

# Under the Bodhi tree



Neelamraju Lakshmi prasad

# **Under the Bodhi Tree**

*N. LAKSHMI PRASAD*

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Late Sri Tanneeru Krishnamurthy garu, my father-in-law, and his wife Smt. Seetaravamma were freedom fighters who had gone to jail during the struggle for Indian Independence. Their eldest son Dr. T. R. Rao who heads the Market Probe Research Organization Wisconsin, USA, with branches in many countries of Europe and Asia, Conducts market research for Banks and other commercial organizations in regard to consumer preferences.

After the passing away of his father Dr. Rao has helped some of his younger brothers and sisters to settle in U.S.A. Dr. Rao and his wife Ms. Susan have been helping educational institutions and setting up housing colonies for the poor in the names of Dr. Rao's parents in the rural areas of Guntur dist. Andhra Pradesh.

The publication of this book along with a couple of other books in Telugu has been made possible with the financial help given by Dr. T. R. Rao in the names of his parents, to whom we are grateful.

*N. Lakshmi Prasad*

## **Remembering late Sri Vakati**

Sri Vakati Panduranga Rao, a Vereran Journalist, carried me along with him to the A.P. Times, where he was specially looking after the literary supplement, apart from his other duties. The short pieces included in this book 'Under the Bodhi Tree' used to appear every fortnight. The lengthier ones were added to the printed pieces at a later date to produce this book. I thank the A.P. Times Editor and Management of that day, while reproducing the published pieces here.

About my dear departed friend Sri Vakati as he was popularly known, I can only say that it was a great pleasure working with him which, alas, was short lived.

*N. Lakshmi Prasad*

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# Beyond All Images

Among the Hindu Trinity, Parama Siva is generally found in a state of *samadhi* or trance. He often roams in the cremation ground, as he never perceives any part as separate from any other part of the universe. In his absence, Parvati felt lonely. She therefore asked him to teach her to attain the *samadhi* state so that she would not feel separated from her consort.

Siva asked her to sit in the *asana* posture, close her eyes and turn her gaze within and meditate. The following dialogue is then supposed to have taken place between them, according to a story related by Swami Ramdas of Anandashram in North Kerala :

*Siva : What do you see now?*

*Parvati : I see your form in my mental vision.*

*S : Go beyond that form. What do you see now?*

*P : I see a brilliant light.*

*S : Go beyond the light. What do you see?*

*P : I hear the sound "Om."*

*S : Transcend the sound. What is now your experience?*

*To the last question there was no answer. Parvati had become one with the cosmic self. There was now no subject or object, no seer or seen for her, only "existence." There was only the nameless, changeless and the formless reality. Some time later when Parvati was gradually coming back to consciousness, she was heard uttering softly, "I am Brahman."*

There are many important things that one can learn from this story. Meditation is shown rightly as going beyond

everything. Lord Siva, asks his wife Parvati to go beyond a vision of Siva, because reality is formless. The brilliant light that Parvati sees thereafter, on reaching which stage, most devotees are satisfied, is again negated by Siva. Parvati hears within herself the sound of the *anahata sabda*, and Siva denies that as well suggesting to Parvati to go still further. The mental visions have vanished, the seeing and the listening have been transcended, and Parvati is now one with existence. She has realized unity, and from this oneness or *samadhi*, arise compassion and love.

When a devotee told Arunachala Ramana that in her meditation she constantly saw the form of Ramana, he advised her to persist in her meditation and that one day the image would vanish, taking her to a different state!

Jiddu Knshnamurti, who always feared that those who listened to him would get attached to his personality, advised them to forget the speaker, while attaching utmost importance to the “teaching.” The true friend in the field of spirituality, will always induce you to go beyond all forms, be they human or divine, lest you get stuck somewhere on the way.

## **Mind Watch**

C. E. M. Joad who belonged to the first half of the twentieth century, apart from being the Head of the Department of Philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London, was an admirable and sane expositor of the various aspects of modern thought, and was widely known through his Brains Trust broadcasts of the BBC during his time.

George Gurdjieff was a Russian who, more than any other Westerner had carried the message of self-realization to the West, after having worked at it for a number of years in Egypt, Turkey, some central Asian countries including Tibet, and learning much from many masters of the East. Gurdjieff, ably assisted by another outstanding man, P.D. Ouspensky, had lectured in London for some time, influencing brilliant minds like Kenneth Walker, J.B. Priestly, Rudyard Kipling, Frank Lloyd Wright and Katherine Mansfield. Joad, for one reason or the other, but mostly because he was not able to conceive of anything other than the mind in understanding man, the cosmos, and a God if there be one, rejected all that Gurdjieff was reported to have been postulating, as mere hocus pocus.

But as fate would have it, Joad was stricken with an illness which confined him to bed, and the doctors had told him that he would survive for about six weeks. With death staring in his face, Joad started wondering whether there was more to it than what was relayed to him as Gurdjieff's teaching. He could not reconcile himself to the idea that man simply appeared and disappeared from the earth at two different points of time, and that there was no other significance to his life. Most of all he felt remorse in having been unfair to Gurdjieff all along, and so

**End of Preview.**

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**\* \* \***

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