On this the first Independence Day I was just a kid admiring the new flag of India. In subsequent years I became a cadet and marched in many an Independence Day Parades. But it was never the same again. The magic of that first Independence Day was never to return. That outpouring of exuberance of the first Independence Day was never repeated.

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On this the Fiftieth Anniversary of Indian Independence, in faraway Canada, the University of Western Ontario organised an official function marking this historic event. At that function I once again gave the INA salute, a salute to the heart, to Netaji, to the Indian National Army and to all those in the freedom movement inside and outside India who sacrificed their ambitions, careers and lives, so that I and millions of others could fulfil our own trusts with destiny.

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A Unique Sled Dog Race Of Alaska

DEBENDRA K. DAS

INTRODUCTION: Every year a unique 1,000-mile sled dog race is run between Fairbanks, Alaska, U.S.A. and Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada. It is called the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race and was originally dreamed up by two pioneer Fairbanks mushers as an alternative to the other famous long distance sled dog race, the Iditarod. The Yukon Quest has been in existence since 1984. Unlike the Iditarod, which is run from Anchorage to Nome, entirely within Alaska, the Yukon Quest has an international flavor because the trail crosses the border between the U.S. and Canada. This boundary has the distinction of being the longest unguarded border in the world. The race starts one year in Fairbanks and the next in Whitehorse, so that both nations become equal partners in the contest. This year the race started in Whitehorse and ended in Fairbanks. Normally the race is conducted in February and this year the starting date was February 8, 1998.

I especially notice a parallel between the Yukon Quest and the Orissa Society of the Americas. Orissa Society has always aimed at binding the Oriya people of North America. Likewise, the main goal of the Yukon Quest has been to commemorate the international bond of citizens of the far north, whose spirits know no boundaries.

There were T.V., radio and newspaper personnel from Canada, Germany, Japan and the U.S.A. at the start of the race in Whitehorse. In addition, the day-to-day progress of mushers was put on the World Wide Web by the media. I read here in the Fairbanks newspaper that many school children in the lower forty-eight states regularly visited these Web pages during the 15 to 16 days that this race lasted. The students and the teachers downloaded the information and photographs to write short papers on the

Yukon Quest. My goal in writing this article is to provide similar information to our Oriya children and adults, who may have been intrigued by this one-of-a-kind sled dog race, which is often called the "toughest sled dog race in the world," because of the difficult terrain over which it is

run. It will be rewarding for me to learn that this article provided information and some pleasure to our Oriya readers. Who knows, in the future I may see a name of one of our Oriya children as a competitor in this sled dog race.

MUSHER PROFILE:

Thirty-eight mushers competed in this year's race; 19 of them were rookies. The oldest person in the group was 63-year-old Terry McMullin, a retired school principal from Eagle, Alaska. The youngest person to compete this year was 19-year-old Brenda Mackey, who comes from a long line of Alaskan dog mushers. Her father, Rick Mackey, was the winner of last year's Yukon Quest and also won the Iditarod Sled Dog Race in 1983. Her grandfather, Dick Mackey, was also the

winner of the Iditarod many years ago. There were 34 men and four women in this year's race from all walks of life. Two of them were physicians, one was a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman, and another was a bush pilot. Eleven were from Canada, one was from Japan, one was from Germany and the rest were from the U.S. Canadian musher William Kleedehn, age 38, who lost a leg in a motorcycle accident at age 18, showed his remarkable determination and courage by finishing the race in the seventh place. One of the contestants, Gwen Holdmann, was a student in the mechanical engineering department of the University of Alaska Fairbanks at one time. She had improved the design of her dog sled in one of the machine design classes and was a rookie in this year's Quest.

TERRAIN: Let us talk about how tough the trail of the Quest can be. Figure 1 shows a map of the Yukon Quest trail. This trail follows the footsteps of early miners, trap-



Figure 1: Yukon Quest trail showing the checkpoints along the way

pers, explorers and missionaries. This year there were seven checkpoints between Whitehorse and Fairbanks. These checkpoints, shown in Figure 1, are: Carmacks, Pelly Crossing, Dawson City, Eagle, Circle, Central, and Angel Creek. The shortest distance between checkpoints is 70 miles, which is from Circle to Central. The longest distance between checkpoints is 235 miles, which is from Pelly Crossing to Dawson City. At each checkpoint a team of veterinarians, race officials and the race marshal examines the dogs for their health. They also examine the mushers' mandatory survival gear that includes a sleeping bag, a 22-inch or larger ax, snowshoes, eight booties for each dog, and six pounds of dog food per dog each day, which they must carry in their sled bag. The trail travels over 250 miles of frozen Yukon River and sometimes on the glare ice of several frozen lakes. This year a 15-mile stretch of the Yukon River ice just out of Dawson was jammed with ice piles 20 feet high, making it impassable. Therefore, another trail was cut through the woods to get around this section. The trail crisscrosses many creeks, carefully avoiding open waters, which are dangerous spots for dogs and mushers. A few years ago, five-time Iditarod champion, Rick Swenson, was disqualified from the Iditarod when one of his dogs was killed after falling through the open water. For a musher, a few minutes in this water with a temperature slightly above freezing can cause hypothermia and be fatal. The trail crosses many hills and three major summits. These summits are: 3,800-foot King Solomon's Dome between Carmacks and Dawson City, 3,600-foot Eagle Summit between Central and Angel Creek, and 3,420-foot American Summit between Dawson City and Eagle. In comparison, the highest peak encountered in the Iditarod sled dog race is 3,160 feet. While crossing these domes, the steep slope, gusting winds, poor visibility due to blowing snow and the wind chill that can freeze the skin make the journey perilous.

PURSE: This year the total purse was \$125,000, to be distributed among the top 15 mushers. The top contender, Bruce Lee of Denali Park, Alaska, took \$30,000. The second place finisher, French-Canadian musher Andre Nadeau, received \$25,000. The rest of the money was apportioned among the next 13 mushers.

DOGS: This year all contestants started from Whitehorse with 14 dogs. Injured or exhausted dogs could be dropped off at any checkpoints shown along the trail on Figure 1. The champion, Bruce Lee, finished the race in Fairbanks with nine dogs, dropping five dogs along the way. The second place finisher, Andre Nadeau, had eight dogs at the finish, dropping six dogs at various checkpoints. Among the top mushers, the one finishing with the fewest dogs in Fairbanks was the third place finisher, Rick Mackey, with seven dogs. All mushers must use booties for their four-legged athletes. The booties are sock-like paw protectors. This year a German tire company and corporate sponsor, Fulda Reifen, distributed free booties to all 38 mushers. It turned out that these lightweight po-

lar fleece booties were of poor quality and wore out quickly. Replacements were sought and provided by other sources quickly. At the checkpoints the mushers apply hydrocortisone creams to the paws of the dogs to minimize injury and prevent swelling of dogs' feet during the run. The dogs are usually either from the husky or malamute bloodline and are bred to run in long-distance races. The average age of the dogs ranges from about two to eight years. The names of some dogs are hilarious: Chip, Duke, Falcon, Binky, Bunny, Zumo, Red Wing and Oscar the Awesome. Although zero dog fatality is the goal of this race, dog death does occur. This year, a five-year-old dog in a team died en route to Eagle. Following the Quest rules, the dog's body was flown to Fairbanks for a necropsy at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Arctic Biology. The necropsy result showed that the dog had been treated well. The dog seemed to have a pre-existing condition that was not evident at the pre-race veterinarian check-up. In order to prevent excessive stress on dogs, the race rules call for mandatory stops at checkpoints. The longest rest in this race is a mandatory 36-hour layover at Dawson City, which is more than 450 miles from the starting point in Whitehorse. It is very important to keep the dogs hydrated throughout the race with a liquid diet. During rest stops, the mushers cook lamb meat, beef, or fish with liquid for their dogs' meals. Also, the teams take short stops for snacks, which may be chunks of meat. Some mushers give steaks to their dogs as a treat on completion of the race.

TIMING: This year's champion, Bruce Lee, completed the 1,000-mile race in 11 days, 11 hours, 27 minutes. Andre Nadeau came in second with 11 days, 15 hours, 13 minutes. Nadeau, a rookie from Ste. Melanie, Quebec, shook up the race like never before with his unorthodox style of racing — incredibly long runs with little rest — he remained in the lead most of the time. Many experts predicted his team was headed for a big crash due to this grueling schedule, but Andre defied all predictions and nearly won the race, finishing a little less than four hours after this year's champ. For being the first to arrive in Dawson City, which is nearly the halfway point in the race, he received four ounces of placer gold, which is a tradition. He is a serious competitor and I think he could win this race in his next couple of attempts.

CHAMPION: Bruce Lee's faster-moving team took the lead over Nadeau's team toward the end to win the race. In good sections of the trail, Bruce Lee's team covered about 10 miles per hour. Bruce's intensity was focussed on winning the race. He first ran this race back in 1986. Over the years, his perseverance paid off. He came close to winning in 1991, when he was edged out by Charlie Boulding, a two-time winner of the Yukon Quest, from the first place by five minutes. So, in the end, he truly deserved it, and I was rooting for him. Years ago, I had the opportunity to meet Bruce Lee at Denali National Park, when he was driving a park tour bus during the summer.

These days he is a Denali Park wilderness tour operator and a professional dog driver. The champion among the champions for the Yukon Quest Race to this date is Frank Turner of Whitehorse, Canada. In 1995, he completed the Whitehorse-Fairbanks race with a record time of 10 days, 16 hours, 20 minutes, which still remains unbroken.

RED LANTERN AWARD: Fairbanks musher Brian O'Donoghue received the red lantern award given to the last musher to cross the finish line. He finished the race in 16 days and 8 minutes as the 26th member, with seven dogs remaining in his team. He was narrowly defeated by Gwen Holdmann by a margin of 2 hours. Although O'Donoghue finished last, it is no small feat to finish at all. Of the 38 mushers who started the race, only 26 completed it. The other 12 scratched from the race along the trail. Brian O'Donoghue has the dubious distinction of being the red lantern winner in both of Alaska's premier sled dog races, since he earned his first red lantern from the Iditarod in 1991. Several years ago, Jeff Curry, a graduate of the mechanical engineering department of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, also claimed the red lantern award in the Yukon Quest.

ADVERSITY: Kurt Smith of Fairbanks had to scratch when he came into the Carmacks checkpoint with a bloody hand. His dog team was showing signs of sickness due to a strain of the corona virus at the start of the race. It made the team cranky and a couple of them started fighting with each other. Kurt jumped in to pull them apart to stop the fight. One of the dogs, Cody, bit Kurt on his left palm, just an inch above the wrist artery. It was a deep, bloody wound. His injury, plus the sickness of his dogs, forced the musher to scratch. When the weather was warm, many mushers ran mostly at nights to avoid the heat. But the visibility was poor at night and hazard lurked around the corner. Several mushers talked about wild survival tales, describing steep drop-offs and tight turns in the 80-mile section of trail between Braeburn and Carmacks, dubbed Pinball Alley. Nenana musher John Nash described a precarious moment on his journey when he looked to the side of the trail and saw an 80-foot bank. He was right on the vertical edge of the frozen Yukon River. Driving at night on such hazard-ridden sections compounded the risk. Perhaps these are the reasons why the Yukon Quest is called the toughest sled dog race in the world. The youngest rookie, Brenda Mackey, had her share of hardships. First, one night, her dog team took off without her, when she was off her sled looking for a music tape. Fortunately, they were later stopped by another musher, Mike King, who was ahead. Then, the same night, Brenda got lost on a lake when she took the wrong trail. But, she finally corrected that mistake, turning around to find her way back to the Quest trail. Despite all the mishaps on the trail, she successfully completed the race in eighteenth place with a time of 14 days, 13 hours and 47 minutes, proving that sled dog racing runs in her blood. Her grandfather, Iditarod champion Dick Mackey, summed up the experi-

ence in such a race by saying that driving dogs in a long distance race provides some of the greatest highs and the greatest lows in life. Japanese musher Keizo Funatsu wears soft contact lenses, but they were not so soft after the wind-blown ride over American summit. Keizo was searching around in his right eye for pieces of a broken contact lens with a tiny hand-held mirror. One of the veterinarians helped him get most of the pieces out and gave him some antibiotic ointment. Keizo, who was the Rookie of the Year last year, finished the race with a respectable eighth place. Rookie Amy Wright of Tok, Alaska, left her beaver mitts at a rest stop. The spare gloves proved inadequate as she showed a few nips of frostbite on her hands. She finished the race in the 23rd place. The 44-year old musher Bruce Lee survived the horrible climb of Eagle Summit to win the race. He said that the gusting wind while crossing the summit created about the coldest and most dangerous situation he had ever encountered. Ice froze inside his nostrils, leaving his entire reddened nose feeling like it was on fire.

CONCLUSION: Each year brings unique events to the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race, and this year was no exception. Mild weather, with midday temperatures ranging up to 20 degrees Fahrenheit, took its toll on the dogs this year. These long-distance sled dogs do not handle the heat very well. In previous years, the other extreme of numbing cold temperatures around 50 degrees below zero Fahrenheit have been endured by mushers along the trail. These mushers and their dog teams are a tough breed. Then there was this year's surprise rookie, 42-year-old Andre Nadeau. Although he was a rookie to the Yukon Quest, he was not new to dog mushing. He came with an impressive list of wins in East Coast races: five-time winner of the Labrador 400 and multiple wins in a 250-mile sled dog race in Maine. He surprised everybody by giving Bruce Lee stiff competition, because the race analysts were predicting competition from three other previous Quest winners: Rick Mackey, John Schandelmeier and Frank Turner. Rick Mackey came in third with \$18,000 prize money. Schandelmeier and Turner took fourth and fifth places, respectively. Andre made a name for himself by beating these three veteran Quest champions with the second place finish. It is Bruce Lee who summed up the secret of success. He said, "Long-distance dog racing is about two things. It's about dog care, and it's about rest." All mushers unanimously agree that if the dogs are cared for well, they will do their utmost to give their best performance for their masters. Although it is exciting to talk about the front runners, everybody who completed the race is a winner in my mind. That is because each one of them has their own tales of overcoming adversity and extreme elements of the Far North.

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The Guru

Dr. PRASANNA K. PATI

It must have been mid-afternoon of a beautiful fall day in October when I had a phone call from Dr. Bose, an internist in Vancouver, British Columbia. He was a close friend of mine. I was a psychiatrist in that gem of a city, mainly engaged in forensic psychiatry. My friend had come to Canada many years back from Calcutta, India via England. He was a bit of an eccentric, but I loved him.

"Dr. Sonjee, will you be interested in coming with me tomorrow evening to listen to Guru Premananda? I understand he is going to talk about one of the Upanishads, specifically, Katha Upanishad, Death as Teacher. The event will be in the auditorium of the Mahalakshmi Hindu Temple on 11th Avenue East."

Dr. Bose was always inclined to listen to anyone who would come over from India and proclaim himself a wise Guru. I thought he was a bit naive and a simpleton.

"Dr. Bose, you know very well how I feel about these Gurus coming to North America in a steady stream. I am sorry I have no time for such activities. I realize there is a kind of existential and spiritual void in many people in North America. These Gurus are coming over to exploit the naive, both in U.S. A. and Canada."

"Dr. Sonjee, you psychiatrists are grandiose. You think you understand the human mind. This Guru is unlike the other Gurus who have come to Vancouver. He is charismatic, warm, friendly, handsome, a picture of health, a bachelor and above all, a great teacher."

I couldn't decline the invitation from my dear friend. I invited him to dinner in an Indian restaurant prior to the lecture at the Hindu Temple. During dinner, we talked mostly about his home city of Calcutta. His nostalgia for Calcutta was profound, pervasive and infectious. It was his beloved city. He knew all the historic antiquities of Calcutta. He could talk for hours on Calcutta of the eighteenth century, of Clive and Warren Hastings, the Governor General of India when the American colonies were engaged in the War of Independence against the British. My interest in the British history of Calcutta started in my high school days. Thus, we shared a deep love for the city and her people.

Dr. Bose had been visiting Calcutta regularly but would always return disgusted and disappointed. He never could realize that the Calcutta of his childhood was no more, and basically, he was now a foreigner in that city. Calcutta had just celebrated her tricentennial in 1990. Dr. Bose had kept in close touch, from distant Canada, with all the cultural events surrounding the celebration. I had listened to his endless discourses on Calcutta. I didn't have the heart to tell him that, in my view, he had no country of his own and that he was a foreigner both in Calcutta and Canada.

The lecture hall was full — mostly native Canadians, white folks but only a handful of South Asians. The Guruji, Swami Premananda, was certainly alive, vibrant, a picture of good health and with a sense of humor. He exuded warmth. His discussion on this very complex Katha Upanishad was analytical. He spoke for an hour or so. I was not bored. He had all the attributes of a great teacher, especially the ability to reach out.

My friend, Dr. Bose, was so moved that he was unable to discuss it, a departure from his usual behavior.

"Dr. Sonjee, what do you think?"

I simply responded, "I was quite impressed with his insightful and analytical interpretations of this highly complex Katha Upanishad, Death as Teacher."

Swami Premananda stayed on in Vancouver. He had attracted a large number of devotees, mostly white but of many professions. In addition to regular lectures, Swamiji started on individual spiritual counseling. He led a simple life. He had no desire for monetary gains. He didn't engage in any fund raising activities. He continued his selfless work without any expectations of praise or gratitude. Dr. Bose and I made a regular habit of having dinner in an Indian restaurant and attending Swamiji's lectures on various philosophies and scriptural teachings of Hinduism. He never put down the other great religions. He never suggested conversion to Hinduism.

Dr. Bose and I would occasionally see Swamiji in various Hindu festivals such as those celebrated in the Mahalakshmi Hindu Temple. On these special occasions, he radiated warmth and joy.

Swamiji had been now at Vancouver for a couple of years. He was immensely popular. Wherever he went in Vancouver, he was usually accompanied by a number of devotees, both male and female. These devotees had become his followers. Obviously he was contributing to the spiritual well-being of the people of Vancouver. Even politicians of British Columbia consulted with him.

Late one evening I received a call from Dr. Bose. He seemed anxious. He said, "Dr. Sonjee, I do not know what to make of this. I just do not believe it. It cannot be true. It is a part of a conspiracy to denigrate Swamiji. There may be jealousy." I interrupted him as he had not told me what it was all about. "Dr. Bose, what is it about Swamiji? Please calm down."

"Dr. Sonjee, I heard this terrible rumor from one of my patients today, that Swamiji has been having affairs with a number of his female devotees — not just one girl friend, but many. This rumor, according to my patient, was going around the circles of devotees, but surprisingly, nothing has changed

on the surface."

I responded, "Dr. Bose, perhaps, some of his female devotees believe they are in love with him and that it is possible that these devotees' fantasies are running wild. Dr. Bose, let us go on a long walk tomorrow, Sunday, to Queen Elizabeth Park, and talk about this. I will pick you up around seven. We will have breakfast at the South Indian restaurant near the park and then go for a walk."

Next morning, during our walk, Dr. Bose added some more details of these rumors. He said, "Swamiji, according to my patient, has at least four girl friends: one, a Filipina called Marcella, a blond Helen, a Canadian, an English lady who arrived at Vancouver recently from Manchester, England, and a native of India, a lady known as Meena. The rumor is that some other devotees arrange these love trysts for Swamiji and that these sessions take place not in the temple complex, but adjoining buildings."

"Dr. Bose, how credible is your patient? There may not be a shred of evidence to all this. It is all in the fantasy land. You know, we psychiatrists have female patients who, during the course of therapy, fall in love, so to speak, with us. As soon as such material emerges during psychotherapy sessions, either through the patient's dreams, expression of fantasies or non-verbal behavior, the therapist must deal with it via interpretations, or face the risk of losing the patient. In psychoanalytic jargon these phenomena are called transference and counter-transference."

"But, Dr. Sonjee, I have difficulty in understanding what you are saying. Can you describe an example?"

"Yes, I will, from my own personal experience. Many, many years back, when I was training to be a psychiatrist, I was doing psychotherapy with a 27-year old single female school teacher. After many, many sessions, on one occasion she brought forth a dream of having inter-racial children. Immediately, I recognized that she was falling in love with me, so to speak. On an intellectual level, I knew I should deal with it and clarify our professional relationship, but I didn't. Perhaps I was attracted to her. You know, she was single and I, too. In fact, I am sure I was quite attracted towards her because I would be anticipating her coming to the session."

"Dr. Sonjee, do you mean that you were having fantasies of having sex with her?"

"I wouldn't put it that explicitly. Shall we say, I was physically attracted towards her. I sought out my supervisor, a reputed psychoanalyst, trained by Anna Freud, daughter of the great Sigmund Freud himself. He told me that as a physician, I mismanaged the situation and that I should have dealt with that sexually-oriented material immediately, for the benefit of the patient. He predicted that the patient wouldn't return to me. I thought he was bluffing but you know, he was right. That patient canceled out with me. I still feel badly over it."

"Dr. Sonjee, let us come back to the Guru Premananda. I can probably understand his having an affair with only one seductive, beautiful female but four or five females? That is beyond me."

"Dr. Bose, man biologically is not monogamous. But let us talk about what we should do."

"Dr. Sonjee, let me talk with my patient some more, to find out some more details. I am really distressed. If true, it will be a big disgrace to the Indian community of Vancouver. It will give India a bad name."

"Dr. Bose, let us not be carried away. This has nothing to do with India or her ancient civilization. We are talking about one wise man who might have fallen into temptations."

Dr. Bose and I kept in touch with each other, even continued to attend Swamiji's lectures.

It was sometime in the spring of 1993 that the daily newspaper, Vancouver Sun, published a piece of news that was staggering. I read it again and again, just to be sure I was reading it right. I could hardly believe what I read. It was something about a Guru from India, Swami Premananda, being arrested on a charge of rape. He had been remanded to judicial custody but bailed out by devotees. The news item mentioned that one of his devotees, Florence Robinson, had filed the charge against him. I was stunned. I called Dr. Bose immediately, "Dr. Bose, have you read today's Vancouver Sun?"

"Dr. Sonjee, no, I haven't read it, but one of my patients told me about Swamiji being arrested and remanded to judicial custody and then bailed. Let us have dinner this evening and talk about it."

Dr. Bose had more information about the alleged rape. "Apparently Ms. Robinson, being married, had pangs of guilt and had wanted to cut off the relationship with the Guru. She had gone to his room to inform him about it and that is where the rape happened. Many devotees believe that Ms. Robinson set a trap for the Guru and that she is being blamed for alternating between seducing and rejecting the Guru. It is being investigated by the RCMP. It may come to a trial, a very unpleasant thing to think about."

I was genuinely fond of the Guru. I admired him for his spiritual insight, warm personality and his ability to respond to the deep emotional needs of his devotees thru his counseling and talks. I was tempted to have a talk with Guru Premananda but decided against it. On the surface, the Guru continued his lectures. He never referred to the charges against him and many of his devotees remained fiercely loyal. However, there was a drop in attendance at his meetings. No member of the Hindu community in Vancouver came forth to support him. For many months, the investigations continued. Dr. Bose and I heard rumors that many of his devotees had been interrogated and that reportedly at least five other women had alleged inappropriate sexual behavior by the Guru towards them, and that they were willing to testify. We also heard that two prominent attorneys were defending Swamiji. Neither Dr. Bose nor I wanted to see the spectacle of the Guru put on trial. We were afraid that the media would have a field day reporting testimony of the various witnesses, and that indirectly, the prosecution would put even Hinduism and India on trial.

One afternoon in my office I had a call from one Mr.

James who introduced himself as an attorney defending the Guru and wishing to set up an appointment to see me in regard to the case. I reluctantly agreed to this request. I was doing exclusively forensic psychiatry in Vancouver and Victoria and I didn't wish to be involved in this particular situation. I had heard about Mr. James as a prominent and competent defense attorney in British Columbia. We agreed that he would come to my office the next day. Mr. James was one of those sophisticated, smooth, personable and, above all, a very clever attorney. Briefly, he requested me to do a psychiatric evaluation on Guru Premananda as he was going to introduce psychiatric expert testimony in the trial.

I responded, "Mr. James, you understand that I admire the Guruji immensely. There is no way I can be objective and my opinion, whatever it might be, would be subjected to cruel cross examination by the prosecution, especially because I am a Hindu from India."

He was not a person to easily convince and he replied, "You are the person I want as a psychiatrist for the defense. Your specialty is forensic psychiatry and you are a Hindu from India. You are the right person to explain the complexity of Guruji's behavior to the jury." I continued to decline and finally, he gave up and said, "Perhaps I can convince the Court to bring you in as an amicus curiae, that is, a friend of the Court."

Dr. Bose and I met frequently. The upcoming trial made both of us anxious. I made many evening visits to the Library of the College of Law of the University of British Columbia to research materials and case laws in regard to my testimony as a friend of the Court.

The trial was highly publicized in the media. The Indian community in Vancouver and as a matter of fact, in entire Canada seemed to be the focus of various media coverage. The learned Hindu Guru was being tried on the media before the trial.

The trial began with jury selection. Anyone with a bias against Hindus was eliminated. At least, five females testified against the Guru. They were subjected to severe cross-examination by the defense team of lawyers headed by Mr. James. Florence Robinson, who had pressed the rape charge against the Guru, maintained her poise during the cross-examination. She stuck to her story, that she was a devotee of Guruji and that due to personal crisis, she had several sessions of individual counseling with Guru. She described the attempted rape scene without showing much emotion. She consistently denied any seductive behavior in these sessions with the Guru. Part of that cross-examination was as follows:

Mr. James: "Ms. Robinson, was there anything in your behavior that would arouse a man? I mean, seduction, flirting and other non-verbal cues that might arouse a man?" Ms. Robinson, a quite attractive blond of English background responded, "Mr. James, I was in a state of depression due to a personal crisis in my family. I had attended many sessions of lectures and discussions by Guruji and I had a fascination with Hindu philosophy as propounded by Guruji, and I was most sincere in getting help from him. No, to your question, I do not believe I exhibited such behavior as you mention. Let

me add, I didn't have any sexual fantasies about Guruji."

Ms. Robinson had described in details as to how unexpectedly during one of these sessions, Guruji tried to make love to her and finally forced himself on her despite her resistance. Only at this point she sobbed quietly.

A number of previous devotees also testified against the Guru, on various behaviors that would be sexual harassment. I had been allowed to attend each session as my upcoming testimony was simply to assist the Court. Finally, I had my day in Court.

Mr. James, leading the team of defense lawyers, took several minutes in establishing my credentials as a forensic psychiatrist. He also established the fact that I had some knowledge of Hindu scriptures and that I had no personal friendship with Guru Premananda.

Mr. James, "Dr. Sonjee, you have listened to all the testimony in this court for the last several days. Can you please give your opinion as a psychiatrist and in order to advise the Court? My client is likely to face twenty years in prison if he is found guilty. I do not deny that evidence is stacked against my client. In fact, in the media, he has been found guilty even prior to the trial. I understand you had attended many lecture and discussion sessions by the Guru. Let me ask you a bit more about your background. Are you a practicing Hindu?"

I responded, "Yes, Mr. James, I remain a Hindu. Of course, in Vancouver, we do not carry on all the rituals and ceremonies that Hindu families normally do in India."

I had learned in my forensic psychiatric career that an expert should be brief and responsive, and always maintain proper decorum and respect for the Court.

"Dr. Sonjee, are you aware that Guru Premananda, in his discourses and talks at Vancouver, has been able to rekindle a spiritual awakening in thousands of people? Are you aware that many eminent professionals in law, medicine, government, business, and teaching have been ardent followers of Guruji?"

Immediately, the prosecution objected claiming such questions have no relevance to the criminal trial.

The Judge firmly stated, "Objection over-ruled. Dr. Sonjee, please answer the question."

My brief response to Mr. James was "Yes". Mr. James looked at the jury and proceeded, "As a psychiatrist, can you be objective and present to the Court a clinical, scientific opinion? Our position is that any sexual relationships between my client and the accusers was consensual. It was a mutually agreed expression of behavior. The prosecution has not presented any evidence that these women were not competent. Perhaps, these women were needy, perhaps compassion and warmth, as expressed by my client, were misinterpreted by these women as seduction or perhaps, my client shouldn't have engaged in such relationships. But the bottom line is that it was consensual. My client has consistently denied any force whatsoever. Dr. Sonjee, I now ask you to give your opinion and advise the Court and the jury."

I had fully prepared my testimony. I made eye contact with the Judge and the Jury and proceeded as follows: 'Mr.

James, Swami Premananda is a profound scholar, a spiritual counselor. He is warm, compassionate and charismatic. But, let us not forget that he is a man in the prime of his youth and that he comes from a sexually inhibitive, restrictive and cloistered society of India. In other words, he comes from a society which practices sexual repression."

Mr. James interrupted, "Dr. Sonjee, I ask you to explain yourself more fully. You might be talking about cultural misunderstandings in this particular situation."

"Precisely. The Guru probably misunderstood his female devotees. These women were outgoing, warm and friendly. They are beautiful, not necessarily seductive, but perhaps both parties had sexual fantasies about the other."

"Dr. Sonjee, do you have a psychiatric diagnosis on the Guru? Do you think he has any mental or personality disorder?"

"Mr. James, I have not examined the Guru and therefore, it will be most inappropriate for me to even speculate on diagnosis. However, I can say that it is normal for men to have sexual fantasies. It is a sort of safety valve. In this particular situation, it led to consensual sex."

At this point, the prosecution objected thus: "Your Honor, I object. Dr. Sonjee refers to consensual sex, but has been clearly established that it was rape." The Judge stated, "Objection sustained. Dr. Sonjee, you should confine your opinions to matters related to psychiatry and interpretation of the Hindu culture. Mr. James, please proceed."

"Dr. Sonjee, do you have an opinion as to the disposition of this case? As an amicus curiae, I am asking you to give your opinion as to what will serve the purpose of justice."

The prosecution again objected but was over-ruled by the judge, who stated, "Dr. Sonjee, whether it was consensual sex, or sexual harassment, or a misdemeanor, or even innocence, the Jury and the Court will decide. But please proceed with your opinion in response to Mr. James' question."

My opinion was as follows, "Your Honor, a person given the trust of his or her client must not violate it. The Guru, even if it was consensual sex violated the trust. That counseling relationship became sexualized."

Mr. James interrupted, "Dr. Sonjee, can you please give an example? Do you have an episode from your own experiences as a psychiatrist?"

I was not prepared for this and I looked at the Judge for help. The Honorable Judge got the hint and stated, "Proceed with an example or two from your own experiences as a psychiatrist."

"Your Honor, I will comply with your order, but, for the sake of confidentiality, I will not divulge dates, names and places, etc., and will simply give situations with some patients of the opposite sex, who were in psychotherapy with me. I will give only two examples. First, there was an attractive woman of 27 who had neurotic symptoms of various kinds and was improving. She had a good rapport with me as her therapist. On one occasion, she brought a dream of

inter-racial children. She was a white female and 1, from India. This dream was a manifestation of the therapeutic relationship that was getting sexualized. It was like a red flag, and I should have dealt with it immediately, that is, interpreted to her and clarified the business nature of the relationship but I didn't do it. Obviously, she had sexual fantasies about me."

"Dr. Sonjee," Mr. James interrupted, "We are lay people. Please clarify to the Court as to why you didn't do what you say you should have done."

"I didn't help her understand what was going on because of my own attraction towards her."

"Did you have sexual fantasies about her?"

"I hate to admit it but I had. In this situation the patient quit treatment. In the case of Guru's counseling with his female devotees, such situations probably escalated to what happened between them, that is, a therapeutic relationship gradually deteriorating into a sexual relationship."

The Judge said, "Dr. Sonjee, do you have another example?"

"Yes, your Honor, in this instance, a female patient of mine had improved greatly from panic attacks and social phobia. She was a married professional woman. One evening, I had a call from this young lady inviting me to a cocktail in a hotel. She was quite seductive in her voice. Was I tempted to go over? No, I was polite and firm and encouraged her to go home, and explained to her that my relationship with her was only professional."

Mr. James then proceeded, "Dr. Sonjee, do you have an opinion as to the disposition of this case?"

At this point, I requested the Court for a recess, which was granted. During the recess, I and Dr. Bose went out of the building for a consultation. It seemed my friend, Dr. Bose, was angry. He didn't think my testimony was strong enough to protect the Guru. He said, "Dr. Sonjee, you spoke of violation of trust. If the Guru is convicted, the entire Indian community in Vancouver will be put to shame. People of Vancouver will mock at Hinduism. I am really disappointed." Then he left abruptly in great haste. On resumption, the Judge disallowed any testimony from me on disposition. It was then the turn of the prosecution to cross-examine me. Essentially, my testimony didn't change significantly. I was dismissed as a witness.

To my utter surprise, Mr. James requested the Judge to put another witness under oath and he mentioned, "Dr. Bose, a prominent internist of Vancouver and a devotee of Swami Premananda."

After he was sworn in, Mr. James asked Dr. Bose thus, "Dr. Bose, you have volunteered to testify. You have admitted to me that you admire Swami Premananda very much. You also feel that Swamiji has contributed a lot to the people of Vancouver. Please make your statement."

Dr. Bose stated thus, "Your Honor, Members of the Jury, I plead with you to balance justice with compassion and consider Gururji's immense contributions to spiritual living and

happiness in this beautiful city of Vancouver. We Hindus are raised in a sexually repressive society."

At this point, much to my embarrassment, Dr. Bose went into a rambling talk on Hindu scriptures, the Gita, the Upanishads and as to how the Guru was filling a spiritual and existential void in Vancouver.

Obviously, both Mr. James, the prosecution counsel and the Judge were getting fidgety. Mr. James intervened at this point, "Dr. Bose, do you have a recommendation?"

"Yes, Mr. James, if the Guruji is found guilty, he should be placed on probation. If supervision is required as a condition of probation, then, I am offering myself as a person who is willing to take that role. If the Court finds the Guruji needs a psychiatrist to supervise him and give him guidance and counseling, there is a man here in the court room who can do it." He pointed his finger at me. "I further suggest that as a condition of probation, Guru Premananda be required to go door to door, on a planned and regular basis, to offer spiritual counseling."

The Judge intervened at this point, "Dr. Bose, are you suggesting that the accused go door to door to preach an alien religion such as Hinduism?"

"No, your Honor, nothing like that. We are stepping into the twenty-first century. It is time for ministers, gurus, priests and swamis to come out of their cloistered places and go out to the streets and people's homes to engage them in spiritual counseling and guide them. It has nothing to do with preaching Hinduism. Of course, in this particular instance, the Guruji will bring the ancient wisdom of Hinduism."

Both the prosecution and the defense rested their cases. The Court was adjourned. Mr. James and Guru Premananda came over first to Dr. Bose and then, to me. We hugged each other. The Guru broke down and started sobbing on the chest of Dr. Bose.

— Prasanna Pati is a retired medical doctor. He lives in Salem, Oregon with his wife Norma. He is a regular contributor to the OSA Journal.

Fall

TARUN TRIPATHY

Let the sundown glimmer down the window,
While you utter words for the winter snow,
I follow the last broad oak leaf sway,
In offbeat to the reggae on the radio.

Chameleon leaves color my thoughts,
We write truth together; look far away,
Into the woods; unveiling reasons;
In a circle of time, memories we lay !

You do that shuffle dance on the wood,
Fly before you fall to the crescendo,
I make tea, mix sugar and a kiss;
Sweeter, as I mix our song on the radio.

Seconds crawl this fall, tempting me,
To discover things in love I missed,
Sweeten your lips in warm white wine,
As I hold your hands and autumn kissed.

— Tarun Tripathy lives in Santa Clara, California with his wife Nita.



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ବସାଇବି ବୋଲି

ମୋ ମନ-ମନ୍ଦିର ରଖୁଛି ସାଜି ।

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ଗାଇବୁ ମୋ ସାଥେ ସ୍ବର ମିଳାଇ ।

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ଛାଡ଼ିବି ନାହିଁ ମା

କେବେ ହେଲେ ତୋତେ

ଏ ଜୀବନ ପଛେ ଯାଇ ମୋ ଝରି ।

—Mamta Mohanty lives in Fremont, California with her husband Deba Ranjan Mohanty. This poem was published in Naba Prakash, the journal of Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondichery, India.

ଗୋବିନ୍ଦ କୋପ ଗୁରୁତର ନାରାୟଣ ରଥ

ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଜାତି:

ତାର ସଂପର୍କ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ କରବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ପାରମ୍ପାରିକ ପରସ୍ପତିର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ଥାଏ ଏବଂ ସେଇ ପରସ୍ପତିରୁ ହିଁ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ହୋଇଥାଏ - ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ, ସାମୟିକ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ଏବଂ ମିମାଂସା । ସେ ଦିନ ତାହା ଅନେକାଂଶରେ ସଂଭବ ହୋଇଥିଲା ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଚକୋର ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ଘରେ । ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ପୂଜା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଆଖପାଖରେ ବାସ କରୁଥିବା ବିଦେଶୀ ଓଡ଼ିଆମାନେ ସେଦିନ ଏକତ୍ରିତ ହୋଇ ଥିଲେ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଚକୋରବାବୁଙ୍କ ଗୃହରେ । ହେଲେ କେବେଠୁ ପୂଜା ସାରି ସରସ୍ୱତୀ ଦେବୀ ପ୍ରାଣିକ ବାନ୍ଧ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସମନ୍ୱରେ ପୁନର୍ବାର ବର୍ଷକ ପାଇଁ ଆଶ୍ରୟ ନେଲେଣି କିନ୍ତୁ ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ଘରେ ଗହଳି ଭାରି ନ ଥିଲା । ବରଂ ଗହଳିଟା କେମିତି ଜମି ଉଠିଥିଲା ।

ପୂଜାବିନିତ ଭୂରୀଭୋଜନ ପରେ ଚାନ୍ଦାର ଆୟୋଜନ କରୁଥାନ୍ତି ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଚକୋର ମିଶ୍ରଙ୍କ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ବରହବେଦନା ଏବଂ ତାଙ୍କୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରୁଥାନ୍ତି ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀଲୋକମାନେ । ଚାନ୍ଦାର ସୁଯୋଗ ନେଇ କର୍ମକାତର ପୁରୁଷଗଣ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଥାଆନ୍ତି ବଶେଷ ଆଲୋଚନା କୁ ନେଇ, ଯାହାର ଆରମ୍ଭ କେମିତି ହେଲା, ତାହା ଭାଗ ନେଇଥିବା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ମନେ ପକାଇ ନ ପାରନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ କଥାଟାର ଆଲୋଚନାର ଉତ୍କର୍ଷତାରେ ସଦାମ ମିତ୍ର ରୋକ୍ ଠୋକ୍ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନ କଲେ - "ହଇହେ, ଆମ୍ଭେମାନେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଆସି ବିଦେଶରେ ରହିଲେ, ଆମ ପିଲାମାନେ ଆମ ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ଭାବନା, ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରା ବିଷୟରେ କିଛି ଜାଣିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ଆମମାନଙ୍କ ସହିତ ଯେପରି ସେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଲୋପ ପାଇଯିବ । ଆମମାନଙ୍କୁ ଲାଗିପଡ଼ି ନିହାତି କିଛି କିଛି କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ, ଯାହାଦ୍ୱାରା ଆମ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଅନ୍ତତଃ ପକ୍ଷେ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ପୁରୁଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବଢ଼ାଇ ରହିବ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ କହିଲେ କଣ ବୁଝାଏ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତି ଏବଂ ସଂସ୍କୃତିଟା କଣ ? ଆମମାନଙ୍କର କଣ ପ୍ରକୃତି ?" ସମସ୍ତେ ପରସ୍ପରକୁ ଚହଟିବୁଁ ହେଲେ, କେହି କିନ୍ତୁ ଏହାର ଉତ୍ତର ଦେବାପାଇଁ ଉଦ୍ୟୁକ୍ତ ନ ଥିଲେ ।

ସଦାମ ମିତ୍ର ଅନର୍ଗଳ ଭାବରେ କହିବାଲି ଥାଆନ୍ତି । "ଆମେ ଯେ ଓଡ଼ିଆଜାତି ; ତାର କଣ ଲକ୍ଷଣ ? ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଯଦି ଆମ ପରମ୍ପରା, ଆମର ସଂସ୍କୃତି, ଚାଲିଚଳନ, ବେଶଭୂଷା ତା'ର ତ କୌଣସି ମାପଥିବ ?" ସଦାମ ମିତ୍ର ଦୃଢ଼ତାର ସହ କହି ବାଲିଛାନ୍ତି, "ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଜାତି କହିଲେ କଣ ବୁଝାଏ ପଖାଳ ଭାତ, ବଡ଼ଭଜା, ନା ଘାଣ୍ଡତିଅଣ । କଣ ଆପଣ ମାନଙ୍କ ମନକୁ ଆସୁଛି ? ଆମମାନଙ୍କୁ ମିଶି ଏଇ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ପୁନରୁଦ୍ଧାରଣ କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ । ଯାହାଦ୍ୱାରା ଆମ୍ଭମାନଙ୍କ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ବଢ଼ାଇ ରହିବ" ।

ଭାତଲୋଚନାବାବୁ କହିଲେ "ସେଇଟା ତ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସୋସାଇଟି ଅଫ୍ ଆମେରିକାଜ୍ ର କାମ; ଆମ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ଦୃଢ଼ତା ଆଣିବା ଏବଂ ଉତ୍ତର ଆମେରିକାରେ ବାସକରୁଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂପ୍ରଦାୟମଧ୍ୟରେ ସଂପର୍କ ସ୍ଥାପନକରିବାହେଲା ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏର କାମ । ଏବଂ ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ଜର୍ନାଲ୍‌ର, ଯେଉଁଟାକି ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ର ମୁଖପତ୍ର । ତାହା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ସଂଭବ ହୋଇପାରିବ । ହେଲେ ସେ ମୁଖପତ୍ରର ଯେଉଁଅବସ୍ଥା, ସେଥିରେ କଣ କିଏ ଆଉ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ବିଷୟ

ଆଲୋଚନା କରୁଛି । ସେଥିରେ ଏଣୁତେଣୁ ଆଲୁରୁବାଲୁରୁ ଲେଖା ବାହାର କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ମିନେସୋଟାରେ ବସି ତାଳଦଣ୍ଡା କେନାଲ ଉପର ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଉପରେ କବିତା ଲେଖୁଛନ୍ତି; ସେଥିରେ ପୁଣି ପଦ ପଡୁନାହିଁ । ସମସ୍ତେ ହେଲେ ସବୁଜ କବି । ଆଉ କିଏ ଲେଖୁଛି ବ୍ୟଙ୍ଗମୂଳକ ଗପ । ସେ ଗୁଡ଼ା କଣ ସଂସ୍କୃତି? ମୁଖପତ୍ରର ପ୍ରାରମ୍ଭିକ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟଟା ଲୋପ ପାଇ ଯାଉଛି । ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଯଦି ଆମରତରୁ କେହି କେହି ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ସାମାଜିକ ସମସ୍ୟା କିମ୍ବା ଐତିହ୍ୟ, ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଉପରେ ଲେଖନ୍ତେ ତେବେ ବା କେହି କେହି ପଢନ୍ତେ । ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଯେଉଁମାନେ ତାହା ପଢ଼ିବେ ସେମାନେ ତ ସମସ୍ତେ ଅଲ୍ଲେବହୁତେ ସ ବିଷୟ ଜାଣନ୍ତି; ପ୍ରକାରେ ରହିବା ବାଲା ଝୁ କଣ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ମନ୍ଦିର ର ମାହାତ୍ମ୍ୟ କହିବ, ସେମାନେ ତ ସବୁ ଜନ୍ମରୁ ପୋଷତ୍ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଯେଉଁମାନଙ୍କର ଶିକ୍ଷା ଏବଂ ଜ୍ଞାନ ନିମନ୍ତେ ସେ ସବୁ ଲେଖାଯିବ ସେ ପିଲାମାନେ କଣ ଏସବୁ ପଢ଼ିବେ ନା ଚୁଝିବେ, ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ଚୁଝିବେ ନା ଜାଣିବେ? କିଏ ଥିଲେ ସାରଳା ଦାସ ନା କିଏ ଥିଲେ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରଦ୍ୟୁମ୍ନ ରାଜା ? ସେଥିରୁ ତାଙ୍କର କଣ ଗଲା ? ପୁଣି ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ଜର୍ନାଲ୍ ପଢ଼ବା ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଇଣ୍ଟରନେଟ୍ ପଢ଼ ବା ବରଂ ଅଧିକ ବାଞ୍ଛନୀୟ । ସଂକ୍ଷୀପ୍ତରେ ନିହାତି ବନ୍ଧ ପାଗଳ ନ ହେଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଶିଖାଇବା ପାଇଁ କେହି ହାତରୁ ଖାଇ ଘୋଡ଼ା ଆଗରେ ଧାଇଁବ ନାହିଁ । ସେ ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ମୁଖପତ୍ରରେ ଯେମିତି ଲେଖା ଚାଲିଛି ଚାଲୁଥାଉ । ତାକୁ ପଢ଼ବା ପାଇଁ କାହାର ସମୟ ଅଛି ଯେ ? ସେ ଯାହା ଲେଖୁଛି ଲେଖିଥାଉ" ।

ଅନ୍ୟ ଜଣେ ବାବୁ କହିଲେ - "ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ଜର୍ନାଲ୍ ହେଲା ଏକ ଉତ୍ସାହର ମାଧ୍ୟମ । ବାସ୍ତବିକ ଯେଉଁ କେତେଜଣ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କର ଲେଖକ, କବି ଏବଂ ଗଳ୍ପକାର ହେବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଥିଲା ଏବଂ ତାହା ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ରହି ସମ୍ଭବ ହୋଇ ନ ଥିଲା, ଆମର ଏ ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ମାଗାଜିନଟା ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନକୁ ସାଥ୍ୟକ କରିବାରେସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରୁଛି । ଏମାନେ ଯାହା ଏଠାରେ ଲେଖୁଛନ୍ତି ସେମିତି ଲେଖା ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଯଦି କୌଣସି ମାଗାଜିନକୁ ପଠାଇବେ, ସେ ଗୁଡ଼ାକ ପର ଅଗତ୍ୟା ରିଜେକ୍ଟ ହୋଇଯିବ । ଏଗୁଡ଼ିକ କଣ ପ୍ରକୃତରେ ଗଳ୍ପକାର ନା କବି ? ଲେଖିବାଟା ଯଦି ଏତେ ସୁବିଧା ଜନକ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତା, ତେବେ ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ ପରା ହସରତ ଜୟପୁରୀ, ଫିରାକ୍ ଗୋରଖପୁରୀ ଭଳି ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ନୟାଗଡ଼ି କିମ୍ବା 'ସାରଙ୍ଗ ପାତ୍ର ହିଂସିଳକୋଟୀ' ନାମରେ ବିଖ୍ୟାତ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତୁ" ।

ଏ କଥାଟା ଅବଶ୍ୟ ଚିନ୍ତାହିନବାବୁ ଖୁସୀମୁଖରେ କହି ଦେଲେ ହେଲେ କଥାଟାବହୁତ୍ କାଟ କରିଥିଲା ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମବାବୁଙ୍କୁ । କାରଣ ସେ ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ଓଏସ୍ଏ ଜର୍ନାଲ୍‌ରେ ଭଗବାନ୍ କୃଷ୍ଣ, ଯମ ଏବଂ ଆତ୍ମା ଇତ୍ୟାଦିକୁ ନେଇ ହାସ୍ୟାତ୍ମକ ଗଳ୍ପ ଲେଖୁଥିଲେ । ଯାହାର ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇବା ଚାନ୍ଦ ନିହାତି କମ୍ । ପୁଣି ସେ ଲେଖୁଥିଲେ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ ଯାହାର ଭାଗ ହେଲା ଓଏସ୍ଏ ଜର୍ନାଲ୍ ରେ ଆହୁରି କମ୍; ଏବଂ ସଂପାଦକମାନଙ୍କ ଦୟାରୁ ସେ ଅତୀତରେ ତିନି, ଚାରୋଟି ଗଳ୍ପ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଥିଲେ ।



ଅବଶ୍ୟ ସେ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଯେ କେହି ପଢ଼ିଥିବ ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମବାବୁ କେବେହେଲେ ଚିନ୍ତା କର ନ ଥିଲେ । ତଥାପି ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ଯୁକ୍ତଶତ୍କ ଆମେରିକାରେ ବାସ କରୁଥିବା କତିପୟ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖକ ଏବଂ କବିମାନଙ୍କମଧ୍ୟରୁ ନିଜକୁ ଗଣେ 'ଅନ୍ୟତମ' ଭାବରେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରୁଥିଲେ । ହେଲେ ଚିନ୍ତାହୀନବାବୁଙ୍କର ସେ ପ୍ରକାରର ମତବ୍ୟବ୍ତୀ ଶୁଣି ସେ ଲେଖା ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେବାର ମିମାଂସା ନ କରି ପୁନର୍ବାର ଲେଖିବା ପାଇଁ ଏକ ଦୃଢ଼ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନେଇଥିଲେ । ସେ ଆଲୋଚନା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ନିଜର ଯୈର୍ଯ୍ୟତା ନଷ୍ଟ ନ କରି ସାମାଜିକ ସଂଭ୍ରାନ୍ତକୁ ନେଇ ବିଶେଷ ବାତ୍‌ବିପାତ ନକରି, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଚକୋରବାବୁଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ସହସା ବିଦାୟ ନେଇ ଥିଲେ ।

ସେ ବର୍ଷ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସୋସାଇଟିର ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇବାକୁ ଯାଉଥିବା ଓଏସ୍‌ଏ ମ୍ୟାଗାଜିନ୍ ପାଇଁ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ ବାବୁ ଗୋଟିଏ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗଳ୍ପର ଆୟୋଜନ କରିଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ତାହା ଥିଲା ଶ୍ରୀ ଭଗବାନ କୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କର ଯୌବନଲୀଳା । କୁ ନେଇ ଏକ ହାସ୍ୟ ରସାତ୍ମକ କାହାଣୀ । ଓଡ଼ିଆଲେଖା ଅଭାବରୁ ସଂପାଦକ ବାବୁ ସେ ଗଳ୍ପକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଦୂରନ୍ତ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିଥିଲେ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖାର ମୁଦ୍ରାକ୍ଷର ଏବଂ ପୃଷ୍ଠା ପ୍ରଯୋଜନା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସଂପାଦକ ବାବୁ ସମସ୍ତ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଲେଖାକୁ ତାଙ୍କ ବଂଧୁ ମୁଦ୍ରକାର ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଛାପାଖାନାକୁ ପଠାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ମୁଦ୍ରକାର ବାବୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର **deadline** କୁ ଆଖି ଆଗରେ ରଖି ସେ ସମସ୍ତର ମୁଦ୍ରଣ ଶୀଘ୍ର ଆରମ୍ଭ କରି ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ଭଗବାନ ଭକ୍ତପ୍ରିୟ ଏବଂ କ୍ଷମାଶୀଳ ହୋଇ ପାରିଥାନ୍ତି, ମାତ୍ର ତାଙ୍କ ରାଜାତା ଲୋକତନ୍ତ୍ର ଶାସନ ନୁହଁ, ତାହା ବରଂ ଏକକ୍ଷତ୍ର ଶାସନ ଏବଂ ଭଗବାନ ଏକକ୍ଷତ୍ରାଧୀଶ ଲୋକତନ୍ତ୍ରରେ ସିନା ଶାସନକୁ ପରିହାସ କଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତିକ୍ତି ହୋଇ ଯିବାର ଭାବନା ଥାଏ, ମାତ୍ର ଏକକ୍ଷତ୍ର ଶାସନ ରେ ତାହା ଶାସକ ଉପରେ କେବଳ ନିର୍ଭର କରେ । ଅତୀତରେ ଭଗବାନ କୃଷ୍ଣ ତାଙ୍କ ରତିଲୀଳାର ବିବରଣୀ ଲେଖୁଥିବା ଦୋଷରୁ ଉଦ୍‌ଦେବଙ୍କୁ କ୍ଷମା କରିଦେଇଥିଲେ; ହେଲେ ସେ ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ଏଥର ଏକ ବିଶେଷ ଶିକ୍ଷାଦେବା ପାଇଁ ମନସ୍ଥ କରିଥିଲେ ଯାହାଦ୍ୱାରା ସେ ଯେପରି ପୁନର୍ବାର ଭଗବାନଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ହାସ୍ୟାତ୍ମକ ରଚନା କରିବାର ଦୁଃସାହସ କରିବେ ନାହିଁ ।

ତେଣେ ମୁଦ୍ରଣ ଶେଷ ହୋଇ ପୃଷ୍ଠାବିଭାଜନ ଡାଲିଥିଲା ଖୁବ୍ ଜୋର ସୋରରେ । ମୁଦ୍ରକ ବାବୁ ଏବଂ ତାଙ୍କ ସାହାଯ୍ୟକାରୀ ମାନେ ଲାଗିପଡ଼ି କାମ ଶେଷ କରିବା ଉପରେ ଥିଲେ, ଯାହା ଫଳ ରେ ସମୟ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ତା ପରଦିନ ତାଙ୍କରେ ସେ ସମସ୍ତ ଛାପା କୁ ଦୂରନ୍ତ ପଠାଇ ପାରିବେ । ଏବଂ ଠିକ୍ ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ବେଳକୁ, ଇଂରାଜୀ ଲେଖାମାନଙ୍କ ମଝିରେ ଯୋଡ଼ା ହୋଇ ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ମ୍ୟାଗାଜିନ୍‌ରେ ତାହା ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଇବ ।

ମୁଦ୍ରକାର ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଛାପାଖାନା ଟି ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ଗୃହର ଏକ ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ଅଙ୍ଗ, ଯାହାଦ୍ୱାରା ସେ କେବଳ ଛାପାଖାନାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ମଧ୍ୟ ମେଣ୍ଟାଇ ପାରୁଥିଲେ । ସେ ପୃଷ୍ଠା ବିଭାଜନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଥିଲେ । ହଠାତ୍

ମାୟା ରହିଲେ ମାୟାଧର
ମୁଦ୍ରକ ଘରେ ଅଧିକାର

ସଶୋଦା ପୁତ୍ର କଲେ କୋପ
ବିଜୁଳି ଶକ୍ତି ହେଲା ଲୋପ
ଡ଼ିକ୍କାର କରନ୍ତି ଘରଣୀ
ଲଣେ ନାହିଁ କିରୋସିନ୍
ବହି ଛାପିବା ବନ୍ଦକର
ତେଲର କଥା ଠାବ କର
ହେବାରୁ ପୁଣି ଫିଙ୍ଗା ବନ୍ଦ
ମଶାଏ ହୋଇଲେ ନର୍ଦ୍ଦନ
ଏପରି ବିପତ୍ତି ପଡ଼ଲା
ବିଭାଗ ଠିକ୍ ନ ହୋଇଲା
ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ହେଲା ଶେଷ ପୃଷ୍ଠା
ତା'ପରେ ଲାଗିଗଲା ଅଠା
ଲେଖାର ହଜିଲା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ
ଗନ୍ଧ ହେଇଗଲା ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗ

(“ଉତ୍ତର ଦିଗେ ବୃକ୍ଷତାଳେ” ବୃକ୍ଷରେ ଗାଇବେ)

ଭଗବାନ କୃଷ୍ଣ ମହାଭାରତରେ ଉଦ୍‌ଘୋଷିତ ପାଇଁ ସର୍ଯ୍ୟଙ୍କୁ କିଛି କ୍ଷଣ ଲାଗି ବରଦି ଦେଇ ଯେପରି ସନ୍ତୋଷ ଲାଭ କରିଥିଲେ, ଏଥର ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଲେଖା ବନ୍ଦକରିବା ପାଇଁ ବଜୁଳି ଶକ୍ତି ଲୋପ କରି ସେମିତି ଏକ ଚୂଡ଼ି ଲାଭ କରିଥିଲେ । ପୃଷ୍ଠା ବିଭାଜନ ରେ ଭୁଲ ହୋଇଛି ତାହା ମୁଦ୍ରକାର ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଆଖିରେ ପଡ଼ିନଥିଲା । କିନ୍ତୁ ସେ ତାଙ୍କ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ସମସ୍ତ ଛାପା ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ତା'ପରଦିନ ତାଙ୍କରେ ଆମେରିକା ପଠାଇ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ଓ ଏସ୍ ଏ ମ୍ୟାଗାଜିନ୍ ତା ମଧ୍ୟ ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ପାଇଁ ଠିକ୍ ସମୟରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲା ।

ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ ବାବୁ ବାର୍ଷିକ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଲା ବେଳକୁ କିଛି ଡେରି ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲା । ତାହାମଧ୍ୟରେ ସମସ୍ତ ମେମ୍ବର ମାନଙ୍କୁ ମ୍ୟାଗାଜିନ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ବଖସାଇ ସାରିଥିଲା । ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମବାବୁ ତାଙ୍କ ନିଜ କପିଟିକୁ ରେଜିଷ୍ଟ୍ରେସନ ଡେସ୍‌ରୁ ନେଇ ସିଧା ତାଙ୍କ ଲେଖାଟିକୁ ତଦାରଖ କରିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ପୃଷ୍ଠା ଓଲଟାଇବାକୁ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି, ହଠାତ୍ ଶୁଣିବାକୁ ପାଇଲେ ଚିନ୍ତାହୀନ ବାବୁ ଭୀତଲୋଚନ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ କହୁଛନ୍ତି “ମୁଁ କଣ ମିଛ କହୁଥିଲି କି ସେଦିନ ? ଦେଖିଲେଣି ଏଥର ଯେସବୁ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଗଳ୍ପ ବାହାରିଛି ଓଏସ୍‌ଏ ମ୍ୟାଗାଜିନ୍‌ରେ, ନିହାତି ବେକାର ନ ହେଲେ ସେ ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଲେଖି କେହି ସମୟ ନଷ୍ଟ କରିବ? ସମସ୍ତେ ଭାବୁଛନ୍ତି ଯେ ସେମାନେ ଏଣୁ ତେଣୁ ଲେଖି ହୋଇଯିବେ ଫର୍ଯୁରାନମ । କିମ୍ବା ଗୋପାଳାଧ୍ୟ ମହାନ୍ତି ।

ହୃଦୟଙ୍ଗମ ବାବୁ ତାଙ୍କ ଗଳ୍ପର ପୃଷ୍ଠା ଓଲଟାଉ ଥିଲେ ଏବଂ ନିଜ ରଚିତ ଗଳ୍ପକୁ ଦେଖି ସେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ କରି ପାରୁନଥିଲେ, କାହାକୁ ଦୋଷ ଦେବେ ସଂପାଦକ ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ ନା ମୁଦ୍ରକାର ବାବୁଙ୍କୁ । ହେଲେ ସେ ଜାଣି ନ ଥିଲେ ଯେ ସେଇଟା ଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କ ଶେଷ “ରମ୍ୟ ରଚନା” ।

- Narayan Rath lives in Fayetteville, Arkansas with wife Sipra.

Book Review

"Best of Two Worlds"

By GHANA SHYAM TRIPATHY

To my knowledge, this book "Best of Two Worlds" by Ghana Shyam Tripathy, a retired medical doctor from Dover, Ohio, is the first autobiography by an Oriya-American. The book, published in 1997, is large in size (8.5x11) and contains over 200 pages including many photographs and documents. It is indeed a commendable effort by the author.

Ghanashyam Babu was born in a small village called Mahu in the Cuttack district in 1924. He tells the joys of his life as a child in this rural Oriya village and the heartaches of losing beloved family members to the ravages of disease. He attended the S.C.B. Medical College, Cuttack and graduated as a doctor in 1950, the first batch of medical graduates from that college. His classmates in this country include Dr. Prasanna Pati, Dr. Udaya Dash, Dr. Biresh Mohanti, and Dr. Aditya Burman. He arrived in the USA in 1952 and spent 3 years at the Canton's Aulman Hospital doing his residency in general surgery. There he met Rita Landers and married her in 1956. They have five children. When he arrived in 1952, the civil rights legislation was not yet passed. Recalling the plight of black citizens as perceived through the eyes of an immigrant, he provides a look at the injustice of segregation on the basis of skin color. After practicing medicine very successfully for 28 years, Ghanashyam Babu retired in 1990.

The book examines the customs and cultures of two very different countries. Ghanashyam Babu provides many events and anecdotes and the narration has a fluid easy-to-read style. He says in the preface that his goal in writing this book was for family reasons - to leave something for his grand-children and their children. It is really a wonderful book and is highly recommended for every Oriya-American. See elsewhere in this journal on how to order a copy.

- By Jnana Ranjan Dash, Editor of OSA Journal





Voice of Our Future



Do Not Be Sad

BAGMI DAS

My sweet little sister do not be sad
See - our garden is green and glad
See - the blooming flowers smiling at you
See - the butterflies coming down to meet you
And little ducklings in the shiny grass
Standing aside to let you pass
Questions in their eyes, and they want to know
What makes all those tears to flow?
The gentle breeze asks you why you cry
Isn't it funny that you don't know why?

—Bagmi Das is a gifted and talented student at Guilford elementary School. She is in fifth grade & stays with her parents Naresh and Bigyani Das in Columbia, Maryland. She likes to write, read, sing, and is learning Odissi dance for last three years.

Spring

SRIYA CHHOTRAY

Spring is pretty as you see,
There are lots of flowers covering the trees.

Sky is clear and the grass is green
Squirrels are out, so are the bees.

Tulips and Daffodils smiling from the lawn
Easter bunny brings to us, so much fun.

Weather is nice, the air feels clean
Grown-ups are jogging with their teams.

Kids are waiting for summer to come,
When school is off, there will be lots of fun!

— Sriya Chhotray is 8 years old and is in second grade. She lives in Cleveland with her parents Santanu and Jhinu Chhotray.

Storm

PRATIK DASH

Lightening strikes
Thunder Booms
Rain drops fall heavily
Against the window in my room

Electricity is out
The window is closed
There is only a flicker of candlelight
When I stay in bed and pretend like I'm froze

The wind throws trees down
With all its might
As it tries to uproot them
On this dangerous night

The next morning I get up
Thinking it was all a dream
But then I saw the truth
Within that dangerous scene

I saw wrecked houses
A trail of tears
No shouts of joy
No praise or cheers

Wherever I look
Disaster all in my sight
Then I understood what happened
On that perilous night

Parents and Kids
Crying for relatives and friends
All I wonder if this sadness
Shall ever end

Week after week
There were volunteers all over the town
Building houses, bridges, churches, and schools
For children and folks around

Nature is invincible
It's still beyond human imagination
She can be seen through the dancing flowers
Also can be felt through its power of devastation

— Pratik Dash is a 4th grade student and lives in Franklin, Tennessee with his parents Prabir and Prajesh Dash. His poems have been published by the Library of Congress and other anthologies. This poem was written the day after a series of tornadoes hit Nashville.

My Village Experience

SMRITI PANDA

I came to the United States in 1972 when I was 5 years old. Like other kids of my generation, my contact with India took place every couple of years with a six weeks trip to India during the summer. We always spent most of our time in Cuttack. Although both of my parents had been raised in villages, nobody seemed interested in visiting them anymore. I gathered from my cousins that villages were filled with ghosts and goblins; no modern conveniences; and backward people. None of them had any interest in visiting villages.

As destiny would have it, I had the opportunity to live in a village and become part of that community. My relationship with an Indian village began when I met Jogesh, my husband. Jogesh comes from a remote village about 100 miles away from Cuttack. Due to age and other factors, we realized Jogesh's parents could not travel to the United States for the wedding, so we decided to have the wedding in India. Jogesh and my parents worried about how I would handle life in a village. He tried to ease any fears by telling me about his family, their home and some of the customs and expectations associated with life in a village.

We were married in a glitzy and glamorous affair at the Cuttack Club. Soon afterwards it was time for our departure to Jogesh's home. The trip to his village took about three hours. Although it was dark, I could sense the terrain had changed as we went over one hill after another. The noise, hustle and bustle of Cuttack were far behind us. Through the haziness of the dark, I could make out the silhouette of the hills and the twinkle of lanterns in huts across the fields. As we approached his village, the smile on my face had diminished and was replaced with fear and anguish of the unknown. All kinds of thoughts raced through my head such as "What if they don't like me? What if we can't understand each other? How am I going to survive the next 3 weeks with total strangers? Sensing my anguish, Jogesh whispered, "Don't worry, I will be with you at all times." By the time we reached his village it was night and as luck would have it, the electricity was out. Hearing our car enter the village people came out holding their lanterns, to get a glimpse of the bride and groom. Some people were asking Jogesh questions as we continued to drive. I don't know how the driver navigated his way through the village and delivered us to the door of my new home. Upon our arrival, we were met by a crowd of people waiting for us. (The people of the village had beaten the car to Jogesh's home and had announced our approaching arrival). As we arrived, the quiet of the night was broken by sounds from "hula huli" and sankha and the chattering of voices. We were greeted with a platter containing a deepa, flowers, rice and mukutas. A firm hand took hold of me and helped me out of the car, I assumed it

was my sister-in-law since it was too dark for me to see anything. She held me tight and instructed me on which foot to use while going over the threshold and when to do mundia. With no electricity, no vision due to the veil covering my head and unfamiliar sounds and voices I was filled with total helplessness and confusion. After the rituals were finished I was taken to my room and Jogesh was lost within his relatives. The room was filled with female relatives and children. They all just stared at me but no one would talk to me (they did talk among themselves). My cousin and I found ourselves huddling closer together as I tried to look through my veil and recognize faces I had seen in Jogesh's photo album. I saw a somewhat familiar face enter the room and she sat down beside me. As soon as she spoke, I recognized the voice as the individual who had helped me out of the car. She introduced herself as Jogesh's Bhauja. I called her Nani from that point onwards.

During the night things just got worse. We were startled awake by a strange sound. The sound went "Kee-en Kaa-aan, Kee-en Kaa-aan" over and over. My cousin was convinced it was some sort of wild animal or a ghost. Neither of us had the nerve to open the windows and check on the sound. We tried to get help, but we couldn't figure out how to open the door. Being too afraid to fall asleep, we sat up and waited for day to break. In the morning when Jogesh and my sister-in-law came in they found us sitting in a corner of the bed, full of perspiration and looking exhausted. Very worriedly, Jogesh wanted to know what was wrong. We explained our ordeal with the strange sound and how we sat up all night out of fright. No one else had heard the strange sound. Nani recognized the strange sound and started laughing as she told us the sounds we heard were the sounds of the sagarda gadhi (bullock carts) passing by. Apparently, the villagers traveled in caravan with their sagarda gadhi while making trips to the jungle. They usually left before daybreak to maximize on time. Needless to say, we felt like great big fools.

For the next few days, women and children from the village stopped by to get a look at me. The women finished their chores quickly and come in groups to see the "America Bahu". Some of them were really disappointed to see me wearing sari, sindoor and having my hair in a bun. They had really expected to see someone with very short hair wearing jeans. Now that I looked "normal" they had to investigate me from head to toe. They brushed aside my sari to get a better look at my necklaces and bangles. They had a lot of questions such as how much gold do your necklaces and bangles have? Is that your real hair of fake? Did your Sister-in-law fix your hair into bun or did you do it yourself? One went as far as asking me to open my hair so that she could check the length of it and watch

as I recoiled it back into a bun. They were also astonished that my hair was not oiled. They inspected everything from the contents my purse to my luggage. I had a fiery look in my eyes and I was ready to snatch my things back. I looked at Nani who was shaking her head advising me not to do anything. I couldn't understand how these people could invade "my sense of privacy, my personal space" and be so nonchalant about it. Someone asked me what my "Gotra and Sangia"(last name, title) were and I had no idea what she was talking about. I had never heard those Oriya words before. I really didn't how to answer any of their questions since I was in utter shock over them. These were such personal questions and I was feeling totally violated by these people. Since I did not know my "Sangia" they concluded that I was a Bengali and did not know Oriya. I tried to remain calm and prayed they would leave soon. During the visits, they gossiped about the village and I understood everything. This situation continued for the next several days. I started telling Jogesh, my sister-in-law and mother-in-law all the village gossip I had heard.

During this time Nani became my guide and guru. She tried to fill me in on the norms and expectations. When I needed to go anywhere I literally followed her feet. Walking bent and veiled; my peripheral vision was limited to the ground and maybe two square feet in front of me. Thus, I carefully watched every turn that her feet took, making sure I repeated the exact same steps. (I was expecting to run into a tree or something any minute). I was very fortunate to have Parents-in-law (Bapa and Bou) as well as Nani and Bhaina who were very supportive and patient with during my period of adjustment. Truly, everything was in their hands. They could have made it a difficult situation for me if they had chosen to. Bapa and Bou chose to look the other way and allow for freedom from some of the strict and traditional norms. Everytime they had a look of disapproval on their faces, Nani and Bhaina would chime in that "times have changed and we need to change with it". This became a very popular phrase.

At first, Bou appeared distant from me. I could feel her gaze upon me as I interacted with other members of the family, particularly with Jogesh. I wanted to get to know her better but we did not know how to approach each other. We were strangers to each other in many ways. One afternoon while everyone was napping I heard sounds coming from the agana(courtyard). This time I went to check on the sound. I found Bou sitting on the floor with a two round slabs of stone (one on top of the other) in front of her. She rotated the slabs of stone rhythmically. I sat down beside her and asked what she was doing and what this thing was called. She told me that the slabs of stone were called a "chaki" and she was grinding urad dal to make chakuli pitha for Jogesh. I asked if I could help but she said "no" because she was afraid I would hurt myself. Since I had never seen a chaki before, I was really fascinated and insisted she let me try it once. She started laugh-

ing and proceeded to tell me how Jogesh, as child, insisted on helping her rotate the chaki with her. She taught me how to lift the chaki and pour the lentil in and rotate it. Together, we held the handle and began rotating it. She also starting telling me one story after another about her and Jogesh and the whole family. I hold that afternoon very close to my heart. It was the beginning of a strong relationship and bond.

I was awestricken by the simple beauty of the village. I loved watching the sunrise over the mountains and across the mango groves and fields. The air always felt so fresh and crisp (except when there was a strong breeze and I would get a whiff of the cows, ox and bulls). Early in the mornings I could hear the sound of birds chirping while mothers and wives rustled against the quiet of the morning, getting ready for the day. I found myself feeling as if I was in a time vacuum. People here were not always looking at the clock or their watches. They wore simple cotton saris or dhotis and they walked bare foot most of the time. Their water was pulled from the well in buckets, and their food was cooked on mud stoves with burning wood (katha chuli). There was no indoor plumbing, phones, cars, or electrical ranges and electricity was limited. There really was not much to indicate that this village or its people were part of the 20th century. I wanted to feel sorry for them because they lacked so much, but I couldn't. They seemed very rich in their own way. They were content and happy with what they did have. They did not seem bothered by what I perceived to be "inconveniences". I actually felt a little envious that they had not become slaves to the 20th century technologies and "conveniences".

I tried really hard to fit in but certain actions made me stand out in the crowd. For example, I understand plain, simple Cuttack Oriya and Oriya spoken in this village had a different dialect. Decoding the language became a challenge. One morning Nani said she was going to "kharadi some vegetables". I knew that "khadi" meant chalk but could not figure out why she was going to mix the chalk "khadi" with the vegetable. I was pretty sure I would not want to eat it. I screamed hysterically every time I saw a mouse; fell backwards while trying to sit on a pidha and got the workers confused with the relatives. The bathing room (which was a structure of four walls and with no roof) was located in the backyard. While bathing one morning, I tried to put my clothes on the wall but missed and all my clothes went up on the branches of the lime tree next to the bathing room. I stood in that room crying and shivering from the cold January wind while waiting for someone to rescue my clothes. I tried to help in the garden but accidentally crushed the ginger plants thinking they were weeds. I picked some beautiful white flowers for my room and learned that they were the flowers from the turmeric (haldi) plant. The paniky (Indian knife) always fell to the side while I used it to cut vegetables. I could not keep soot from the chuli(stove) from getting smeared on my face when I helped

cook. I watched in awe as Nani did of these things with grace and efficiency. Each day of village life seemed like a new adventure.

As the time for our departure drew nearer, I recognized the look of sorrow in Bapa and Bou's eyes. They tried to remain strong as they realized destiny had other plans for their son and it did not include living in this small village. As we departed the village, people came out of their homes to see us off. I had entered this village with anguish on my face, I left with sorrow. Yes, it was difficult

at first because everything was so different, but I came to understand that the difference was a state of mind. I had chosen to approach the difficulties as challenges and learning opportunities. I kept reminding myself that I was no better than Jogesh and if he could grow up in this environment and turn out to be the wonderful person he is, then I too should be able live here without feeling "put out".

— Smriti Panda, formerly known as "Smriti Joshi", resides in Michigan with her husband and two children.



Ellora Patnaik

Ellora Patnaik, known to all as Lora, is a pride to the North American Oriya community. She is the daughter of Pramod and Jitu (Chitrlekha) Patnaik of Toronto, Canada.

Lora has been in big news lately for her lead role in Mira Nair's latest movie "My own country", starring other known stars such as Navin Andrews (of "English Patient" fame) and Marisa Tomei (of "Perez Family" fame). The film will be released in the Fall of 1998.

Lora is a prolific Odissi dancer and she has been teaching Odissi with her mother Jitu at the Chitrlekha Dance Academy. She has performed in many OSA conventions. Both Lora and her brother Raj (himself a prolific Odissi

dancer and pakhouj player) acted in Girish Karnad's stage play "Nagamandala" in Toronto. The brother-sister performance was so stunning that Mira Nair selected her instantly for the lead role in the movie.

Lora has also been dancing at the annual Konark Dance Festival, held in March every year near the famous Konark temple in Orissa. Lora studied acting at the New York Academy of Acting and she has acted in several stage plays in both the USA and Canada. Her immense dancing experience combined with the acting talent makes her quite outstanding an artist. She has even acted in an Oriya movie.

We are extremely proud of Lora and wish her greater success in the future.

Mix and Match

SONALI SAHOO

A, B, C, D, One, Two, Three,
I know you and you know me.

E, F, G, H, Four, Five, Six,
Do you know this how to fix?

I, J, K, L, Seven, Eight, Nine,
I think you are looking fine.

M, N, O, P, Ten, Eleven,
Do you know God in heaven?

A, B, C, D, One, Two, Three,
I know you and you know me

Q, R, S, T, Twelve, Thirteen,
It is good to eat some bean.

U, V, W, X and Fourteen,
Go to school and learn something.

A, B, C, D, One, Two, Three,
I know you and you know me

Finally, it is Y and Z,
Can you read this or busy?

– Sonali Sahoo is 6 years old and is in the 1st Grade. She lives with her parents Sudam and Kantilata Sahoo in Santa Clara, CA.

APPLES

SUMAN PANDA

I like apples, they are sweet
Eating apples cleans my teeth
Enjoying apples twice a day
Keeps the doctors safely away

– Suman Panda is in the 1st grade and lives in Canton, Michigan. She is the daughter of Jogesh and Smriti Panda

Guess it Now !

SAGAR SAHOO

Thirteen lettered word
It's really very hard.

But think it and tell me,
which is not so bad.

It's a name of the God,
I am offering Him a bud.

Here are some clues for you
If you guess it now,
God will bless you.

1. (7th + 2nd + 4th) letter = you worship
2. (13th + 11th + 12th) letter = Something you wear on your head
3. (3rd + 11th + 12th) letter = Vehicle of Lord Ganesh
4. (1st + 2nd + 7th) letter = Use to make fire
5. (5th + 2nd + 7th) letter = Morning exercise on the road
6. (3rd + 2nd + 6th + 4th) letter = The same thing as street
7. (6th + 9th + 4th) letter = And
8. (7th + 2nd + 12th) letter = Got

– Sagar Sahoo is 8 years old and is in the 3rd Grade. He lives with his parents Sudam and Kantilata Sahoo in Santa Clara, CA

The Whole Clue is : " Lord Jagannath "

1. GOD 2. HAT 3. RAT 4. LOG
2. JOG 6. ROAD 7. AND
8. GOT

ANSWERS:

My Trip to India

BARNALI DASVERMA

"Mu bujhi paru chi...kintu kahi paruni..." This is a phrase I found myself repeating time after time during my trip to India, specifically, Orissa, this past summer. Having not been to India for almost nine years, this trip was not one that I was originally looking forward to. However, within two days of arriving in Cuttack, I remember asking my Dad, "Can we come back in December?" I must admit, this was one the best summers I have ever had. So, now, you, the reader, may be wondering, "What's in this essay for me?" Well...Of interest to you may be: my mini-language crisis, my incredible late August Orissa sightseeing, and, most importantly, my bonding with my newly rediscovered relatives. Language crisis? Yes, that's right. Now, you may be wondering what exactly I'm referring to. Well, for starters, being the expatriate child of 14th generation Bengali-speaking Orissan parents, I understand Oriya completely, but can't speak it. At least, I don't want to. Why? Well, as many of our close family friends, including Anjalika mausi and Surya uncle (Anjalika & Surya Pattnaik of San Jose whose home is the most popular watering hole for people from Orissa during California trips), can attest to, I sometimes "mix up" my Oriya. More specifically, at the age of six, I mixed up "kakudi" and "kukuda," a vegetable for a bird. Your imagination can take over from here. Thus, my fear of speaking Oriya is really quite understandable. However, on the other hand, it drives me crazy when my mother begins to translate the Oriya an aunt or uncle speaks. "Don't you understand that I UNDERSTAND?" I feel like screaming. With regard to Bengali...I'm much more comfortable speaking it. Still, I'm often embarrassed by my limited vocabulary. Often, it takes me ten different words to express one simple idea. Pathetic, isn't it? The worst is yet to come. When I speak Bengali, I often pronounce things in a way that "Calclassian" Bengalis deem "wrong." This, though hurtful, is probably the truth. The irony however, is that when I speak Bengali with my aunts and uncles and cousins in Cuttack, they joke about how my Bengali is too "Calclassian." My conclusion? There is none. Pathetic.

On a far more positive note (and indeed, I am an optimist, though my writing thus far may have misled you to believe otherwise), I must say that my sightseeing in India was truly awe-inspiring. Though the majority of our trip was spent in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, the first few days were spent seeing Delhi and Agra. Certainly, the pervasive silence of the Bahai Lotus temple was mind-boggling, and the majestic artistry of the Taj Mahal is too incredible to properly describe in words. I was amazed. Then, I found myself dumbly repeating, "This is so beautiful."

Even now, I don't think I can say much more coherently. I had heard of the beauty of the great Taj, but never

did I imagine it to be sooo great. Often, others speak of "building up" a person, place, or thing to be so great in their minds that when they finally encounter the object, they feel "let down." I assure you, this was certainly not the case. I was inspired. On a more somber note, I wondered out loud, "if this is what our ancestors were capable of building when the mighty United States was but nothing, how is it possible that such a great disparity between the success of the two nations exists today?" I now realize this reflection was quite naive and idealistic, but yet it saddens me. In Orissa, seeing the ancient Sun Temple at Konark and the famous Jagannath Temple at Puri was a unique experience. The beauty of both historic sites, coupled with the amazingly aggressive street hawkers, made our two-day outing (including an overnight stay at Pantha Nivas) quite impressive. With ever greater enthusiasm, I can narrate to you the most memorable part of my India experience. Spending time in Cuttack with my cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandmother is what I treasure most. Going to Angul to see Malati Choudhury on her 94th birthday, travelling to Jajpur to visit my father's uncle and visiting other relatives in Khurda were memorable. The visit to Khurda and riding my Betu Kaku's Luna (moped) all by myself is something I'll never forget, as is splashing around in the Puri surf with my Chotopisi and my cousin Shrey (my idea - short for Shreyashi) as the rain poured down. The fun I had riding on the back of my Jhantu dada's motorcycle and Som dada's (Advocate Somnath Roy of Orissa High Court and Badambari) scooter along Cuttack's Kathjori Ring Road and through the city was unsurpassable. Visiting Mahanadi Anicut with four of my cousins and watching as the water rushed by was certainly "cool." The same applies to watching Auzaar, the worst Hindi movie ever made (yes, the one with the Indian Macarena!), with eight of my favorite cousins. Practicing my (yes, poor) Oriya at home was also fun; the phrases "nahi-mo," "jaldi-jaldi," and "akhadua," suddenly became part of my everyday vocabulary. Most shocking of all, my largely anti-Hindi movie self (my good friend Smita Das of San Jose can attest to this) got "into" Hindi music. Even today, nine months later, the tunes of the Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge soundtrack and the Alisha tape can often be heard in my mother's car.

So, yes, all in all, I must say my trip was truly unforgettable. Regardless of my language barrier (I'm working on it...), I had a wonderful time, and I must say, I'm really looking forward to going back. (Hint, hint...Mom and Dad). All in all, at the risk of sound ultra-cliched, I must admit, "I Love My India." I pray that you do too.

- Barnali Dasverma lives in Los Angeles with her parents Sandip and Leela Dasverma. She is 16 years old and in 11th grade. She writes regularly in English and Bengali.

Searching For Truth

GITANJALI SENAPATI

The search for truth is perhaps the eternal vocation of most people. The desire to know everything is one which permeates the minds of almost everyone. This particular quote encourages a search for truth by introspection and faith in oneself rather than a simple acceptance of that which is merely shown to you. However, the definition of truth is different for all. For the artist, truth is a spiritual endeavor to discover purpose and meaning in life. The scientist craves truth, or knowledge, of all that is unknown in the world. The process of the search for truth and its meaning is defined differently for scientists, artists, and individual people such as myself.

The typical scientist is portrayed as accepting truth only with the assistance of factual evidence. As a result, philosophically looking inside oneself does not always suffice. The scientist's truth is one where he or she has a basic understanding of the world, which comes with facts and evidence. Consequently, they conduct scientific experiments in an effort to create evidence. Scientists usually subscribe to the doctrine that a truth is universally agreed upon- they desire agreement and harmony in truths. Scientists are also prone to classification as a manner of seeking truth. As developments are made in the laboratory, their definition of what is true changes. For example, sickness was once thought to be a result of unequal blood balances in the body, and draining blood seemed to be the obvious answer to healing. However, as science progressed and knowledge increased about the human body, the "truth" was changed to one in which draining blood was useless and even harmful. In this way, truth is fickle, and constant observation can be concluded to be the only way to truth. Overall, scientists have a tendency to need statistical proof to be convinced of things. The scientific method, comprised of making a hypothesis and testing it, was developed so that scientists could methodically develop truths.

Artists traditionally encourage the search for truth by self examination. Artists favor individual expression, and strongly believe in different answers for all. For them, their search for truth is one where they seek to learn about themselves and create a meaningful life. The painter and writer create their art in order to seek truth through their individual mediums. They desire to create their own answers and look for themselves. While they create, they hope

to inspire others and perhaps share their knowledge and truth with others. But as Julianne Barnes said, I'm not surprised that some people prefer books. Books make sense. The only problem is that the lives they make sense of are other people's lives, never your own.

Simply put, the works of artists usually do not convince people to follow a specific doctrine, but rather add to the pool from which they may compile their truths. Artists, like scientists, advocate the process of searching for truth as well as the end product.

The famous cubist Pablo Picasso viewed truth as an adventure, different for each person. In his personal adventure, he incorporated the creative works of art from around the world and adapted each of them to become his own art. For example, his famous art technique, Cubism, was directly influenced by the Impressionist Paul Cezanne. Cezanne emphasized form and realism in painting, and Pablo Picasso adapted this idea by focusing on realism through three dimensional techniques. Similarly, artists generally encourage individual paths, and thus individual truths.

However, I believe that no person fully subscribes to the beliefs of the stereotypical artist and scientist. Each person, in the course of his or her life, attempts to find truth in the way they feel best. In Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, he explained that his own search for truth involved non-violence. His truth was not only an attempt at understanding the world, but understanding God and his manifestations. For Gandhi, truth was God, and in his pursuit he was willing to sacrifice all. He believed that he had succeeded- that his experiments with truth did lead him to correct conclusions. But Gandhi clarified that his conclusions satisfied only him, suggesting that each person must find truth individually.

My personal experience has led me to believe in both myself and that which is told to me. By undermining my own beliefs, I have had to sacrifice pieces of myself to be part of the norm. However, I know I am unable to answer all questions, and therefore must turn to my surroundings for assistance. Like the scientist, I believe in observation and trials to determine truth. The search for truth is one where looking inside one's self may not be enough, but is certainly significant. Our minds have the capacity to understand, both by creating beliefs and believing in others.

*When you look for truth,
look within yourself,
for there lies truth.*

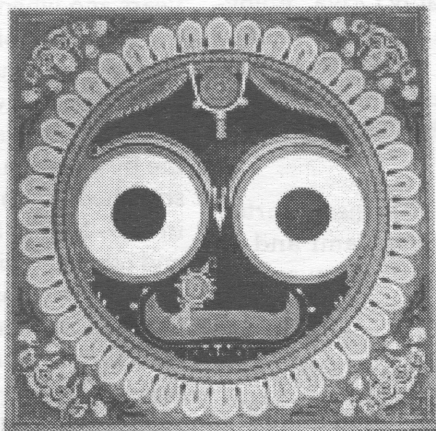


A friend of mine, Jaleh Khorsandian, was recently diagnosed as manic depressive. For two years, she battled outsiders that deemed her crazy and unreachable. Rather than accept the simple classification of "insanity", she forced herself to believe that she could overcome whatever was hurting her. When she did enlist help from a doctor, she accepted his diagnosis only after it coincided with her own personal feelings. She remained independent, looking inside herself for answers, but was willing to cooperate with outside help. From her experience, I learned that the discovery of truth is a process of trust - both in yourself and others. It is all right, and even necessary, to seek help from others, but the most important element in seeking truth is believing in your own self.

The search for truth is an often long and weary road

individualized for each person. Scientists and artists alike have to choose the truths they believe and their own way of attaining them. While scientists tend to bemoan objective, artists form emotional bonds with the subjects of their research. However, most people do not fit completely into a category where they fully look inside themselves for answers or accept only scientific explanations. Instead, they follow philosopher William James theory that truth is simply what works in everyday practice, not what is theorized and tested. I believe most people define truth on what they feel is practical, a combination of introspection and scientific basis.

- Gitanjali is the daughter of Sukanya and Kiron Senapati and is a Senior in King High School in Tampa, Florida. Her hobbies include reading, writing, and singing Hindi/Oriya songs.



Orissa

CHANDAN MISRA

From the great sand dunes of Puri and Konark, to the monkeys
that swing carelessly through the trees,
Orissa is a marvelous land, one with many varying degrees of beauty.
The architecture of centuries long past stands gracefully,
Amidst the fast-paced, technological present, with cars and scooters,
Kicking up dust as they race along, the ones that prosper leave their tracks,
others fade into the ground
Orissa, although change occurs constantly, will always be the land of kings,
Whether they be from centuries long past, or from the present,
For the element is always there, for people to learn new ideas and improve
their glorious land.

- Chandan Misra, age 12, is the son of Sourya and Krishna Misra of Castro Valley, California. He is a grade 7 student at the Head-Royce School.

Marrying a Non-Oriya: An Experience of Unity

PRAGATI MISRO

My mother's words ring through my ears even though they were told to me many years ago, "Pragati, you can marry anybody you like—we will never force you. Just make sure he is Indian... and an Oriya... and is from Ganjam and... is a Brahmin." I think my mom was half-serious and half-joking.

I knew, however, that all joking aside, my mom would be in heaven if I found any person meeting the above criteria. In fact, I myself had always believed and hoped to find a nice Indian boy, preferably Oriya. Enjoying the Oriya community all my life in Northern California, I never wanted to give it up—so I believed I needed somebody who would also wish to share this important part of my life. I believed he needed to be Oriya (who else would understand me and us?)

Naturally, many years later (I was 25) when I started dating a non-Indian, non-Oriya, non-Ganjami and of course, non-Brahmin boy—I was hesitant to reveal his identity to my parents. I kept his existence secret from all but my closest friends. I am not sure what I thought my parents would do, but I was afraid of their disapproval. Because I myself was unsure of my relationship with Marc, I felt that my parents' (surely negative) input would simply distract me from finding out if this was the right person for me.

This "secret-keeping" took a huge toll on me. Living two separate lives, one completely unknown to my parents and one veiled in mystery to Marc was mentally taxing. All through my life I had an open and clear relationship with both of my parents. My father, unlike many Indian dads, encouraged me to openly debate with him. He did not always agree with me, but he at least knew what I was thinking. In our home, nobody sullenly accepted the decrees of the father—we debated, discussed and then compromised, not always, but many times. My father believed that openness was the best way to respect him. He never believed in blind obedience. My mother and I always talked openly with each other about feelings, friends, and everyday life. I hated keeping Marc from my parents.

Suddenly, everything became more complicated. After a year and a half of being friends and later dating, Marc and I knew we were deeply in love and talked about marriage and that I would soon be moving 500 miles away to attend law school. These, and a number of other factors, lead me to tell my mom and dad about Marc. At first, my parents were afraid—afraid that maybe I had made a

bad choice—after all—they had never met him! But as they got to know Marc, they began to see that he met all the IMPORTANT criteria—you know, all those values they had been instilling in me since the day I was born.

Of course, when parents say they want you to marry an Indian—this is a shorthand way of saying, "we want you to marry somebody who shares our values and who understands us." I think that my parents really did a great job of raising me (with what little they had and knew 30 years ago when they came to this country). They had no examples to follow here. All they knew was what they brought with them from Orissa. Amazingly, despite all the culture clashes we experienced throughout my teen years, I had co-opted all those good things they'd been teaching me by example. So, when I chose a life partner—I chose somebody who shared the values that they had instilled in me—love of family, love of community, respect for self and others, stability of character, gentleness, independence, honesty, compassion, helpfulness, generosity, and love of learning, to name a few. When my parents saw all these qualities in Marc—their fears were allayed—after all he had fulfilled the requirements "somebody who shares our values and understands us." Also he was a person who deeply cared for their daughter.

I recall once that an "Oriya uncle" of mine decided to discuss this "marriage thing" with me when I was about 23. I realize now that he was trying to be kind and understanding, but at the time I was mortified. He told me that as a young woman, one who would likely marry soon ("you still have a couple of years left to find somebody") that I would need to be extremely careful choosing a husband. "Pragati, you are the eldest Oriya girl amongst many younger girls here on the West Coast—what you do will be an example for them to follow. It would be best if you married an Indian. These girls will be looking to you."

I remember trying to explain that finding an Indian boy here in America is very difficult. He patiently responded, "but each of us needs to compromise." Help! It wasn't as if I hated Indians! I really wanted to find one, but never could. Surely, the only criteria in deciding a husband could not be race! I could compromise a lot, but I could not compromise my basic fundamental personality! And at that point in my life, I had never met an Indian, let alone, anybody who matched my personality. This was not a simple issue of compromise. What about love? "Pragati, love comes after you are married."



Well, that was a long time ago. Soon after I introduced Marc to my parents, I introduced Marc to the Oriya community. Despite my concerns about having a relationship with a non-Indian, non-Oriya, non-Ganjami, non-Brahmin, everybody really accepted Marc as part of this community. They graciously opened their hearts and minds to him and have sincerely welcomed him as an honorary Oriya. I am thankful that they were open-minded enough to give him a chance. I think that they saw in him those IMPORTANT criteria. Marc, in his way showed the community that he was a wonderful person. Today, they see him as the good person that he is, not simply as the "non-Oriya".

The Oriya community has always been behind me one hundred percent and I am grateful for all their love, kindness and support. They watched me grow in front of their eyes and because they knew me, they knew that I was likely to choose well in the husband department. After all, the Oriya Community nurtured and influenced me. They had a stake in my development.

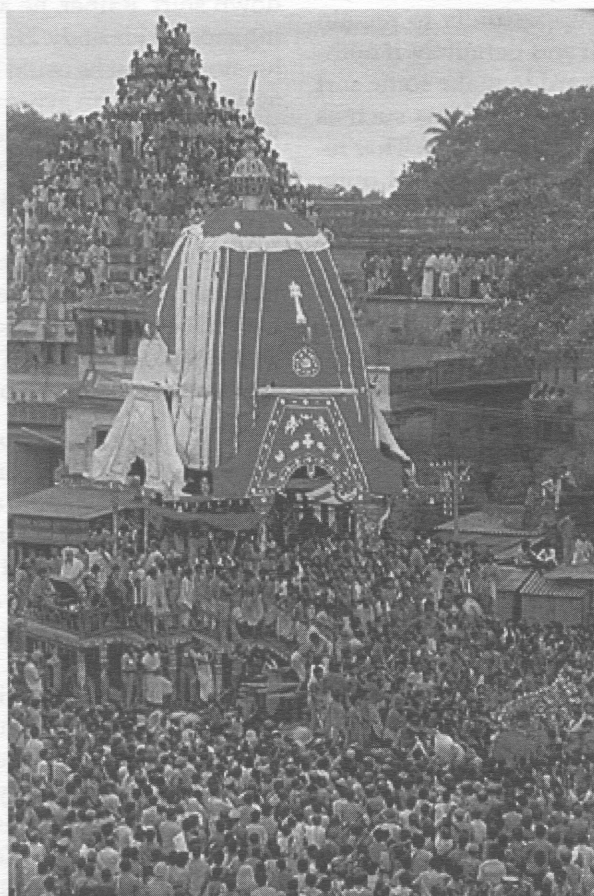
Last year Marc and I got married and had a fabulous time at the wedding—a truly multi-cultural event. Marc's Panamanian mother's Panamanian and Latin friends and his French father's brothers (three of them flew in from France with their wives and children), my loving Oriya extended "family," and just about everybody in between

attended. I viewed our wedding as a symbol of unity. All these people from different backgrounds and cultures came together for one purpose—the joining of two young people. Marc and I personify the values from each group—if the two of us can get along so well—maybe we aren't as different as we think we are.

As for being an example to all the younger girls who may follow my lead (which I doubt because all the girls that I know are independent, brave, smart and do as they please), I hope they have confidence in their decisions, believe they deserve the best, and never compromise their fundamental personality to suit others. Don't rush into a relationship. Take your time and make sure you find the person who loves you with all his heart and who shares your values on most things that are important to you. He may be Oriya, but don't shut the door on someone because he is not—you may be shutting the door to your own happiness.

My mother's new marriage requirements for my younger sister are "Arati, you can marry anybody you like. Just make sure...he makes you happy."

—Pragati Misro lives in Cupertino, California with her husband Marc Dareau. They were married in December, 1996.



Village Life in Orissa: *Personal Observations*

SOMESH DASH

Most of us reading this article right now are probably taking a break from our intensely hectic lives. Classes, meetings, and appointments infiltrate virtually every minute of our existence. All of us spend half our time hurrying about our activities and the other half complaining about our lives. We all crave for some breaks or vacations that allow us to contemplate on other essentials that we normally neglect.

Now imagine a lifestyle with virtually no worries. The only stimulant is, well, the movement of time itself. Even the most insignificant situations assume a large importance. This place, we believe, doesn't exist. But it actually does. In fact, most of us have been to this place at one point or another in our lives. It is the Indian village.

I personally experienced village life in its vast idleness some months ago. Although I had visited villages many times before, I had usually stayed there for only a few days. Last summer, I had the opportunity to remain in a village for around two weeks. It was definitely, if nothing else, a didactic experience. It's hard to make some sort of a judgement as to whether Indian-Americans such as myself can truly adapt to the ways of the village. That really depends on the individual. But I can contend quite firmly that village life really gives an individual the key to seeing India in the most complete fashion.

My arrival at the village brought along with it a sense of restrained excitement. Although this feeling of "restrained excitement" is seemingly contradictory, it accurately depicts the plethora of emotions one undergoes in the village. The village evokes a sense of complete liberation and freedom. Looking on the street, you see hardly any cars driving around. Rather, it is the cows that are the masters of the street. One almost envies the freedom with which they trot on every street. As I entered the village, I marked certain groups of young men standing around paan shops. When I passed by the same street a few hours later, the same group of people were sitting in the same positions as when I had initially marked them. Conversing with them is also quite interesting. I recall one specific paan shop that my uncle used to take me to. There was a middle-aged man sitting on a stool applying paste to betel-leaves with great speed and agility. His hands had the mark of his profession, as his fingers were stained with the red paste that he applied to the paan. I actually met him at least twice a day. He always had the same question,

"So Babu, when did you get here?" I usually replied with some relative timeframe, such as a day, five days, or ten days ago. His next question was usually, "So Babu, when are you leaving?" I replied, "The 3rd of August." This was usually the core of our conversation. One time, he actually asked me a few more questions. He asked me, "Babu, do you have these types of roadside paan stores in America?" I replied that we didn't. He became quite disenchanted by my reply. A few moments later he said with a smile, "And all this time I had thought that you were going to take me back to America with you. Now I will have nothing to do when I get there." He gave me a huge smile and a hearty laugh, exposing his reddish tongue for me to marvel at.

The shop next to paan shop was a Bata shoe store. This place sold slippers, shoes, and formal shoes. I vividly remember the owner of the store. He was a dark man with a very prominent moustache. He never wore a full button down shirt. Rather, he always wore an undershirt exposing most of his body. He strategically sat on a bench inside his store so that he could help customers browsing his racks as well as keep an eye on the happenings of the bazaar. He was known by everyone in the village as Mithun, due to his uncanny resemblance to a Bollywood actor of the same name. Everytime he saw me, he would give a nice long yell and beckon me over to his shop. He would always admire my shoes. I remember him saying, "If I sold shoes like this, I could become much richer." I don't know how well Birkenstock or Nike would sell in a little village in Orissa. But Mithun liked to imagine the impact of our western commercialization upon his little shop.

Mithun's next door shopkeeper was a Pepsi dealer named Loknath Das. Commonly known as "Loki", he sold all types of candy, soda, and junk food. I loved the way we simply asked him for something to drink and he gave it to us immediately, without asking for any money. The drink-first-pay-later system was definitely quite a change from our restaurants and supermarkets. If I got a drink from McDonalds and didn't pay for it immediately, I would probably be charged with theft and would have to face severe penalties. The trust factor definitely plays an important role in the village economy even today. Loki maintains a book with everyone's tab recorded. I remember sometimes I used to finish my Pepsi and give him the ten rupees for the bottle. He would never accept. He would always say, "I'm under strict instructions from your uncle to never accept money from a kid like you." Once a friend

of mine from the U.S. was visiting India and came to see us in the village. We went on a tour of the whole village by foot. The entire tour lasted thirty minutes. One of our stops was Loki's shop, a definite attraction for all foreign visitors. When we arrived, the usual group of people at the shop became quiet and began to examine my friend from head to toe. He was a bit unaccustomed and kept asking me why these random people were giving him these hard stares. I simply told him that it was the way of the village. I introduced my friend to Loki who became a bit tight-jawed and quieter than usual. He stopped writing stuff in his book, came out of the little den that he usually sits in and approached my friend. He stuck out his hand for a handshake and said with a smile, "Hello." I think that may have been the extent of his knowledge of English.

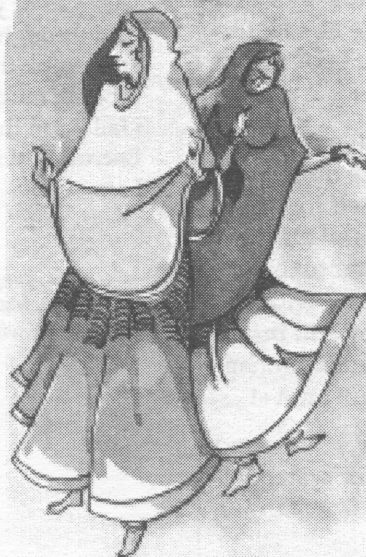
I explained to my friend that part of the charm of villages was that even the most random situations were considered routine. As we were walking home from Loki's shop, I noticed a cow slowly trod into a person's living room. A minute later, the lady of the house started yelling and began to chase the cow out of the house. If a cow had walked into my house in the U.S., I would have been on the front page of the newspaper. Conversely, some of the things we take for granted are actually considered quite important in India. For example, there was a Hanuman temple only about a fourth of a mile from our house in the village. People in my family would plan out at what specific time they would leave for the temple and when they would come back. The journey to the temple was actually mentioned at least four times before the event occurred and several times after it took place.

Part of the reason the village is so unique is because the usual dichotomy that exists between the home and the

outside world is totally eliminated. One thing I learned was to assume that everyone knew everything. For example, the pharmacist at Manorama medical store knew that I lived in California. The mechanic who fixed my uncle's Bajaj scooter knew that my brother had his thread ceremony earlier that summer. It is almost mind-boggling when I considered that personal lives were like open books, ready to be devoured by everyone within the village. But perhaps that also has its advantages. The sense of loneliness that pervades many individuals within this country is not existent for most people within the village. People also interact a lot more with each other in times of trouble and misfortune. The support system established within the community gives people the emotional security to pull them through times of dire situations.

The village, as many authors have pointed out, is the microcosm of Indian society as a whole. One is able to meet representatives of every major profession on a daily basis. It is possible that the very man who sells you audio tapes will be in your house later that evening eating on a banana leaf along with many other people. It is also possible that the man who drives you from the airport to the village is going to be sitting in the living room chatting about politics with your uncles and relatives. As my stay in the village came to a conclusion, I realized that there wasn't any sort of assessment I could make about the village being bad or good. I believe that the village is in itself an experience that significantly develops our perception of India. It is truly something, which needs to be experienced in order to be understood.

- Somesh Dash, a freshman at the University of California, Berkeley is 18 years old. He is the son of Jnana and Sweta Padma Dash of San Jose, CA.



Dilemma

SHILPA CHHOTRAY

It was almost 12:30 in the night. I was still working on my history project for Mrs. Cornell. I was tired and weary. I couldn't wait until it was done. I finally put the finishing touches on my water colored diagram and left. My auburn hair was matted down and looked horrible. I combed it into a comfortable pony tail and headed for my bed. I was happy my everlasting project was over. I couldn't wait until the next day to turn it in.

The next morning I smelled freshly brewed coffee and eggs waiting to be eaten. I rushed downstairs to eat my favorite breakfast. My mother told me I deserved an enjoyable breakfast after I worked so hard on my project. My collie Kate waited patiently for a piece of egg. I ignored her and went to find my diagram.

I gaily skipped into the family room where I left it the night before. I was thrilled with what I saw, it really looked good! I guessed it looked better than the night before since I was using dim lights. I was sure I'd get an A+ on the project. Seeing me so exuberant, Kate came in and accidentally knocked down my half-finished coffee on the marble table. I was relieved to see the dark liquid hadn't spilled on my project, but it had spread all over the carpet.

I quietly sneaked into the kitchen to find the spot remover. I made sure my mother didn't see me do so. She would be very angry indeed if she saw what Kate did to the off-white carpet. Soon enough I found "Mr. Carpet", perfect for the situation. I took the solution into the family room along with a pink "brillo" sponge. I opened the cap and noticed the design of the brim. Suddenly, I heard footsteps coming from upstairs. Startled, I let too much of the clear substance spill, it got all over my dedicated project.

I screamed as I saw it penetrate my hard work into a puddle. The watercolor I used blended all together and turned down in the middle. My mother came in and also screamed when she saw the coffee mug on the floor. I cried and explained the dilemma to my mother.

"The stupid spot remover did more than remove the spot, it ruined my project as well!" My sincere mother explained to me that I should be proud of myself for doing such a good job. That things like this happens all the time. It made me feel better, but I didn't know what to tell my teacher. Then she told me she was so happy with my project that she took a picture! I was so happy and proud of HER. She wrote a note to my teacher about what happened. I turned in the Polaroid picture and got an A+!

I learned to be more responsible for my actions and not to leave things to the last minute. And for water colors, I've never used them again!

– Shilpa Chhotray is 13 years old and is in the 7th grade. She lives in Cleveland with parents Santanu and Jhinu Chhotray.

Mud

SUCHARITA LIRA MISHRA

They have watched
The rains come
The heavy clouds roll
Callous smoke without fire
And the four winds howl through their panpipe
A sweet melody of fear

They have watched
The monsoon fall
Crashing, pouring, pelting the palm trees
Licking its lips with harsh fury
Dancing like the god of destruction
In raga rhythms

The rivers overflow
Eroding the banks
Grasping the mud
Taking it with both hands
And carrying it in its body
Water, Earth, Soul

And the earth accepts him upon her bosom
Through the tears in her ebony eyes
Soothes the rages in his heart
And when it seemed the waters endless
Thunder beats its drums in silence

Beads of moisture crawl upon jasmine petals
And collect in red pools of liquid dust

In the thunder my father cried
In the supple earth my mother lied
And from the mud I rose

I am
The mud of you
And through the oceans
Have sunk their teeth
Eroding mud piece by piece
I fall upon this shore
Encrusted with the mud
I am

– Sucharita, daughter of Satyabrata and Bijoylaxmi Mishra, of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, has graduated this year from Rensselaer Polytech, NY with Biophysics/Biochemistry and Psychology.



Emigrant Historiography: A Perspective

ARATI MISRO

In 1924, the passage of the Immigration act effectively ended all Asian immigration, including Indians. The small group in the United States was racially classified as "Hindoos" in the 1930 and 1940 consensus. Since 1940 there were about 2,000 Indians, most of them stayed in California. In 1980, Asian Indian was substituted for "Hindoo" from the reports of Asian immigration. The sudden mass of South Asian Immigration is the result of the 1965 act, particularly the clause extending special preferences to professionals. This shift in preferences in national origin to skilled qualifications was made in response to the demand for scientists, engineers, doctors and highly skilled workers needed for the U.S economy.

The emigrant experience is often assumed to be homogenized as easily as milk, stated by internationally acclaimed author - Salman Rushdie. It is crucial to acknowledge a diasporic perspective, which means spreading, dispersal and diversity. This spreading is crossing transnational and transglobal borders to London, Trinidad, Africa and South America. These emigrant experiences vary depending on class, ethnicity, gender and political climate. The emigrant experience is redefining "home" and "roots" because of displacement and migration.

Entering the year 2000 entails mass migrations to the United States for capital means and economic stability. Jenny Sharpe, a scholar at UC Irvine explains Members of the South Asian professional-managerial class were suited for professional jobs, not only because of their high degree of education and training but also their command of the English language. This is of course related to British colonialism which was a precondition for the post 1965 migration of South Asians to the U.S, just as Sikh emigration from the Punjab region was the result of a colonial restructuring of the land tenure system and the British Raj. However unlike their Sikh predecessors, the post 1965 immigrants are skilled rather than unskilled workers, from urban rather than rural areas.

Tracing the beginnings of Asian Indian diaspora to the existence of the Californian Sikhs covers discontinuities in immigration patterns. The exclusionary practices that produced Mexidus which is the hybridity of Mexican women and Sikh men, are missing from the post 1965 immigrant experience.

Sikhs came for labor and were not allowed to marry of their own religion and race, so they resorted to marrying Mexican women in the Imperial valleys and Yuba City. Sikhs at one time were not allowed to buy land. The Third case declared whiteness among Sikh men because of the Aryan myth. Also Sikh men would collaborate with white men to buy their land for them. Thus the white men would get paid back after this transaction was done.

We see a different emigrant experience after 1965 because individuals were protected under the immigration act and did not arrive as economic and political refugees as did their British counterparts. Nor was there institutionalized racism in the form of discrimination in housing or employment. Professional managerial Indians had to adjust to "anglo-conformity" in the work place and have been successful in obtaining large amounts of money. However this "privilege" is not universal. Dr. T. N. Pandey stated, "In America, money is knowledge". This powerful quote illustrates the lack of awareness regarding alternate experiences of immigration in regards to labor, education and careers in many Indian communities. Indians were not always regarded as the "model minority". We were not always viewed as "educated". Our race has been created and recreated because of political and economical reasons. Our privilege is in relation to the economy and what bearing it has on our class and racial formation. The Aryan myth is used to infer whiteness. In other words it was a political movement to uphold agency in buying land and finding employment to adhere to American standards.

The American dream entails the fact of class being in dialogue with culture and, how it is experienced and consumed. Many Indians do not have a strong community and are not exposed to cultural events. Not every Indian can afford music and dance lessons. Not every Indian goes to India every other year. Culture transforms into an entity of consumption, rather than a way of life. The diasporic experience differs, just as it does in the immigrant experience. Many Indians have to deal with poverty and blatant institutionalized racism. The Sikhs created a strong community that welcomed difference within ethnicities. Not only does the emigrant experience differ across time, but also it differs across borders from city to city and from nation to nation.

Learning about diversity within multiple Indian communities can only be beneficial. It can provide perspective as to why and how people are situated and located in the United States as well as other geographic locations. It did not just happen! Indians in Trinidad reside there because of indentured labor. The British transported them. Many Indians take for granted their class positioning and forget to realize the first wave of South Asians came for labor and not education. Also, there are Indians in other locations who immigrated without a choice. Many of us are lucky because we were born in or came to America at the right time and the right place. Racism may still be present, but not in the degree our predecessors dealt with. Instead of separating ourselves from "low-class" Indians, one should make an effort to contextualize their experiences historically, socially and politically. After all, we are "educated".

Language[English], class, modernity and tradition are all postcolonial constructs that have been brought with the emigrants to the United States. Some Indians that do not assimilate to America's constructs are outcasted and labeled as deviant because of their questioning and inquiry as to

why certain constructs exist. They are often ignored and unacknowledged. The British in India created an Indian elitist class which caused a separation between the 'educated' and 'tribals'. They used the divide and conquer method. The same trend is occurring in America. Instead of separating ourselves from Indians that are in America for different reasons other than capital intentions. One should embrace difference and realize the Colonial project in India celebrated mimicry instead of originality. America is the same way. Homi Bhaba, a scholar who is a Persian, British subject that lived in India is the father of postcolonial theory. He has unleashed many writers, literary critics, professors and students to study the deep and lasting impacts of Colonialism, mimicry and migration in India and throughout the world. The study of postcolonial theory can bring our communities closer because it uncovers answers to many questions regarding the emigrant experience. My only hope is it will spread and stay alive.

— Arati Misro lives with her parents Sarat and Biju Misro of Cupertino, California. She recently graduated from the University of California, San Diego.

Oriya in Me

SHALINI PATNAIK

Jeans, a tight shirt, and a pony tail up high,
Would anyone think there was Oriya inside?
Looking off the top it may seem,
She's just like any American teen.
But certainly her ways, beliefs, and her likes,
Match up to the Oriya ways of life.
An Odissi dancer she is in the making,
And is what she likes eating.
In Jagannath she lays her trust,
And an annual trip to Puri is a must.
After travelling the world she must admit
There is nothing like Kalinga for a summer trip.
Bombay and Delhi may be the metropolitan nests,
But I think Bherampur is the best of the best.
So don't make assumptions and fail to see,
That inside there is true Oriya in me.

—Shalini is 15 years old and lives with her parents Purna and Gopa Patnaik in Olivenhein, California



Poverty and Human Courage

SATYA BIKRAM DAS

Poverty like a dreaded disease spreads its web on the unlucky,
Traps them in sickness and horrible disaster,
Brings them disgrace and no opportunities,
Makes the unfortunate grief-stricken,
And leads them to a miserable and most unbearable life.

Poverty like a gadfly bites again and again,
Sucks life away from people bit by bit,
Weaves stories of living nightmare out of ordinary lives,
Spreads its tentacles far and wide,
And pulls down countries and even continents.

The tolerant bear through it without much of a complain,
But it also makes some lose their mind and drive them insane,
Only the strong-willed try to break out of its deadly grip,
Though reeling from its blow over and over again.

However, the human spirit triumphs over any disaster,
The hope of better days slices through the areas of darkness of
human misery,
Strikes a bright streak in a dark night of people's lives,
It provides a tent of warm shelter against the icy forces of despair,
Gives the brave the courage to fight against any odd,
And come out triumphant in the face of defeat,
Which is the ultimate testimony to human courage.

*– Satya Bikram (Nanu) is 11 years old and in 6th grade. He lives with his
parents Rama and Jayantika Das in Santa Barbara, California.*



My Thread Ceremony

SUCHIT DASH

How many times have you been the real “center of attention”? Once, twice, maybe three times? I am talking about not just birthday-type stuff here, but being the center of attention of several hundreds of people. Well, I just had an opportunity to go through such an experience called a Brata Ghara or a “Thread Ceremony”. In the next few paragraphs I will tell you about this experience of a lifetime.

Many of you might have heard of the Brata Ghara. It is like the Jewish ceremony, the Bar Mitzvah. The Brata Ghara is usually performed when you are a young adult. I was 12 years old. It is an elaborate ceremony that helps you on the path of being a teenager and becoming an adult. In the olden days, this ceremony marked the beginning of formal scriptural studies by the young adults and to face life’s challenges. In the road of life there are many obstacles that you have to face. To me this ceremony helped prepare myself to make important decisions in life. My Brata Ghara lasted for seven hours. It was a long process, but I learned many important things.

Six hundred people attended my Brata Ghara! It was held in a place called Kalyan Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. We arrived there at eight o’clock in the morning and no one was there. It was dark and gloomy and the set-up crew was supposed to set it up the night before. The ceremony was supposed to start at nine o’clock. Before we panicked, everything got set up; the lights, the flower decorations, the music, and the place took a festive look. The ceremony started with my parents sitting for two hours. Then I came and sat on my mom’s lap. The priests recited many prayers before I came. Then my father and I sat with the pundits and went through many steps like praying to different Gods. Then I was taught the well-known Gayatri Mantra which is a sacred mantra of the Hindus for many thousand years. Yet, I had already learned this mantra. The mantra goes like this:

Om Bhur bhuvah swah, tatsavitur varenyam

bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo na prachodayat

The meaning of this mantra is as follows:

O god, Thou art the giver of life, the remover of pain and sorrow the Bestower of happiness. O Creator of the Universe, may we receive. Thy Supreme sin-destroying light. May Thou guide our intellect in the right direction.

I am supposed to chant this mantra every day to get confidence and courage. After the priest explained the Gayatri mantra to me, I put on the sacred thread called the Paita. Then, all my relatives came to give their blessings and each one gave me a gift. Most of the gift was money but I also got books, gold rings and chains. It was fun seeing everyone’s happy and smiling face. Lastly, I went to the mandir in my new clothes and sought the blessings from the Lord. It was hard to sit for seven hours in the July heat of India. The thing I hated most about my ceremony was having no fan above me. Also I disliked sitting right next to the fire. Yet both of these things made me remember this lifetime experience.

The Brata Ghara was not only a fun time for me, but it was a blast for the people attending. We served them breakfast and lunch. We had ordered some ice cream because of the heat in July. It was like a stampede of people rushing for a piece of the tasty ice cream. Food is definitely a big deal in Orissa.

In this Brata Ghara I learned many important things to look forward to, in my life. I know that in life there are two paths - one easy and one hard. This ceremony gave me the confidence to go on that hard path and become the best I can be in what I do.

— Suchit Dash, 13-years old, is entering the 8th grade. He is the son of Jnana Ranjan and Sweta Padma Dash of San Jose, California.



Oriya Activism 101

SARITA MISRA

It has been a little over one year since I traversed India over a four month period by plane, train, and automobile drinking in the richness and vitality of rural life within Orissa and Rajasthan. It was a frigid December morning in Bhubaneswar when I mentioned to my "mamu" that I wanted to observe the work of non-governmental organizations. Forty-eight hours later, I found myself gazing out the window of a sleeper - class train, rumbling past fields soaked in seething sunlight with flecks of people scattered randomly across rippling masses of land under a bulging, azure sky.

Fourteen hours later, dawn leaked into Kashipur where an NGO named Agramee lay nestled inconspicuously within this interior region. Raised eyebrows and curious smiles greeted me in this alternate world seen only through subversive documentary footage and patronizing portrayals on nightly news programs. I was asked time and time again: Why would someone from the corridors of America want to visit remote villages infested with malaria? Why eat on the floor, wash clothes while bathing in the river and pump water from a well? Curious as my curiosity may have seemed to others, it seemed inevitable and natural to me. After four years of working in the nonprofit sector during college and beyond, I was fiercely interested in finding out how non-governmental organizations operated overseas. What I found out was phenomenal.

Agramee turned out to be the organization I spent the most time with and became the most partial to over the course of a twelve week period of NGO observation. Its group of dedicated activists, teachers, and volunteers have been working on behalf of tribals, harijans, and the rural poor for over fifteen years. The NGO addresses issues regarding sustainable agriculture, education, health, and womens' issues. Agramee's ultimate success will come when their presence is no longer required and self-sufficiency and sustainability become a reality for the "poorest of the poor." A final stay on the "campus" in March sealed my fervor to learn more about development issues around the world. A month later I found myself back in the States, learning about diverse efforts not only through the Internet but through the many resources available to those of us living here.

I came back on the assumption that I could make a smooth and swift transition back into American life. I failed to prepare myself fully for the awkwardness and awe I would experience upon my return. I knew coming back to the States would be a challenge in the sense that I had experienced a heightened form of "sensory overload" from the exposure to structure which forced me to question my beliefs and turn them inside out. Even one year later, during the most unexpected moments, I find myself jolted

awake by spurts of "culture shock." The hardest aspect of coming back has been returning to urban communities that are drowning in apathy and consumerism. Even more disheartening has been observing the indifference of Oriyas to situations taking place in their state of birth.

Not all, but many of us are so busy acquiring more and more technological "toys" and devices while asking for donations to sustain our temples and institutions here. Perhaps, this is how it should be although I feel that we have additional responsibilities. We may be attending the temple regularly as many Oriyas in the South do but what are we doing to help impoverished conditions in Orissa? Sure, we don't have the time, money, etc. What we do have are the excuses, not the inclination to change our outlook, actions, or even deviate from the current system.

Are we teaching this upcoming generation of Oriya-Americans to respect and revere their ancestry? Or does it merely boil down to heading to India every few years for a few weeks; making extra space in that second suitcase for that extra salwaar kameez or an additional ounce of gold? India and Orissa have come to represent rushed visits to family members purled out by euphoric "oooohs" and "aaaahs" after finding the "cheapest" deal at the emporium.

There is nothing wrong with purchasing aesthetic outfits, jewelry, or handicrafts. Aside from experiencing the pleasure such tangibles bring us, we must learn to question where these products come from. Are the producers receiving fair wages or do they lie at the mercy of middlemen? Similarly, once we return to the States, we must continue to monitor "goods" and find out where the coffee we drink comes from. Who suffered to make those Nikes we adorn so fashionably? Out of the thousands of edibles we consume and the hundreds of products we purchase on an annual basis, how many are part of a fairly traded cooperative movement? Are we aware as consumers of the inequity taking place on our planet? It is all too easy for each of us to sit back and sigh: "Well. There is no way that I can keep up with where every little thing I buy comes from." Exactly!

This is precisely why our current system of corruption and exploitation exists. Primarily because many of us are too "busy" (or so we claim) to question the status quo and why it is operating in this fashion.

My generation, in particular, is in such a miraculous position to make a substantial difference and promote sustainable alternatives for the future. Because many of our parents induced us with language and customs intrinsic to Orissa; if and when we are able to go to India ourselves, we can communicate with individuals from all walks of

life and learn from them. One of the most joyous aspects of my stay in Kashipur was the ability to communicate with the villagers. Never will I forget the image of their faces lighting up with rapture and wonder as I spouted forth my sloppy Oriya, minced by mispronunciations and incoherent mumbblings. Yet these villagers ardently prodded me on and urged me to refrain from uttering even a single syllable of English.

Another incident during an agricultural and environmental workshop in Phulbani I attended moved me deeply. After lunch and a brief visit to a nearby sunflower field, I was introduced to the eldest woman among this particular group of tribals. She became ecstatic upon hearing that I was born in Orissa, raised in the States, and had returned to the villages. She motioned for me to come sit by her and then cradled my shoulders. Slowly, she pulled me towards her; close enough to where I could smell her heartsick breath on my skin.

"You," she began, "are more fortunate than you realize. Many people never have the opportunity to leave the land of their birth. If they do, some never return. You are here because God has brought you back to see how we live and tell others about us." For the first time the magnitude and impact of sitting there in a village block half a world away from the environs of my familiar, seared right through me. A consequence, so profuse, has yet to blaze before me again. I was humbled and blessed to be sitting amidst such grace.

I will always feel lucky for that initial exposure to the interior of Orissa and its people. Now I face the challenge of using this new found awareness to educate myself further. Along with awareness, comes responsibility. I could join a graduate program or research expedition but I cringe at the thought of diving into village life for mere weeks or months only to transform lives withered with hardship and strife into a mass of cold statistics. Americans are living knee deep among their creature comforts. Children born in Orissa have little else than a lantern to do their school lessons by after spending sun-drenched days in the fields.

There are viable steps we can take in order to ensure fair practices throughout the world. Below, are a few suggestions!

1. Link up! Take advantage of Internet access at your public library and participating cafes. Go beyond the drudgery of e-mails and chat rooms! There are some incredible web sites on fair trade including: www.corpwatch.org; www.ifat.org; www.villages.ca and www.iisd.ca are just a few among thousands of sites which monitor multinationals, expose unethical corporate practices, and shed light on sustainable development efforts.
2. Become a responsible consumer! Ditch the trendy interior of Starbucks for fairly traded Equal Ex-

change coffee(www.equalexchange.com). Run with a conscience! Trash those Nikes and get the lowdown on their hideous sweatshop crimes(www.globalexchange.org)!!!

3. Research campaigns including the "Check Your Tags Campaign" sponsored by San Francisco - based Milarepa Fund(www.milarepa.org). Milarepa also has excellent links to other human rights, economic, and environmental organizations.
4. Beyond that occasional trek to the temple or church every Sunday, make religion a way of life. You don't have to be a vagabond saint or live the myth of the starving artist, but do question. Think about the consequences that your daily actions have upon the lives and economies of individuals in other countries.

And WHY is all of this important? Because as cliché as it sounds, we ARE interconnected. As children of two or more cultures we are in an exciting position to expose ourselves to our parents' culture while spreading awareness within our own. We are more than our advanced degrees, our jobs, our Saturday night "soirees" and OSA cliques. There is a world out there beyond the ivory towered walls we have sequestered ourselves in. It is up to each one of us to push ourselves beyond our comfort zones and experience realities which we can help mold into something better for everyone.

Oriya parents must question themselves as well. To you, I ask: Why did you come to America? Was it to own three luxury cars and pray that your child grows up to enter one of four "acceptable" professional fields? Or did you possibly come here with a yearning to provide your son or daughter with a higher standard of living so that in turn, she could in turn question this society and seek out alternatives?

One needs only look to our annual OSA convention to find the priorities of the Oriya community in the States. We sponsor "cutesy" speech and essay contests as we traipse about in shimmering salwaars, saris and our trendy summerwear. Aside from exhorting such veneers we should be holding seminars on alternative careers, consumer education and grassroots advocacy efforts in Orissa and throughout the world. Instead, OSA has become a fashion show with status-conscious parents milling around, exalting the praises of their child's latest SAT score.

I have a close friend in California who will embark upon a six month journey throughout India come November. She is wildly enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with social change organizations there. I applaud her sense of urgency and willingness to find out for herself what the ills of our society are, where they stem from and why they exist in the first place. We should be encouraging more young people to go and see the state for what it

is: an overpopulated region where the very people who produce many of the products we so casually consume are dying by the thousands on a daily basis against a backdrop of misery and poverty. It is easy enough to glamorize India as some "exotic" vestibule where we can reassuringly find "cheap" goods to adorn ourselves with as we complain about its heat, dust, and mosquitoes back in the good ole' U.S.A.

What is a little bit harder to swallow is the reality of our blinding refusal to acknowledge actual conditions; our willingness to cower in the face of what others in our community think as we strangulate awareness and growth.

I would love to begin a dialogue with interested parties of all ages and backgrounds concerning the corrupt role of transnational corporations and steps we can take

together to end their merciless cycle of economic, environmental and human rights abuses.

Please contact me at :

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I look forward to your input and the opportunity to learn from you!

— Sarita Misra, a graduate in journalism, lives in Huntsville, Alabama. She is the daughter of Debi and Sarojini Misra.

RAGHURAJPUR: Orissa's Village of Artists

NIHARIKA MOHANTY

I am sure that every Oriya raised in Orissa is familiar with the place called Pipili, but have you heard of Raghurajpur, a village near Puri? You have probably seen Orissa's own patachitra paintings, the paper mache masks

It was Bapa, my father, who had wanted to visit Raghurajpur, and his intention was to visit the place with my guru, the renowned master of Odissi dance, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, since it was Guruji's birthplace.



and toys, the stone sculptures, and possibly even the gotipua (male) dance form. Raghurajpur is the home of all these great art traditions: it is a village of only artists.

Unfortunately, this trip could not take place during my father's past visit to India. However, Guruji had remembered my father's wish for me to visit Raghurajpur and he

was also eager to take me to his home to see his birthplace, to see the village thakurani (goddess) that he was building a temple for, to see his family of patachitra artists, and to see the gotipua dancers who he also had trained to be, as a son of this village.

I was a little girl when I first noticed the patachitra painting in our house. Bapa would always explain to visitors about the distinct Oriya painting style and the story behind the scene that was depicted ("Kanchi Abhijaan").

When I visited Raghurajpur, I was enthralled by the numerous ornate and detailed patachitra paintings I was shown by enthusiastic painters who were not as eager to sell me their work as they were to have their pieces videotaped so I could show their work in "America". According to one painter, this art form began from the time of the first Ratha Jatra (Car Festival) in Puri in which the three deities of the Jagannath Temple, Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra, are placed in three chariots and travel a distance from their home in the temple to their aunt's house.

Traditionally, before the festival, the three deities leave their thrones to bathe. As a result of their bathing, they fall sick and must recover in a different place in the temple. In the meantime, painters are employed to replace the three idols with three patachitra paintings of them. This duty of the painters still remains today. However, their temple duties increased in time to include painting for all the public festivals connected with Lord Jagannath — Ratha Jatra, Jhoolan, and Chandan.

I was intrigued to find out how these paintings were made. The traditional base for the paintings consists of two cloths glued together with the paste created from tamarind seeds. Powdered calcium together with water is made into a paste which is applied upon the glue. Finally, the surface of the base is smoothed out using a stone. The base is then cut into rectangular pieces. Using a pencil, the border and contents of the painting are sketched on the surface of the base. Then, colour is added. The colour is made from all natural materials. For example, the black paint is made from the lamp's smoke, and the white paint is made from the powdered conch shells. Today, many paintings are done on tusser silk for easier portability for the many foreigners who buy them.

The first theme of the paintings was Jagannath with his siblings. Later, stories of the Lord were depicted. Other themes were slowly introduced, like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Krishna Lila, and Ganesh. I found it very fascinating to find out that the favourite pastime of the villagers is to retell mythological stories. It is no wonder that their paintings depict various mythological stories. It is also no wonder why Guruji and Guruma always love to tell us these stories.

According to gotipua dance master, Guru Maguni Charan Das of Raghurajpur, the gotipua (male) dance tradition began when Chaitanya Mahaprabhu visited Puri and introduced male dancers dressed as females to dance in the Chandan Jatra. The King of Puri ordered maharis (female temple dancers) to teach the boys of seven communities so they could dance in the festival. As a result, the tradition of male dancers performing caught on throughout many districts of Orissa as kings and zamindars employed boy dancers just to entertain them.

I was told that the only authentic and traditional gotipua dance existing today was found in Raghurajpur from the students of Guru Maguni Das, and so I was elated to have the great opportunity to witness and videotape three young male students of his. Although they were not in their female attire, I was able to make several interesting observations from their dance. Compared to present day Odissi, I felt this form seemed raw and not as stylized, but it was closest to the late Guru Deba Prasad Das' style of Odissi. Perhaps the students were too young and not as experienced. I liked seeing them singing to the expressional dance. It reminded me of the mahari art, in which the female dancers would sing to Lord Jagannath while they would dance. Of course, what was most impressive were their acrobatics which are typical to only the gotipua dance tradition. These dancers are trained from a very tender age to perform many acrobatics or gymnastics. The dancers all had long hair which they would tie up and place on top of their heads.

Apparently, the village is receiving visitors everyday. In fact, seeing me with my video camera, the children recognized a foreigner (although I was very traditionally draped in a sari, wearing a bindi, and my hair was braided and parted in the centre) and they all greeted me with the one English word they all knew regardless of their age, "Hello"! I felt grateful to Guruji for sharing his past with me through visiting his village. It gave me a greater insight into who he is, contributing to a deeper guru-shishya bond. Moreover, I fell in love with Raghurajpur not only because it was Guruji's cherished village, but because this village only reflects beauty. There is so much love in this village — love of the arts, love for each other, and love for those who came to appreciate their work. It is no wonder why Guruji has tried to instill a great pride in me for my Oriya culture.

Thank you Guruji and thank you Bapa.

- Niharika (Rini) Mohanty lives in Hamilton, Ontario with her parents Sri Gopal and Shanti Mohanty. She is an accomplished Odissi dancer and participated with Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra's North American tour of 1996.



"Folk-Tales of Orissa"

By UPENDRAKANYAN DUTTA-GUPTA

This book was first published in 1913. A second edition was brought out two years later in 1915, on the 10th anniversary of its author, the late Upendra Kanyan Gupta. This book is 100 pages long, comprises of 20 folk tales, and is a collection that is important to talk about the author.

Upendra Kanyan was born in 1872 in a small village in Midnapore district. He was a brilliant student and had completed his high school education at the age of 14. Later he went

Oriya Folk Tales

married. He married, and in a form of grateful affection to his wife, he wrote this book. He was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand. He was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand.

The book is a collection of 20 folk tales, and it is a very good collection. It is a very good collection, and it is a very good collection. It is a very good collection, and it is a very good collection.

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In a certain country there reigned a king who had an only son. The prince grew up to be a fine young man, and as he grew up, he was accompanied by his father's army of men, but strongly enough the king, his father, never failed to mention the fact that the prince

was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand. He was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand. He was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand.

The prince, however, was not the best of writers, but he was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand. He was a very good writer, and his writing was very simple and easy to understand.

"Folk-Tales of Orissa"

By UPENDRA NARAYAN DUTTA-GUPTA

This book was first published in 1923. A second edition was brought out fifty-two years later in 1975, on the 100th birth anniversary of its author, the late Upendra Narayan Dutta-Gupta. This book is 180 pages long, comprises of 20 folk tales, and is a collectors' item. It is important to talk about the author.

Upendra Narayan was born in 1875 in a small village in Midnapore district. He was a brilliant student and had completed his high school entrance at the age of 14. Later he joined Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and during this time, he earned his education expenses by being the private tutor of Netaji Subhas Bose and his brother. After graduation, he became a teacher all his life and spent several years as head master of Balasore Zilla School. From 1919 to 1926, he was the headmaster of Puri Zilia School, then of Ravenshaw Collegiate School, and lastly the principal of Cuttack Training College. He was a close associate of Fakir Mohan Senapati, the architect of modern Oriya literature. He was also close to Utkalmani Pundit Gopabandhu Das.

The present book was composed during his early years of teaching during the second decade of this century. He compiled these folk tales for Orissa's children. We present one of these folk-tales in its original composition. We hope the readers will enjoy the language and style of that era, including the British spelling of words.

The Story Of The Girl Belavati

In a certain country there reigned a king who had an only son. The prince grew up to be a fine young man, as handsome as he was accomplished. He attained the age of marriage, but strangely enough the King, his father, never talked of marrying the heir to the throne. The Prince, however, was very eager to marry, and longed for the day when his father would be pleased to look out for a suitable bride and arrange for the wedding. The Prince waited from day to day, from month to month, from year's to year's end, but there was no talk of his marriage in the royal court. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick. The Prince grew melancholy, and when all his hopes gave place to despair, one day, in a fit of vexation and disappointment, he left the royal palace in quest of a suitable damsel. He stole to the King's stables at night, and having taken out a Pakhiraj horse furnished himself with the accoutrements necessary for a cavalier, and trotted off in the direction of the forest before it was dawn. The journey was long and difficult. As he was passing through a large forest, he met a Kumaruni (A female belonging to the blacksmith caste) who was on her way home with a burden of ghasi (cakes of cow-dung baked in the sun) on her head. When the old woman saw the Prince, she thus accosted him -

"Fair youth, your looks and bearing show you are a Prince; but why are you going thither, my son? There the Apuja (Unpropitiated by worship or sacrifice) goddess stands, Panki (fish-knife) in hand, to cut to pieces and devour anyone that she may find. Turn back, silly young man, I tell you, and leave this country-side without delay."

The brave youth, however, was not the least dis-

mayed. He smiled, and in a tone of grateful affection replied, "Mausi (Aunt), give yourself no concern on my account. Little is my desire to live any longer, and I need not be afraid of the goddess you speak of."

The old woman looked at the Prince's face with wonder mingled with pity. The Prince thanked her for her good wishes, and setting spurs to his horse, galloped off in a direction of the goddess.

The swift-footed animal soon brought him face to face with the Thakurani (Goddess), who looked at him with a hideous stare and a terrific smile. Her mouth seemed to water at the sight of the handsome youth. "Alight, young man," said she with joy, "long is it since I tasted such tender flesh as yours, and I have been fasting these three days. Alight from your horse, darling, and do not keep me waiting for good any longer."

"Feed on my body if you like, I am ready." Was the Prince's reply.

"Get down, sweet creature," cried the goddess with impatience.

"That I will never do. I will not dismount."

The goddess was in a fix. The horse was her favourite animal, her Vahana (a carrier). How could she devour her victim, so long as the latter was seated on the horse? Many were the words of persuasion that she used to induce the Prince to get off the horse's back, but the Prince firmly refused. At this the goddess appeared to be greatly pleased, and said, "You seem to be a cunning fellow. I am pleased

with your firm and bold demeanor. Ask for any boon you like."

"I have nothing to beg but a fair damsel whom I may love with all my heart."

"Very well. Go, then, straight to the west, and do not stop till you find yourself in the Asura country. You will arrive at the Asura's houses before evening, long before they return home after their day's wanderings. Be not idle, young man, but set to work as soon as you arrive. Sweep their houses clean with great care, and, when this is done, set about boiling rice for them. Be sure to keep ready, against their arrival, no less than two hundred pots of full boiled rice and curry. All this being done, retire into the loft just before the Asuras arrive, and remain in hiding throughout the night. Repeat this from day to day till, one evening, being very pleased, they will want to see you and ask you to appear before them. It is then only, and not till then, that you should come out of hiding and prostrate yourself before them with a rope of straw wound round your neck (in token of absolute submission)."

"This," continued the goddess, "will be enough to move the hearts of the Asuras. With faces beaming with satisfaction, they will call upon you to rise and beg for the boon of your choice. You know what to do next. With joined hands, you should at once pray for the fair maiden in their custody. Now go forth, Young man, and act up to my instructions."

Upon this the Prince rode off, as fast as the Pakshiraj could carry him, keeping steadily to the west, as directed by the Goddess. Long indeed was the journey, and the country wooded and uneven, but the Prince's animal was equal to the occasion. Long before evening, the prince reached open country which seemed to be devoid of human habitation. The Prince understood that he had reached his destination. He soon found out the Asuras' houses, and alighting from his horse began to sweep the floors and cleanse the utensils. When this was over, he collected hundreds of cooking pots, and finding a large quantity of rice in stock, he at once kindled a fire and began to prepare boiled rice and curry for the Asuras. The cooking over, he arranged the pots of rice and curry neatly together with many pots full of drinking water. He then satisfied his own hunger and thirst with rice and water, and at last betook himself to the loft where he remained in hiding during the night.

As the darkness of evening set in, the Asuras came home. The noise and brawl somewhat frightened the Prince, but the Asuras were delighted to find the house neat and tidy, and when they found the rice and curry, their joy knew no bounds. They at once fell to with their Asura appetite, and the pots of food and drink were quickly emptied. The Asuras then retired to their rooms to rest, and snored away the whole night.

At early dawn, the Asuras rose, and amidst brawls

and confusion dispersed before the sun appeared above the horizon. When the giants were fairly out of sight, the Prince came out of hiding, and having swept the floors clean, washed the cooking pots and utensils. He then cooked his own food, and having taken his breakfast, tested for sometime. Early in the afternoon he rose and set about preparing rice and curry for the Asuras, as on the preceding day.

This continued for several days. Every evening the giants returned home and were entertained with food and drink got ready for them by some unknown hand. One evening the Asuras returned very tired and were in consequence extremely delighted at the sight of the excellent food prepared and placed ready for them. Having satisfied their hunger and thirst they enquired who it was that had been serving them so diligently all those days. "Who are you, friend," cried they, "that have served us so carefully, but have not yet appeared before us to have your reward? You have deserved well at our hands; come, we ask you, and tell us what you want."

The Prince had been eagerly waiting for these words of hope. He at once put round his neck a rope of straw, and, holding a piece of straw between his teeth, came out of hiding, according to the instructions of his divine preceptress. Advancing slowly in front of them, he threw himself flat at the feet of the Asuras, in token of absolute submission and perfect allegiance to their lordships.

The Asuras were greatly moved. They were eager to grant a boon befitting their own rank and the excellent service rendered by the young man. They called upon him to ask for whatever boon he chose. The Prince's heart was full with joy. He raised his handsome face, and in a tone of great humility begged for the fair beauty whom they had in their custody.

"What do you mean, young man? Alas! Do you really mean what you say? Do you ask for our darling Belavati? Won't you be satisfied with any other gift?"

The Prince kept silent. The Asuras understood that he wanted to have Belavati and would take nothing else instead. Being thus hard put to it, the Asuras in a tone of despair said, "Be it so, then, as you say; we have given our word, and it must be made good," with these words, they brought a ripe Bael fruit (Aegle Marmebos), and moved even to tears handed it to the Prince.

"Take this fruit, then," they added, "our beloved Belavati is inside it. Take this, child, but mind, you should not call her out until you have reached home." Then, addressing the fair maiden inside, they said, "Rise, Belavati, darling, and accompany this young man."

The Prince thanked the Asuras for the gift and at once set out for home on the back of his favourite Pakshiraj. On his way home, he was often tempted to call out the beauty from inside the fruit, and enjoy a glimpse of her, but the

words of caution, which accompanied the gift, were still ringing in his ears and he checked himself. But every time he checked himself, he spurred the animal that it might hasten with greater speed and take him home as soon as possible.

At last his father's capital was in sight. The Prince's heart rejoiced, and his curiosity grew to such proportions that as soon as he reached the well behind the palace, he could not restrain himself. In a fit of impatient curiosity he said, "Sweet Belavati, let me have but a glimpse of thy fair face," - and lo! A young damsel at once appeared before him clad in gold, and radiant with pearls and diamonds of the most uncommon lustre. Her ornaments gave forth a melodious jingling sound, as she trod upon the ground and moved her limbs. The sight of her marvellous beauty was, however, more than the young man could bear, and he dropped from the animal's back senseless. The tender-hearted damsel turned pale with fear and grief. She at once drew water from the well, and, sprinkling it on the prince's face, nursed him with loving devotion, filling the air at the same time with her pathetic lamentations.

But before her pitiful cries could be heard by any one, she was overtaken by a sad accident. A Kunda-bhusundi (A fat ugly woman, generally a witch; literally, resembling a bag of husks) appeared on the scene, and seeing the beautiful damsel, throttled her to death and threw the corpse into the well. She then clad herself in the robes and with the ornaments of Belavati, and began to nurse the Prince in her stead, as if nothing had happened.

Some time after, when the Prince regained consciousness he opened his eyes, but found an ugly Kunda-bhusundi, nursing him by his side. "Alas!" said the Prince to himself with a sigh, "What a beauty have I seen! But where is she now? Shall I not be able to look on that fair face anymore? The prince felt very sad, but not knowing what has happened he thought that as the girl had been reared by the Asuras, she was probably an Asuruni herself, or having partaken of their nature, could assume any form she liked. He then took the Kunda-bhusundi into the palace, where she was received into the zenana as the King's daughter-in-law. The news soon spread throughout the town, and ladies flocked into the inner apartments of the palace to see the new bride. The marriage was then formally celebrated with great pomp, and the Prince and the Kunda-bhusundi began to live as husband and wife.

One morning, a few days after the arrival of the Prince and his bride, the King's gardener saw two lovely Padma (The sacred lotus, *Nelumbun speciosum*) flowers growing inside the well into which Belavati's corpse had been thrown by the Kunda-bhusundi. It was unusual to find such flowers growing out of a well, and the flowers were so large in size and at the same time so fragrant, that the gardener wished to make a present of them to the newly wedded couple. With a heart full of joy, he plucked the flowers and took them to the Prince, who enquired where

such extraordinary flowers had been found, and being very much pleased with the present, granted the gardener a handsome reward. The Prince then took the flowers into the zenana and presented them to his wife, who however, instead of admiring the beauty and fragrance of the flowers, seemed to be somewhat perturbed at the sight, and enquired who had presented the flowers and where they had grown.

"They were just presented to me, this morning, by our gardener, my dear. The flowers were found growing in the big well behind the palace."

The Prince's wife turned up her nose and said, "If you have any love for me, my dear, take these flowers to the barren meadow beyond these gardens, and tearing them to pieces, throw them away there without delay. If you do not comply with the request I will put an end to my life."

The Prince was so much struck with amazement and fear, that he was hardly able to speak, much less to enquire the reason. He felt very sorry for this strange attitude on the part of his wife, but had to comply with her wish without a murmur.

Early next morning, the gardener was surprised to find a Bael tree in the meadow where he had seen no tree before, and what struck him all the more was that the tree, young as it was, had borne a fruit, which appeared to be ripe. He immediately culled the fruit, and so fragrant and ripe was it that the delicious smell made his mouth water. He then brought it home and gave it to his wife who was very delighted.

In the afternoon, the gardener's wife brought out the fruit, and was going to cut it in two with a knife, when, from inside the fruit, a voice exclaimed; "Halt, halt, Aunt Maluni (Feminine form of Mali, gardener. "Aunt" is the ordinary salutation to an elderly woman), cut this fruit, I beseech you, either on one side or on the other, but not through the middle."

The sound of a human voice made the Maluni start with fear. Thinking it was some evil spirit, she flung the fruit away and uttered a scream, but the same voice was heard again, and in clear accents it continued - "Be not afraid, Aunt Maluni; I am Belavati, a maiden living inside this fruit. Do not throw me away, but cut the fruit open as I have said, and you shall have the wealth and happiness beyond your dreams."

Malunis who, by virtue of their craft, have access to all household and find favour even with the ladies of the royal zenana, are proverbially wiser in their generation than most other persons of their sex and social position, and our Maluni, poor as she was, was no exception to the rule. On second thoughts, she picked up the fruit. The gloom of fear gave place to the illuminating hope of future prosperity. She cut the Bael asunder, as directed by the unknown voice, and behold, a beautiful young dam-

sel, clad as before, came out of the fruit and saluted her with sweet and graceful modesty!

The Maluni and her husband began to take care of the beautiful maiden, as if she had been their own daughter. She remained in the house all day and night, and only went out of doors at early dawn for her morning ablutions.

Belavati's advent seemed to inaugurate a new era of prosperity in the little household. The Mali's earnings increased by leaps and bounds, and in the course of a few months he became one of the richest men in the town. The lowly thatched shed was soon converted into a decent building, which grew in size every month until, in about a year's time, it looked as high and magnificent as the king's palace. Belavati appeared to the Mali and his wife as the very incarnation of Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and happiness. Nobody, however, not even the Mali's nearest neighbours or relatives, had any knowledge of the mystery, much less had they had the slightest glimpse of the beautiful creature who was the cause of all his good fortune. There was indeed for some time a great deal of slanderous talk, especially among the idle folk of the town, about his sudden and mysterious fortune, but the Mali was so well-known and so popular with the people of all classes, that all such gossip gradually subsided. People began to look upon the Mali's prosperity as the outcome of his good luck, his honesty, industry, and frugal habits.

This state of things, however, did not continue long. One morning Belavati, being a little late in rising, went for her ablutions in a huff and while coming back was seen by the Kunda-bhusundi, who was on the roof of her palace at the time taking the morning air. The Kunda-bhusundi at once recognized her as Belavati and being bent upon destroying her again, immediately set in motion all her usual methods of cruel intrigue. She came down from the terrace, and, shutting herself up in her own room denied herself all food and drink, until the matter came to the notice of her husband. The Prince at once came up and enquired what had happened. The wife, with an appearance of grief and despair, informed him that she had been insulted every day by a certain girl, who lived in the house of the Maluni. "The girl," she said with tears in her eyes, "had the audacity to make faces at me while she was returning home from the tank every morning. I would rather commit suicide than submit to such treatment at the hands of an impertinent ill-bred girl." The Princess sobbed with an appearance of great agony.

The prince was astonished. Not knowing who the foolish girl might be that had thus courted ruin and disaster by insulting the only daughter-in-law of the King, he tried to console his wife as best he could. "I do not know of any such girl in the Mali's family," said he, "but I will have enquiries made at once and teach the impudent wench what it is to offend the King's daughter-in-law. You may rest assured that you will have no cause for complaint

again, and that the girl will be adequately punished. Shake off your melancholy, my dear, and take food and drink as usual."

But those words seemed to have little effect on the Princess, who would take no food or drink until the offending girl had been impaled on the execution ground, as the proper punishment for her offense. The Prince looked anxious, and at once brought the matter to the notice of the King. When the King heard the story he burned with rage, and accompanied by armed men went to the Mali's house to seize the culprit.

"Who is the girl, that goes every day into the palace and there insults the princess, my daughter-in-law?" thundered the enraged monarch.

"Manima (My Lord)," said the Mali with a profound bow, and with hands joined together in prayer, "there is indeed a girl living with us, and she is my wife's niece; but she never goes out of this house at all."

"I will have none of these falsehoods," replied the King; "if you do not produce the girl forthwith to be spitted on the stake, the whole of your family will be arrested and beheaded without any further hearing."

The Mali and his wife trembled with fear. There was no alternative but to surrender the poor girl to the exasperated king, to be unjustly put to death. The girl was brought before the King who at once ordered her to be taken to the place of execution and impaled. When the news of Belavati's execution reached the palace, the Kunda-bhusundi was satisfied, and peace was restored in the royal family.

The following morning, the people of the town were greatly astonished to find that a temple of Mahadeva had suddenly sprung up on the very spot where the girl had been impaled. The people, when they first saw the temple could not believe their own eyes; but it was no illusion; there the temple was standing, and it seemed as if it had existed there for a long time. This miracle caused a great sensation, and the fact soon reached the ears of the King, who came to the spot personally to satisfy himself. Every one was dumb-founded in utter amazement. The King entered the temple and saw the phallic image of Mahadeva inside. He then sent for a Bramhan who lived close by and put him in charge of the God's worship. The Bramhan was allowed a grant of money and land to defray the expenses of the daily Puja, and was ordered to present to the King every morning, immediately after the Puja was over, one Bael-leaf offered to the God at worship. The King used to wait for the God's Prasad (things offered to a God at worship) every morning and would never retire into the inner apartments to have his breakfast, until he had received the Bael-leaf from the God's temple.

One morning, while the Bramhan was going to worship the God, he found a Sua (parrot) and a Sari (another talking bird, a common pet like the parrot) on a tree grow-

ing in the courtyard in front of the temple. The Bramhan went inside and began to bathe the image with consecrated water, as usual. While he was doing so, the following conversation between the two birds entered his ears.

Sua - Well, Nani (elder sister), won't you tell me a story?

Sari - What story, brother, would you like to hear, fact or fiction ? Shall I tell you something from my own experience?

The Bramhan began to listen with great attention. The Sari related to the Sua everything that had happened to Belavati, and the cruelties that had been done to her by the Kunda-bhusundi herself or at the instigation. The Bramhan could hardly believe his own ears and fearing lest his memory should fail, he unloosed the ball of Khari (ordinary soap-stone, commonly used as chalk for writing on the floor) from his waist-cloth and began writing down on the temple wall the whole story, omitting no details. "Is there no means to avenge the wrongs suffered by Belavati and to restore the poor damsel to her rightful place in the royal zenana?" enquired the Sua, when he and heard the story of her suffering.

"Certainly there is; if the King comes here and throws himself prostrate before the God, with a piece of straw between his teeth and a piece of straw rope wound round his neck, the God will pardon his sins and Belavati will come out of the Gambhira (the pit inside the temple, containing the seat of the God Mahadeva) in all her former glory, clad as before."

Thus ended the conversation between the birds which the Bramhan listened to with rapt attention. When the birds flew away, the Bramhan attended to his worship and finished it as quickly as he could. He then went to the palace with his usual present of Bael-leaf for the King; but he was late, and the King who had been waiting for a considerable time, seemed rather vexed at the delay, when the Bramhan appeared.

"What makes you so unusually late in coming?" enquired the King. 'Excuse me Sir,' replied the Bramhan, "the delay is due to the most unusual occurrence. But Your Majesty can hardly believe the story until you have been to the place. I would therefore, entreat Your majesty to accompany me to the temple and see what had happened."

"What do you mean, Bramhan? What is it about?"

"The mouth can speak only if the head be spared."

"Nonsense," cried the King with impatience, "speak out what you mean."

"It is something relating to the royal zenana. The whole thing can be known only if your majesty accompanies me to the temple."

At this the King's anxiety became as great as his curiosity. Without wasting any more words he went

straight to the temple, accompanied by the Bramhan. There the latter showed the writing on the wall and informed the King that the writing was a faithful record what he and heard from the birds themselves.

The King then did as the Sari had said, he placed a straw between his teeth, and putting a straw rope round his neck, threw himself flat on the floor before the God. Presently he could hear the ringing of ornaments, and when he raised his head, behold, a charming damsel, exquisitely clad, met his bewildered eyes. He at once rose up, and took the maiden home with all the honour and ceremony that the occasion deserved.

The rest of the story may be easily inferred. The Kunda-bhusundi was ignominiously put to death in expiation of the cruel wrongs that had been inflicted upon Belavati.- An auspicious day having been appointed and preparations having been made, the marriage of the Prince and Belavati was celebrated with great pomp and splendour. Belavati was all the more honoured and loved for her wrongs, and being endowed with many noble qualities of the head and of the heart, she soon became the light of the royal household.

When, however, I went to the palace she spoke not a word.

Here my story endeth.

And the flower-plant withereth.

Oh, plant, why dost thou wither?

The black cow eats me up.

Oh, black cow, why dost thou browse?

The cow-herd watches me not,

Why (cowherd) dost thou not watch?

The eldest Bahu (daughter-in-law) gives me no food.

Why, Oh Bahu, dost thou not feed the cow-herd?

Alas! My baby cries,

Why, baby, dost thou cry?

Alas! The ants do sting.

Oh! Ants, why do ye sting?

Here in the dust we do quietly hide

And when we get tender flesh,

We never fail to bite.

Lessons From Panchatantra

KIRON SENAPATI

There is a lot of wisdom left behind by older generations in India, in the form of folk tales. One compilation of such stories, called "Panchatantra", is famous for its lessons and knowledge. This book has lots of stories that I heard as a child and I believe that they have helped me in life. I have compiled the following story from memory and I hope you enjoy it as I did. The teachings from these stories are applicable to our lives even today, no matter where we live.

The Three Fishes

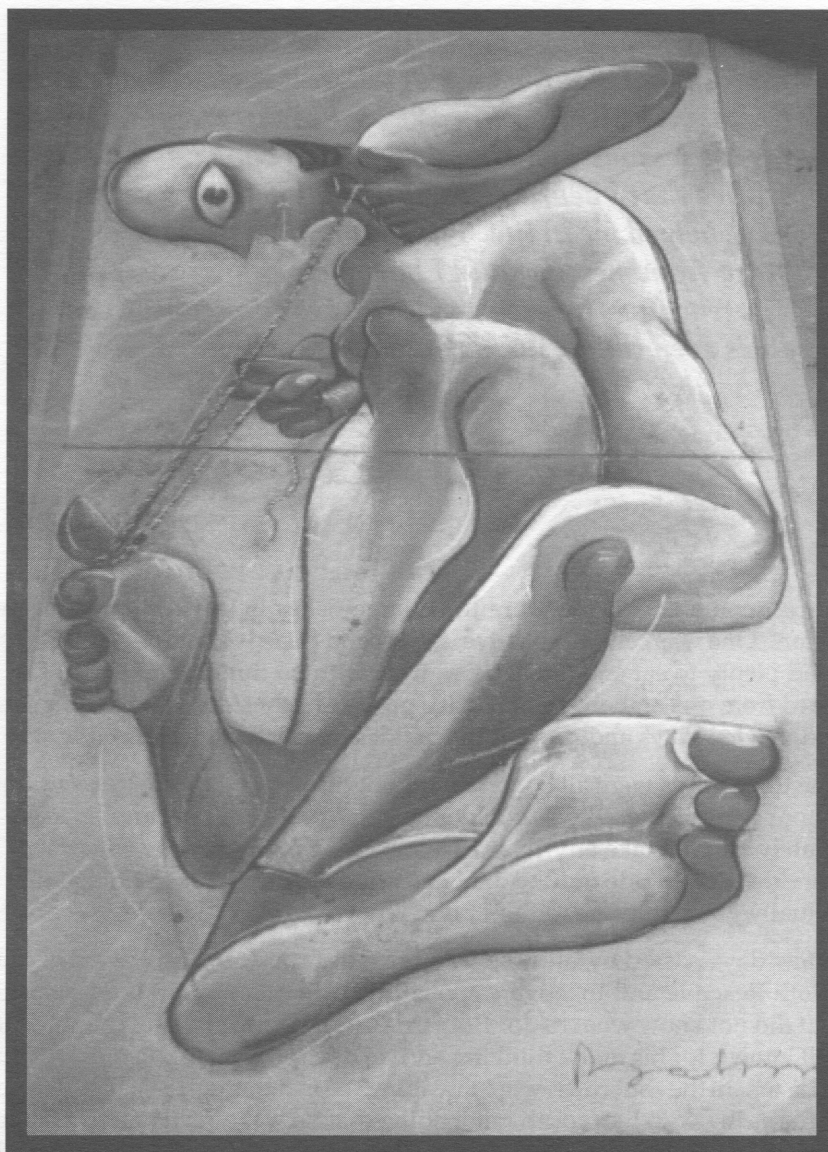
Once upon a time there were three large fishes living in a pond far away from civilization. One was called Proactive, the second Reactive, and the third Inactive. The fishes had plenty to eat and led carefree lives with no threat from anywhere. One day they heard from one of their friends that a group of fishermen were planning to come to the pond in a few days and dry out the ponds and catch all the fishes.

The three fishes were all concerned about the impending danger and started worrying about their future. Proactive thought for a while and decided to leave the pond immediately and not take any chances about being caught by the fishermen. The other two fishes decided to ride out the danger since they were not certain that the fishermen were actually going to come to their pond anyway.

A few days passed by, and the fishermen did show up and started evacuating the pond. Both Reactive and Inactive watched the fisherman pump the water out of their pond but did not know what to do. Both the fishes were eventually caught, but Reactive was well known for his quick thinking and he devised a plan. He quickly flipped over to the side where the fishermen were threading the fish through a string. Reactive caught hold of the string with his mouth, pretending that he was already attached to the string. Inactive was not so lucky and was hooked through the string along with the other fishes that were caught from the pond. When all the fishes were hooked to the string, the fisherman dropped them into a large pool of clean water to wash them one last time before putting them into the cooler. Reactive was waiting for this opportunity and quickly let go of the string and swam away to safety.

The moral of the story is "Be proactive or at least reactive but definitely not inactive in dealing with your problems". The fish Inactive would be alive if he had heeded the warning or at least done something about it when he faced the life-threatening situation of being caught by the fishermen.

— Kiron Senapati, is an Environmental Engineering Consultant with over 15 years of experience in areas of water and wastewater treatment. Kiron lives in Tampa, Florida, with his wife Sukanya and daughter Gitanjali.



'Feet First,' a sidewalk painting created by Prabin Badhia at the Sidewalk Painting Festival organized by L'Arte Della Strada at the Anchore Shopping Plaza, San Francisco, June, 1997.



Darkness

JAYANT MAHAPATRA

From Grissa With Love



Darkness

JAYANT MAHAPATRA

The darkness kept on its gentle murmur
Peeping out from piles of refuse
From tips of brooms that swept every floor
From the posture of litter after the party got over
From the exhausted yawn of someone called God
Darkness recited the tables of the turning of the earth

From a window here and a door there
Darkness lifted its head and looked
Who would show it the way?
It slipped past reason and knocked on the Minister's heart
It flaunted its shape, gathering moments
From the light of hostile history
Then came and stood there
In a middle-class neighborhood, stark naked

Does the dark hide a distant tenderness?
An air of healing?
For years it has mumbled the song of the senses,
Growing older with each night; but now
Keeps alive the desert moon of the soul
In the endless self-betrayal of the waking sense
Of things through the clock's ticking on the bookcase

Darkness, evening song
Root of startled light
Good may come out of it
But the mind is too small a room
And I don't know where the dream can go
Just a bank of colored lottery tickets
Crosses the darkness
Of an ill-fated man

– Jayant Mahapatra is a distinguished poet of India. His writings have been published both nationally and internationally over the last twenty years.



ଧର୍ମପଦ: ନିର୍ଭୁଲ ଠିକଣା

ମନୋଜ ଦାସ

କୋଣାର୍କର ଅବଲୁପ୍ତ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ମନ୍ଦିରର ଶିଖର ସ୍ଥାପନ ଅନ୍ତେ ଧର୍ମପଦ ନିରୁଦ୍ଦେଶ ହୋଇଯିବା ବ୍ୟାପାରକୁ ଭିତ୍ତିକରି ଯେଉଁ କିମ୍ବଦନ୍ତି ପ୍ରଚଳିତ, ତାହା ଏକ ସାଧାରଣ ବୋଧଗମ୍ୟ କୈଫିୟତ୍ ମାତ୍ର । ଧର୍ମପଦ ଅସାଧାରଣ । ସେଭଳି ଏକ ସତ୍ତାର ଆବିର୍ଭାବ ଏବଂ ବିଲୟର ରହସ୍ୟ ସ୍ଥୂଳ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତର ତଥ୍ୟ ଦ୍ଵାରା ନୁହେଁ, ଏକ ଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ତରର ସତ୍ୟ ଦ୍ଵାରା ନିରୂପିତ ହୋଇପାରେ ।)

ଏତେବେଳେ ଆକାଶରେ ନକ୍ଷତ୍ରର ସ୍ଥିଗ୍ଧ ସମାବେଶ
ସାମୁଦ୍ରିକ ଦିଗନ୍ତରେ ତରଙ୍ଗିତ ପ୍ରହ୍ଳନ୍ତ ଉଲ୍ଲାସ,
ଏବଂ କୁହେଳି-ମଗ୍ନ ଏ ନିର୍ଜନ ମନ୍ଦିର ଶିଖର
ମୋତେ କିଆଁ କରେ ବାରମ୍ବାର-
ସଜ୍ଞାନେ ଧ୍ୟାନସ୍ଥ,
ଏକାଗ୍ର କରେ ମୋ ଚିତ୍ତ, ସୁଭାବତଃ ଯାହା ଅବିନୟସ୍ତ;
ଅନୁଭବ କରେ ମୋର ତନୁ, ମନ, ପ୍ରାଣ,
ଅନିର୍ବଚନୀୟ ଏକ ତୀବ୍ର ଆକର୍ଷଣ;
କାହାପାଇଁ ? କେଉଁ ଲକ୍ଷ ମୋର ଅଭିପ୍ରେତ ?
ଉତ୍ତର ଅଜ୍ଞାତ ।

ଜାଣି ମୁଁ ନଥିଲି ଯେବେ କିଏ ପିତା ମୋର,
ଅଥଚ ହୃଦୟେ ମୋର ଜିଜ୍ଞାସା ଦୁର୍ବାର,
ମୋ ଗୃହେ ସମ୍ପୃତ ଯେତେ ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ଲେଖନ,
ସ୍ଥାପତ୍ୟ ଓ ଭାସ୍କର୍ଯ୍ୟର ତତ୍ତ୍ଵ ସଙ୍କଳନ-
ଅଧ୍ୟୟନେ ପାଇଥିଲି ଯେତିକି ବା ପିତୁ ପରିଚୟ,
ତାହାଥିଲା ଜାଣିବାର ପ୍ରଥମ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟ ।

ତା'ପରେ ଭେଟିଛି କେତେ, ଜଣେ ପରେ ଜଣେ,
ଦୂରାଗତ ପଥଚାରୀଗଣେ-
ସମୁଦ୍ର ତୀରର ବାଉଁଶ, ବାଉଁଶ ଚମକ୍କାର,
ଅପୂର୍ବ, ଉତ୍ଥାନ-ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଅର୍ଦ୍ଧ-ମନ୍ଦିରର,
ସେମାନେ ପରଶିଛନ୍ତି; ଆବେଗ-କଂପିତ
ସେ ବାଉଁଶ କରିଛି ମୋର ପ୍ରାଣ ଉଦ୍‌ବେଳିତ ।

ଅଭିନବ ସେ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ଯହିଁ ଅଶ୍ଵ ସଫ,
ପାଷାଣଦ୍ଵାର ଅତିକ୍ରମି ଉଦ୍‌ଗମ, ଜୀବନ୍ତ,
ପୂର୍ବାଶାର ଦ୍ୟୁତି ଯହିଁ ମନ୍ଦିର ଗର୍ଭରେ,
ଅପୂର୍ବ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ସୃଜେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତରେ,
ପ୍ରତ୍ୟହ ପ୍ରଭାତେ ଯହିଁ ଉଦୟ-ଭାସ୍କର,
ନିଜ ପ୍ରତିବିମ୍ବେ କରେ ଆତ୍ମ-ଆବିଷ୍କାର,

ଯେଉଁ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ ଏକ ପ୍ରତୀକ ମହାନ
ଅସୀମକୁ ସସୀମର ନମ୍ର ଆବାହନ,
ଅମାପ, ଅପରିସୀମ, ଉତ୍କଳ, ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧ,
ଜୀବନର ଯାଦୁ ଯେଉଁ ଦେଦିପ୍ୟ ମାର୍ତ୍ତଣ୍ଡ,
ଅତୀତ ଓ ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ତଥା ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ,
ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିଥାଏ ଯା'ର ଉଦୟାସ୍ତ,
ଶୁଭ୍ର-ବହିଁ ଏକଚକ୍ର, ଅତସ୍ତ୍ର ଦେବତା
ଯା' ଆଶୀର୍ଷେ ବିଦୂରିତ ତମଃ ଓ ଜଡ଼ତା
ଏ ମାଟିରେ ତା' ପ୍ରତିଭୁ କରି ସଂସ୍ଥାପନ
ସ୍ଵର୍ଗ ସହ ପୃଥିବୀର ମାର୍ମିକ ବନ୍ଧନ
ସାବ୍ୟସ୍ତ କରିବା ଯେଉଁ କର୍ମର ପ୍ରେରଣା -
ତା' ପୁରୋଧା ପିତା ମୋର, ବିଶୁ ମହାରଣା !

ଏକଦା ନିଶାନ୍ତେ ମୋତେ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନ ଏକ ଦେଲା ଚମକାଇ
ସୁଦୂର ସମୁଦ୍ର ତଟେ ପିତା ମୋର କଦବା ସମେହୀ-
ଯେ ପୁତ୍ର ଭୂମିଷ୍ଠ ହେବା ମାତ୍ରେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ମିଳିଲା ସମ୍ପନ୍ନ,
ବାରଣସ୍ୟ ଭାସ୍କର ଓ ସ୍ଥପତିଙ୍କ ମୁଖ୍ୟର ଆସନ,
ସେ ପୁତ୍ର କି ହେବ ତାଙ୍କ ପୁରୋଗ୍ୟ ଦାୟଦ୍ଵ,
ତାଙ୍କ ଅଧ୍ୟାପନା ବିନା ହେବ ବିଷାଦ ?
ଏକଲବ୍ୟ ସମ ମୁହିଁ କରିଥିଲି ପିତାଙ୍କୁ ବରଣ,
ଗୁରୁ ରୂପେ; କରିଥିଲି ଯୋଥ୍ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ,
ଦେଖୁଥିଲି ତାଙ୍କ ସୃଷ୍ଟି ମୋ ଗ୍ରାମର ସୁରମ୍ୟ ମନ୍ଦିର
ଅନୁସରି ତତ୍ତ୍ଵଗାଣି, ଗଢୁଥିଲି କେତେ ବାଲିଘର,
ସେ ସ୍ଵପ୍ନର ସ୍ମୃତି ମୋତେ କରିଥିଲା ଅଥୟ, ବ୍ୟଥୃତ,
ଅତଏବ କୋଣାର୍କର ଦ୍ଵାରଦେଶେ ହେଲି ଉପନୀତ,
ଦ୍ଵାଦଶ ବରଷ ବ୍ୟାପି ପ୍ରସ୍ତ ପରେ ପ୍ରସ୍ତ
ସେ ମହାନ ଦେବାଳୟ ବିନ୍ୟାସରେ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ,
ଶୀର୍ଷକ-ସ୍ଥାପନ ଜ୍ଞାନ ପିତା ମୋର ସାମୟିକ ହେବାରେ
ବିସ୍ମୃତ,
କିବା ଆଚମ୍ବିତ !

ହଠାତ୍ ମୋ ମନେହେଲା ମୋ ସ୍ବପ୍ନର ପ୍ରଜ୍ଜ୍ବଳ କାରଣ,
ଏ ସଙ୍କଟେ ଦୈବ-ଦୃଷ୍ଟ ମୋର ଅବଦାନ ।
ମୋ ପରିବେଶିତ ତତ୍ତ୍ବେ ସଙ୍କଟର ହେଲା ସମାଧାନ
ଆନନ୍ଦ ଉଲ୍ଲାସେ ଆଜି ମୁଖରିତ ମନ୍ଦିର ପ୍ରାଙ୍ଗଣ ।

ଦ୍ବୀପଶ ବରଷ ବ୍ୟାପି ସାଧନାର ଅନ୍ତେ,
ବାରଣସ୍ୟ ଶିଳ୍ପୀ ଯେବେ ଭାସମାନ ପୁଲକର ସ୍ରୋତେ,
ମୁଁ ଏକାକୀ ଜ୍ୟୋତ୍ସ୍ନାପୁତ ଶିଖର ଆରୋହି,
ନିଜକୁ ମୁଁ ଦେଇଛି ହଜାଇ,
ଅନିର୍ବଚନୀୟ ଏକ ଧ୍ୟାନ-ତତ୍ତ୍ବା ବଶେ,
ଏକାନ୍ତ, ନିଃଶେଷେ ।

ମନେହୁଏ ଏ ସମୁଦ୍ର ତଥା ତା'ର ବିପୁଳ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତି,
ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ନୁହେଁ ମୋର ତନୁର ହିଁ ଏକ ପରିବ୍ୟାପ୍ତି,
ମନେହୁଏ ଏ ନକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଗଣ,
ମୋ ପ୍ରାଣର ନାନାବିଧ ଅଜସ୍ର ସ୍ଥାନନ,

ମନେହୁଏ ଏ ଆକାଶ, ନିଶ୍ଚବଧ, ଅସୀମ,
ଅନ୍ୟ କିଛି ନୁହେଁ ମୋର ଚେତନାର ଭିନ୍ନ ଏକ ନାମ ।

ବାହୁଁ ଚାହୁଁ ରାତି ହୁଏ ଗତ -
ସହସ୍ର କୁଟୀର ମଧ୍ୟେ ନିମ୍ନଦେଶେ ସଭିଏଁ ସୁସୁପ୍ତ,
ପୂର୍ବାଶାରେ ସ୍ବର୍ଣ୍ଣପ୍ରଭ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟର ସଙ୍କେତ,
ସେ ଅବା ମୋହରି ଆତ୍ମା, ମୋ ସମ୍ମୁଖେ ଉଦୟ-ଉଦୟତ!
ଏତେବେଳେ ମନେହୁଏ ତାହା ସହ ହୋଇ ଏକୀଭୂତ,
ଏ ମନ୍ଦିର ଗର୍ଭଗୃହେ ସଂଗୋପନେ ହେବି ଆବିର୍ଭୂତ,
ମନ୍ଦିରକୁ ଘେରି -
ଉଦ୍ୟାନ, ଉତ୍ତାଳ ଏହି ଅସଂଖ୍ୟ ଲହରି,
ମୃଦୁ ମୃଦୁ ହିଲୋଳରେ କହୁଛନ୍ତି, ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଜଣା,
ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟଲୋକେ ଯାହା ମୋର ନିର୍ଭୁଲ ଠିକଣା ।

ମୋର ପରିଚୟ ନୁହେଁ ଧର୍ମପଦ, ମହାରଣା-ସୁତ,
ମୁଁ ଏକ ଓଁକାର ଧ୍ବନି, ଅଜାତ, ଅଶୁତ ।

Manoj Das is an eminent writer of India. He is a professor at the Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education in Pondicherry, India. His writings have been published in numerous books and periodicals. This poem, specially written for the OSA Journal, looks at the disappearance of Dharmapada in a new Vedantic light. The common belief that twelve-year old Dharmapada ended his life by jumping off the Konark temple (after fixing the engineering problem that twelve-hundred masons, headed by his father Bisu Maharana, could not resolve) is a popular myth in Orissa. Manoj Babu finds this explanation at a "gross" level not doing justice to the greatness of Dharmapada. He provides an insight at a "subtle" level - Dharmapada is the embodiment of Sat-Chit-Ananda, the Brahman that pervades and guides this universe.



ଦୁଇଟି କବିତା ମନୋରମା ମହାପାତ୍ର

ଗୋଟିଏ ଜନନୀ କୋଟିଏ ପୁତ୍ର

ମାନବିକତାର ପ୍ରଣବ ମନ୍ଦ
ଉଠେ ଯହିଁ ଦିବାଭାତ
କୁମାରିକାଠାରୁ ହିମାବଳ ଯାଏ
ଗୋଟିଏ ତୀର୍ଥ
କୋଟିଏ ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ଚରଣ ଧୂଳିରେ
ପବିତ୍ର ତା'ର ଗାତ୍ର ।
ବିଶ୍ୱବୁଦ୍ଧରେ ଯେଉଁଠାରେ ରହି
ଦିଅ ଥରେ ଚାହିଁ
ନେତ୍ରପଥରେ ଦିଶିଯିବ ସେହି ନୀଳଚକ୍ରର ନେତ,
ଜାତିଧର୍ମ-ଭାଷା ବିଭେଦର ବ୍ୟଧନ କାଟି
କୋଟିଏ ଜନତା ସମତାର ନେତ
ତଳେ ତହିଁ ସମବେତ ।
ଭାଇରେ ଭାଇରେ ଭାଗ ବଞ୍ଚିବା
ବିନିଷ୍ଟ କରେ ଯେଉଁଠାରେ ଭାରସାମ୍ୟ,
ଭଲ ମଣିଷର ଭାବ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱାସ ଟିକିଏ ମିଳିଲେ
ଗଳ୍ପ ଉଠିବ ଯେ
ସେହିଠାବେ ପୁଣି ଭାବ ସଂହତି କାମ୍ୟ ।
କର୍ମର ଏବେ ବେଳ ଆସିଅଛି
ଧର୍ମଧୂଜାରେ ନାହିଁ ଆଉ ପ୍ରୟୋଜନ,
ବିଭେଦର ବାଡ଼ ଭାଙ୍ଗାଇ ଯାହା, ତାହା ହିଁ ଧର୍ମ
ସେହି ଧର୍ମର କର ଏବେ ଜୟଗାନ ।
ଧ୍ୱାନ୍ତ ଭିତରେ ଅଗ୍ନି ଶଳାକା
ଦେଖାଇ ଦିଏ ଯେ
ସେହି ମଣିଷଟି ଅପାପବିଷ ବୁଦ୍ଧ,
ଅପରୁ ନୟନୁ ଲୁହ ପୋଛି ଦେଇ
ଆଶ୍ୱାସ ବୁଣେ
ସମବେଦନାରେ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ।
ଗୋଟିଏ ଜନନୀ କୋଟିଏ ପୁତ୍ର
ପ୍ରତି ଧର୍ମନୀରେ ଗୋଟିଏ ରକ୍ତ ବହେ
କୋଟିଏ କଣ୍ଠେ ଗୋଟିଏ ମଣିଷ
ମାନବବାଦର ମହିମା ସ୍ତବ ଗାଏ ।

ମଧୁମୟ ହେଉ ବିଶ୍ୱ

କ୍ରାନ୍ତି ଭିତରେ ଶାନ୍ତି ନ ଯାଉ ହଜି
ଉଗ୍ରବାଦଟି ଅଗ୍ରଭାଗରେ
ସ୍ଥାପିତ ନ ହେଉ ଆଜି ।
'କ୍ରାନ୍ତି' ନାମରେ ନ ଚଳାଉ କେହି
ହିଁସୁ ମାରଣ ଯନ୍ତ୍ର
ପ୍ରତି ଅଂଶନେ ପ୍ରତିଧ୍ୱନିତ
ହେଉ ପୁଣି ଥରେ
ଗାନ୍ଧୀ, ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଦେଇଗଲେ ଯେଉଁ
ଅହିଂସା ମହାମନ୍ତ୍ର ।
ଶ୍ରୀକ୍ଷ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା, କୃଷ୍ଣର ବାଣୀ
ନାନକ ବଚନ, ମହମ୍ମଦର ଗାଥା
କୋଟି ଜନତାରେ ଅନୁପ୍ରେରିତ
ଜନ୍ମ ପୁଣି ଥରେ
ମହିମାତାର ସମ୍ମୁଖେ ପୁଣି
ଅବନତ ହେଉ ମଉ ମାନବ ମଥା ।
ହିଁସା ବିଷରେ ପ୍ରଦୂଷିତ ଏକ
ପରିବେଶ ଆଜି
ସଂତ୍ରାସେ ସାଜି
ମାନବାତ୍ୱକୁ ନ କରୁ ନ କରୁ ନିଃସ୍ୱ,
ପ୍ରେମେ ପୁଲକିତ, ସ୍ନେହେ ସିଞ୍ଚିତ
ସଂବେଦନାରେ ଅନୁକଂପିତ
ମଧୁମୟ ହେଉ ମଧୁମୟ ହେଉ
ମଧୁମୟ ହେଉ ବିଶ୍ୱ ।

Manorama Mohapatra is an established writer, poet, journalist, and social worker of Orissa. She is the editor of the newspaper "Samaj". She was the President of Utkal Sahitya Samaj. The OSA invited her as the keynote speaker at the annual convention in 1992 at Atlanta.

ନୂଆ ଅତିଥି ସୁପ୍ରସ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ

ବୟସ ବଢ଼ିବା ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କର ଆମେରିକାରେ ରହିବାର ଅଭିଳାଷ କମି କମି ଯାଉଥିଲା । ଏହା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଦଶବର୍ଷ ବଡ଼ି ଗଲାଣି । ନଜ ଗାଆଁରେ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା କରିଥିବା ଅନାଥ ଆଶ୍ରମଟିକୁ ଉଦ୍‌ଘାଟନ କରିବାକୁ ସ୍ବାମୀ ଅସିତ୍‌ବାବୁ ଯାଇଥିଲେ ଯେ ଆଉ ସେ ପୁରରୁ ଫେରି ନ ଥିଲେ । ଫେନରେ ପୁରୁରା ଅରୁଣ ଖବର ଦେଲା ଯେ କାର୍ ଆକ୍ସିଡେଣ୍ଟରେ ଆଉ ସେ ଚେତା ଫେରି ପାଇ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଏ ଖବର ଜାଣି ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କର ଆଉ ବେତନା ନ ଥିଲା । ସେ କଅଣ ଶୁଣିଛନ୍ତି କି ବୁଝିଛନ୍ତି କିଛି ଜାଣି ପାର ନ ଥିଲେ । ଜେବଳ ହସ୍ପିଟାଲ୍ ବେଡ୍‌ରେ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଚେତା ଆସିଲା, ସେ ଏତିକି ବୁଝିଥିଲେ ଯେ ଅସୀତ୍ ଆଉ ଫେରବେ ନାହିଁ । ଯେଉଁ ଦେଶ ଗାଆଁକୁ ସେ ଏତେ ଭଲ ପାଉଥିଲେ, ସେଇ ଗାଆଁରେ ତାଙ୍କ ଶେଷ ଲୁଇଟି ଜଳିଗଲା ।

ସ୍ବାତୀ ବ ନିଜେ ବଶ୍ମାସ କର ପାରୁନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ଅସୀତ୍‌ଙ୍କୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ସେ ଏତେ ବର୍ଷ ଆମେରିକାରେ କେମିତି ରହିପାରିଛନ୍ତି ବୋଲି, ତିରିଶ ବର୍ଷ ରହଣି ଭିତରେ ଅସିତ୍ ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଘର, ଗଙ୍ଗାର କିଛି ଅଭବ ରଖି ନ ଥିଲେ । ଅସୀତ୍ ଦୂରଦର୍ଶୀ ଥିଲେ, କୌଣସି କାରଣ ରୁ ସେ ଯଦି ଆଗ ଚାଲି ଯାଆନ୍ତି ସ୍ବାତୀ କାହା ପାଖରେ ଯେମିତି ମୁଣ୍ଡ ନୁଆଁଇବେ ନାହିଁ ସେଇ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କର ସାରିଥିଲେ । ସେମାନେ ଥିଲେ ନିସନ୍ଧାନ । ସେଇଥିପାଇଁ ଅସୀତ୍ ଗାଆଁରେ ସ୍କୁଲ, କଲେଜ, ଶିଶୁକେନ୍ଦ୍ର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା କରିଦେଇ ଯାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଶିଶୁକେନ୍ଦ୍ରରେ ଯେତେ ପିଲା, ସମସ୍ତେ ତାଙ୍କର ପିଲା । ତାଙ୍କ ଚଲାପରେ ଏ ସବୁ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର କେମିତି ଚାଲିବ ତାର ମଧ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା, ରକ୍ଷଣାବେକ୍ଷଣ ସେ ସବୁ ବନ୍ଦୋ ବସ୍ତୁ ଆଗରୁ କରି ସାରିଛନ୍ତି ।

ଅସୀତ୍ ଥିଲା ବେଳେ ନିଃସଙ୍ଗତାରୁ ରକ୍ଷା ପାଇବାପାଇଁ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ସେମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ବୁଲି ଯାଉଥିଲେ । ଯେଉଁ ଟିକିଏ ସ୍ନେହ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଆଦର ଅନ୍ତରଙ୍ଗତା ଆମେରିକାରେ ମିଳେ ନାହିଁ ବୋଲି ସେମାନେ ନିଜ ଦେଶକୁ ଧାଇଁ ଯାଆନ୍ତି, ଯେଠି କେତେଦିନ ଅସୀତ୍‌ଙ୍କର ବଡ଼ ପରିବାର ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସ୍ନେହ ଆଦର ବହୁତ ମିଳେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ଫେରିବା ବେଳେ ହେବା ଆଗରୁ ସମସ୍ତେ ନିଜ ନିଜର ସୁବିଧା ଅସୁବିଧା ଦେଖାଇ ଚଙ୍ଗା ମାଗିବାକୁ ଆସି ଥାଆନ୍ତି । ଅସିତ୍ ଓ ସ୍ବାତୀ ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ଜାଣି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଦାବୀ ପୂରଣ କରିବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରି ଆସିଛନ୍ତି । କିନ୍ତୁ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟ କରିବା ଅସାଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଛି । ଯେଉଁ ମାନଙ୍କୁ ମନମୁତାବକ ଚଙ୍ଗା ମିଳେ ନାହିଁ, ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଚାହିଁ ଡାପରା କଥା ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କୁ ବହୁତ ବାଧୁଥିଲା । ଅସୀତ୍ ନଜ ଗାଆଁର ଲୋକ ସାଇ ପଡ଼ିଶାଙ୍କୁ ପିଲାବେଳରୁ ଜାଣିଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ଏ ସବୁ ଶୁଣିବା ତାଙ୍କର ଦେହ ସୁସ୍ଥା ହୋଇଯାଇଥିଲା । ଦିନକୁ ଦିନ ସ୍ବାତୀ ଙ୍କର ଶରୀର ଘର ଓ ସେ ଗାଆଁ ପ୍ରତି ମନ ଛାଡ଼ି ଯାଇଥିଲା ।

ଅସୀତ୍‌ଙ୍କର ବିୟୋଗ ପରେ ସ୍ବାତୀ କପାଳରୁ ସିନ୍ଦୂର ପୋଛି, ସୁନା ବୁଡ଼ି ଉତ୍ତାରି ଶାଧା ଲୁଗା ପିନ୍ଧି ବଧବା ବୋଲି ସେ ସବୁର ବ୍ୟୁପାଳ ନ କରି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଯାଇ ଶାଶୁଘର ଗାଆଁରେ ରହିବାର ଆୟୋଜନକୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟାଖାନ କରିଦେଇଥିଲେ । ଆମେରିକାର ଯେଉଁ ସହରରେ ତା ଙ୍କର ପ୍ରଥମ ଘର କରଣା ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା, ସେଇ ସବୁ ସ୍ମୃତିକୁ ସାଇତି ରଖି ସେଇ ଘରେ ରହିଯିବା ପାଇଁ ସେ ଛିର କର ଦେଇଥିଲେ ।

ସେ ଦିନ ଶୀତ ସକାଳର ଗୋଟିଏ ଦିନ, ଖ୍ରୀଷ୍ଟମାସ ଛୁଟି ହୋଇଥାଏ । ଏମିତି ଦିନଗୁଡ଼ା ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କୁ ବହୁତ ଏକାନ୍ତ ଆ କରନ୍ଦା । ସେ ତାଙ୍କର ଅତି ଘନିଷ୍ଠ ସାଁଗ ସୁଷମାକୁ ଡାକି ସେ ଦିନଟି ବୁଲାବୁଲି କିଣାକିଣିରେ ସମୟ କଟାଇବାକୁ କହିଥିଲେ । ଦୁହେଁ ବଙ୍ଗର ସାରି କାରରେ ଜିନିଷ ରଖିଲାବେଳେ ପଛରୁ ଜଣେ ଅନ୍ଧ ବୟସର ଯୁବକ ଆଗେଇ ଆସି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଜିନିଷଗୁଡ଼ା ରଖି ଦେବାପାଇଁ ହାତ ବଢ଼ାଇଦେଲା । ସ୍ବାତୀ ଓ ସୁଷମା ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇଗଲେ । କିନ୍ତୁ ତର ଯାଇ ନ ଥିଲେ । ଯୁବକଟି ନମସ୍କାର କର କହିଲା - ମୋ ନାମ ସମର । ଆପଣମାନେ ଓଡ଼ିଆରେ କଥାବାର୍ତ୍ତା ହେବାର ଦୋକାନରୁ ଶୁଣି ମନଟା ମୋର ଖୁସି ହୋଇଗଲା । ମୁଁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରୁ ଅଗାନକଣ୍ଠବରେ ଏ ସହରକୁ ଆସିଛି, ମୁଁ ଆଗରୁ ଜାହାଜରେ ରକ୍ଷିନକାରୀ ଜୀବରେ କାମ କରୁଥିଲି, ଲସ୍‌ଏଂଜେଲସ୍ ସହରଟି ଦେଖିବି ବୋଲି ମନରେ କେତେ ଦିନରୁ ଥିଲା । ଜାହାଜ ଯେତେବେଳେ ଏଇ ସହରରେ ଲାଗିଲା, ମୁଁ ଏଇ ସହରର ଆଲୋକମୟ ସୌନ୍ଦର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଦେଖି ଆଶ୍ଚର୍ଯ୍ୟ ହୋଇଗଲି, କି ବରବଣାଳୀ ଏ ଦେଶ, ଏଠାରେ କିଛିବର୍ଷ ରହିବାକୁ ମୋର ବହୁତ ଇଚ୍ଛା ଅଛି । ମୋର କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ବନ୍ଧୁ କି ଆତ୍ମୀୟ ସ୍ବାକ୍ଷର ଏଠାରେ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ଛୋଟ ଛୋଟ କାମ କରୁଛି । ଦିନେ ନା ଦିନେ ମୁଁ ମୋ ନିଜର ଭେଜନାଳୟ ଖୋଲିବି । ଯୁବକଟିର କଥା ଶୁଣି ସ୍ବାତୀ ଓ ସୁଷମା ଖୁସି ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିଲେ । ସ୍ବାତୀ ସମରକୁ କହିଲେ - ତୁମେ ଚାଲ ଆମ ଘରକୁ । ଆମ ଘରେ ଆଜି ଖିଆପିଆ କରିବ ।

ତିନିଜଣ ସାଁଗ ହୋଇ ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ଘରେ ପହଞ୍ଚିଗଲେ । ସମର କହିଲା, ଏ ଦେଶରେ ଆପଣମାନେ ତ ସବୁବେଳେ ନିଜେ ରନ୍ଧା ବଢ଼ା କର ଖାଉଛନ୍ତି, ଆଜି ମୁଁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ରନ୍ଧି ଖୁଆଇବି । କହିଲା ମାତ୍ରେ ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ଅନୁମତି ନେଇ ସମର ରନ୍ଧାବଢ଼ାରେ ଲାଗିଗଲା । ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟାବେଳକୁ ଅତି ସୁସ୍ବାଦୁ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ବାଡ଼ିଦେଇ ସମର ସ୍ବାତୀ ଓ ସୁଷମାଙ୍କୁ ଖାଇବାକୁ ଡାକିଲା । ସୁଷମା ପରିବାର ସହ ଆନନ୍ଦରେ ଖାଇ ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ଠାରୁ ସେ ଦିନ ପାଇଁ ବିଦାୟ ନେଇଥିଲେ ।

ସ୍ବାତୀ ସମରକୁ ସେ ରାତିରେ ଛାଡ଼ିବାକୁ ଇଚ୍ଛାକର ନ ଥିଲେ । କହିଲେ - ମୋର ଏ ଘରସବୁ ଖାଲି ପଡ଼ିଛି, ତମେ କାମ ପାଇଲା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମୋ ପାଖରେ ରହିଥାଅ । ସମର କଥାର ଆପତି କରି



ନ ଥିଲା । ନୀଡ଼ହର ପକ୍ଷୀଟି ପର ଡାଳଟିଏ ଆଶ୍ରା ପାଇ ଖୁସି ହୋଇଗଲା । ଦିନକୁ ଦିନ ସମରର ବ୍ୟବହାର ଓ ଚାଲିଚଳନରେ ସ୍ବାତୀ ଖୁସି ହୋଇଥିଲେ । ମା' ହେବାର ଯେଉଁ ସ୍ବେଦ ଧାରାଟି ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ହୃଦୟରେ ଲୁଚି ରହିଥିଲା, ସମରକୁ ପାଇଲା ପରେ ସେଇ ସ୍ବେଦ ଧାରାଟି ସୁଜଳ ଭାବରେ ବହିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଲା ।

ଦିନେ ସମର କଥା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗରେ ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କୁ କହିଲା - ମୋର ନଜର ବୋଲି ଏଇ ସଂସାରରେ କେହି ନାହାଁନ୍ତି । ବାପାମାଙ୍କର ସ୍ବେଦ ମୁଁ ଜୀବନରେ ପାଇନାହିଁ । ମୁଁ ଅସୀତ୍ ଅନାଥ ଆଶ୍ରମରେ ବଢ଼ିଛି, ବଡ଼ ହେଲାପରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଛାଡ଼ି କଲିକତାରେ ବଡ଼ ବଡ଼ ହୋଟେଲରେ କାମ କର ଯାହା ଭଲ ରନ୍ଧା ଖିଶିଥିଲା, ସେଇ ପାରଦର୍ଶିତାରେ ମୁଁ ଜାହାଜରେ କାମ ପାଇ ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଆସିଛି ।

ହଠାତ୍ ଅସୀତ୍ ଆଶ୍ରମ କଥା ଶୁଣି ସ୍ବାତୀ ଚମକି ପଡ଼ିଲେ, ଅସୀତ୍ ଜ୍ଞର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠିତ ଅନାଥ ଆଶ୍ରମ । ପୁଣି ସେଇ ଅନାଥ ପିଲାଟିଏ ତାଙ୍କ ଆଗରେ ଛିଡ଼ା ହୋଇଛି । ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ଆଖିରୁ ଲୁହ ବହୁ ଆସିଲା । ସମର ଆଗରେ ଲୁହକୁ ଲୁଚାଇ ସ୍ବାତୀ କହିଲେ - ସମର, ତମେ ମୋର ପୁଅ, ଅତିଥି ନୁହଁ । ତମକୁ ଆଉ କେଉଁଠିକି ଯିବାକୁ ହେବନି । ତମେ ଏ ଘରେ ମୋରି ପୁଅ ହୋଇ ରହିବ । ତମକୁ ପୋଷ୍ୟପୁତ୍ର କରିବାକୁ ଯାହା ସବୁ କାଗଜପତ୍ର ଦରକାର, ମୁଁ ଏଠିକାର ନୟନ ଅନୁସାରେ କରିବାକୁ ଠିକ୍ କରିଦେବି । ସମର ଭାବି ପାରିଲା ନାହିଁ । ସ୍ବାତୀଙ୍କ ପଦତଳେ ପ୍ରଣାମ କରି କହିଲା - ମା ।

- Suprava Patnaik lives in Bhubaneswar & writes short stories.



ସମୁଦ୍ରକୁ

ଦେବଦାସ ଛୋଟରାୟ

ଖଣ୍ଡିଆ ଖାବରା ଏକ ସମୁଦ୍ର ଉପରେ

ରଖୁ ତା'ର ରକ୍ତାନ୍ତ କହୁଣୀ

ସୁଯ୍ୟାସ୍ତ ତାହାଁଲା ମତେ

ହାରିବାର ଲଙ୍କିତ ଆଖିରେ

ପବନ ହାତରେ ଧରି ଝାଉଁର ଛା'ତୁଣୀ

ଖରକି ଫେପାଡ଼ ଦେଲା ଢେଉ ଭିତରକୁ

ଗହଗହ ନେଲିଆ ବୋତଲ

ଭଂଗାରୁଜା ଧଳାକାତ

ପାଣିର ଫେଶର

ଦିଗ୍ବଳୟ ଭରା ସେଇ ଅଳିଆ ଭିତରୁ

ହଠାତ୍ ପଡ଼ିଲେ ତେଇଁ

ଝଟିକର ଝିଟିକା ପରିକା

ଦି'ଚାରିଟା ଗୋଜିଆ ଓ ମୁନକରା ତାରା

ଆକାଶ ଆଡ଼କୁ

ଅଂଧକାର ଦେଉଳର ଅପହଂତ ନଉତି ଉପରେ

ହଳଦିଆ ପେଟା ପରି

ଲାଖୁ ଗଲା ଜହ୍ନ

ରାତି ହେଲା । ସବୁ ପୁଣି ତୁମ୍ ଗାମ୍

ବନ୍ଦ ହୋଇ ଯାଇଥିବା ଏକ କାନ୍ଦଣା ପରିକା

Debdas Chhotray is a well-known poet and lyricist of Orissa. He joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1968 and is a joint secretary at the ministry of food processing, Government of India. He attended Cornell University in 1982 on Humphrey scholarship.

ଗୋପ ଭବାତ

ରାଧାମୋହନ ଗଡ଼ନାୟକ

କଟକରେ ସେତେବେଳେ
ସାମୟିକ ଆବାସ ମୋହର
ମୋ' ପାଖକୁ ଆସିଗଲା
ଏକକାଳେ
ବିପରୀତ ଦୁଇଟି ଖବର ।

ବାଁ ହାତରେ ଧରିଥିଲି ଟେଲିଗ୍ରାଫ୍ ଏକ-
ଲ' ପରୀକ୍ଷାରେ ମୋର ପାଶ୍
ଏ ହାତରେ ଶୋକର ଏ ଲେଖା-
ମୋର ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କର ସ୍ୱର୍ଗବାସ ।

ଜୀବିକାର ରାଜପଥେ ଏକ ଜାଣ,
ବାସ୍ତବିକା,
ପ୍ରତୀପର ଶିଖା,
ଜୀବନରେ ପ୍ରଭାସନ ଆନ
ଭବନରେ କରିଦେଲା
ପ୍ରତୀପ-ନିର୍ବାଣ ।

ମୃତ ପୁତ୍ର ଜନ୍ମ ଦେଇ
ମୃତ୍ୟୁ-କୋଳେ ଶୋଇଗଲେ
ମୋର ପ୍ରାଣପ୍ରିୟା
ବୁଝୁତ ମୋହର ଆତ୍ମା,
ବୁଝୁଅଛି ପୁଣି ମୋର
ନିଭୃତ ଏ ହିଆ ।

ଜୀବିକାର ପୃଷ୍ଠି ପାଇଁ
ରକ୍ତ ମୁହିଁ
ଦେଇପାରିବି କି,
ଲାଭ ଲୋଭ ତୁଟି ପଥେ
ରକ୍ତ ମୁହିଁ
ହୋଇପାରିବି କି ?
ପର ପାଇଁ ଯତ୍ନ କିମ୍ଭୂତ୍
ଆପଣାକୁ ଦେବା
ତାହୁଁ ଅଛି କରିବାକୁ
ଜଗତର ସେବା ।

ତିନି ଚାରି ବର୍ଷ ତଳେ
ରୋଗ ଶଯ୍ୟା ପରେ
ଶୋଇଥିଲା ମୋର ଏକ
ବାଳୁତ ସନ୍ତାନ,
ଆର୍ତ୍ତ ଜନତାର ତାଙ୍କେ

ଘରେ ତାକୁ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେଇ
ବନ୍ୟାଞ୍ଜଳେ କରି ଅଭିଯାନ ।

ଫେରି ଆସି କି ଦେଖୁଲି
ସିଏ ଆଉ ସଂସାରେ ନାହିଁ,
ସଜଳ ମୋ'
ପତ୍ନୀଙ୍କର ମୁଖେ, ନେତ୍ରେ
ନିର୍ବାକେ ମୁଁ ରହିଲି ଅନାଇ ।

ମହାଯାତ୍ରା କରି ଏ ଯେ
ପ୍ରିୟତମା ପତ୍ନୀ ଗଲେ ଚାଲି,
ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ମୁହିଁ ତେବେ
ହେବି ଭଲା କେଉଁ ପଥଚାରୀ ?

ଜୀବିକାରେ କୁଣ୍ଡି ମୋର
ଜୀବନରେ ତୁଟି ଦେବ ନାହିଁ,
ଅଭିଯାତ୍ରୀ ହେବି ମୁହିଁ
ଦେଶ ସେବା, ଜନସେବା ପାଇଁ ।

ଶରତ

ସୀତାକାନ୍ତ ମହାପାତ୍ର

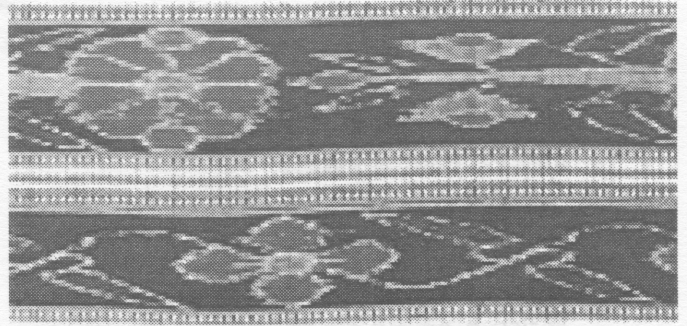
ଶରତ ଯୁଦ୍ଧକ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ଗୋଳିଆ ନଇପାଣିକୁ ସଫା କରୁଛି
ଯୁଦ୍ଧ ସରିଛି, ମନ୍ତ୍ର ପାଠ ସରିଛି, ମହିଷାସୁର ନିଧନ ସରିଛି
ଦେବୀଙ୍କ ମରଦେହ, ମାଟି-କୁଟା ଛାସ୍ତ
ନଇ ଅତରାରେ ଖରା ଖାଉଛି
ଶାନ୍ତ ବୁଦ୍ଧିର ସ୍ୱର ପବନରେ । ଆକାଶରେ
କାଶଫୁଲ ଝୁଲି ପଡୁଛି ଆନନ୍ଦରେ, ଆବେଗରେ ॥

ଶରତରେ । ବାଟ ଭୁଲି ହୁଏ ସହଜରେ
ମେଘ ଅନ୍ଧାର କରି ଆସେନି ସତ
ଖରା ଦାର ଦାର ଜଳେନି ସତ
କିନ୍ତୁ ବାଟ ଦୁଗେନି ଯୁଦ୍ଧକ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ନୂଆ ଶବ୍ଦହୀନତାରେ
ଆତ୍ମାର ଜାଲୁ ଜାଲୁ ଛାଇ ଆଲୁଅରେ;
ଶରତରେ ବାଟଭାଙ୍ଗି ନଇ ପାରି ହେଲାବେଳେ
ଦୁର ଗାଁକୁ ଯାଉଥିବା ସଞ୍ଚର ବାଟୋଇପରି
ବାଟ ପଚାରିବାକୁ ହୁଏ
ନୀଳ କୁହୁଡ଼ିର ଆସୁରଶକୁ
ନିର୍ଲିପ୍ତଭାବେ ଉଡ଼ିଯାଉଥିବା ତଡେଇ ଦଳଙ୍କୁ
ଜୁନି ଜୁନି ଅସୁମାରି ନଇର ଢେଉଙ୍କୁ
ଛାଡ଼ି ଭିତରେ ନ ବୁଝି ହେଉଥିବା କୋହଙ୍କୁ
ଅବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ଛାୟାରୂପିଣୀ, ଭ୍ରାନ୍ତିରୂପିଣୀ ଦେବୀଙ୍କୁ ॥

ଦିଅ ହେ ଉତ୍ତର

ମାୟାଧର ମାନସିଂହ

ପୁଣି ଏକ ଦିନାରମ୍ଭ
ପୁଣି ସେହି ଦୈନନ୍ଦିନ ଗତ,
ଜୀବନ ରକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ
ପୁଣି ସେହି ପୁନରାବର୍ତ୍ତନ,
କରି ଆସୁଥାଉଁ ଯାହା
ଦୀର୍ଘ କାଳ ମୁକ୍ତ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରବତ୍,
କ୍ଷୁଧା-ତୃଷ୍ଣା-ଆୟୋଜନ,
ଉଷ୍ଣ-ଶୀତ-ସ୍ବାଚ୍ଛନ୍ଦ୍ୟ ରଚନ ।
କିପାଇଁ କରୁଛୁ ଏହା ?
କିବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟେ, କିବା ପ୍ରୟୋଜନେ ?
ସତ୍ତାର ରକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ,
ସ୍ବେଦ-ସିନ୍ଧୁ କୁର ଏ ଜଞ୍ଜାଳ
ଜାତବ ପ୍ରେରଣା ମାତ୍ର
ପୁଣ୍ୟାୟିତ କରେ କାୟେ, ମନେ,
ଜଟିଳ ବାସତ୍ବ ଏ ଯେ,
କେ କହେ ଏ ସ୍ବାଧୀନ ବିହାର ?
ସ୍ବାଧୀନ ହେବି ମୁଁ ତାହେ,
ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ କାହିଁ? -- ଜାଣିବାକୁ ତାହେ,
କିମ୍ବା ଆବର୍ତ୍ତିତ ମୁଁହିଁ
କୋଟି କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର କର୍ମର ଉତ୍ସାହେ ?
କି ମହତ ଶେଷ ଅଛି
ଜୀବନର ଏ କଟାହ ଦାହେ ?
ଅଜ୍ଞାନ-ଚାଳିତ ଏହି
କ୍ଷିପ୍ରତା କି ଜୀବନ ବୋଲାଏ ?
ଜୀବନର ତତ୍ତ୍ବ କହ
କିଏ ଅଛି ହେ ଜୀବନେଶ୍ବର,
ବିରାଟ ଏ ଅପରାଧେ,
କିଛି ଅଛି ଶୁଭ ଅନଶୁଭ ?



ଜହ୍ନୁରାତି

ରମାକାନ୍ତ ରଥ

ଯେତେକ ପଡ଼ିଆ ଜମି ସବୁ ମିଶି ଗୋଟିଏ ସମ୍ପେଦ୍,
ବିଛଣା ତାଦର ଯା'ର ଶେଷ କାହିଁ ଆରମ୍ଭ ବି କାହିଁ,
ଠିକ୍ ମୋର ଦେହ ପରି । ଆକାଶ ବି ପ୍ରାୟ ତମପରି ।
ବେଳେ ବେଳେ ମନେହୁଏ ମୁଁ ଆକାଶ, ପ୍ରଶସ୍ତ ଅଥଚ
ଫାଙ୍କା, ଏବଂ ଦେଖୁଅଛି ପୃଥିବୀ ଯେପରି
ତମେ ଠିକ୍ ସେହିପରି ମେଲା କରିଅଛୁ ହାତମାନ,
ଯେଉଁଠାରେ ଓହ୍ଲାଇଲେ ସେଇଠାରେ ତମ ଆଲିଙ୍ଗନ ।

ଦୁଇରେ ଦିଶୁଛି ଜମି ଓ ଆକାଶ
ମିଶିବାର ଭ୍ରମ ।
ତମେହେଲେ ଉଡ଼ିଆସ ପ୍ରବାସରୁ
ହେ ମୋ ବିହଙ୍ଗମ ।
ମୁଁ ଏଠାରୁ ପାରିବିନି ଘୁଞ୍ଚି କାଳେ
ଜହ୍ନୁ ବୁଡ଼ିଯିବ ।
କାଳେ ମୁଁ ଫେରିବା ବେଳେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟାଲୋକେ
ବାଟ ନ ଦିଶିବ ।

About the poets

Mayadhar Manasinha - Eminent poet, writer, and educationist of Orissa. His writings covered a vast expanse, from emotional romanticism to rich philosophy. He edited a prestigious journal called "Sankha" and compiled an authoritative book on Orissa's history and culture. His famous poems like "Dhupa", "Hemasasya", and "Sadhab Jhia" were huge hits with youth of Orissa in the 1940s and 1950s.

Radha Mohan Gadnaya - Pioneer in a new style of rhythmic and fluid poetry. His famous writings include "Meghaduta" (Oriya translation of Kalidasa's epic poetry), "Pasu Pakhira Kabya", and many collections of poems.

Sitakanta Mohapatra - Modern and experimental poet of Orissa, recipient of Jnanapitha award.

Ramakanta Rath - Modern Oriya poet and currently president of the Sahitya Academy in Delhi. His famous book "Sri Radha" got nationwide accolades few years ago.

ସୋରିଷ ଫୁଲର ପଥ

ସଚ୍ଚିଦାନନ୍ଦ ରାଉତରାୟ

ଅଗନା ଅଗନି ଘୋର ବନସ୍ତ ଭିତରେ
କେଉଁ ଆଡ଼େ ନେଉଛ ସଂଗିନୀ
ସରୁ ସରୁ ବଣବାଟ ଦୁଇ ପଟେ ଘାସ
ପାଖେ ଶୁଭେ ପାହାଡ଼ୀ ନଈର କୁକୁଣୀତ
ଅଜଣା ଫୁଲର ବାସ୍ନା କରୁଛି ଆକୁଳ
ଆଖିରେ ତ ବାଂଞ୍ଛୁ ଅଛ ମୋ ଅଂଧ ପୁରୁଲି,
କେଉଁଠିକି ନେଇ ଚାଲ ହାତ ଧରି
କହିବ ସୁନ୍ଦରୀ ॥

କିଏ ସେ ଦେବତା ? ବୃକ୍ଷ-ଦେବ
ଚତୁର୍ଥା ମୂରତି
ନା ଭାଇ ଭଉଣୀ ମିଶି ଏକ ଭାଇପଣ
ଏକ ଭ୍ରାତୃ ଧର୍ମ
ଯେଉଁଠାରେ ଆୟର୍ ଅଣଆୟର୍
ଦ୍ରାବିଡ଼, ଶବର ସମସ୍ତେ ସମାନ
ଏକ ମହା ମଣିଷପଣିଆ
ସବୁରିକି କରେ ଏକାକାର,
ସିଂଧୁପରି, ଏକ ମହାଜୀବନର ସଂଖ୍ୟା
ସବୁରିକି କରେ ସମନ୍ୱିତ ॥

ମୋତେ ପାଇଅଛ ଭଲ, ମୁଁ ଯେ ତୁମରି
ମୁଁ ତୁମର ରଣୀ

ତୁମେ ମୋର ଶେଷ ଫୁଲ ମୋ'ର ଅଦୃଶ୍ୟ ।
ତୁମେ କି ଜାଣିନ ପ୍ରେମିକ ତମର ଏକ ଦସ୍ୟୁ
ଏବଂ ତର ପଳାତକ ତୁମର ଠାକୁର ।

କେହିତ ପାରେନା ତାକୁ ଧରିରଖି
ସତ୍ତ୍ୱିକି ମିଶାଇ ଦେବା ଯା'ର କାମ
ସେ କିପରି ରହିବ ଏକାଟି ହୋଇ ଜଣକର ॥

କହ କହ କେଉଁଠାକୁ ନିଅ ସହଚରୀ
କେଉଁ ସେ ଅଜଣା ଠାବେ, ଜାଣିବି କିପରି
ମୋ'ର ଅଂଗରଖା କୋଣେ ମୁଠିଏ ସୋରିଷ
ବୁଣିଯାଏଁ ଚଳାବାଟେ ଦେବାକୁ ସୁତନା
ଭକୁଟି ଅଂକୁରମାନେ ନବ ବାରିପାତେ
ଯାହାପରେ କଳିଂଗର ଚତୁର୍ଭୁଜ ଥାଟ
ଚାଲିବେ ସଦର୍ପେ କରିବାକୁ ଠାବ ସେ ଦେବତା,
କରି କୋଳାଗ୍ରତ ଆଣିବାକୁ କଳିଂଗ କଟକେ
ଗଢ଼ିବାକୁ ଦୁଇ ସଭ୍ୟତାର ସଂଗମ ସାଗର,
ଶଂଖ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ମହାମାନବର ମୁଁ ମାତ୍ର ନିମିତ୍ତ,
ତମେ ମୋ ସଂଗିନୀ,
କେଉଁଆଡ଼େ ହାତଧରି
ନେଉଛ ସୁନ୍ଦରୀ,
କହ ମୋତେ ଖୋଲି ॥

Sachi Routay is the well-known poet of Orissa who received the highest literary award of India – the Jnanapitha award. This poem, specially composed for the OSA Journal, reflects the myth of locating Lord Jagannath who was hidden by a Sabara king. The theme describes the anguish of someone who cheats on his beloved in secretly planning to steal the Lord, but again he questions how can anyone keep the Lord of the Universe away from the humanity!



Has "Lajja" Gone With the Wind?

RICHARD A. SHWEDER

These days, long term residents of Bhubaneswar will tell you that the town has become hot, polluted and overgrown, and that there are no sea-breezes anymore. They have even begun to worry that some old and prized features of Oriya culture, for example the virtue of "lajja", will soon be gone with the wind.

What is "lajja?" It is certainly an old Oriya virtue, for it is mentioned in the Chandi Purana, the famous Oriya scripture about the Great Goddess of Hinduism, composed in the 15th century by Sarala Das. And it was once a prized Oriya virtue, which even today is associated with the Goddess Durga, and is sometimes likened to a beautiful ornament worn by women. But what is it? And why are so many Oriyas worried that it may soon disappear? Before answering these questions let me tell you an abbreviated story about my first acquaintance with Orissa and my first experience with "lajja".

In a way, I have been a long-term (even if occasional) resident of Bhubaneswar. It was exactly thirty years ago this summer that my wife and I began doing research in the shadow of Lingaraj, in the old temple town. On June 12, 1968, our plane blew into New Delhi on a dust storm, where it was 112 degrees. We flew on to Calcutta, where the monsoon had just begun, made our way through the chaos of Howrah Train Station and bedded down on a wooden bench in a third class sleeper on the overnight Puri Express. Shouts of "Chinna Badam" at train stops are all I can remember of the ride. We woke up in Bhubaneswar, jumped on a bicycle rickshaw and said to the driver "Tankapani Road jauchhu, Brahmeshwar Mandira pakhare."

In those days, Tankapani Road was a rather serene goat path. Near the beginning of the lane, not far from the intersection with Lewis Road was the Raja Rani Temple. Beyond that there were very few houses. The only phone on the lane was Bhubaneswar phone number 64, which belonged to Sri Nilamani Senapati, I.C.S. (retired), who lived far down the road and off the way - Brahmeshwar Mandir pakhare. We were his guests for the summer.

At the time Nilamani Senapati was the Gazetter of the State of Orissa; indeed, if you look in the Sambalpur Gazette you will find a photograph of my wife, Candy Shweder, twenty-one years old at that time, modeling a Sambalpuri sari. That summer Senapati introduced us to a broad circle of his friends and educated us in Oriya culture, while taking a great interest in our various escapades in and around the temple town. At dawn, we observed the ablutions at Kedar Gouri tank and Mukteshwar temple. During the day we visited villages on our Rajdoot motor cycle and conducted interviews with temple priests. In the

early evening we attended melas in the old town. And of course there were hours and hours of conversation on "Uncle's" roof, where one could catch the sea-breeze in the evening and enjoy an undisturbed view of the Brahmeshwar temple and the paddy fields beyond. "Uncle" was an Indian gentleman, and like many gentlemen of his generation he had a bearer, a cook, a driver, a gardener, a house sweeper, a house guard, and a personal secretary. It was that summer that I met Sashi Misra and Manamohan Mahapatra and formed many life-long friendships in Orissa. And it was that summer that I first ran into the virtue called "lajja".

"Lajja" is not an easy concept for a contemporary American to understand. When I first started doing research in Bhubaneswar, my Oriya friends would sometimes recommend someone as a research assistant by saying (in English), "She is a very shy girl. You should hire her." Their recommendations would baffle me. In the United States the English word "shy" implies meekness, timidity, insecurity and weakness (not to mention such culture-specific metaphors as "sheepish" and "mousy"). To describe someone as "shy" is not the way to recommend them for a job. Or so I thought.

What I did not realize at the time was that my Oriya friends were using the English word "shy" as a translation of the Oriya word "lajja", which they also sometimes translated as "shame" or "embarrassment". What my Oriya friends did not realize at the time was that all of those translations are misleading.

Consider, for example, the translation of "lajja" as "shame". If you ask middle-class Anglo-Americans to judge "which is the odd one out: happiness, shame or anger?" their response will be "happiness is the odd one out" (on the grounds that "happiness" is pleasant while "shame" and "anger" are unpleasant) or they may say "shame is the odd one out" (on the grounds that "shame" is humiliating and makes you feel small and weak, while "happiness" and "anger" make you feel strong, big and puffed up). They will never say "anger is the odd one out". Now consider the supposed Oriya language translations of happiness (sukha), shame (lajja) and anger (raga). Thirty years ago if you asked an Oriya in Orissa "which is the odd one out: sukha, lajja or raga?" they were most likely to say "rage (anger) is the odd one out" (on the grounds that "raga" is destructive of social relationships while "sukha" and "lajja" are good and powerful things, which bind people to each other).

In other words it is misleading to translate "lajja" as shame, or embarrassment, or shyness. It is something else. Something closer to propriety, civility or respect-

ful restraint. In the 18th and early 19th century the English novelist Jane Austin knew all about the idea of "lajja" or "respectful restraint", but it is a relatively unacknowledged or dormant virtue or emotion in the cosmopolitan Western world today. So when my Oriya friends said "She is a very shy girl; you should hire her", I did not understand that in their minds the English word "shy" (as the translation of "lajja") was meant to imply unpretentious, being mindful of another person's status and sense of honor, not brazen, not arrogant, not egocentric, having humility, self-restrained, elegant, decent and good.

I recently returned (March 1998) from my seventh visit to Bhubaneswar (in 1982-83 my wife and I returned for a year with our two children, and we have been back several times since). It was hot, over 90 degrees in February, and the winter was only ten days long. There was no sea-breeze. The telephone system worked very well, which means that old "calling system" (visiting friends before dining at home) is dying. The town (once a real "jungle", now a "concrete jungle") spreads beyond the Khandagiri caves and the serenity and dignity of many of the historical sites are being destroyed by development. Shiva must have been napping while that ugly multi-story apartment building complex was being built in close proximity to, and in direct sight of, the Mukteshwar temple complex. A condo is being constructed near the Brahmeshwar Mandir, in what was once a bamboo grove, on what was once Uncle

Senapati's land. And now, for the first time, people are beginning to think that "lajja" does not get you anywhere in Delhi or Manhattan. They worry that even in Bhubaneswar, among the younger generation, "lajja" may be going out of style. Is this just sentimentalism, the predictable nostalgia of an aging generation for the values and vistas of the past, or is it an early warning sign for those of us who love Orissa to take a greater interest in the preservation of Parvati's second home? What do you think? In the contemporary world of India and of the United States, is the old Oriya feminine ideal of "lajja" something valuable, which deserves to be prized and preserved, or is merely some out of date ornament, which deserves to be forgotten, scorned and discarded?

[For those interested in reading more about Oriya "lajja" and its connection to the Great Goddess of Hinduism, see Usha Menon and Richard A. Shweder "Kali's Tongue: Cultural Psychology and the Power of 'Shame' in Orissa, India, In Emotion and Culture, Shinobu Kitayama and Hazel Markus (Eds.), American Psychological Association Books: Washington, D.C. (1994) or Richard A. Shweder and Usha Menon "Dominating Kali: Hindu Family Values and Tantric Power", In Jeffrey Kripal and Rachel McDermott (Eds.), Encountering Kali: Cultural Understanding at the Extremes, In press.]

— Richard A. Shweder, a cultural anthropologist, is Professor and Chairman of the Committee on Human Development at the University of Chicago.

Information Technology Infrastructure Of Orissa

CHITTA BARAL

In his inauguration speech at the first National Conference in Information Technology — NCIT 97 — held in Bhubaneswar in Dec 1997, the additional chief secretary of Orissa, Mr. P. K. Mishra, compared Orissa with Tamilnadu and Karnataka in terms of the number of engineering graduates per year. While Karnataka graduates 20,000 engineers per year and Tamilnadu graduates 25,000 engineers per year, Orissa graduates only 2,100 engineers per year. Even taking into account the populations of these states — Orissa's population is 31.66 million while Karnataka's is 44.977m and Tamilnadu's is 55.859m — Orissa is way behind these states. No wonder Bangalore and Chennai are the destinations for major technology companies. This reality is disheartening. But the good news is that despite the not so good economic state of affairs of the Orissa government, in the last couple of years some major steps have been taken and several events have happened — some with NRO initiatives — which is very promising for Orissa.

To start with when I finished my I.Sc. in 1983 there were two established general Engineering Colleges in Orissa (REC Rourkela and UCE Burla) and one had just opened in Bhubaneswar (CET). In the next five years IGIT was established in Sarang, Talcher and the first private Engineering College, Orissa College of Engineering was established in the Bhubaneswar area. Guess how many Engineering colleges are there in Orissa now? Around Seventeen. About 10 of them — all private — have been established in the last 2 years. Some of them are: Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, C. V. Raman, Institute of Technology and Engineering Research (all in BBSR), Ajai Binay — for Architecture, Jagannath Inst of Engg Tech (both in Cuttack), National Inst of Science and Tech and SMIT (both in Berhampur), Ghanashyam Hemalata Inst of Engg and Technology, FCI engineering college, Barapada Engineering college, Paralakhemundi Engg College, Gunpur Engg College, etc. Besides, there are already more than 10

places that offer University affiliated MCA program. Some of them are: REC, UCE, IGIT, Utkal Univ, Sambalpur Univ, Berhampur University, Ravenshaw College, Khallikote College, KIIT, Orissa Computer Academy, IISIT, etc. The last three are private institutions in Bhubaneswar. In December 1997, the Orissa govt approved another 8-10 private institutions to offer MCA, and I am aware of additional institutions that are in the planning stage.

I applaud the government for opening and encouraging the private sector to invest in higher education. On the other hand there may be some worries about the nature of operations at these new private institutions and colleges. Most of them require significant capitation fees which they use towards their operation. But they are required to set aside certain percentages — I think 50% — of the seats for purely merit based admission without capitation fees. Despite many critics, I consider this to be a positive development and added opportunity for us (NROs) to be involved in helping and making sure these institutions provide adequate faculty and facilities. Since they are private they are much more flexible, are more amenable to new ideas, and can incorporate them faster. For example, I was told that NIST in Berhampur has students who work as teaching assistants. Similarly, both NIST and KIIT in Bhubaneswar have good email and Internet access. In Dec-Jan 97-98 I had the opportunity to interact with some of these private institutions, their faculty and their students. In terms of facilities and vision I was impressed with KIIT, with its campus in Patia on the Nandan Kanan road. They had an excellent computer lab, a very nice and clean building — with warning signs not to spit — and a visionary in Dr. P. K. Mishra, who is looking for top notch visiting faculty from any where. Although I did not visit NIST in Berhampur, I met a few faculty from there and I have corresponded with its founders. One of its founders works at Lucent and the other was in US for several years. Their course structure was developed by leading NRO computer professors from US. I also met faculty and students from OEC, Orissa Computer Academy and IISIT and visited IISIT's campus. They all seemed to me in good shape. I came to know about this recent development during my last visit to Bhubaneswar. Some of these institutions sponsored luncheons, dinners, and cultural activities at the other major event that happened in 1997, the NCIT 97 conference. Now a few words on my impression on this conference: NCIT-97, the national conference on information technology was held in Utkal University during Dec 21-23 with active organizational help from the faculty and students of the Dept. of Computer Science and Application of the Utkal university. It brought together Computer scientists and students (mostly of Oriya origin) from universities, institutes, and companies in Orissa, India, USA and Australia, such as: IIT Guwahati, U of Hyderabad, IISc Bangalore, Utkal, Berhampur, KIIT, NIST, OEC, REC, IISIT, ACE, Texas A & M, HCL, Adobe, VLSI Tech, etc. There were also participants from Orissa government and state enterprises such as OSEDC and OCAC.

Some of the highlights of the conference were:

- Keynote addresses by Prof. L. M. Patnaik of IISc Bangalore, one of the top computer scientists in India; and by Prof. S. K. Pal from ISI Calcutta.
- An interesting array of technical talks and panels.
- A panel session where the director of NIC and the Chief exec of OCAC outlined the procedure of how educational institutions in Orissa can get Internet access from them at minimal cost.
- A consistent attendance between 150-250 in all sessions.
- A beautiful cultural show held in the first evening at the Kalinga Inst of Industrial Tech campus in Patia, BBSR. The show had Odissi, chhau and other dances from Orissa.
- A panel on studying abroad, where many details about the procedure to study in USA and Australia were discussed.
- The formation of the Orissa Information Technology Society, with Dr. S. P. Mishra as its founding president. (Dr. Mishra has taught Physics and Mathematics in Ravenshaw college, REC RKL, Institute of Physics; and is currently also the President of Orissa Science Academy. He has been championing the use of email and Internet.
- The announcement of a similar conference in December 1998 (which is now called ICIT 98), with Prof. L. M. Patnaik as the Conference Chair and Prof. Rabi Mohapatra — rabi@cs.tamu.edu (Texas A & M Univ), Dr. A. K. Pujari (Chief Exec OCAC), and Prof. G. Panda (REC Rourkela) as program chairs.

The abstracts of NCIT 97 is available at <http://cs.utep.edu/chitta/ncit97> and the details about ICIT'98 is available at <http://www.cs.tamu.edu/cit'98>. As an illustration of how an idea became a reality, I would now like to briefly describe how this conference came about. Dr. Hrushikesh Mohanty, a Reader in computer science at the University of Hyderabad was trying to organize one of the Indian computer science conferences in Orissa and in that context had discussions with Dr. Meher of Utkal University. The conference did not materialize, but as a result Dr. Mohanty felt strongly the need for establishing an organization which he called Orissa Computer Congress, which, among other things, would make it easier to arrange for such Computer related events in Orissa. In September of 1997, I posted a message to ornet@cs.columbia.edu enquiring about a friend of mine from IIT Kharagpur. Dr. Mohanty, who is also an alumnus of IIT KGP, replied to my message and we exchanged several mails enquiring about each other. During this exchange he mentioned about Orissa Computing Congress. This idea

struck a chord in me and I suggested that perhaps we should have it that December. Within a few days Dr. Mohanty took care of some of his prior plans for December and we decided to have a conference on computing in December in Bhubaneswar. We decided that we will have it in whatever scale possible and with whatever help we can get. Our first contact in Bhubaneswar was Jyoti Nanda from NIC who was known to Dr. Mohanty and who had email access at NIC. While Jyoti organized a group in Bhubaneswar, Dr. Mohanty and myself used ornet@cs.columbia.edu to spread the word in the cyberspace. Unfortunately due to a fatal scooter accident Jyoti left us before seeing his dream fulfilled. Dr. Meher and his colleagues from the Dept of Computer Science and application at Utkal University, and Suchitra Patnaik, CEO, Tekons Services, Bhubaneswar and one of the co-founders of ORICOM — the first private computer firm in Orissa which was established around 1986 — took over the organizational aspects in Orissa. They also suggested to broaden the conference scope and name from 'computers' to 'information technology'. In the US, Dr. Rabi Mohapatra and Purna Mohanty helped in the organization.

In the conference Dr. Mohanty, Dr. Meher and myself met each other for the first time. In other words from the conception to its occurrence much of the communication about the conference was done through Internet.

Recall that the Orissa Computing Congress was initially envisioned as an organization. Along these line, there was a business meeting during the conference where "Orissa Information Technology Society" was established. Here are some of the by-laws of this society:

A. The Society is named as the Orissa Information Technology Society, hereinafter referred as OITS.

B. Membership of OITS: Any professional in Information Technology or interested in the same shall be eligible to be a member of OITS.

C. Aims and Objectives of OITS is to

- i. promote education and research in information technology (IT) primarily in Orissa.
- ii. promote collaboration of information technology personnel in Orissa and abroad.
- iii. promote the usage of IT products in Orissa.
- iv. organize annual conferences/symposia and workshops in IT areas.
- v. publish periodicals and journals on IT
- vi. discuss and encourage young talents on IT.
- vii. felicitate persons having outstanding contributions for education, research and technology in IT areas.

Additional information on this organization is available at <http://cs.utep.edu/chitta/occ> and the main contact persons are Dr. S. P. Mishra (spmishra@acad.ori.nic.in or scacad@ori.ori.nic.in@nicnet.nic.in) and myself (chitta@cs.utep.edu). I consider the establishment of private engineering colleges, and MCA granting institutes, the holding of NCIT 97 and the establishment of OITS to

be major events that will have a big impact on the IT infrastructure of Orissa. But, all these still leave out large part of Orissa unimpacted with information technology infrastructure. Here, I am referring to places that are not close to an university, or an engineering college or a college with post graduate programs. One other recent Orissa govt decision is aimed at this. Again, as an illustration of going from ideas to policy, I now describe my perspective and involvement on this.

During the Invest Orissa Symposium at Houston in June-July 97, I met several Orissa ministers and bureaucrats. To provide educational opportunities in information technology all through out Orissa — not just in a selected few places — I suggested them that colleges offering science degrees in Orissa should offer programs in B.Sc (Hons) in Computer Science. The main importance of such a program is that it could be made available in many more colleges than programs like B.Engg or MCA which by definition can only be in engineering colleges and post graduate colleges, respectively. With positive response from them and from participants at OSA 97, and with feedback from Ornet, I sent a written proposal to the Orissa govt. (This proposal is available at <http://cs.utep.edu/chitta/orissa/bsc>.) When I visited Orissa in Dec 97, I met the additional Chief secretary, Secretary of Education and Secretary of Science and Technology and the Orissa govt took a decision to establish pilot programs in B.Sc (Hons) in Computer Science (together with pass options with other honours choices) in six colleges: B.J.B College, Bhubaneswar; Ravenshaw College, Cuttack; G. M. College, Sambalpur; Khallikote College, Berhampur; R. D. Women's College, Bhubaneswar; and Govt College, Rourkela. (Earlier, S.C.S college in Puri had been authorized and funded by UGC for a vocational B.Sc program — but without honors — in Computer Science.) Although the program is designed so as to utilize as much of the current available infrastructure as possible — such as, retraining current science faculties in computer science and using the class rooms and offices that are already there, there is still some cost involved and the Orissa government can not afford to have this programs at too many places in one go. But, once the model is established I hope OSA members and others will pitch in to have these programs in their favorite colleges, or in colleges in places near and dear to them.

So far I have mostly discussed the IT infrastructure of Orissa in terms of educational opportunities, the OITS and the NCIT and ICIT conferences. Now a brief picture on the other aspects. Currently, the main national software companies with operations in Bhubaneswar are Infosys Technology and Satyam Computers. There are also several smaller companies such as ORICOM and TEKONS services. I am excited by a recent venture being planned by Prabhu Mohapatra (prabhu@aiol.com) and Suchitra Patnaik. Their company called "All India On Line" envisions to play the role of "AOL" in India. Prabhu has a ISP (Internet Service Provider) company in the USA and will be taking his experience to India. Some of the other orga-

nizations in Bhubaneswar that play a big role in information technology are: Software Technology Park (STP), Xaviers School of Management (XIM), Orissa Computer Application Center (OCAC), National Informatics Center (NIC), and Orissa State Electronic Development Corporation (OSED). Some of the individuals in Orissa that are actively involved in IT aspects are: Dr. Sanghamitra Mohanty (Utkal University), Dr. Surendra Nayak (On deputation to Dept of Sc and Technology, Orissa govt), Laxman Mohanty (ORICOM), Rakesh Agrawal (INFOSYS), Manas Ranjan Patra (Berhampur Univ), Manas Patnaik (STP), and Dr. Manoj Nayak (OUAT).

To round off the good aspects of the IT infrastructure, I would like to applaud the decision taken by the Orissa government to declare areas around Bhubaneswar as pollution free and not to allow any polluting industries in that area. I was impressed that the ministers were actively marketing this feature of Bhubaneswar to potential Info tech investors during the Houston symposium.

How can we help?

One major drawback I noticed during my visits were the low usage and awareness of Internet in Orissa. Even though NIC has facilities where by educational institutions can get free (almost) Internet access, very few institutions have taken advantage of it. Besides awareness, the major problem most institutions face is the equipment: Not the computer which many have, but the modem. One of OITS's major agenda is to change this state of affairs. I would appeal to the readers of this article to help in this. Please tell your friends, family and acquaintances about Internet. If necessary, arrange with Dr. S. P. Mishra for a demo at one of the sites where it is available. Buy a modem and/or a computer for a school or college. There are some private ISP providers in Orissa and many more will be coming within the next few months. Arrange for email access for your family and friends back home. Unless Orissa is more Internet aware we will be left behind.

I would like to arrange for cyberchats with prominent Orissians. To start with it would be great if we could have our current leaders like Naveen Patnaik and J. B. Patnaik chat with Oriyas in the cyberspace over the Internet. I would urge people involved in IT aspects to help the educational institutions in Orissa, particularly the govt ones. They seem to me little behind in terms of IT infrastructure. (They normally have the best faculty and students though.) While some of the private engineering colleges now have Internet, none of the govt engineering colleges have them.

I think we can also help in terms of developing new courses, programs, and revising current courses and programs. In particular, the current MCA and B.Engg programs in Orissa (except perhaps the the B.Engg programs at Berhampur University) need a thorough revision. Also, I

feel that the B.A and B.Com programs should have Hons and pass in Information Systems. I envision the B. Com (Hons) in Information Systems program to be similar to the Bachelor in Information Systems programs offered in Business schools in the USA. Any one interested in this aspect can contact me for more detailed information on how to go about it with the Orissa Universities and Orissa government. Such programs will take IT closer to all corners of Orissa, not just to a handful of places. The UGC in India encourages new vocational courses and often funds them. For example, the initial B.Sc in computer science program at S.C.S. college in Puri came about due to a proposal submitted by S.C.S. college to UGC. We should help colleges in such endeavors. On the other hand people among us in high tech and emerging areas such as biotechnology and environmental science and engineering should help establish and support post graduate, Ph.D and research programs at the Orissa universities.

We can also help in establishing training institutes that train qualified people on emerging topics and help place the trained personnel. For example, I have heard of training schools in Chennai that offer training in SAP for about Rs 1 lakh and are able to place their graduates in the USA. I know of one NRO who discussed such a plan with the Orissa government. To the best of my knowledge his ideas were warmly received by the government (particularly, the chief secretary and the OSED MD) and he was promised all help from them.

To conclude, I hope the examples in this article on how some ideas were made realities and how the Orissa govt is receptive to good ideas from us are useful. I feel the Orissa government as a whole is now a days very forward looking and accessible to us. I can not imagine setting up an appointment with the governor or secretary of state of Texas and discussing with him on a plan to introduce a new curriculum. But, I could, with no personal contacts and relationship, do it with the Orissa deputy CM, and chief secretary. One thing we need to remember is that the state of Orissa is not flush with money. In fact their balance is in bad shape. So when we discuss something which involves a lot of financial investment from the state it may be hard to get it done. On the other hand if our plan involves help from the state in terms of 'kind' (not hard cash) then the state will probably be more receptive. Hence, we should develop our ideas into plans that does not require substantial cash investment from the state.

I would like to encourage the readers to come up with additional ideas and plans, discuss them in forums such as Ornet and develop them into concrete documents, contact appropriate individuals and officials in Orissa, and proceed with its implementation. I personally would be happy to help in any such endeavor.

— Chitta Baral is a professor in Computer Science at the University of Texas at El Paso. He can be web-reached at <http://cs.utep.edu/chitta/chitta.html>.

ସୁନ୍ଦର ପୃଥ୍ବୀ

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ହେ ଇଶ୍ବର !

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ରୂପେଲି ଜୋଛନା ତଳେ
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ନିଜକୁ ନିରେଖୁ ଥରେ,
ଚାହିଁବାକୁ ଦିଅ ଅବସର ।

— Urmila Das is from Bhubaneswar, currently visiting her daughter Gopa Patnaik in San Diego.

Inauguration of the Kalinga Hospital

LALU MANSINHA
MANARANJAN PATTANAYAK

"...we are distressed in our minds to see the people suffering from various tribulations and injuries on account of diseases of somatic, psychic and traumatic origin, behaving helplessly and crying in agony In order to cure these people who desire to be relieved of diseases as well as to keep up normal health . . ."

— Susruta, Physician and Surgeon, circa 500 BC., Varanasi, India

On May 8th and 9th 1998 the Orissa State Association of Surgeons held its Annual Conference in the Kalinga Hospital campus in Bhubaneswar. Approximately 300 delegates from throughout Orissa attended the two day conference. Prominent guests were Dr. K. Ravindranath of the Apollo Hospital, Hyderabad and Dr. Nageswar Reddy of Medinova, Hyderabad. The keynote address was by Dr. S. Vittal, President of the Association of Surgeons India.

By itself an annual meeting of a group of medical specialists can be considered just another professional gathering. But for the Kalinga Hospital there was special significance in that within months of opening the Hospital has been accepted and recognised by the medical and surgical fraternity in Orissa and India.

There is of course the human side. On December 1, 1997, a resident of Bariapur, Cuttack District, in Orissa, India was admitted to the hospital with severe abdominal pain. He was diagnosed as suffering from appendicitis. The surgeon performed Laparoscopic Appendectomy. The patient had an uneventful recovery and was discharged. The terse, brief, language of the hospital records did not tell the whole story. Without intending to, both the surgeon and the patient made history. He is the first patient to undergo surgery in the just opened Kalinga Hospital. From the other side of the world a Minnesota resident and his family are also celebrating the opening of the Kalinga Hospital. On November 27 an unconscious patient, an American, arrived at Emergency. He has been sick for a week and had been unconscious for the last two days. The diagnosis was Cerebral Malaria. He was treated and was discharged after complete recovery on December 10, 1997.

These simple magical events, of sick and suffering patients becoming whole again, through ministration of the healing arts, represent what we are about. This represents just the beginning of the achievement of our goals to establish a hospital and research center of first magnitude in a region that does not have one.

The Charter of the Hospital, filed with the State Government, requires that upto 40% of outpatients must be

treated without consideration of ability to pay. Similarly 10% of hospital beds must be devoted to the poor and the indigent. The Kalinga Hospital is a hospital for the community.

Bhubaneswar, with over 300 temples of antiquity, is truly the City of Temples. In a way one can think of the Kalinga Hospital as a new temple, a house dedicated to the God or Goddess of Health, and of Wellbeing. We aim not only treat diseases; we hope to promote both longevity and the quality of life.

By June 1998, Phase I would be complete and the large multi-specialty hospital, with 175 beds, would be in full stream. There is no other hospital like it in Orissa and in contiguous areas of neighbouring states. Intensive care, open heart surgery, cardiac by-pass, kidney transplants, neurosurgery are just a few of the specialty services now available. We are now the major dialysis center in Orissa. The dialysis service, available since February 17, 1997, is now fully booked. Plans are afoot to purchase additional units and to extend working hours. There can be little doubt that the Kalinga Hospital will have a major and positive impact on health services in the capital region. A recent issue of Orissa Times points out the appalling situation prior to the opening of Kalinga Hospital. The two existing hospitals in the city are not well equipped for intensive care, and inadequate to meet the needs of 690,000 people of the capital region. If there is a medical emergency the patient has to be taken to the SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack. Even though the distance is only 30km, the heavy traffic on the National Highway ensures a travel time of two hours or more. The delays commonly result in fatality. Well, no longer. The Kalinga hospital is now only minutes away from most parts of Bhubaneswar and surround-

**The
Healing
Arts
Of The
World
in Orissa**

ing towns. With road, rail and air-taxi links, it will be the Hospital of last resort for most of the 32 million people in the state of Orissa. We also expect overflow patients from neighbouring states and with Bhubaneswar about to be designated an international airport, from neighbouring countries.

An earlier seminar was organised in Cuttack, on April 23, 1998, on the 'Role of the Kalinga Hospital in the Health Services of the State'. Dr. B.K. Nanda, former Principal of Srirama Chandra Bhanja Medical College presided over the seminar. Many eminent persons of Orissa, such as Girija Bhusan Patnaik, Prof. Rekha Mohanty, Gourhari Das, Dr. Basudev Kar, Dr. Krupasindhu Panda, Sri Shyam Sundar Padhi and Dr. R.N. Das attended the seminar.

The Chief Minister Shri J.B. Patnaik visited Kalinga Hospital on January 3, 1998. He appreciated the progress of the Hospital to date and the targets for the year 2000.

Another measure of recognition by the public, somewhat of a lighter import, is that two commercial movies have been shot on location on the campus and within the Kalinga Hospital Building. The print and electronic media coverage of the above events provided wide publicity for the hospital. It has been a long journey. The Kalinga Hospital started as an idea at a gathering in 1989 at the home of Dr. Ramesh Raichoudhury in Glen Cove, New York. Subsequently two companies were founded, Hospital Corporation of Orissa Inc. (HCO) in New York and the Kalinga Hospital Private Limited (KHPL) in Orissa were formed, with Dr. Ram Patnaik as the first CEO. Dr. Kailash Pani served as vice-President, Dr. Radhakanta Mishra as Secretary. Other active members at that time included Dr. Uma Mishra, Dr. Bhagabat Sahu and Dr. Panchanan Sathapathy. Mr. Madhab Dash moved back to India to supervise construction.

After an initial period of planning, financing, land acquisition and design finalisation, construction started in 1991. In 1994 a new executive slate was elected, with Ramesh Raichoudhury, MD taking over as President and CEO. Current officers are: Hara Mishra, MD, Vice President; Manaranjan Pattanayak, Executive Vice-President, responsible for the construction phase of the project; Uma Mishra, MD, Secretary Treasurer; Braja Mishra, MD, Chair, Personnel Committee; Braja Swain, MD, Chair, Equipment Committee; Dhiraj Panda, MD, Finance Committee. All are residents of the United States.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT KALINGA HOSPITAL

Clinical Services

Cardiology Cardio-thoracic Surgery Dental Surgery

Gastroenterology

General Surgery Medicine Neonatology Nephrology/ Dialysis

Neurology

Neurosurgery Obstetrics and Gynecology Orthodontics

Orthopedics

Paediatrics Plastic Surgery Urology

Diagnostic Services

ECG Gastroscopy, Colonoscopy Laparoscopic Surgery Radology-CT Scan

Sigmoidoscopy Ultra-Sound-X-Ray

Target, January 1, 2000: A complete modern health care center. 350 Beds Emergency Room and Trauma Center, 6 Operating Theaters, Laser Ophthalmic Surgery, Joint Replacement and Arthroscopic surgery, Linear Accelerator MRI Scans, Rehabilitation Microsurgery, Teaching Hospital Research Center, Burn Unit, Other Specialist Services.

In the Plans: Health Insurance Plan - In association with a health insurance provider, we are negotiating for issuance of insurance plans for travellers in the Bhubaneswar area, parents of residents of United States and Canada, as well as for local residents.

Kalinga Medical College: Being a large well equipped hospital brings with it the responsibility for teaching the next generation of physicians. We are in the process of drawing up plans to establish a medical college. The college will be affiliated with Utkal University.

A Plea for Continued Support

To construct a hospital of this scale requires capital. Therefore an infusion of capital will obviously help. In return for major donations, we are prepared to provide permanent and significant recognition in the form of bronze plaques. Beneficence will allow us to name room(s), major facility(ies) and operating theatre(s) after the benefactor. Please make your donations to the Kalinga Health, Education and Research Foundation Inc. (KHERF). US tax receipts will be issued. We offer the following suggestions for donations: \$2,500 for a room with 2 beds; \$5,000 for room with 6 beds; \$15,000 for Dialysis Unit; \$30,000 for Operating Theatre etc.

We are happy to announce and recognise the donation of Dr. Uma Mishra for the Cardiac Catheter Laboratory (\$30,000) and Dr. Pradip K. Swain (\$30,000) for the Out Patient Department. In the same humanitarian spirit please consider an appropriate donation.

A Plea for Equipment Donations

Expansion from the current 175 beds to a planned 350 beds, from the current 1 Operating Theatre to a planned 6 means that there is an immediate need for all types of medical, surgical and hospital equipment. A partial list is given below. If you know of any hospital that is disposing of usable equipment in working condition and of recent vintage, please suggest the Kalinga Hospital as a recipient of donated equipment. We are also prepared to purchase needed equipment if the price is right. Contact for donations is Manaranjan Pattanayak (215-493-8770) in USA, Lalu Mansinha (519-433-0854) in Canada.

- *Lalu Mansinha is a Member of the Board of Directors of Kalinga Hospital and is an active member of SEEDS (Sustainable Economic and Education Development Society).*

Sustainable
Economic and
Education
Development
Society

The SEEDS of Today are the Trees of Tomorrow

SEEDS Report to the
Community

Collated by LALU MANSINHA

SEEDS (Sustainable Educational and Economic Development Society) is a small group who originally 'met' through discussions on ORNET (ORissa NET) and decided to loosely organise, with the resolve of taking on small projects in to help those who are in need. Our funds are raised through personal donations, and through the OSA (Orissa Society of America). We search out projects where a small infusion of funds would make a substantial difference. It is important to emphasise that SEEDS is denomination neutral, with no religious affiliation. The overriding criterion is the betterment of the community through the SEEDS sponsored project.

It is important for sponsors and donors to recognise that every penny of donated funds goes to the project in Orissa. SEEDS members have developed a tradition of absorbing routine overhead costs such as postage, telephone etc. There is considerable personal interaction between SEEDS members and local project groups in Orissa. Each and every project is visited at least once every year by a SEEDS member and a report is sent on our SEEDSnet. Progress is monitored carefully to ensure that the aims and targets are adhered to. SEEDS is interested in any project that will improve the quality of life for the poor in both the cities and villages. A key idea of SEEDS is sustainability. After a few years of SEEDS help, five years at best, the project must be self-sustaining.

Last year SEEDS was involved with several projects: Drought relief work in the South Chilika area; Construction of the Srinivas Praharaj Memorial Library at the Kanyashram at Jalsapetta in Kalahandi; Well boring and pump at Dalijoda; Adopt A Student Project at Dalijoda; Community health (family planning, prevention of disease, nutrition) project with ASRA in the Jagatsinghpur-Naugaon-Balikuda region.

Detailed reports on the last three projects are presented below.

For the the next year (1998 - 1999) SEEDS plans to continue the last three projects: the school at Dalijoda, the Adopt A Student Project, and the ASRA projects and a community hospital in the delta area. This list is neither exclusive nor inclusive and SEEDS invites your participation in any or all projects, through donations, coordinating the fund raising for a specific project; supervising the execution of a project, or, initiating a new project.

SEEDS is now incorporated in Oregon, thanks to the efforts of Priyadarsan Patra. Efforts are underway to obtain tax-exempt status. A suggestion and legwork by Purna Mohanty has led to registration of our own domain name and the creation of our own web page. Asutosh Dutta who originally setup SEEDSnet has also volunteered to provide a host for our webpage.

CONTACTS:

For continuing information please visit the SEEDS webpage at:

www.seedsnet.org

You can join the SEEDS discussions by being a member of the network.

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Priyadarsan Patra <ppatra@ichips.intel.com> • 503-617-0667

The Dalijoda project has been visited by many SEEDS members, all of whom have reported very favourably on SEEDSNET. Recent visits were by Sujata Patnaik, Gopal Mohapatra, SriGopal Mohanty, ManaRanjan Pattanayak and Somdutt Behura. We present two of the reports in the following pages.

The Ashram

SOMDUTT BEHURA

A lot has been told about Dalijoda project, yet whatever we might say will be inadequate, for me personally, for the level of achievements and success of this Sri Aurobindo Ashram. At present my interest in Dalijoda is beyond SEEDS immediate interest. This is the temple

where my cousin sister's son was rehabilitated. I had been to Haripur, a place 5 kms from Dalijoda on several occasions, where my cousin sister lives. She became an widow seven months after marriage when her husband was killed in a road accident. She was pregnant with her son then. The boy was born with a mental disorder. It was the Ashram that rehabilitated him and nurtured him in a natural environment for more than 5 years. Prior to this visit I knew that my sister's son was going to one Aurobindo Ashram nearby, but never had a clue that this was Dalijoda. I am indebted to this Ashram forever. Many more like my sister have turned to this Ashram for help, and have been re-warded. By chance my visit coincided with one of the four festivity days that every Aurobindo Ashram celebrates. This was the anniversary of the day when the Mother first visited India. The school starts with meditation at 7:30 AM. The environment all over the surrounding is one of serenity and beauty. The music is one of spiritual, touching your soul at its depth. In the midst of this natural habitat I saw a group of yogis dedicating their life in self-sustainability and working toward, in their own little but resolute world, making the mother India a proud nation in the world. Seems little unbelievable. But this is true.

Every action initiated in the Ashram is directed toward this single philosophy of building world class responsible citizen.

One thing that has touched my heart most is the Ashram's goal of eradicating poverty in the locality by providing gainful employment to the local tribes. They receive their salary in cash or kind. Also Ashram provides essential goods in fair market price to the local community. In my video clipping you will see an involved interaction with the local tribes who are employed there. There are three distinct tribes with their own distinct dialects. The Ashram produces almost everything that they need, starting from paddy and vegetables to cash crop like sugarcane.

ASRA-SEEDS-IVAN

Community Health Project in Naugaon Block

Report by SRIGOPAL MOHANTY

ASRA (Association for Social Reconstructive Activities) has been active in the Jagatsinghpur-Balikuda-Naugaon area in providing tubewells for drinking water, health services, community hospital, old-age home and many more community development activities. IVAN (India Voluntary Action Network) is an organisation in Canada with aims similar to SEEDS. IVAN and SEEDS have sponsored a three year Community Health Awareness project. The first year of the project has already started. The objective is to develop awareness on family planning, prevention of disease and nutrition among the poor in the delta area. Eleven Motivators have been selected. Each

Motivator will be trained and will be responsible for 10 villages. The Motivators are from the nearby villages and know the region. The Motivators are trained at the Rural Health Center (RHC) at Jagatsinghpur. The RHC is an unit of the SCB Medical College in Cuttack. The staff of RHC are comprised of Professors from SCB, and local staff of the Jagatsinghpur Hospital. The training syllabus is prepared by RHC, under the direction of Dr. Rabi Raut. The RNC will continue to give technical guidance for the duration of this project. Dr. Bishbu Mishra, Retired Professor and Head of Surgery will be assisting ASRA.

The Motivators will go to each village and conduct preliminary survey of families in each village and then work to teach each family basic hygiene, family planning, nutrition and health care. Each motivator will have a basic medical kit. ASRA and RHC will continuously monitor progress on the project.

I was also taken by Samir Babu to visit other ASRA projects in the area: The School for Mentally Retarded Children at Jagatsinghpur: Twenty students stay at this residential school and are looked after by a Principal, two regular teachers and a music teacher. Old Age Home at Raghunathpur: About 25 old men and women, all destitute, live with some dignity at this home.

Hospital at Naugaon: This hospital needs to be expanded to provide surgery and gynecology services to 150 villages in the area.

Adopt A Student Project at Dalijoda

SEEDS -AASP

SUJATA PATNAIK and GOPAL MOHAPATRA

The Adopt-A-Student Project of SEEDS aims to help poor children in Orissa to get a proper education. Many poor parents cannot afford to send their children to school. Some children are forced to work from an early age to help the family budget. The mission of AASP is to help provide a way out of the poverty cycle for the children, to fulfil their dreams, so they do not continue to be indigent and poor like their parents. Without the scholarship poverty would force the student to work for a living. Each sponsor pays \$12/month per student. SEEDS arranges to the equivalent in rupees as a scholarship, to pay for food, clothing, school materials and medical care. Name and profile of the student and periodic progress reports, can be sent to the sponsor on request. The sponsor may also visit the school and get acquainted with the student. The school is Sri Aurobindo Purnanga Vidyapitha, situated at Dalijoda. The school provides free education to the nearby villages. Currently 33 students are being sponsored by AASP. Additional 20 students are waiting for sponsors. It is only rare that one can positively turnaround life of a youth with only a few dollars. Here is an opportunity. Please consider adopting a student.

The Sound of Flowing Water

A Report on the SEEDS Dalijoda Project
MANA RANJAN PATTANAYAK

Shri Dharanidhar Pal gave a brief speech to the small gathering, outlining the contribution of SEEDS to this project. On behalf of SEEDS I thanked him for allowing our group a role in this community. Then I cut the red ribbon, opened the door of a small shed and flipped a switch. The pump started humming and water gushed out from the well and into the channel. Against the backdrop of the serenity of the countryside and the school, the sound of flowing water was like music.

For, on the parched earth, the water was a promise of everything vital. In the faces of the school children, the teachers and in the produce of the earth around me I saw a reflection of everything that SEEDS stands for.

Coming from bustling Bhubaneswar, the campus appeared to me to be an oasis of peace. I found a beauty and serenity that was so unique that I resolved to bring my wife Minati to this spot next time we were in Orissa. I am not religious, but Minati is. She would be happy to know that I found peace here without seeking. I was happy that SEEDS is associated with Sri Aurobindo Purnanga Vidyapitha and I was delighted to be the representative of SEEDS on this inauguration of the pump and well. I was very conscious that I have not been an active member. This project was initiated by Gopal Mohapatra, who has directed it to completion. Major contribution to the execution of the project has been through Sujata Patnaik and the personal knowledge and contacts of Somdutt Behura. As is the practice in SEEDS, many others have helped in the project through site visits, discussions and ideas.

I spent about half a day at the school, the ashram. After the inauguration I was asked by the teachers to give a talk on the school system in America. My knowledge of the school system in United States and Canada is indirect, picked up on the way as my daughter and children of my friends went to school. It was an impromptu talk lasting an hour, totally unprepared and unrehearsed. The questions that followed my presentation were very perceptive, particularly from the young students. The approach to Dalijoda is by National Highway towards Dhenkanal, 45km from Bhubaneswar, and then 10km on the Tangi-Haripur road. The area is near Kapilas. Along the way the scenery changes from the flatness of the delta to the scrub and forested hilly tracts. As the car approached Dalijoda, I had a sudden flash. I had been here before many years back, with friends, for hunting. I remember this area as a dense forest at that time, with much wildlife. Only tribals lived in the region. There was no cultivation and no agriculture.

Followers of Sri Aurobindo had a dream to set up an Ashram in Orissa. The opportunity came in 1970 when 200 acres of land around Dalijoda was put up for sale. With

funds collected through donations and with bankloans the property was purchased in the name of Sri Aurobindo Srikshetra Trust. The Ashram started in 1974, as a dedicated community of sadhaks.

Approximately 60 acres of uneven hilly land with poor washed out soil was cleared, leveled and made into cultivable land. Part of the land was cleared for dairy farming. Houses for the Ashram and school were built. Slowly an independent, self-sustaining community has developed. Paddy, pulses, oil-seeds, flowers, sugar cane and seasonal vegetables are cultivated. The Ashram has its own tractors and bullocks. There is emphasis on organic farming and avoidance of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. A fruit orchard was developed.

Approximately 22 acres of cashew, mango, jackfruit and guava trees have been planted. The dairy has about 20 heads of cows and provides milk for the Ashram and the surrounding community. Excess milk is used to make sweets. I tasted peda made at the Ashram. It was the tastiest peda I have ever had in my life. It was delicious. The Ashram earns an income through sale of the grains, fruits, flowers, vegetables and milk to the surrounding villages. The income not only makes the Ashram self-sustaining, but also allows the Ashram to offer employment to many local tribals and villagers. The agricultural activity at Dalijoda brought back memories of my youth, when at 19, I also took up farming for three years. The mix of tractor, bullocks and people reminded me of my youth. Perhaps inside me there is regret that I gave up farming to enter the steel industry.

What I saw on my first visit to the Ashram and school was a community of smiling faces, each going about cheerfully about their tasks. I saw a teacher-student relationship that I have not observed before in Orissa. There was not the usual fear of teachers, no sign of obsequence. And yet there was a dignity, affection and mutual respect. I liked the team-work that I saw. Every sadhak is addressed by everyone as bhai (brother), an equal among equals. This is so strikingly different from the differential rank-conscious behaviour elsewhere in Orissa and India. The sadhaks get no salary, but their food, shelter and other needs are provided for. Since there was no school in the area, the Ashram started the Sri Aurobindo Purnanga Vidyapitha, which now has Grade I to Grade X. They now have 240 students, mostly from tribal and low-income families. The students are taught not only the standard curriculum, but also agriculture, floriculture and gardening. Teamwork, responsibility, organisation are the skills that are imparted. The practical training has not affected the academic quality. Since 1986 the students HSC examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education. The average success rate is 68%. After leaving the school many students have moved on, taking up government service or higher studies. However, many have returned as sadhaks to the Ashrama and a few have come back to the school as teachers.

Gopal Mohapatra of SEEDS came to know of a problem with water. In this hilly area, there is a shortage of water during the dry summer months. There is insufficient water for drinking as well as for irrigation. The continuing income of the Ashram from sale of produce was insufficient to install a deep bore well and pump. After the usual detailed project application from the school, and discussion over SEEDSnet, the project was approved. Gopal Mohapatra agreed to oversee the execution of the deep bore well and the pump. Prior to the drilling Somdutt Behura brought in his personal expertise on boring wells in that area. As a result the costs were brought down substantially. The tubewell is emplaced in a good aquifer at 165ft depth, cased with PVC pipe. An electric pump is used to draw the water for use for drinking and irrigation. The flow rate appears to be adequate at present, but performance during the dry summer months will be the true test.

In some sense the school is bringing a structural change to the community. Twenty-five years ago there was only goat and cattle herding available as professions. Literacy was low. Now it is now possible for young boys and girls to think of being engineers, scientists or modern farmers. This is a reenactment of the story of my life, and the story of so many of us from Orissa. From the half day that I spent in visiting the school, talking to teachers and students, I have come back with the conviction that SEEDS should provide help with a Vocational Training Center at the school. Although the school provides practical training on ongoing activities on the campus, it needs a well-equipped vocational training center. Here machinshop, computers, sewing machines etc can be setup to teach other technical skills.

Report by SOMDUTT BEHURA

ASRA's health project is well in progress. ASRA has trained 11 individuals for their projects. I met seven of them in Naugaon. They have taken a small office next to the hospital building. Currently all the volunteers are involved in data collection for the locality. I was really impressed with the data sheet that ASRA has created for this purpose. It takes into consideration every details that a volunteer needs to know before he starts his immunization and family planning activities. The medical tool kits have already been bought. The dedication and morale of the volunteers are very high. The data collection phase will end this month. Samirbabu has clearly indicated that because of the nature of the project, he can't assure the extent of the success. But from his side he will not leave any stone unturned to make the project successful.

Besides SEEDS project, I visited other ASRA project areas, including the Old age home in Raghunathpur. I think ASRA is providing a great service, and SEEDS to continue to support its cause. Particularly of interest is ASRA's Naugaon hospital. In terms of massive constructive return to the society capital investment in the infrastuctural facilities has been kept at the bare minimum level. ASRA is looking for two kind of help from SEEDS:

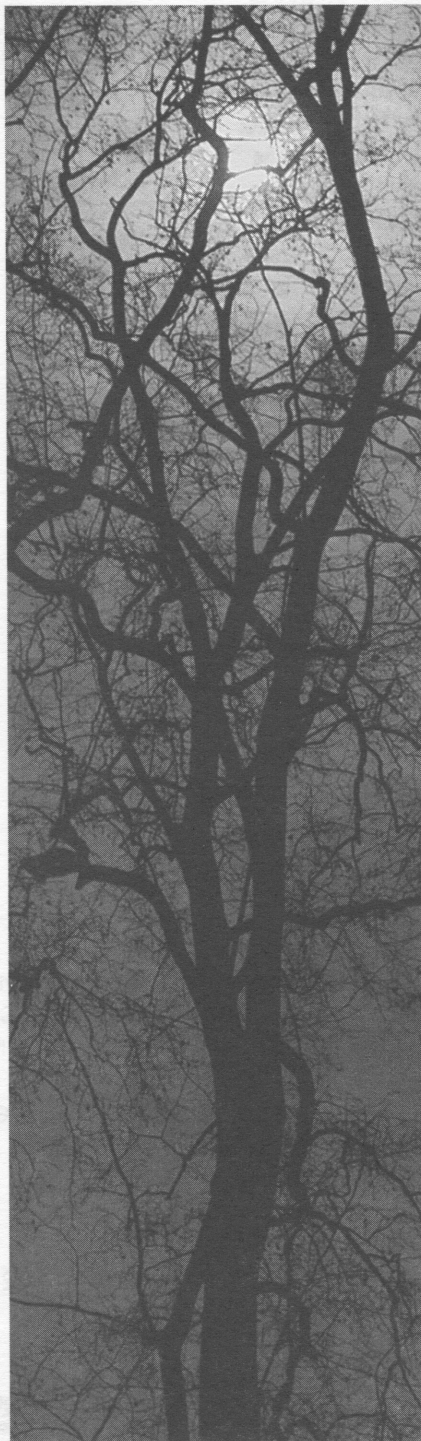
- 1) If the help is around Rs. 3 lakhs then they would like to use the money for completing the building.
- 2) If it is more than Rs 3 lakhs they would prefer using them for buying medical equipments.

I have brought a video clippings of Mentally Retarded school in Jagatsinghpur. This is a school that deserves our praise. A particular student drew my attention most. This boy is a genius. You need to see him to believe.





In Memorium



ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ପୁରୁଷ

ଡଃ ସରୋଜିନୀ ଷଡ଼ଙ୍ଗୀ

ଶତାବ୍ଦୀ ପୁରୁଷ ତୁମେ
ରାଧାନାଥ ॥

ଦିନ, ମାସ ବର୍ଷ ନୁହେଁ
ଯୁଗ ନୁହେଁ— ଯୁଗାନ୍ତର ନୁହେଁ
ବିଂଶ ଏଇ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀର
ଆରମ୍ଭରୁ ଶେଷ ଯାଏଁ
ଶତାବ୍ଦୀର ଆୟୁନେଇ
ତୁମେ ହିଁ ତ ଜଳିଥିଲୁ
ଭଞ୍ଜଳ ନକ୍ଷତ୍ର ଭଳି
ଭଞ୍ଜଳର ମୁଖ ଆକାଶରେ
ତୁମେ ହିଁ ତ ଭଞ୍ଜଳର ରତ୍ନ ହୋଇ
ମଣ୍ଡିତ ଆପାଣାଲ୍ । ଏ
ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଗାଆଁ ଦାଣ୍ଡ
ଧାନଭିଲ, ବନ ଝରଣାରେ ।

ପରିହରି ସକଳ ଆଦିଳ
ତୁମେ ତ ସରଳତମ
ତୁମେ ତ ନିର୍ମଳତମ
ନିଷ୍ଠାପର ଜୀବନର
ନିଜ୍ଞକ ପ୍ରତିମା
ତୁମେ ତ ନିବିଡ଼ତମ
ସଂଗ୍ରାମର ମହା ଯୋଦ୍ଧା
ସତ୍ୟବାଦୀ “ପଂଚସଖା”
ତଳରେ ମନ୍ଦିତ ହୋଇ
ଆଦରିଲ ଜନତାର ସେବା ।

ଶିଶୁପୁତ୍ରଟିଏ ଭଳି
‘ସମାଜ’ର ହାତ ଧରି
ତୁମେ ହିଁ ତ ଦେଖାଇଲ
ସମାଦର ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ
ତୁମେ ହିଁ ତ ‘ସମାଜ’କୁ
ନିର୍ବିକାରେ ଶୁଣାଇଲ
ସତ୍ୟ ଆଉ ନିର୍ଭୀକ ହେବାର
ଅଭିନବ ଦୃର୍ଯ୍ୟ ।

ସାମାଜିକ ନୁହଁ ଖାଲି
ନୁହଁ ଖାଲି ଜନନେତା
ସମାଜ ସେବକ
ଦେଶପ୍ରେମୀ ରାଧାନାଥ
ଜଳାଇଲ ସଂଗ୍ରାମର ମହାଦୀପ
ପୁଟାଇଲ ସଂକଳର ଅକ୍ଷୟ ଗୋଲ୍‌ଫ
କିଏ କହେ ଏ ତୁମର ମହାନିଦ୍ରା ?
ତୁମେ ତ ପଢ଼ିଛ ଶୋଇ
ପୁଣିଥରେ ଉଠିବାକୁ ଚକ୍ଷୁଷ୍ଟାନ ହୋଇ
କିଏ କହେ ଏ ତୁମର ମହାଯାତ୍ରା ?
ଏ ଯାତ୍ରାତ’ ବିଜୟର ଜୟଯାତ୍ରା
କନ୍ୟାକୁମାରୀର କୃଷ୍ଣକୁ
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ଏ ଯାତ୍ରା ତ ଏକ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଆୟୁଷ୍ଟାନ ଯାତ୍ରା
ଏ ଯାତ୍ରାତ ସହସ୍ରଟି
ଶରଦ ଶିଖାରେ ସ୍ମିତ
ନିର୍ଭୀକ ପୁରୁଷଟିର ଅନୁପମ ଯାତ୍ରା ।

ସହକାରୀ ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ, ଶାରୋର ଓ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି ବିଭାଗ,
ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଭଞ୍ଜ ମେଡିକାଲ କଲେଜ କଟକ



Radhanath Rath

The Ultimate Humanitarian

Radhanath Rath, the veteran journalist, Gandhian freedom fighter, social worker, and a direct disciple of Utkalmani (Jewel of Orissa) Pandit Gopabandhu Das left us on February 12, 1998 at the age of 102. His life was a symbol of selfless service and worldclass journalism combined with many years of untiring progressive work for Orissa as a minister in the state government and as a social leader. He was a household name in Orissa, as the editor of the daily newspaper, *The Samaj*.

Radhanath Rath was born on December 6, 1896 in the town of Athagarh in Cuttack district. What was the world then? The telephone was barely in use. Henry Ford was yet to invent his model T car. Of course there was no television, even the radio was a very new thing. The world was going through a transition from an agrarian economy to the industrial revolution. India had just seen the use of railways. Mahatma Gandhi was 27 years old and he had just arrived in South Africa as a young lawyer. Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of modern India, was 7 years old. Pandit Gopabandhu Das was 20 years old. Radhanath Rath was 16 years old when the Titanic sank in 1912.

He went to Ravenshaw Collegiate School and was one year junior to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at the same school. After graduating in 1916, he could not afford college and worked under the British regime in Sambalpur and then in Chainbasa. This is where he met Gopabandhu Das who prompted him to leave his job and join him in Satyabadi (near Puri) and publish a newspaper for the people of Orissa. Pandit Gopabandhu had started the open-air Satyabadi school in 1909, which was unique in India then. On October 1, 1919 Radhanath Babu arrived in Satyabadi to join his guru. Three days later, a weekly newspaper called "*Samaj*" was published with Gopabandhu Das as the editor and Radhanath Rath as the manager. Pandit Gopabandhu died young in 1928. The weekly paper *Samaj* became the first daily newspaper of Orissa in 1930. Since then it has become the voice of Orissa, its people and their heart. Mahatma Gandhi visited Orissa for the first time in 1921 when he also visited his friend Gopabandhu's Satyabadi school. He was so overwhelmed that he wrote about this open-air

school experiment eloquently in his paper, *Young India*. Radhanath babu remained in charge of *Samaj* until his death this year: the longest editor of a newspaper anywhere in the world.

Samaj is part of an all-India organization called The Servants of People Society (Lok Sevak Mandal) started by the late Lala Lajpat Rai, who was known as Punjab Keshari. National stalwarts like former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri were its president. Radhanath babu was also the

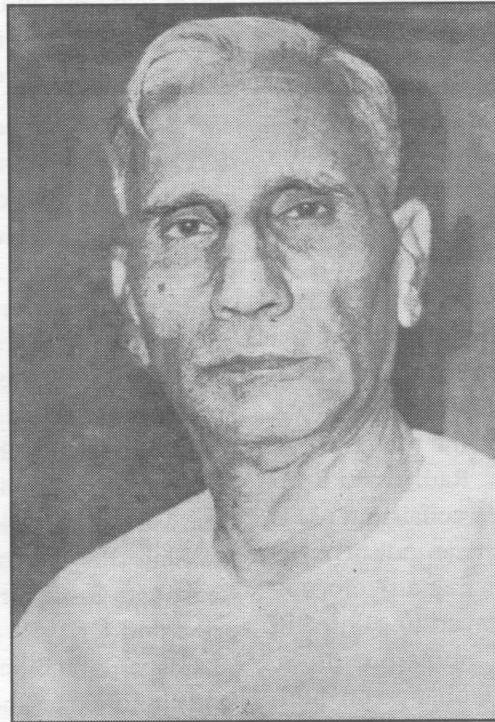
all-India president for many years. Part of the charter of *Samaj* institution is to help the poor and downtrodden of Orissa. Radhanath babu kept this promise throughout his life. He would be the first one to arrive at places of natural disaster with volunteers and relief. Millions in Orissa revere him for his humanity and selfless service to the people.

During the 1950s and 1960s, he was elected to the state legislative assembly and was a minister in various departments like finance, agriculture, forestry, etc. His creations during this tenure include: Nandan Kanan (sanctuary, zoo, botanical garden near Bhubaneswar), The Orissa University of Agriculture & Technology (OUAT), Hirakud Dam, and several colleges throughout Orissa. He received many awards including Padma Bhushan from the president of India, Utkal Ratna, and the Anubrata award for

excellence in journalism. But power never allured him and he declined several offers to become Orissa's chief minister and to become governor of various states. He wanted to follow his mentor and Guru's ideal of serving the people of Orissa.

The state of Orissa celebrated his 100th birthday for a whole year 1995-1996. He was a simple man with very few possessions. The last rites were performed with full state honors with several state and national leaders present. He was cremated at Sakhigopal near Puri, right in Satyabadi next to Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das. Orissa lost in Radhanath Rath a true son of the soil who served Orissa and Oriyas selflessly for over 8 decades.

— This article was extracted from an original article by Jnana Ranjan Dash in Oriya, published in the Samaj in March, 1998



My Memories Of A Centenarian

SARADINDU MISRA

How many of us have come across a centenarian in our lifetime? Not many. However, I am one of the few privileged who had the good fortune of knowing a centenarian. He was Radhanath Rath (we affectionately called him Babuji) who departed from this mortal world on February 12, 1998, at the age of 102 - the end of an extraordinary and eventful life dedicated to public service.

My association with Babuji goes back to the mid-forties when I was a student in the grammar school. We lived in Kaligali, Cuttack. Samaj press was then located in a building in Dhuanpatra Lane in Balu Bazar. Radhanath Babu's family had a two room dwelling in that building. My father, late Shyam Sundar Misra and Radhanath Rath were close associates, as both of them devoted their lives to public service. Due to close proximity, I would often visit his house on my own. I was very popular in the Rath family. I would be offered with sweets by Mrs. Rath, each time I visit their house. That is perhaps the reason why I would go to their house so frequently. Radhanath Babu was a voracious reader. The two rooms consisting of his living quarters was literally littered with mounds of newspapers and magazines. His mind was like a photocopy machine. Whatever he read once, it stayed imprinted in his mind for ever. I have heard him, numerous times, speaking at public functions where he would go on quoting statistics, as if reading out of a book.

We moved from Kaligali to Buxi Bazaar in 1950. Radhanath Babu became a minister in the Nabakrushna Choudhury cabinet around 1994-49. He was heading Finance and Education portfolios. At this time he took a sabbatical from Samaj to work as a minister and moved to his ministerial bungalow near the Kathjuri river. My visit to his house became limited because of the distance. Although he had this huge ministerial quarters, it was still littered with books and periodical, everywhere. That was the bone of contention of Mrs. Rath. Around that time, Sulu Nani (his second daughter, Manorama Mohapatra) got married to Padarbinda Babu. The marriage reception was held at the Radhanath Training college campus by the Kathjuri river. Radhanath Babu was always famous for

hosting grand feasts and the wedding was no exception. All my family members were there. Finding me loitering without anything else to do, Radhanath Babu handed me a bunch of flyers on which little poems by relatives of the bride were printed, blessing the newly-weds. The printing was done on fancy tissue paper which was quite a novelty at that time and everyone around would like to have more than one. So it was up to me to favor invitees and that made me feel very proud.

When we moved to Buxi Bazaar, Samaj was our next door neighbor. It was then only a bare plot of land of two acres with a little old house in the middle. The press was yet to be constructed and was still functioning out of Dhuanpatra Lane. After the second general elections, a coalition government took charge in Orissa. There were only three ministers, and Radhanath Babu was one of them, holding the Development portfolio. During his tenure as a minister, he was associated with a lot of grand projects in Orissa, notably, the New Capital in Bhubaneswar, the Hirakud Dam, the Rourkela Steel plant, and the bridge over Mahanadi, linking Cuttack and Choudwar. When the State Reorganization Commission visited Orissa, Radhanath Babu, armed with volumes of evidence, deftly presented Orissa's case for the inclusion of Saraikala, Kharasuan, and other Oriya border tracts in the state. Due to the indifference, however, of the then chief minister, the inclusion never became a reality. This incident was a severe blow to Radhanath Babu's efforts and made him extremely sad. He decided to part company with active politics and returned back to the editorship of his beloved Samaj. By then, the Gopabandhu Bhaban of today, housing Samaj office, press, and living quarters for the editor and staff was fully completed and was standing next door to the Servants of India Society in which my family lived. In his second term, as the editor of Samaj, I had the privilege of watching Radhanath Babu from very close quarters. As an editor, he was completely independent and was very fierce in his criticism of the then present day political leaders. Any political or administrative wrong-doing by the Government would be reported without any favor or bias with constructive criticism. This trend continued to the very end of his life. No one was spared in

the process - not Biju Patnaik, not Biren Mitra, not Sadasiv Tripathi, not Nandini Satapathy, nor J.B. Patnaik. Coupled with relevant news and constructive views, Samaj became the conscience keeper of Orissa. Its fame soared not only throughout Orissa, but went beyond it. The Congress government at the center, impressed by his reputation and background in public service, offered Radhanath Babu the governorship of West Bengal. He declined the offer stating that Samaj was more important to him, at that time, than anything else.

With the completion of the Gopabandhu Bhaban, housing both Samaj office and press, in Buxi Bazar, we also got a free reading room in the building. Most evenings I would go there to read newspapers and magazines, and once a while, I would meet Radhanath Babu there. He would immediately send me to his second floor quarters where I would be fed by Mrs. Rath. This ritual was religiously followed by the Rath family whenever they have a visitor in their home. It will not be fair if I don't say a few words about Mrs. Rath. She was the strength behind her husband. Managing the family and the household, taking care of the perpetual stream of visitors, and most importantly, managing Radhanath Babu was a monumental task. He was oblivious of his personal life and she relieved him completely of those chores. Always a smile in her face, kindness in her heart, and her cool disposition, reminded me of the goddesses Saraswati.

In 1971, I came to United States. So meeting Radhanath Babu got restricted by my visits to home which usually happened once in two or three years. The first day I would reach home, my father's first concern will be to remind me and my wife that we must go and see Radhanath Babu and get his blessings. He would not stop until this ritual was complete. As always, we would be received by them with great affection and love. No matter how busy he was, Radhanath Babu will always spend a few minutes with me and my wife, inquiring about life in the United States. He would urge both of us to come back to mother land and devote our lives in some meaningful occupation. We visited Orissa in 1982 when the state was ravaged by hurricane and flood. I and Mr. Jnana Dash of California collected funds for the flood victims. It was a sizable amount and we decided to hand it over to the relief organization, headed by Radhanath Babu. I remember vividly the day we went to Samaj office to hand over the check to him. He was visibly moved and thanked us profoundly for our concern for the flood victims, even if we were several thousand miles away.

By this time, Radhanath Babu must be over 85 years. But those of us who had seen him at that time must remember how physically fit he was. With his regal personality, endowed with a golden skin color, a full head of silvery white hair, he moved about fully erect. Once I had the occasion of walking with him from our residence to Samaj office. It was difficult for me to keep pace with him. He was literally running - and this was how he lead his entire life. Even if he lived more than 100 years, he was always in a hurry. He always held that there was so much that needs to be done. He began his life at a time when Indians were struggling to get freedom from the British Raj. Passions were tremendous. The wave of freedom struggle swept away all other personal considerations of people. By contrast, forty years after independence, it was a different India where corrupt leaders were drowning the country in a bottomless pit. To a visionary like Radhanath Babu, this was the very sad blow. No wonder, during my visit with him in 1990, instead of his usual advice for us to return to India, he held the view that we were better off living in the United States as India had nothing to offer for an honest livelihood. Although the aging process was unable to daunt him, he received three severe blows between 1988 and 1995. The death of his younger son-in-law Padarbinda Mohapatra in 1988, followed by the death of his younger son Ramesh Chandra Rath in 1994, broke his heart. The ultimate blow came when his wife passed away in 1995. He started sulking. He had already reached 100 years by then and was ready for the other world.

The passing away of Radhanath Rath was an end of an era in the history of Orissa. For over ten decades he selflessly served the people of Orissa. Thus, it was only natural that he became the president of the respected organization, the Servants of People Society for a long time, a position he held until his death. Gopabandhu started Samaj with forty rupees in his pocket. It was worth seven crores when Radhanath Babu left it. Being a minister for ten years, and the editor of the richest daily of Orissa for over fifty years, he never made a penny or property for himself. However, he had a vault full of innumerable honors and laurels, including the Padma Bhusan award from the Government of India. He was (literally!) a man in a million, and was a guiding father-figure for many million Oriyas in this century. His loss would be hard to fill. May his soul rest in peace and continue to guide us from the outer world.

-Saradindu Misra lives in Dix Hills, New York with his wife Lata. Both Sashi Babu and Lata are active members of the OSA and OSANY.

Malati Chowdhury

The Universal Mother to the Poor

Malati Devi Chowdhury passed away on March 15th, 1998. She and her husband, late Nabakrushna Chowdhury, ex-Chief Minister of Orissa, were known as Numa and Bapi to all. Life long Gandhians, their saga is one of the noblest in the political history of Orissa. With her death, the poor, the tribal, the harijan, the dispossessed lost their sincerest friend and well wisher. Numa's was a voice for the voiceless. A life long Gandhian and a votary of non-violence, she hated oppression and was always in the middle of people's fights, from the Praja Andolan & Quit India movements to Indira Gandhi's emergency. She led Gandhi's salt marches in Orissa in 1930. She was jailed several times and was always defiant of wrongful authority. She led a simple life till death, in a mud hut of Baji Rout Chhatrabas, even when her husband was the Chief Minister of Orissa. She often quoted balladist Brajanath Badjena: 'Kuha keun jati payeechhe mukati karee haree huree guharee?' (give an example of a nation which found its freedom by making appeals and prayers to the oppressor?).



hours late and thus it was very unlikely that she would see me. So I called. Surprise was waiting for me. Her eldest grand daughter asked me to hurry. Numa had refused to go take her bath and was waiting for me. Sure enough when I arrived two hours late, she was still waiting. I was amazed since she was such a stickler for strict punctuality. She embraced me with affection. She wanted to know all about me like a child, and the clock was ticking. I had to promise her that I will come back in the evening before she agreed to let me go and go for her well delayed bath and lunch. I am glad I did. It was a rich experience. She opened up that evening to describe many of the stories of her days at Santi Niketan, Poet Rabindranath and Bapi. Those are my treasures for life. With Malati Chowdhury's demise, Orissa lost a fearless fighter against oppression and a universal mother of the poor in the society.

— This article was written by Sandip Kumar Dasverma of Los Angeles, who was personally close to Numa.

She was born on July 26, 1904 in an illustrious Bengali Brahma family at Calcutta. Her father Kumudnath Sen and grand father were lawyers. Her maternal grand father Sri Bihari Lal Gupta, ICS, was once the district and sessions Judge of Cuttack and was a close friend of poet Rabindranath Tagore. Numa went to Santiniketan as one of its early girl students. There she met well known scholars and social activists like Dinabandhu Andrews, W.W. Pearson, French Sanskrit scholar Silvan Levi, Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Dwijendranath Tagore, Dinendranath Tagore, Pundit Kshitimohan Sen and Jagadananda Ray. Dinendranath Tagore, "the famous custodian of Tagore's songs" taught her Rabindra Sangeet. At her 94th birth day last July, 1997 when I had the privilege of meeting her, she could still sing beautifully.

Numa's story is incomprehensible and incomplete without that of Bapi. They met and were later married on July 1927, at Santi Niketan, in a function presided by Poet Tagore. Unlike Kasturba Gandhi, who she is frequently compared with, she was not a follower of her husband but a co-worker, a comrade in true sense. She was his most powerful critic and friend at the same time. Numa & Bapi were the fountainhead of all pro-people, democratic & progressive movements in Orissa. They founded Orissa Congress Socialist Party in 1934. The magazine "Sarathi", which became the mouthpiece of the progressives of Orissa, was established with Numa's contribution of all her personal jewelry. They really represented the Indian ideology of simple living and high thinking. Numa's most significant work was for "Utkal Nabajiban Mandal", a vehicle of her life-long work among the Harijans and Adivasis of Orissa. It was her very life and passion till the last moment. Numa was an artist and a patron of art also. She was a dexterous musician, playing the "Veena", at the same time, a wonderful singer of Rabindra Sangeet.

I had a unique experience in 1993. My cousin, who was to drive me to Baji Rout Chhatrabas, Angul, told me that I was 2

IN MEMORY OF MALATI CHOUHDURY - A CLOSE VIEW

KASTURI MOHANTY (New Jersey)

Malati Choudhuri guided hundreds of young women and children from a world of poverty and inhuman conditions, to understanding themselves, being self-reliant, and living in a society where they gave up themselves to others in need.

I feel blessed to be her grandchild. We called her Didun, derived from Didima in Bengali. Didun's maiden name was Malati Sen. Didun and Dadul, our grandfather, were an ideal couple. The grandchildren admired them and enjoyed being a part of the political discussions and debates in the family gatherings. We listened to heroic stories about both Didun and Dadul as freedom fighters. Growing up with individuals like them, I felt the enormous responsibility one has towards society. They made us aware of the sufferings of the poor, and taught us to share our food, clothing, books, and toys with the children living in the institute. We learned at a very young age to share our grandparents with all the children.

Our family visits to Angul during our summer vacations were the most memorable events of my childhood. The days were filled with chores that we did with Didun as our leader - we took turns watering the vegetable garden, we went to the Church to listen to the Service and to the Temples on religious holidays, we read books and newspapers to her, we learnt patriotic songs from her, and enjoyed singing with her. She had a beautiful voice and played the veena, the flute, and the keyboard. She challenged each one of us to be honest, hardworking citizens, and to remember to help people in need. Above all, she taught me to stand up as a woman, to fight injustice, inequality, and dishonesty, through the practice of non-violence.



Biju Patnaik - *The Brave son of Kalinga*

It is worth writing about Biju Patnaik for at least two reasons. His long life can be read as something of a history of India back to the time when the country was run by Britain. And he gave Indian politics a rare flash of colour.

His great pleasure was flying, and his exploits as a pilot provided his career with a metaphor that endured from the frolics of his youth to his ambitions as a politician and an industrialist: he was, everyone said, a high flyer. At his wedding his guests arrived in Tiger Moths. When the second world war broke out Biju Patnaik joined the Royal Air Force, along with British friends who, like him, had learnt the rudiments of flying at the Delhi Flying Club. when Japan entered the war in 1941 Mr Patnaik evacuated British families from the advancing invaders. He flew supplies to China and the Soviet Union. Not for him the neutralism or collaboration with the Japanese favoured by some Indians.

But Biju Patnaik had a second loyalty. When he was 13, Biju had met and come under the spell of Mahatma Gandhi, the proponent of passive resistance to British rule. in the war he sought to satisfy both of his strongly-held beliefs: the need to defeat Japan, and to give India independence. While flying over Indian soldiers under British command he dropped bags of Gandhi's "Quit India" leaflets to them. While on leave he ferried independence leaders to secret meetings with their supporters. Mr Patnaik's scarcely concealed double life could not last. in 1943 he was arrested and jailed until 1946, a year before the British left and the subcontinent was partitioned between India and Pakistan.

To the rescue

The derring-do continued after Indian independence. He started his own airline and in 1947 carried soldiers into Kashmir in the first of India's three wars with Pakistan. He became interested in the struggle in Java between the independence movement led by Sukarno and the Dutch who were trying to hold on to their colony. in 1948 he flew to Java and saved two rebels from capture by the Dutch.

The wide publicity given to the exploit gave a boost to the cause of Indonesian independence, and drew the Indian government, albeit reluctantly, into supporting it. Sukarno was suitably grateful and after becoming president made Biju Patnaik an honorary citizen. Mr Patnaik liked to tell the story of how he persuaded Sukarno to call his daughter Megawati (Goddess of the Clouds). The would-be goddess is today another high-flying hopeful, with plans to topple President Suharto, although so far without much success. Mr Patnaik's public popularity as a daredevil brought him into the circle of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister. Nehru sent him on a number of missions, one of them to America to appeal for aid when

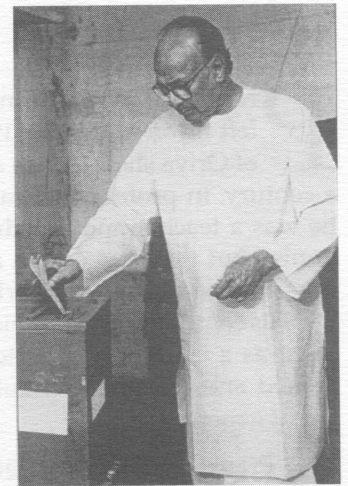
India was being threatened by China. Mr Patnaik became chief minister of Orissa, his home state. But he fell out with Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter, who became prime minister in 1966. Mr Patnaik left the Congress party and formed a regional party. When Mrs Gandhi imposed her semi-dictatorial "emergency" Mr Patnaik was jailed, achieving the distinction of being a political prisoner both under the British and an independent India.

Mr Patnaik remained personally popular in Orissa. He came from an aristocratic family and had the style that went with it. His daughter, Gita Mehta, who lives in New York, is admired as a novelist and as the author of books on the westernisation of India. Mr Patnaik was called affectionately the grand old man of Orissa, although his rule was mostly ineffective. He was out of power as often as he was in it, and there were the stories of corruption that have bedevilled many politicians.

Mr Patnaik established a string of industries in Orissa from textiles to domestic goods. He used his political clout to create large public-sector enterprises in the state, notably Paradeep port and a steel plant at Rourkela. But the state has remained one of the poorest and most backward in India. The quality of its administration has steadily deteriorated, to the disgust of voters. Since bureaucrats are virtually unsackable in India, Mr Patnaik suggested in a speech that disgruntled citizens should stone them. He was a bit upset that someone stoned him.

Nationally, he was one of the founders of the Janata Party that took power after Mrs Gandhi was defeated in 1977, and at the time of his death he was one of the leaders of the present wobbly coalition government. Among Indian newspapers there has been speculation about the effect of his death on the unity of the coalition and on Mr Patnaik's regional party. The Hindu published an intriguing story about an ambitious politician in Orissa who claimed, falsely, that he was at Mr Patnaik's bedside "when the leader breathed his last". But this politician's "gameplan" to succeed Mr Patnaik has been exposed, said the newspaper. Colourful stuff, and very Indian. Biju Patnaik would have loved to have read it.

- This article was published in the "The Economist" from London in May, 1997



Bijoyananada (Biju) Patnaik, who brought a touch of color to the politics of India, died on April 17th, aged 81

Pranabandhu Kar

The Renowned Writer

Pranabandhu Kar, born on December 1, 1914 at Puri, left us on March 30, 1998. He was a prolific writer of Oriya short stories and plays spanning over half a century. In professional career he was a teacher and an educationist, but that was only a routine part of his very illustrious life. His contribution and achievement as a creative soul is to be valued and treasured by subsequent generations.

Pranabandhu babu started writing short stories in the 1930s on mainly social events of his time. His first short story "Bhranti" was published in 1933. The trend of short story writing in the 1940s was psychological, giving emphasis on complex psychology of character. Prominent among the writers of this era were Kalindi Charan Panigrahi and Sachi Routray. Though Kar belonged to this genre of writers, he improvised on the style. Unlike his predecessors, he did not deal with human psychology in general but specialized in picking up small incidents and limited emotions that arise from specific situations.

Oriya short story writers after the 1950s, more or less unconsciously and in a general way continue with this trend which Kar developed. Today, the strength of an Oriya short story does not lie in social exposure but in delineating the complex and unfamiliar human psyche. In this, the stories written by Kar in the 1950s and 1960s provide the pioneering impetus.

This trend of writing he also carried over to dramas. Before him, in the 40s and 50s, dramas were mostly on social topics in story form and they emphasized on change and growth of events in which the characters used to play their parts. These type of dramas were written by Kali Charan Pattanaik, Gopal Chhotray, Ramachandra Mishra and early plays of Manoranjan Das. Kar brought new elements into his dramas, in the sense that, the emphasis shifted from plot-character to subtle human reactions and development of complex human psychology. The attitude

was no longer social and socio-political. It became an involvement with human existence, which comes to every human being as an organic part of his association with others. This was, in fact, a change in Oriya drama that took

place towards the end of the 60s with the plays of Bijay Mishra and Biswajit Das and mid-career plays of Manoranjan Das. Again the unconscious and invisible impetus came from the plays of Kar, as it had come in the case of short stories.

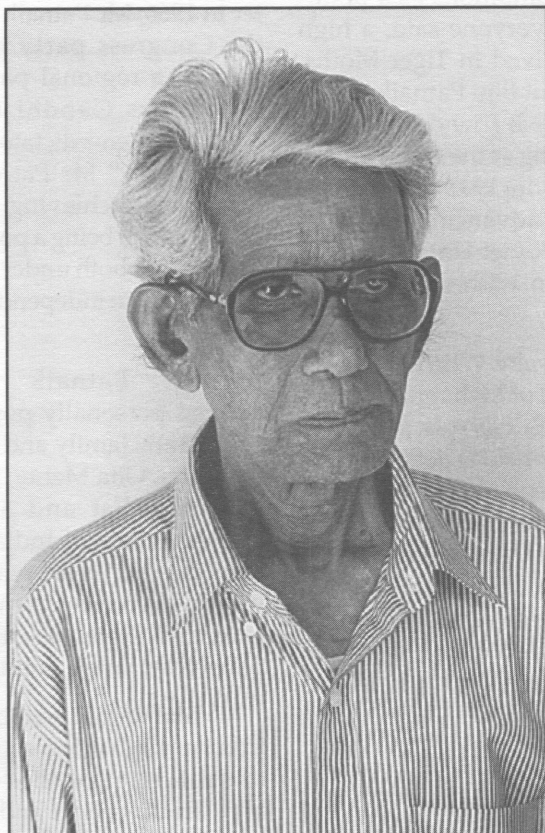
He played a pioneering role that provided necessary infrastructure to Oriya short stories and plays that have come to prominence in the last three decades. Some of his highly successful short stories are Sua Munhara Patara, Nishithara Pretatma, Parahata, Geeta Master, and plays Petu, Swetapadma, Snayu Sanhara, and Ekamati Aneka Akasha, etc. Many of his works have been included as Oriya textbooks at various levels of the University curriculum. Many have also been broadcast from All India Radio, Cuttack and telecast by local TV stations. His plays Swetapadma and Pagala Janatara Bahare were translated into 14 modern Indian languages by the National Book Trust, New Delhi. His play, Petu

was translated into Hindi and broadcast on the national network couple of years back.

His creative genius was reflected in many awards he received. He got the best script and production award for Swetapadma in an all-India one-act-play competition in 1958. He received the Orissa Sahitya Academy award in 1980 for Snayu Sanhara and dramatist award in 1978 by Orissa Sangeet Natak Academy. He leaves behind many publications of his work in short stories and plays. In losing Pranabandhu babu, Oriya literature has lost a pioneering spirit whose position is assured in modern Oriya literature.

Our condolences go to his family, especially to his son Dr. Gitimoy Kar of Corning, New York.

— This article was extracted from a tribute written by Jatindra Mohanty, a former professor of English at Utkal University.





Sanjukta Panigrahi

The Doyen of Odissi Dance

Sanjukta Panigrahi, the doyen of Odissi dance, left this world last year at very young age of 53. She was, undoubtedly, the greatest-ever Odissi dancer. The first girl from a well-to-do family to take up Odissi, she gave this till-then-neglected art form a status equal to any other recognized Indian dance.

The word Odissi had not even been coined when Sanjukta began dancing at the age of five under the tutelage of the celebrated guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra. By the time, she breathed her last she had earned international recognition. Technically, as she matured in years, Sanjukta's work was perfect, transforming her talent into a universal language understood and applauded irrespective of whether the stage was in London, New York, Tokyo, Sydney, Singapore, or New Delhi.

Her creativity took her to newer horizons, embracing new experiments, new compositions and keeping the visual and emotional appeal fresh and brilliant at all times. Born on August 24, 1944, Sanjukta also studied Bharatnatyam under the guidance of Rukmini Devi Arundale in Chennai. But Odissi remained her forte as she studied the ancient manuscripts and the figures of the temples of Orissa working hand in hand with other scholars and greatly helped in codifying the nomenclatures of Odissi style.

Pioneering the spread of the Odissi form, Sanjukta participated in various dance seminars and performed throughout India under the auspices of Orissa Sangeet Natak Akademi making the connoisseurs of art and culture aware of the salient features and technical aspects of the new style of dancing captured from the walls of Orissa's hallowed temples. Sanjukta married the famous vocalist Suramani Raghunath Panigrahi in 1959 forming a unique husband-wife duo who took the stage by storm almost in every state in India and all over the world. Pandit Raghunath is regarded as one of the most well-known vocalists and is known for his mastery over Jayadev's immortal Gita Govinda.

As the popularity of Odissi started climbing, Sanjukta kept up with a punishing schedule, traveling all over the world many times, presenting this unique art form of Orissa to thousands of people. She visited the USA and Canada many times, sometimes giving consecutive performances for days and conducting workshops. She went to far off countries like Australia, Japan, Israel, Mexico, and Colombia. Travel to Europe was a frequent affair. She regularly performed at the annual Khajuraho and Konark Dance festivals, as the final solo performer.

She received numerous awards - Padma Shree in 1975, Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 1976, Nritya Vilas by the Sur Singar Sansad, the Nritya Siromani, the Tirupati National, the All India National Critic..the list is too long. Sanjukta Panigrahi was truly the prima donna of Odissi.

As one paper in India said, "Sanjukta breathed life into the inanimate sculptures on the

walls of Orissa's hallowed temples and lifted the dance form to sublime levels, giving it the status it has attained over the last 47 years".

Dance, for Sanjukta, was life. It was not just an art form, not just a passion. It meant more to her. Dance, glorious dance, was her very being. With it, she was queen. Without it, she was utterly lost.

With Sanjukta's departure, Orissa has lost its most famous cultural ambassador of Odissi dance.



- This article was compiled by Jnana Ranjan Dash, editor of OSA Journal.

ଧୂପଦର ଧ୍ୟାନଭଙ୍ଗ

ବ୍ରଜକିଶୋର ଦାସ



ଶାର୍ଦ୍ଦୂ ଖଜୁରାହୋ

ହିମାଦ୍ରିରୁ କୁମାରିକା

ପ୍ରାରବ୍ୟୋତିଷପୁରଠାରୁ ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରପ୍ରସ୍ଥ

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ଆଉ କିଏ ତୁମ ଭକ୍ତି ଅପ୍ରତିହତ୍ବିନୀ !

ପାଷାଣର ପ୍ରକାରରୁ

ତୋକି ଆଣି ମୁଦ୍ରା-ମୂର୍ତ୍ତି ଜଡ଼ବେଦ

ଚିନ୍ମୟରେ କରିବ ବସିନୀ ?

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ତୁମେ ଥିଲ, ଅଛ ଏବଂ ରହିଥିବ

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ଚିରକାଳ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ-ରୁଚିରା ॥

Girija Das Mahapatra - *The Famous Surgeon*

Papaji, A Remembrance

by ASHISH & SUNITA MOHANTY



Our grandfather, Dr. Girija Shankar Das Mahapatra, passed away on the evening of August 28th, 1997. He left behind a legacy of love, devotion, & human spirit that only few sons of Mother Orissa could have achieved. When tears first fell from our eyes, it was not only for the fact that we had lost our grandfather but also because we realized that thousands of others had lost a guru, an advisor, a tireless worker, and most of all a great man who had undisputed love for all things.

Our grandfather was a father of four but he looked after many others who were not as fortunate. He reasoned that everyone needed a focus and that by helping them achieve their goals, he was helping to achieve the plan that God had set for them. He along with our grandmother believed that people needn't praise their own kin but be thankful to God for what they were. Both our grandmother

& he were blessed with four wonderful children who are carrying on their legacy.

The bond with all his seven grandchildren is priceless. Two of us were born in the surgery room that he built. However, all of us were spoiled by the loving gentleman we knew as "PAPAJI". He not only doted on us like many grandfathers do but he also took us with him to see the world around us at such young ages so that we would be stimulated to greater experiences later in our lives. He would make sure that we always told him of our life, friends, & future plans whenever we visited him. That way he felt that he could be with us at all times of joy and sorrow.

Art to him was not an effort but a great expression of his true feelings. His poetry moved the masses because so few achieved a sense of flow and spirituality. His paintings allowed others to experience surreal worlds never visited before. Gardening in his mind was like tending to all his patients. He reasoned that all living things must be cared for till they were indeed in full bloom. He tended after the harijans whom few would touch. He looked after many orphans who had no where to go. Such love for all living things was truly a joy to admire.

One event in particular moved us about the greatness of our grandfather. In SCB Medical College in Orissa, which our grandfather helped start, a certain leper used to sit at the entrances to one of the buildings. The leper had lost his legs in a train accident so he always stayed in the same spot and everyone refused to go near him. One certain day we were passing through the college when the leper turned to "look" at us. He then respectfully called aloud our grandfather's name and asked how he was doing. Our grandfather then caressed the leper's stumps to see that they weren't infected and gave the leper enough money to last for some time without any word. What was amazing about the whole thing was that the leper had no eyes and was almost deaf. Greatness is something that is truly hard to believe until you see it firsthand.

He may have been a surgeon by profession but his great soul lives on in the legacy of his poems, his many students, his loving family, and mostly his sacred soul in heaven. He was truly one of the foundations upon which Orissa was built. "Papaji", we miss you!!

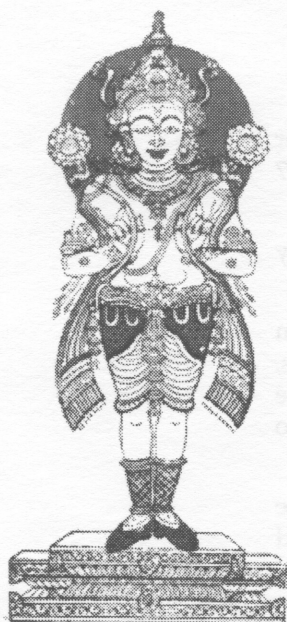
- Asish and Sunita Mohanty live in Chicago with parents Saroj and Shreelekha Mohanty.

DR GIRIJA SHANKAR DAS MAHAPATRA

He was held high in the eyes of the beholder
He was oft spelt in the lips of the beholden
His face was lit with the soft sigh of contentment
He was as pure as innocence.
He loved the symphony of life
He dreamt of a peaceful world-away from the maladies injustice,
suffering and pain
He read the poetry of poverty
He wept in the heart of the poor
He treated the suffering humanity with care
His heart sang the divine melody of "Samarpan"
He aroused in young hearts the spark of universality as he spoke
ceaselessly of Swami Vivekenanda
He nurtured the bounties of nature and looked beyond the "narrow
domestic walls" of caste....Creed and religion.
He took me to the world of Dinosaurs when I was hardly introduced to Darwin
He talked of international politics when I was struggling with my text of civics
He made me appreciate the painting of "Mona Lisa", when I still fumbled
with my crayons.
He spoke to me of conversation and bio diversity when I barely knew that
nature was as important as life.
Yes.....he was not only a philosopher....an orator....an artist....an
environmentalist but an institution in himself—

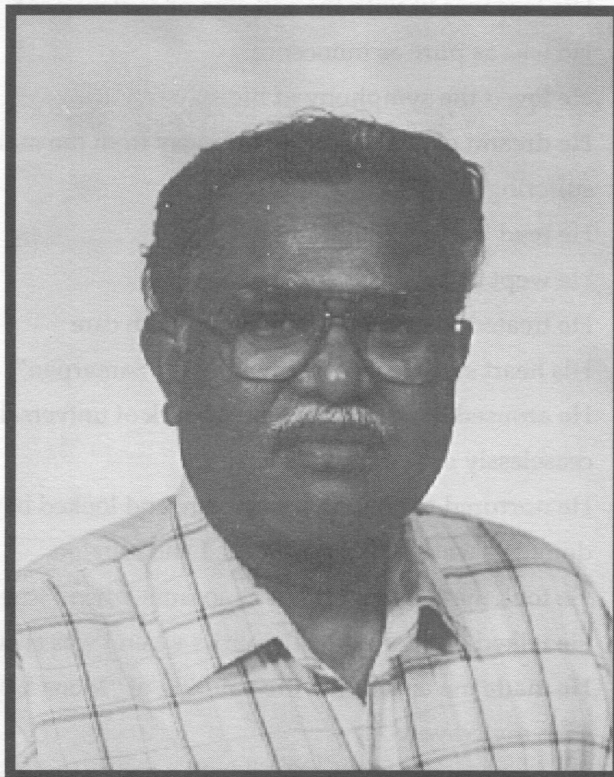
A doctor to his patients
A teacher to his students
A papa to his children
A friend of friends.

Yet to me.....an eternal source of inspiration—then.....now.....and always!
Friend....Physician.....Grandfather



— This poem was written by Ms. Padma Mohanty, daughter of Mr. And Mrs. Ambica Mohanty of Cuttack, Orissa on the occasion of Shradha ceremony of Late Dr. G.S. Das Mahapatra.

In Memory Of Sanatan Mahanto



Sanatan Mahanto, loving husband of Urmila and dear father of Kuni, Kartik, and Durgapada passed away on November 11 1997 after a brave fight with cancer. He was 61.

After a successful career at Ontario Hydro, he took an early retirement and he started a small business of his own.

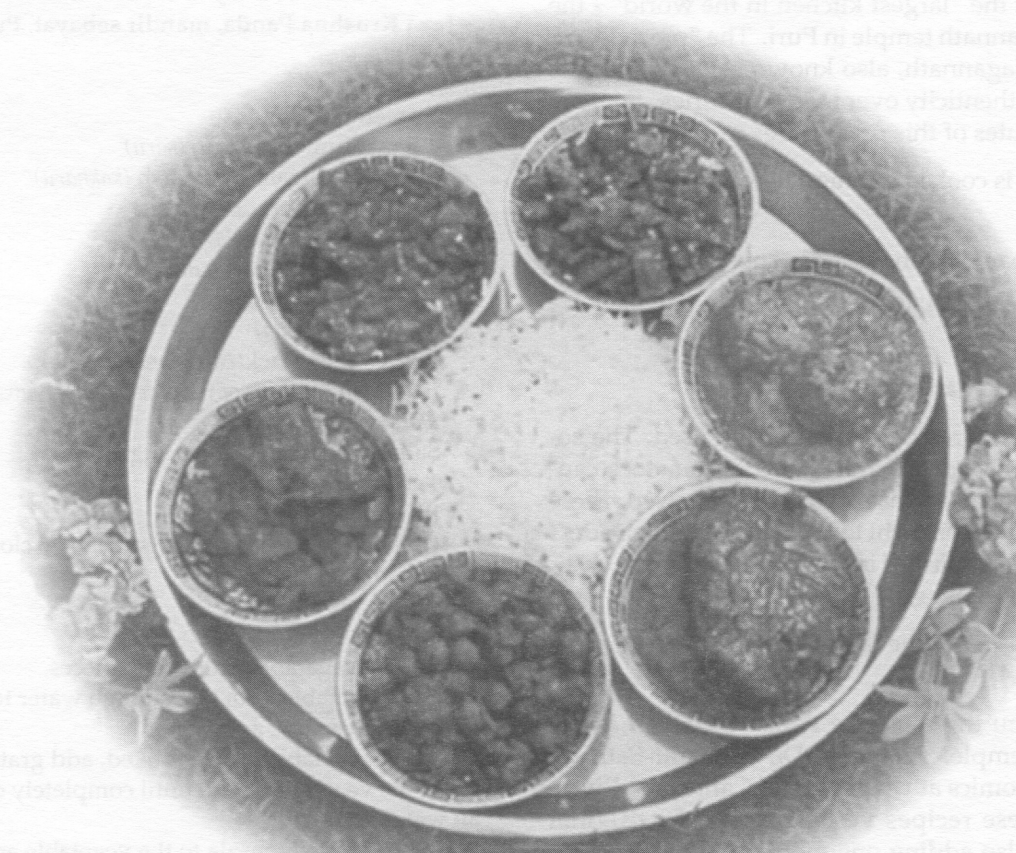
He was a very active person socially. Everyone speaks of him very highly. By his pleasant behavior, he was not only close to Oriyas, but with a vast number of Bengalis and other Indian families. He was the force behind many newcomers who have landed in Toronto and are new to this type of environment.

He is survived by his wife Urmila, three children, and three grandchildren. OSA wishes to convey its deepest sympathies and condolences to his family.

We pray for his soul to be in peace.



From The Griya Kitchen



Authentic Oriya Cuisine

No discussion on the Oriya cuisine can begin without talking about the "largest kitchen in the world" - the kitchen of the Jagannath temple in Puri. The "prasada" (offerings) of Lord Jagannath, also known as "abhada" has maintained its authenticity over many centuries. Some of the unique attributes of this prasada are:

- Everything is cooked in brand new earthen pots every day.
- Food is prepared for thousands of people, twice a day.
- Earthen pots are stacked one over the other and food is steam-cooked.
- No onions and garlic are used.
- Only certain types of vegetables are used. The so-called foreign vegetables like potatoes, tomatoes, cauliflower, cabbage, etc. have never been allowed. These vegetables were brought to India by foreign invaders and they were excluded in order to maintain the originality of the cooking.

This food has a unique taste not found anywhere in India and abroad.

We bring you three unique items as cooked in the Puri Jagannath temple. Thanks to Dr. Prashant Patnaik, Professor of Economics at University of California, Riverside who got these recipes verbally from the original sources. We are also adding one more unique sweet, the Puri Mandir Khaja to this collection.

Buta Dali of Puri Mandir

- Gobinda Suara of the Puri temple

Ingredients

- 2 cups chana dal - wash and clean it
- 1/4 cup grated coconut
2 cinnamon sticks 1 inch long each
4 black big cardamom
4 cloves
1 tsp whole black pepper
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp coriander seeds
- salt, turmeric, a pinch of sugar
- 1 tsp ghee plus chari-phutana seed
(cumin, mustard, fennel, fenugreek)

Process

Boil the clean chana dal in hot water.
Add salt, turmeric, and sugar.
Cook it until almost done (dal should be thick).
Blend all the ingredients in "b" together.
Add it to the dal after it's almost cooked and simmer it for another 19 minutes.
Fry the chari-phutana seed in "d" and add it to the dal.

Besara of Puri Mandir

- Jaya Krushna Panda, mandir sebayat, Puri temple

Ingredients

- 2 green raw banana
- 4-5 medium sized taro (*saru*)
- 1 big slice of yellow squash (*kakharu*)
- pound casaba root (*desi alu*)
- 1 white radish (*mula*)
- 15 flat italian beans (*simba*)
- 4-5 green kankada
- 5 parvals (*potala*)
- 1 piece green jackfruit (*kancha panasa*)
- If you can't get one of these vegetables, substitute more of another kind.
- Salt, turmeric, and 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 grated coconut
- Blend masala together
(1.5 tbsp mustard seed, 1 tsp fenel, 6 cloves)
- 2 tbsp ghee

Process

Cut all the vegetables into small pieces.
Boil the vegetable with just enough water to cover.
Add salt, turmeric, and sugar.
After the vegetable is half-cooked, add grated coconut.
Cook the vegetable again until completely cooked and all water gone.
Add the blended masala to the vegetable and cook for 5 extra minutes.
Put the ghee at the end and take it out of the fire.
Consistency of "besara" should be thick and sticky.

Mahura of Puri Mandir

- Jaya Krushna Panda, mandir sebayat, Puri temple

Ingredients

2 green raw banana
4-5 medium sized taro (*saru*)
1 big slice of yellow squash (*kakharu*)
1/2 pound casaba root (*desi alu*)
1 white radish (*mula*)
15 flat italian beans (*simba*)
4-5 green kankada
5 parvals (*potala*)
1 piece green jackfruit (*kancha panasa*)
2 eggplants
If you can't get one of these vegetables, substitute more of another kind
Salt, turmeric, and 1 tsp sugar
1/2 grated coconut
Blend masala (1 tbsp cumin, 1.5 tsp whole black pepper, 2 black cardamom seeds)
2 tbsp ghee with cumin and mustard for baghaar

Process

Boil the vegetable with salt and turmeric.
After it's half-cooked, add grated coconut.
After vegetables are fully cooked, add the blended masala.
Cook for 5 extra minutes.
Make sure there is no water left.
At the end, fry mustard and cumin in the ghee and add to the mahura.

Khaja of Puri Mandir

- Biju Misro, Cupertino, California

Ingredients

1.5 cup all purpose flour
2 tsp corn oil
Pinch of salt
1 cup sugar and 1/4 cup water for syrup
Thick paste of 1/2 cup oil and 1/2 cup flour
Extra oil for deep frying

Process

Put flour, salt, corn oil in a bowl and mix it well.
Slowly add water to make a stiff ball of dough.
Knead it for 10-15 minutes until it's smooth.
Roll the entire dough into a big rectangle (12"x18").
Spread the thick paste smoothly over the rectangle.
Roll the dough into a big rope, cut into 1" size pieces.
Take each piece and roll it again into a 5-6" size khaja.
Heat oil in a deep frying pan, medium-high first.
Turn to medium-low heat once oil is hot.
Fry the khaja in oil until it turns pink.
Drain it on a paper towel.
Boil sugar and water in another pan for 5 minute to make syrup.
Switch off the heat when syrup feels slightly sticky to the finger.
Deep the khaja one at a time and take it out.
Repeat the process until all are done.
Cool the khaja completely before you serve.

Pitha & Mitha of Orissa

In this section, we present some unique Pitha (cake) and Mitha (sweet) of Orissa. Ingredients are modified to suit the western kitchen. Pitha is part of the Oriya festivals and there is a wide variety of them. Such pitha items are not found elsewhere in India. In the Mitha category, Chhena Poda Pitha is a surprise to many Indians. We also present Rasgolla (commonly attributed to Bengal) as done in the Oriya household.

Sada-Kakara Pitha

-Renuka Panda, Bellevue, Washington

Ingredients

1.5 cup of wheat flour (atta)
1/4 cup of Gud (molasses)
A pinch of salt
1.5 tea spoon of aniseed (sauf)
Ghee or oil for frying

Method

Boil 2 cups water and GUD and stir it properly.
Add a pinch of salt and the aniseed into it.
Then add wheat flour to boiling water.
Stir it properly to make a good dough.
Then leave it until the dough is cold.
Once the dough is cold, knead it smooth.
Then make small kakara rolls.
(like small thick poories) and fry in ghee or oil.

Pura-Kakara Pitha

- Urmila Das, Olivenhain, California

Ingredients

- 1 whole fresh grated coconut
- 2 cartons(15oz) Ricotta cheese
- 2.5 cups of sugar
- 4 pods of green cardamom (powder)

For the dough

- 3 cups water, 1.5 cup sugar, 4 cups whole wheat flour

Process

Put 2 cartons Ricotta cheese in a frypan and add sugar. Warm over moderate heat, then added grated coconut. Fry it until it's dry, add cardamom powder. Take it out of the fire and allow it to cool. Make a paste of 2 tsp flour with little water and keep it aside. Boil sugar and water in a pot, add the flour paste. Slowly add all the flour to the syrup mixture. Mix it well and take it out of the fire. Cover and cool. Knead the dough when completely cool, use a little oil if needed. Make balls and put the filling inside the balls. Close and roll it into a smooth circle. Deep fry the Kakara Pitha until it's looks reddish brown. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Vegetable Chokuli Pitha

- Lata Misra, Dix Hills, New York

Ingredients

- 2 cups Urad dal
- 1 cup rice
- 1 medium size potato
- 2 small size Italian eggplants
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 big onion chopped
- 5-6 green chillies chopped
- 1 inch piece of ginger grated
- 8-10 curry leaves
- Oil and Panch Phutana

Process

Soak Urad dal and rice together for 3-4 hours. Blend it into a thick batter. Cut potato and eggplants into small pieces. And fry it in a saucepan with little oil, turmeric, and salt. Add the fried stuff to the batter. In a small wok, put 1 tsp oil, half tsp panch phutana, 1 tsp chopped onion, tsp green chillies & ginger. Fry it for few seconds, add 2-3 curry leaves. Then spread 1 cup of batter on top of it. Cover the wok, reduce heat to low, cook it for 5-7 minutes. Take out the cover, turn the chokuli and cook it for another 3-4 minutes. Repeat process to make all the chokuli pithas.

Sijha(Steam) Monda

- Indumati Pati, Connecticut as told to Chhabi Satpathy, Sacramento, CA

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice soaked overnight
- 3 cups water
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt

For filling:

- 3/4 cup dry homemade cheese
- 3/4 cup freshly grated coconut
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 6 cardamom seeds crushed

Process

To make the filling, put all the ingredients in a pan and fry it for few minutes. Blend water and rice together until paste is very smooth. Put paste in a deep non-stick pan. Fry it in medium-high heat until dough is dry and soft. Stir it continuously, otherwise it may stick to the bottom. Take it out, cover it and let it cool. Make 16 balls out of the dough. Put the filling inside and shape it into smooth Monda. Tie a cloth over the mouth of a deep pan with 2-3" water. Put all the Monda on top of the cloth. Cover and steam it for 20-25 minutes until it's done.

Chhena Poda Pitha

- Simi Acharya, Los Altos, California

For 20-25 servings

Ingredients

- 4 lbs. 'Precious' brand part-skim Ricotta cheese
- 4 tbsp. Sooji
- 2 2/3 cups sugar
- 1/3 tsp baking powder
- 1/3 tsp baking powder
- 1 cup water
- 1 tbsp. Oil or ghee (Optional)
- Cardamom powder or few drops of rose essence

Process

Mix the ingredients in a bowl with a hand blender. Pour the batter in a greased 9.5x13.5x2 in. baking pan. Don't overfill the pan, leave 1 inch from top. Bake in a 350°F oven for 60-90 mins. Oven temps. may vary, so check after 60 mins. Bake till the top is light-medium brown. Then take it out from the oven and cool it uncovered for 5-10 mins. Cover it with a aluminum foil to keep it moist and cool it outside or in the refrigerator. Cut it into pieces.

The Chhena poda pitha can be served either cold or slightly warm (warm it few secs. in the microwave).

Rasagolla

- Soma Mohanty, Castro Valley, California

Ingredients

Wholemilk (1gallon)
Vinegar (1-11/2 cups)
Sugar (3 cups)
Water (6 cups)
Cream of wheat (1 heap Tbsp)
Cardamom and Rock sugar if desired

Process

Bring milk to a boil in a large pot.
Gradually add vinegar until the milk and cheese separate.

Pour milk mixture into cheese cloth set over a bowl.
Tie the ends of the cloth together around the kitchen faucet and leave it overnight.

In the morning put the cheese, cream of wheat in food processor and smooth it to a paste.

Make 30 balls and keep it aside.

If desired add cardamom and rock sugar in the middle of the balls.

In a 5qt pressure cooker take 1cup sugar and 2 cups water.
Bring it to a boil and add 10 balls, close the lid and put it in pressure for 5minutes.

Release pressure immediately under cold water and Rasagollas are ready.

Repeat this for two more times and you have 30 Rasagollas.

Other Specialties of Orissa

It is beyond the scope of this journal to provide a complete list of Oriya cuisine. We only attempt to present a small sample of typical items. There is a wide regional variety of cooking in Orissa. Just to prove this point, we have presented one regional item from North-Western Orissa (Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sambalpur) called Karadi Bhaja. Many of the Oriya recipes here use ghee, which may be substituted by oil. The amount of coconut can be reduced for low cholesterol diet.

Kanji

- Kantilata Sahoo, Santa Clara, California

Ingredients

1 cup overcooked rice
2 or 3 Taro roots sliced
Poi-stems cut in 2 inches long
Cauliflower - leaf stalks
Green Papaya sliced
Salt to taste
2 tsp. turmeric powder
2 to 3 Dry Mango

Seasoning:

Mixture of pieces Fennel seeds, Black cumin seeds, Cumin seeds, Mustards, Fenugreek seeds.
1 or 2 twigs Curry Leaves for flavor
2 qts Water (according to the thickness of Serving)
2 tsp. oil for seasoning
1 tsp. Chopped garlic, 2 dry chili and 2 whole green chili

Procedure

Blend the cooked rice and make a smooth paste.
Boil or steam the vegetables.
Add water and the rice paste into it.
Stir it in a stirrer, put it in a medium flame for about 25 minutes.
Keep stirring from time to time so that it won't be lumpy.
Add salt, turmeric powder, dry mango.
Add more water if necessary.

In a saucepan, put oil, add dry chilies, green chilies, chopped garlic and the seasoning mixture, curry leaves.
Add Kanji to the pan while hot, serve as a hot soup.

Karadi Bhaja: (bamboo shoot bhaja)

- Suparna Behera, Fremont, California

A specialty of Kalahandi, Bolangir, and Sambalpur

Ingredients

1cup fresh julienned bamboo shoots.
(available in Chinese stores).
2-3 tblsp rice flour
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp cumin powder
Salt to taste.
little water.
Oil to panfry.

Process

Pound the bamboo shoots to crush and flatten coarsely.
Add rice flour, turmeric powder, chilli powder, cumin powder and salt and mix together.
Add enough water to make a thick pakora like batter.
Heat enough oil in a pan as if to panfry pancakes.
Make thin round pancakes out of the batter and panfry till crisp and golden brown.

This tastes good with pakhala.

Patara Poda

- Tita Das, Santa Barbara, California

Ingredients

16 oz packet of mushroom
2 small potatoes
2 medium zucchinis
1 small tomato
1 small onion
3 cloves garlic
2 small green chilies
Mustard paste - 2 tsp mustard soaked and blended
1 tbsp oil
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp salt

Process

Chop all the vegetables into very thin pieces.
Cut onions, garlic, and green chilies into thin slices.
Mix vegetables with oil, turmeric, salt and mustard paste.
Put mixture in a flat and thick pan with slight oil at bottom.
Cook in high for 6 minutes without any cover.
Reduce heat and cook for 5 more minutes until vegetables are just cooked.
Garnish it with cilantro and serve it hot.

Dalma

- Julie Mishra, Fremont, California

Ingredient

1 cup Toor Dal
1 potato
2-3 taro (*saru*)
1/2 cup cut yellow squash (*kakharu*)
1 Indian zucchini (*janhi*)
1/2 cut eggplant
1 tbsp ghee or clarified butter
1 tbsp punch phutana
3-4 dry red chilies
1/4 coconut grated
1/2 inch ginger crushed
1 tsp turmeric, salt

Masala

- Dry roast and grind (1 tsp cumin seed, 2 dry red chilies)

Process

Boil 3-4 cups of water in a pot
Add crushed ginger, dal, salt, and turmeric
Cook it until dal is half cooked
Add potato, taro, and squash
Cook it for 5 minutes
Add Indian zucchini, eggplant
Cook until dal is cooked
Fry punch phutana with ghee
Add it to the dal
Add masala and coconut at the end
Mix it well and serve

Machha Besara

- Anjalika Pattanaik, San Jose, California

Ingredients

20 pieces of cut fish
(2 tbsp salt, 1 tsp turmeric, fry it in oil).
2 medium size potato, sliced
1/3 cup black mustard seed
1 tsp cumin seed
4-5 red chilies
1 tbsp salt
2 tbsp mustard oil
1 tsp panch phutana
14-15 cloves of garlic crushed
4 green chilies
10-15 curry leaves
1 diced tomato

Process

Soak black mustard seed, cumin & red chilies in water for 30 minutes and blend into smooth paste.
Put 2 tbsp mustard oil in a wok.
Add 1 tsp panch phutana, wait until seeds crackle.
Add crushed garlic, green chilies & potatoes.
Fry for two minutes.
Add tomato and turmeric, fry for 1 minute.
Add the blended mustard paste.
Slowly add 4 cups of water.
Bring the curry to boil
Cover and cook in medium heat until potatoes are half-cooked.
Take out the cover and add all the fried fish pieces.
Simmer for 10 minutes.
Turn off the heat, add 2 tsp lemon juice and 1 tsp mustard oil.
(Instead of lemon juice, you can add 2 "ambula" with the fish)

Amba Khata

- Mamata Mohanty, Fremont, California

Ingredients

2 big green mangoes
2 tsp oil
1/4 tsp black cumin seed
1/4 tsp mustard seed
6 curry leaves
1/4 tsp turmeric
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp salt

Masala - Roast in pan (1 dry red chili, 1 tsp cumin seeds, tsp fenugreek seed) and then grind.

Process

Heat oil in a pan.
Add black cumin and mustard seed. Fry until it crackles.
Add curry leaves & turmeric.
Add chopped mangoes and salt. Fry it for few minutes.
Add lemon juice and sugar. Simmer until mango is cooked.
Add the dry/ground masala at the end.
Serve it at room temperature.



Organizational 7 it Bits



Progress Report on various OSA committee activities

Traditionally, the President reports on the progress and the achievements made last year in the souvenir journal. Instead of repeating what I have already reported in the last winter journal, let me bring you up to date on the status of various committees I had formed in the beginning of the year to look into various issues that are important to OSA's members and OSA's future.

Fund Raising:

Chair Hemant Senapati has been aggressively looking into ways OSA can do some fund raising. I will have some concrete numbers from him to report to you during convention time.

Women's Issues:

Chair Mamata Mishra has published her ideas and her proposal in the last Winter Journal. I hope she will have more to say in this year's women's forum.

Recent Immigrants:

Chair Purna Mohanty has taken a good lead on the issues and will report more in the convention. Students' Issues: Chair Sachin Panda is dressing socio-cultural issues faced by the immigrant students. He is working with OSA to provide information on higher education at OSA Centers in Orissa.

Youth Affair:

Chair Arati Misro is planning youth involvement through survey, email, and a dedicated web site.

Elderly Issues:

Temporary Chair Amiya Mohanty has been talking to many of you interested in the elderly issues facing the OSA members and will report in the convention.

Continuity of OSA's Goals:

Chair Amiya Mohanty will be chairing a forum at the convention and has invited many past OSA Presidents to speak out on this important issue: as the leadership changes, what happens to OSA's evolving plans and programs? I know, many of you expressed concern about this continuity issues.

Outreach Activities:

Chair Debi Mishra has been leading many of these activities benefiting mainly organizations of Orissa. Over the years this has become a main component of OSA's overall activities. He will report more on these at the convention.

Gopa Patnaik
President, OSA

OSA Financial Statement

9-18-97 to 5-15-98

The financial statement from 6-16-97 to 9-17-97 has been published in the 98 Winter Issue of OSA Journal. The following statement covers the period 9-18-97 to 5-15-98.

INCOME

Loan payoff by Houston convention committee	\$2000.00
Profit from Houston convention	\$1446.00
Membership dues collected at Houston	\$2230.00
Membership	\$ 935.00
Contribution by H. Senapati	\$5050.00
Contribution by N. Doshi	\$10007.62
Contribution by D. Mishra	\$ 150.00
Contribution made for SEEDS	\$2274.00
Total	\$24092.62

EXPENSES

Reimb to Past Editor for Journal expenses	\$1167.74
SEEDS	\$2274.0
* Basundhara	\$150.00
Balasore Educational Foundation	\$10000.00
Puri School	\$5000.00
Winter Journal Printing	\$960.00
Mailing & Supplies	\$496.19
Stationery Printing	\$332.00
Web Service Fee	\$70.00
Travel Expenses	\$190.00
Total	\$20639.93

FIXED DEPOSITS

Money Market a/c with Charles Schwab	\$35535.00
Interest earned up to 5/15/98	\$875.09
CD at Harris Bank	\$ 4500.00
Interest earned up to 5/15/98	\$ 742.02
CD with Glendale Federal	\$ 1000.00
Total*	\$42652.11
Summary Carry over from past Treasurer	\$2520.15
Income	\$24092.62
Expenses	\$20639.93
Transfer to fixed deposit	\$1000.00-
Cash on hand (5-15-1998)	\$4972.84

Dr. Babru Bahan Samal
Secretary/ Treasurer, OSA, May 1998

*We have not withdrawn any accumulated interest for operational expense. In fact we have added \$1000 of membership money to fixed deposit.

An Appeal For Help

The Rotary Club of Bhubaneswar has been striving to provide vital health care assistance to the indigent population surrounding the metropolitan area. Apart from their Polio Campaign, they have successfully initiated a rehabilitation center for about 30 leprosy patients. With the assistance of a group of German philanthropists from the Rotary Club of Muenster, Germany, they have set up a successful school program for the children of these afflicted leprosy patients. Without this, these children would be outcast from local schools, and without good hygiene habits could protract the disease. Another generation of suffering and misery has thus been averted.

The lack of adequate supply of healthy blood from Donors, exacerbated by lack of mobile screening units to effectively identify early cases of Hepatitis B and many other diseases widespread in the area, the new Capital Hospital and the Municipality Hospital are sorely lacking in adequate blood collection and blood banking facilities.

A bold and venturesome proposal has been made by Rotarians from Bhubaneswar and from the Rotary Club of Brighton, NY (a suburb of Rochester, NY) to the Rotary International Foundation that they will raise \$25,000.00 between them for this humanitarian cause by fall this year under Rotary International Foundation's Health, Hunger and Humanity (3H) Program. If the Foundation approves the project estimated to cost \$286,000.-, the Foundation will provide the balance of the funds needed for the project.

That is an opportunity OSA and its members can help to capture for the suffering masses in and

around the capital city of Bhubaneswar. New equipment for screening of patients, blood collection by mobile ambulance and at the hospitals will be provided under this project.

The challenge facing us is whether the "seed sum" of \$25,000.- can be raised in time. The Brighton Club has already put together about \$4,000.- A balance of \$ 8,500.- is needed for the contribution from USA.

Bhubaneswar has a steeper challenge since their share of \$12,500.- in Rupee equivalent, is a formidable sum (nearly Rs.5 lakhs).

Here are some facts and figures:

- The Government of Orissa will fully support this project and has committed to provide the space, infrastructure, manpower and maintenance needed. A copy of their letter is available for examination.
- Local Rotary Volunteers will dedicate a team to support and monitor effective implementation of the program.
- Blood collection will improve by 400%.
- The population estimated to benefit from this program is about 450,000 in the first three years and another 200,000 thereafter.

Sincerely,

Bhabesh C. Dash

e-mail: dashcorp@ix.netcom.com

Telephone: (708) 960-0428

MASTECTOMEES ASSOCIATION (INDIA)

(ORISSA CHAPTER, BHUBANESWAR)

Registration No. 1078/1995 13 BSD

Dear Sir / Madam :

Among all types of cancers, breast cancer is the No. 1 killer among urban women in India. However, many people are not aware that breast cancer is completely curable, if detected early. It is also not commonly known that a woman who undergoes mastectomy - the surgical removal of the breast - suffers severe physical, emotional and social problems. She desperately needs help and support, which is rarely available, especially in India.

Many of us at the Mastectomees Association (India) (MAI) are survivors of this dreaded disease. Having recovered, we formed this association to help the rehabilitation of breast cancer victims throughout India. MAI has been granted official recognition as a Charitable / non-profit association by the Registrar of Societies in India. There are well above one lakh of women, spread all over the country, who are treated for breast cancer in India. It is the primary aim of MAI to reach out to these women with a network of support groups throughout the state capitals and major cities. Our other related objectives are to spread public awareness and to encourage women to come forward for early detection and consequently, improve chances of full recovery.

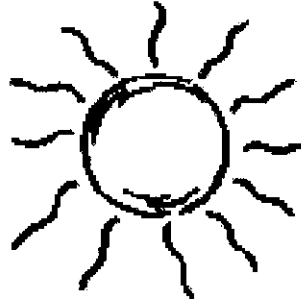
We have already started Reach to Recovery Services by establishing branches in Pune, Calcutta, Delhi, Bangalore and the latest one being in Bhubaneswar, in addition to several sub-branches at Mumbai. We have also conducted successful cancer detection camp in all the above mentioned cities and hope to conduct several more in other areas around all the branches of MAI. The MAI also has many other plans. The aim and objectives of our association are :

1. To provide a central organization to assist in the awareness, treatment and rehabilitation of persons who have, or will have, any type of breast cancer.
2. To publish helpful information regarding all aspects of breast cancer.
3. To work with those national and international bodies, whose purposes are to combat cancer in all its forms.
4. In affiliation with the International Reach to Recovery, function on guidelines on their norms.
5. To encourage formation of support groups all over India.
6. To promote awareness among medical professionals and the general public that mastectomees can resume normal living and to help to remove misconceptions about the well being of mastectomees and to impress particularly their employability and social acceptability and roles in family and interpersonal relations.
7. To procure and make available prosthesis aids and equipment for the mastectomees.

The volunteers are putting in hard work for this deserving cause. However, the need for FUNDS to support these philanthropic activities is acute, especially in India. On behalf of the Mastectomees Association (India), and especially for the newly formed chapter in Orissa, I appeal to you for moral support and generous donations.

Thanking you,
Yours faithfully,
Mrs. Namita Misra President

MAI, ORISSA Chapter,
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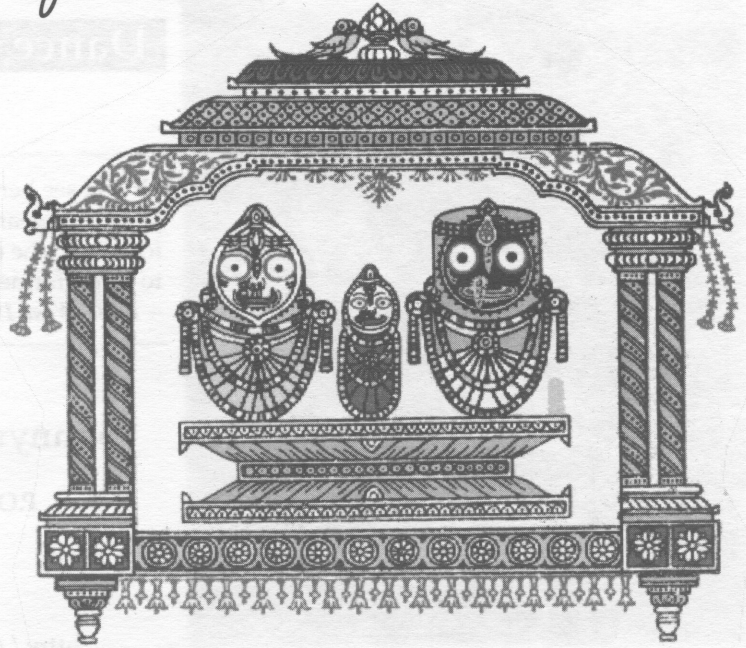
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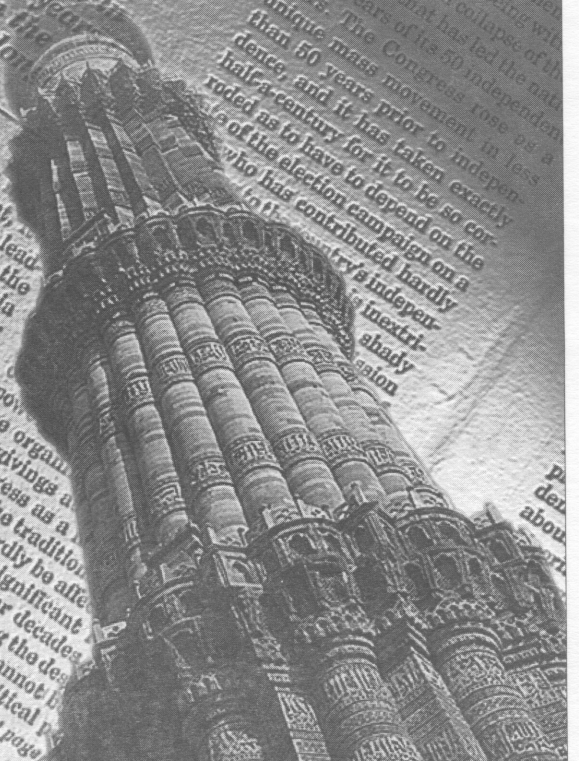
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*"Happiness depends upon ourselves."
– Aristotle*

*"The best thing about future is that it only
comes one day at a time."
– Abraham Lincoln*

*"I think and think for months and years.
Ninety-nine times, the conclusion is false.
The hundredth time, I am right."
– Albert Einstein*

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With best wishes from

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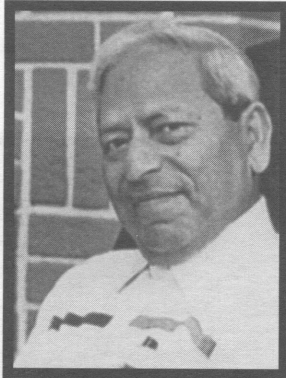
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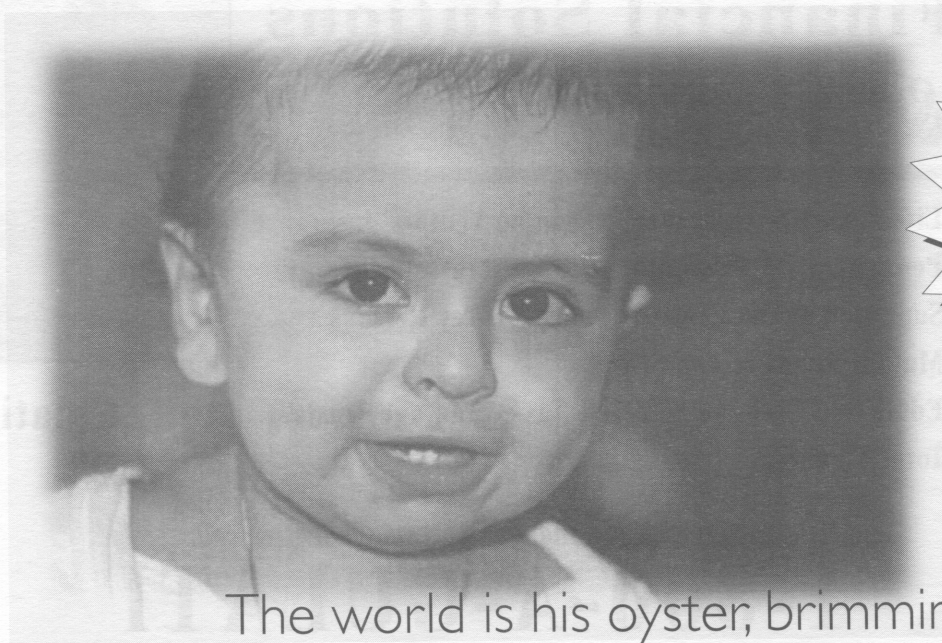
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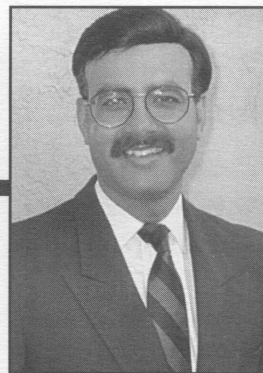
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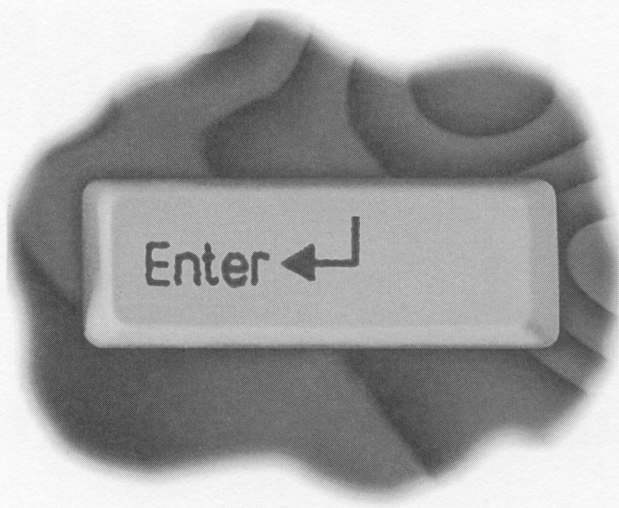
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