

First

Kamaladevi
Chattopadhyay
Memorial

Lecture

2009



Education through the Arts: Values and Skills

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

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FOREWORD

It was for me, a great opportunity and a privilege to have been present at the first Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, and now to write the Foreword of its publication.

Both Kamaladevi and Dr. Vatsyayan being iconic figures, it is not necessary for me to write about either, nor do I possess the competence to do so.

The step taken by the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) in initiating an annual lecture series to honour the memory of one of the pre-eminent Indians of the last century is both commendable and long overdue.

Dr. Vatsyayan, in her lecture has said of Kamaladevi, 'the values she embodied she actualized throughout her life', that 'she refused to be President of India, because her calling was of a different kind', and that she chose instead to devote her life to giving 'dignity to the crafts, and craftpersons.'

But, despite her reserve and self-effacement, offices and honours pursued her.

Having played a pivotal role in the setting up of unique institutions such as the National School of Drama, the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Central Cottage Industries Emporium, the Crafts Council of India, and a series of craft museums, including the Theatre Crafts Museum in Delhi, she was the natural choice to be the Chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Akademi and Advisor on the boards of several prestigious institutions.

She was conferred the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1966, and the Padma Vibhushan in 1987.

What we, at the CCRT, feel most privileged about is that this was one of her creations; she honoured it by serving as its first

Chairperson, and continued to nurture the institution even after relinquishing office. This bequest casts on us a special responsibility.

The CCRT is extremely fortunate in having had Dr. Vatsyayan deliver the first Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay Memorial Lecture, since she learnt from and worked with Kamaladevi, and was foremost amongst those who strove to continue her mission. A scholar and dancer, she combined the finest in mind and body, the education she received at Shantiniketan, Delhi and Michigan, exposed to the best of what the East and West had to offer, and, as an art historian and administrator, she contributed most, after Kamaladevi, to portray the inter-dependence and areas of fusion of the cerebral world and that of the arts.

I am equally not equipped to comment on the lecture, which deserves to be read on its own, and re-read.

However, as an Indian and an administrator, I do feel that focusing on the subject of the lecture—‘Education through the Arts’—remains today as critical a necessity as it was in the late 1970s, when both Kamaladevi and Dr. Vatsyayan felt the need to set up the CCRT, to serve as a vehicle for realizing the mission they envisaged.

If then, teachers, parents and the youth were frantically pursuing science and engineering degrees, they are today mesmerized by the globalized world, the entry to which is the much sought after ‘MBA’. In both cases what they are ignorant of, or ignore, is their own heritage and the world of the crafts and the arts, the absence of which prevents persons from developing fully and meaningfully, which, amongst other things includes, possessing purpose and values.

In the lecture, Dr. Vatsyayan uses her not inconsiderable erudition and skills of articulation to trace the relationship between the development of the parallel approaches of the sciences and the arts in Europe, from the triumph of science in

the 'Age of Enlightenment', to the questioning of its primacy, in the Romantic Movement.

She then goes on to focus on India, narrating the approaches of the Orientalists and the Anglicans, one delving into the offerings of the cultures and environment of India, and the other denigrating these in favour of the modern system of education, consequent to Macaulay's Minute of 1835.

This was followed by institutions set up by Indians such as the DAV, the Brahmo Samaj and the Gandharva Mahavidhyalaya, to integrate benefits of what the West had to offer with those of our rich indigenous traditions. These attempts at fusion were developed further by visionaries like Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Aurobindo, whose conceptions were of education that was inclusive, unleashing the 'powers of the hand, the heart and the head'.

The lecture finally dwells on the post-Independence efforts of Maulana Azad and others to strengthen, through the State, institutions devoted to Oriental learning, as well as those set up by the British, such as the schools of art which were of national importance, and those devoted to higher education.

To foster the continuance of the great Indian traditions of the arts, national institutions were established, such as the Lalit Kala, Sangeet Natak and Sahitya akademies.

Kamaladeviji, spurning offers of a number of prestigious offices, devoted herself, almost single-handedly, to providing dignity to craftpersons. Indeed, as Dr. Vatsyayan touchingly reminds us, while Kamaladeviji would have rejoiced in the ever-increasing interest in the traditional crafts of India, she would have been disappointed by the absence of a rightful, concomitant improvement in the status of the craftsperson. The craftsperson was at the heart of Kamaladeviji's quest to obtain recognition for the crafts of India.

Despite the stature of our leaders, the sensitivity and magnificence of their visions, and the tireless efforts put in by them, as Dr. Vatsyayan concludes, there was a lack of coherence at the policy and programming level, which resulted in cultural heritage and crafts remaining outside the pale of institutions of higher learning.

The creation of a fine balance is the great unfinished agenda, in which the CCRT must play a pivotal role.

This lecture will serve as a talisman for the CCRT, as it will for all those working in the areas of education and culture, and will provide critical insight to all Indians involved in creative thought and action.

We are extremely grateful to Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan for having provided us with this opportunity of hearing her, and the privilege of publishing this lecture.

P.C. Sen
Chairman
CCRT

KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAY



Known in her student days as the ‘uncrowned queen of India’, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay was a rare combination of beauty, intelligence, courage and commitment. In her person, since her early childhood, she assimilated the values imparted by her mother, grandmother, and the English suffragette Margaret Cousins; in short, a generation of women who instilled in her values which guided her life and work for over seven decades. Kamaladevi represented a generation of Indian women who were freedom fighters, in and out of jail, but also those who were responsible for freeing Indian women from the shackles of narrow social and economic boundaries.

In this long journey, Kamaladevi eschewed power, position, explicit political leadership. No public office could attract her, and, instead, it was the mission of alleviating the suffering of the people which was her calling. She was active in the movement of rescuing women soon after Partition. She gave her full energies to the Faridabad refugee camp. Cumulatively, her proximity to Mahatma Gandhi and conscientiousness of the creativity of economic disempowerment gave rise to the Indian cooperative movement. It was this movement, along with her work at the grassroots level and her advocacy, which resulted in the recognition of Indian handlooms and handicrafts. She not only nurtured craftspeople but also gave dignity and value to their products. All this and more has brought about a sea-change in the tastes of the modern generation. Today, the handicrafts sector is recognized both for its vibrancy and its market value in India and abroad. The institutions of the All India Handicrafts Board and the All India Handloom Board came into existence as a result of her active advocacy.

For Kamaladevi, life was an integrated whole – the hand, the heart and the mind, and an unflinching commitment went together. As a young girl, she had defied convention to be a theatre artist. The arts were her love and passion, be it music, dance, theatre or the crafts. There was not an occasion when she did not discover a remote tradition of handloom or craft, or an obscure theatre form, to nurture it, to promote it and to present it.

And yet, there was a last mission to be fulfilled, to integrate the rich diverse and living traditions of our cultural heritage with the formal systems of education. It was her firm belief that unless there was equity between the creativity of the hand, the intellectual critical discriminating mind and the pulsating heart, a total human being would not be possible. It was this vision and conviction which motivated the Government to establish the institution of the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT).

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAY

Personal Details

1903 April, 3 Born at Mangalore, Karnataka
1988 October, 29 Died at Mumbai, Maharashtra

Major Publications

The Awakening of Indian Women. Madras: Everyman's Press, 1939.

Towards a National Theatre. Aundh Pub. Trust, 1945.

Socialism and Society. Bombay: Chetana, 1950.

Indian Handicrafts. New Delhi: Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1963.

Carpets and Floor Coverings of India. Bombay: Taraporevala, 1969.

The Glory of Indian Handicrafts. New Delhi: India Book Co., 1976.

Indian Carpets and Floor Coverings. New Delhi: All India Handicrafts Board, 1974.

Handicrafts of India. New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1975.

Tribalism in India. Leiden: Brill, 1978.

Indian Embroidery. New Delhi: Wiley Eastern, 1977.

The Glory of Indian Handicrafts. New Delhi: Indian Book Co., 1978.

Indian Women's Battle for Freedom. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1983.

Inner Recesses, Outer Spaces: Memoirs. New Delhi: Navrang, 1986.

Major Awards and Recognitions

1955, the Padma Bhushan of the Government of India.

1966, the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership.

1974, the lifetime achievement award of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Ratna Sadasya.

1977, the UNESCO Award for promotion of handicrafts.

1987, the Padma Vibhushan of the Government of India.

DR. KAPILA VATSYAYAN



Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, scholar, author, linguist, dancer, ethnographer, educationist and art historian, combines the creativity of a performing artist, insight of a scholar and an over-arching vision of a thinker in the domain of culture. As an art historian and scholar, she has established, through her writing, lectures and exhibitions, the intrinsic inter-relationship and inter-dependence between and amongst the arts, as also the interface of the arts with the domains of science, metaphysics and sociology.

She spent her childhood in the creative ambience of Santiniketan and received her Masters from Delhi and Michigan Universities and her doctorate from the Banaras Hindu University. She was on the faculty of the Universities of Delhi, Banaras, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia) and California (Santa Cruz). She combines the best of the academic traditions of the West and the East.

Concurrently and at a time when music and dance were not considered to be particularly respectable and were certainly not aimed at public performance, she persevered to receive training from Acchan Maharaj in Kathak. She then brought his son to Delhi, today known as Birju Maharaj. Equally important was her attempt to bring Guru Amobi Singh to Delhi after the breakdown of the Almora Centre. She was one of his first disciples. Besides, she brought S. V. Lalitha from Kalakshetra to Delhi and became her student in the Kalakshetra style of Bharata Natyam. She was also responsible for bringing Yamini Krishnamurthy and other dancers to Delhi. She went on to learn Odissi from Guru Surendra Nath Jena. It was this which prepared her to relate texts, critical analysis and performance.

Dr. Vatsyayan is widely acknowledged for her multi-disciplinary approaches towards the fundamental perennial concepts of space and time. Besides elucidating her ideas through writing, she has conceived and organised several thematic and multi-media presentations such as 'Image of Man', *Akasa* (Space), *Kala* (Time), *Akara* (Form) and *Prakriti* (Primal elements) to communicate this vision.

She is a renowned author and has written over 15 books and 200 articles. Being a performing artist and art historian, her works have focused on the *Shastra* and *Prayoga*, i.e, theory and practice, as also on the relationship of the written and oral traditions. Some of her path breaking publications are -Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts (Sangeet Natak Akademi), 1968; Indian Classical Dance (Publications Division) 1972; Traditional Indian Theatre: Multiple Streams (National Book Trust) 1972; Traditions of Indian Folk Dance (Clarion Books) 1975; Dance in Indian Painting (Abhinav Prakashan) 1982; The Square and the Circle of the Indian Arts (Roli Books International) 1983; Bharata: The Natya Sastra (Sahitya Akademi) 1996 and six volumes on the 'Gita Govinda' as reflected in different regional pictorial traditions of India such as Gujarat, Rajasthan, Mewar, Bundi, Assam and Orissa.

In the course of a multi-dimensional career, Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan has been involved in teaching, administration, organizing, building institutions and in framing cultural policies at national and international level. She has concretized her vision through many institutions she has established, both in her capacity as Adviser to the Government of India (Ministry of Education and Culture) as also in her individual capacity. Some of the prestigious institutions she has been instrumental in establishing are: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Varanasi; Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, Delhi and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Delhi.

Dr. Vatsyayan has received many awards from academic

institutions in India and abroad. She is the Fellow of Asiatic Society of Bombay and Asiatic Society of Bengal. She has received the Campbell Award from the Asiatic Society, Bombay and the R. P. Chanda

Memorial Award from the Asiatic Society, Bengal. She is a Fellow of the Sangeet Natak Akademi as also the Lalit Kala Akademi and also recipient of the Ratna Award from both these Academies. . She is a Fellow of the Russian Academy of Science and the French Academy of the Study of Asian Civilizations.

Dr. Vatsyayan has received many Honoris Causa degrees from several universities in India and abroad – from University of Manipur, Rabindra Bharati, Banaras Hindu University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetham, Tirupati, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, as also Mount Holyoke and University of Michigan.

She is a recipient of the prestigious Sankaradeva Award for National Integration from Government of Assam; the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award; Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Sahitya Sewa Samman from Delhi Sanskrit Academy and Lifetime Achievement Award from the Sahitya Kala Parishad of the Government of NCT of Delhi.

Students and researchers are motivated and encouraged by her guidance. Many of today's scholars have had the good fortune of studying under her. She is actively involved in the promotion of the arts and is considered a living legend whom today's scholars look up to seek knowledge in the field of literature and the arts, art history, history of science, living traditions, social structures, etc.

She is presently Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha (Nominated), Life Trustee, India International Centre and Chairperson of IIC-Asia Project. She has been a Member of the UNESCO Executive Board and President, India International Centre.

Education through the Arts: Values and Skills

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

Chairman Shri Jawhar Sircar, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Shri Probir Sen, Chairperson of the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, members of the governing body of the CCRT, and distinguished people present here:

Thank you, Shri Probir Sen, for inviting me to deliver this first Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Memorial Lecture. This is a rare honour. I agreed, but on reflection I realized how difficult it was going to be for me to articulate the oceanic grasp of this human being whom we are honouring today. No doubt she was a person who represented a historical moment of change in this country and was also an agent of change. The values she embodied she actualized throughout her life. It is not for me to recount her journey from childhood to adolescence to youth to adulthood and finally that mellowing ripeness and richness of experience, extending love and affection to all, young and old, the disempowered and the empowered. Not for a moment throughout her life did she flinch an inch to make compromises on values that she inherited from her mother and grandmother. With utmost ease she could take courageous action. In what words can I pay tribute to her, the little I, who since childhood received from her unbounded love and trust as also candid, sharp criticism!

Biographies of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya have been written, and she has contributed her own memoirs as well. Rich compliments have been paid to her by political leaders, especially her companions during the freedom struggle and particularly members of the Socialist Party – e.g., Narendra Dev, Jayaprakash Narain, Yusuf Meherally and others. She could argue with Mahatma Gandhi, interrogate Jawaharlal Nehru. She refused to be the President of India, because her calling was of a different kind and at a different level. Theatre and the arts, the fragrance of flowers, the sweet smell of jasmine which she wore on her

hair from childhood to old age, the immaculate attention to dress and coiffure, was the natural feminine who could effortlessly match the masculine power with a smile, humour and laughter! She believed in making the ordinary, extraordinary. She was a person who gave dignity to the crafts and the craftpersons. She made it fashionable to wear hand-spun, hand-woven *sarees* and adorn homes with the crafts. Today, they have acquired a status of 'brand names' in the design market, domestic and international. Welcome as all this is, one wonders whether Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya would have thought that this was the fruition of a plant or a seed she sowed, or regretted the fact that while the creativity has been acknowledged, there has not been an equal acknowledgment of the craftpersons. Her agenda here was to give economic sustainability, dignity and pride to the makers, and of course, bring about a sea-change in the sensitivity of the elite.

Since the moment of agreeing to deliver this lecture I have been filled with memories and this could be sharing of not just my memories but her memories of me! One episode would probably be relevant. We sat in a formal meeting. In my foolish manner I began to argue or disagree with her. She listened and then turned round and said to me, 'You shut up. You were too heavy to be carried when we were collecting salt at Chowpatty during the Salt Satyagraha. I had to hand you over to your mother and go to court arrest in the cause of the salt of freedom'. Naturally, I was stunned, to say the least. Within a second, however, with her characteristic disarming smile, she said, 'Anyhow, let us listen to her argument. There is something there'. Often, and more than often, I thought that Kamaladevijji was giving us this freedom salt, i.e., freedom salt of the spirit that permeates all dimensions of life.

On another occasion, my mother lay ill in hospital. Kamaladevijji came to see her. The two women held hands and there was exchange of emotions through eyes, no words were uttered. She came out of the hospital. As she was going to sit in the car, I said to her, 'Kamaladevijji, thank you very much for

coming; you know what it means to her'. She snapped back at me, 'What impertinence! I knew your mother before you were born'.

These two very personal recollections give an insight into her character at the most human level. However, as we all know, she was called in her days in Britain 'the uncrowned Queen of India'. Wherever she sat, spoke or initiated a programme, her presence and her words communicated her conviction and dedication to the causes that she championed. I have watched her from near and far, first, when she went off without notice (with my mother) to Kashmir, when the first attack of the infiltrators took place, to bring relief and solace, specially to the women, and then her relentless work in the rehabilitation of refugees in Faridabad. There was the other Kamaladevi in her public persona as a key figure in the first Asian Relations Conference of 1947. The artist Kamaladevi was naturally involved in the establishment of many institutions and consulted by the political leadership in the setting up of the National Academies of India following Independence.

In her book *Inner Recesses, Outer Spaces*, apart from many other important issues, she gives a vivid account of her conversations with Maulana Azad on the establishment of the Academies and also his views on what he considered the Academies to be, i.e., something in the nature of the Greek academies as envisaged by Plato, and not administrative institutions. He adapted the term as 'Akademi' to be congruent with the Greek pronunciation and also to conform to the Hindi pronunciation. According to Maulana Azad, says Kamaladevi, the role of the Akademies

'will be to canalize fruitfully the new cultural forces released after Independence. While I believe that arts have to derive their sustenance only from the people, the Government must undertake their development and continuity as its primary duty. The Akademies will,

however, be autonomous in their internal working and will include in their composition not only State representatives, but equally representatives of important art organizations and distinguished individual artists. The Akademi of dance, drama and music will be the first to be set up. Because of your active interest in them, I wish to share my thoughts with you'. (1)

She also gives an account of the genesis of the National School of Drama. It was my privilege to work with her in the early years of the formation of the Asian Theatre Institute, the incipient institution of what is today the National School of Drama. It was also my pleasure to work with her as a Vice-Chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Akademi and of course as Vice-Chairperson of this institution, the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training.

This is, perhaps, not the stage to dwell on the reasons for the establishment of the CCRT when there was already a National Council of Educational Resources and Training, known also by its acronym NCERT. I hope by the end of my narration, I may succeed in placing before this audience why it was necessary to have a CCRT, with the specific objective of integrating the arts with the values and skills they embodied into the educational system. At this point, I can only draw attention to the first logo of this institution, which was 'the thinking hand'. It was under the guidance of Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya that I had the privilege of conceptualizing the programmes as also being instrumental in concretizing them. Over the last decade or so, one has watched from a distance the growth of this institution. The fact that it has acquired an all-India personality and has regional centres speaks of the relevance of the work of the CCRT.

As I mentioned before, the subject I have chosen for this lecture – *Education through the Arts: Values and Skills* – is

rather complex. Nevertheless, I thought this was the appropriate occasion to refresh our memories in regard to the context of the establishment of what is called the system of 'modern education' and the concurrent history of calling attention to the richness of Indian cultural heritage – monuments, manuscripts, literature and the arts. No doubt, an undertaking of this type is an attempt to overview the history of the discourses on the subject both in Europe as also India.

Where do we begin? We can go back to Plato, Aristotle and others in the West, to the Vedic *pathshalas*, the Buddhist *sangha*, the Jain *srenis* and much else in India, to the textual evidence of education as also the arts, both in the West and in India, particularly the latter, viz., Panini before Christ and Vatsyayana after Christ. The enumeration of textual sources would certainly be helpful and illuminating. However, this is not the occasion to do so – I have done so elsewhere. For our purpose today, I have tried, if inadequately, to rapidly review some crucial developments which took place during the last three or four centuries, particularly in Europe, which had a bearing on the developments in India not only in the socio-economic sphere, but also on the systems of education and approaches in regard to the arts and crafts. Despite the impressive body of critical writing on the period, it has to be pointed out that the studies have either been restricted to particular geographical areas or to tracing histories of discourse through particular disciplines, e.g., maritime trade or political thought. Also, often these studies have been undertaken from a specific theoretical position, if not an ideological bias. My purpose today is to look at these domains as dispassionately as possible.

My narration, of necessity, will have to follow a rough chronology, but the purpose is to condense a history which is not irrelevant to the predicaments which we face at this time, especially in India.

At first glance, it may appear that one is unnecessarily taking a detour route or labouring a point. However, this is neither a detour route nor a mechanical repetition of facts known. I am keenly conscious of the movements of this period which have impacted the minds of both the thinkers as also policy planners. The political, economic and social dimensions brought about changes in societal structures and organizational formations. All these, in turn, impacted the then extant institutions, which facilitated transmission of knowledge that ensured continuity of skills in the arts and the crafts.

After two centuries or more, it is not irrelevant to revisit the tension and the dialogue between what has been acknowledged as the formal system of education and the artistic and craft traditions which have been outside its pale in this country. Although there has been a sea-change in the attitude towards arts in recent years, there is room for deeper reflection on the subject, more specifically on the arts and the crafts within the formal system of education. The debates and discourses are not restricted to India; they are fairly extensive at the international level.

The question is not so much about the teaching of the arts or imparting traditional skills; more importantly, it is the tacit acceptance of a hierarchy of values in respect of what is considered to be the sharpening of the intellect as distinct from the refinement of sensibilities. To put it simply, is cerebral knowledge to be prioritized at the cost of values and manual skills? Also, can we adopt, or should we adopt, material returns as the only indicator of development?

Obviously, this issue underpins the international debates both implicitly and explicitly. The arts and the crafts, especially of the developing world – India, Asia, Africa, Latin America – represent the creativity and the gifts of those who are economically under-privileged, but culturally rich; who have lived with nature, and who use the resources of nature with the firm conviction

that they belong to an interconnected ecological system. On the other hand, there has been a phenomenal growth of 'development' based on the principle only of economic growth and affluence. This tension and polarity is fundamental at the level of value. Today, we recognize that there is a difference of opinion between those who advocate a path of growth through, what I would call, 'unsustainable consumption' and pure economic growth based on the values of materialism, and those others who are committed to a model of 'sustainable human development', which will contain greed and satisfy needs and promote most of all the value of nurturing the earth and human as equal partners.

* * *

Our story begins with that period of European history called the Age of Enlightenment, roughly the late 17th-18th century. Perhaps, we could go back to the European Renaissance, which was responsible for a fundamental change in man's perspective of the universe and his place. We are also aware that the scientific revolution, as it is called, attributed to Galileo and Copernicus, was as much scientific as it was a break from the dominance of the Church. Both the scientific discoveries and perception of the universe, as also the break away from the absolute dominance of the Church, resulted in a movement we recognize as New Humanism. This New Humanism expressed itself in many ways and especially in the arts. The names of Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo are familiar to everybody. Leonardo Da Vinci was a scientist-artist, while Michelangelo and his contemporaries reflected this new faith in the human.

The Age of Enlightenment was another most significant turning point in European thought. The propounders in the realm of thought were many. Among these we may draw attention only to Descartes, Kant and Spinoza. The thinking in the age was facilitated by many developments in the field of science, especially mathematics. This influenced the thinkers. Thus, Descartes said: 'I think, so I am'. He propounded the theory of binary opposites. Also, Newton's theories brought

about a fundamental change in man's thinking. He performed an unprecedented task of explaining the material world. Resultantly, a divide was established between Nature-Culture, Intellect-Emotion and, most of all, the Material and the Spiritual.

The history of the Enlightenment has been critiqued competently by many. I do not have to cover that ground again, except to point out that mathematical reasoning was prioritized. Appropriately, the era has been called the Age of Reason. This along with other technological developments also laid the foundation for a mental environment of intellectual exploration. These developments have now to be juxtaposed with the expansion of maritime trade as also all that happened to bring about the Industrial Revolution. In our context, we have only to underline the fact that the Industrial Revolution was in no small measure facilitated by the import of raw materials from the East. Psychically Man (Human) considered Nature as a storehouse for exploitation. The fissure between Nature and Culture was almost complete.

Maritime trade and the urge for both adventure and supremacy attracted many to the East. Again, in our context, we may draw attention to the many players – French, Dutch, Portuguese and the British. There was a twin aspiration - for attaining supremacy as also discovering and collecting material. Also, the ancient civilizations and their remains posed questions in their minds. Neither the remains of the monuments, nor the living cultures they encountered, embodied or reflected a duality between nature and culture. For them, the exploration into the rich and varied panorama of the natural and cultural diversity was as attractive as it was bewildering. They encountered another worldview and another method of reflecting this worldview in the philosophic systems as also in artistic traditions. To put it even more brashly, it was difficult for the visitors to comprehend the complexities of a culture committed to plurality.

Gods and Goddesses, the multiple arms, the multiple faces bewildered them. Sometimes, these were called pantheistic; at other times, they were called monsters. Partha Mitter has delineated the many levels of this discourse in his book *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reaction to Indian Art*. (2)

The craft traditions of India were another important dimension, which was as fascinating as threatening to the new industrial world. Many of the European traders realized that if the dexterity of the hand was not curbed, it would be impossible for the cloth of the Manchester mills to survive and pervade the international market. It is not necessary for me to remind ourselves of the cruelty experienced by the weavers of the exquisite Bengali muslin; also, dexterity of the hand in making Kashmir *kani* shawls was sought to be replaced by the machine made Paisley of Europe.

Equally educative is the history of the identification of the many botanical species, and Indigo in particular. India was known for the many varieties of the plant, known in its Botanical name as *Indigofera*. There was an indigenous technology of extracting the dye from the plant. There were many ways of processing of the plant to extract the dye. Many parts of Southeast Asia also had varieties of Indigo. As is well recognized, the plant Indigo and the natural dyes extracted from Indigo were pervasive in what is called the developing (the erstwhile colonized) world – Asia, Africa, Latin America. Each had distinctiveness and in each country there is a history of exploitation.

Exquisite designs in textile were created in many different ways ranging from wood blocks to batique. Indigo fascinated the colonizer. In Europe, a synthetic dye was developed. Now, it was politically and economically advantageous to replace the natural indigo with the synthetic indigo, and suppression of the peasants was a logical concomitant. The arts related to indigo were many, but the exploitation of natural dyes

and the establishment of synthetic dyes were not only inimical to the society, but also affected productivity in the arts and the crafts. The socio-economic and political dimensions of indigo are well documented. Dinabandhu Mitra's celebrated play, *Neel Darpan*, in Bengali (1860), reflects the agony and pain of the peasants. Gandhiji's Champaran Movement (1917) was the culmination. The story of Indigo and the introduction of the synthetic indigo for uniforms in the Navy and the schools had both a political and artistic relevance. The indigenous techniques of extracting the indigo dye for making designs in textiles was a social, cultural and artistic activity of the community. This was excluded from any formal recognition of value and skills.

We return to Europe where the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, as has been pointed out, established a mechanistic view of life and subscription to the physical, material, rather than spiritual or metaphysical. In a word,

Nature and nature's laws lay hid in Night;
God said, Let Newton be! and all was Light.

However, the mechanistic worldview and the subscription to a progressive linearity of time did not satisfy all in Europe. There was an interrogation in regard to the values embedded in the notion of man's superiority over nature and the prioritization of the material over the spiritual, the creative and the imaginative. The first symptoms of this interrogation were reflected in the arts – poetry, music and visual arts. Needless to draw attention to what has been designated as the Romantic Movement in Europe. Far from considering Nature as a source to be exploited or over-powered, she was now the teacher, a source of solace, for those who could not come to terms with the implications of the progress in science, which formulated a mechanistic view of life.

The history of this movement has been delineated over and over. It is not for me to add a word, except to point out that

while maritime trade had ignited curiosity for the riches of the East, many messages from the East also travelled to Europe. Their contribution is not minimal in the effervescence of what we today recognize as the Romantic Movement. Coleridge and his *Kublai Khan*, or Wordsworth's *The Solitary Reaper* represents one end of the spectrum, while Shelley's *To a Skylark*, the other. Keats (1795-1821), whether in the *Ode to a Nightingale* or *On a Grecian Urn*, returns repeatedly to the centrality of truth and beauty. Most of all, Blake (1757-1827) reminds us to 'see the world in a grain of sand and to see heaven in a wild flower, hold Infinity in the palm of your hands and Eternity in an hour'. In this, he was deeply influenced by Swedenborg, the scientist who had said:

Does the whale worship at thy footsteps as the hungry dog?
Or does he scent the mountain prey because his nostrils wide
Draw in the ocean? Does his eye discern the flying cloud
As the raven's eye? Or does he measure the expanse like
the vulture ?
Does the still spider view the cliffs where eagles hide their
young?
Or does the fly rejoice because the harvest is brought in?
Does not the eagle scorn the earth & despise the treasures
beneath?
But the mole knoweth what is there, & the worm shall
Tell it thee.
Does not worm erect a pillar in the mouldering Church
yard?
And a palace of eternity in the jaws of the hungry grave?
(3)

Blake exclaimed almost in ecstasy: Everything in nature has its inner no less than its outer being. The 'mortal worm' is 'translucent all within' and of 'the little winged fly smaller than a grain of sand' –

It has a heart like thee, a brain open to heaven & hell,
Withinside wondrous &expansive; its gates are not clos'd,
I hope thine are not: hence it clothes itself in rich array;
Hence thou art cloth'd with human beauty,
O thou mortal man. (4)

This concern with nature and the inner world impacted musicians and painters – the names of Mozart and Beethoven are familiar. Also, we may remind ourselves of the many schools of painting, which emerged throughout Europe, especially the Impressionists. But for this interrogation at the deepest level, would we today have the great artistic expressions of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* or Monet's *Lilies*? These were the responses against the shackles of the mechanistic world.

It was not only in the artistic creations that this interrogation was reflected, but it was extended to critical discourses in the realm of philosophy and art criticism. Thus, of equal significance was the voice of those who associated relationship between art and life. Art was not a matter of escape; instead, art was intrinsically related to manual work and skill, on the one hand, and imagination, on the other. The work of art was not purely decorative or dissociated from life and certainly not dissociated from nature. Utility and beauty went together. A most remarkable enunciation of this philosophic stand was a book by Eric Gill (1882-1940) entitled *A Holy Tradition of Working*, which raised some fundamental questions of the relationship of skill and value. From amongst the many important issues he raised was a redefinition of the word 'art'. In his words,

The word 'art' first of all meant skill, and it still means that first of all. And it means human skill, the skillful doing which results in making, so that, in its full meaning, the word 'art' meant, and still means, the power in the mind of man so to direct his acts that the result

of his thought and actions is a thing made. But though that is the original meaning of the word, and though that meaning is still the true one, we have nowadays almost completely forgotten it, and have come to think of art as though the word did not mean all human works whatsoever, from drain-pipes to cathedrals, from paper-weights to statues of saints or politicians, from street cries to songs and symphonies, from signboards to Royal Academy paintings, but only the special works of the special people who paint pictures, carve or mould statues, write books and poems, and design buildings to be looked at. (5)

This was a defining moment in Europe. A significant sector of the artists as also critical thinkers and poets interrogated the prioritization of the intellect over both imagination as also manual dexterity. There was an identifiable movement across the USA, UK and Europe. The protagonists were small in number but their views could not be dismissed. This group reminded modern civilization that there should not be a hiatus between skill and imagination; also asserted that art was not a sphere to be dissociated from ordinary life nor was it a superstition. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877-1947) wrote several essays interpreting the definitions of art at that time. In one essay, entitled *Is art a superstition or a way of life?* he said:

What is art, or rather what was art? In the first place, the property of the artist, a kind of knowledge and skill by which he knows, not what ought to be made, but how to imagine the form of the thing that is to be made, and how to embody this form in suitable material, so that the resulting artifact may be used. The shipbuilder builds, not for aesthetic reasons, but in order that men may be able to sail on the water; it is a matter of fact that the well-built ship will be beautiful, but it is not for the sake of making something beautiful that the shipbuilder goes to work; it is a matter of fact that a

well made icon will be beautiful, in other words that it will please when seen by those for whose use it was made, but the imager is casting his bronze primarily for use and not as a mantelpiece ornament or for the museum showcase.

Art can then be defined as the embodiment in material of a preconceived form. The artist's operation is dual, in the first place intellectual or 'free' and in the second place manual and 'servile'. (6)

Coomaraswamy asserted that there was a direct relationship between the idea, the form and the function of art. While the idea occurs in the head, it can only be concretized through the work of the hand. The form, whether in paper or a piece of canvas or a utensil, has a function. Thus, he went on to state:

Where an idea to be expressed remains the same throughout long sequences of stylistic variation, it is evident that this idea remains the motif or motivating power behind the work; the artist has worked throughout for the sake of the idea to be expressed, although expressing this idea always in his own way. The primary necessity is that he should really have entertained the idea and always visualized it in an imitable form; and this, implying an intellectual activity that must be ever renewed, is what we mean by originality as distinguished from novelty, and by power as distinguished from violence. (7)

This brief narration of the developments in Europe will have to be juxtaposed with the contemporary situation in India. Let us begin by recalling the arrival of William Jones (1746-1794) in Calcutta.

Jones arrived in Calcutta in 1783. An erudite scholar, he

had been advised that he must peruse the *Manu Smriti*, if he were to function as a successful judge. In the course of his stay, he discovered the manuscript of *Abhijnana Sakuntala* by Kalidasa. This he translated. The translation was received with enthusiasm and fulsome praise by Goethe. He was also given the manuscript of Jayadeva's *Gita-Govinda*. I have traced the history of the travel of the *Gita-Govinda* to the West elsewhere. (8)

This was the beginning of what we today understand as the 'Orientalist' discourse in and about India. There was a strong advocacy for collecting and understanding the ancient civilization and culture. Directly opposed was another view, which we recognize as the counter argument of the 'Anglicans.' The tension and polarity of views between the 'Anglicans' and the 'Orientalists' shaped the destinies of this country. While William Jones and his colleagues represented one view, the Anglicans represented another view which sought to prioritize European knowledge. Thus, while the 'Orientalists' were responsible for the establishment of the Asiatic Societies in Calcutta and Bombay, Museums and later the Surveys, the 'Anglicans' were responsible for the establishment of what we today recognize as the modern system of education.

In this connection, the correspondence between Raja Rammohun Roy and Lord Amherst (1834) is a key document. Elsewhere, I have addressed the history of how this correspondence was used to declare an official policy which we identify as Macaulay's Minute of 1835. (9) Of particular relevance are the debates that followed the Minutes. The participants in this debate included Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), Ranade (1842-1901), Tilak (1856-1920), Vivekananda (1863-1902) and Gokhale (1866-1915), each with a different perspective, but on one issue they were united, i.e., they did not want the Indian to be uprooted from his or her moorings intellectually and culturally. However, none of them rejected European knowledge. Their grasp was wide, their goals unambiguously grounded in a subscription to moral

values, ethical conduct and dedication to selfless community work. It is not possible to enlarge upon the spectrum and perspective by each of these people.

Despite what has been called the many-hued nationalist discourse, politically and administratively the policies advocated by the Anglicans were accepted. There was the Charles Wood's Education Dispatch in 1854. This was followed by the Hunter Commission Report in 1884. The Dispatch of Sir Charles Wood enunciated that education would be the instrumentality of bringing the science, philosophy and literature of Europe to the Indian. Although the place of Indian languages was recognized, English language was to be prioritized. The Hunter Commission report laid the structural foundation of what I have referred to as the modern system of education. (10)

It is necessary to reiterate that the new system of education resulted in the shrinking and de-prioritization of the then extant indigenous system of education as also the variety of systems of transmitting knowledge, skills and techniques. We all speak about the *guru-shishya parampara*, but forget that this *parampara* had an institutional framework, be it *tols* or the *pathshalas* or the *gurukulam* or the *madrastas*. These traditions were sustained by a variety of chiselled institutional frameworks, such as the *gharanas*, *sampradayas*, and *banis*. There was also a well-established guild system, *karakhanas*, *stapathi*, *shilpakoodam*, for the arts and crafts ranging from architecture, sculpture, metal work, etc. One is not absolutely clear whether the Hunter Commission wanted to stifle all the systems, but it is evident that the Commission did not recommend recognition and certification to those who were educated or trained in the existing system. Thus, the Hunter Commission said: 'By not recognizing the indigenous system and not giving jobs to those from the system we shall have shrunk the system, so that it will shed of its own accord without our being held responsible'. (11)

Concurrently, the British government established many Surveys—the Geological Survey of India (1851), the Archaeological Survey of India (1861), the Botanical Survey of India (1887) and the Zoological Survey of India (1916). (The Survey of India had already been established in 1767.) The purpose of these surveys was to map the country – its geophysical mass, its geological substrata, its archaeological remains, its botanical wealth and its zoological diversity. Added to this was a concerted effort to documenting the ethnic types of India as also measuring the human species. The Anthropological Survey of India consequently accepted the classification dividing the disciplines into physical and cultural anthropology.

They also established three schools of art in India – the Madras School of Art (1850) (now called the Government College of Fine Arts, Chennai), the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta (1854) and Sir J. J. School of Art in Bombay (1857). These Schools were established with the clear purpose of training Indians in styles of European art, e.g., portrait painting, models, etc. This history is well-known. But equally significant is that there was another movement which was initiated to urge the Indians to relook at their own traditions. The role of E. B. Havell and Abanindranath Tagore for the emergence of what we today recognize as the Bengal School is also well known. (12)

The Government of the day took note of some movements in civic society. Naturally, it was anxious to bring all of them into a regulatory system. Thus, a network of the civic society was sought to be regulated through an Act called the Registration of Societies Act, significantly passed in 1864. The implications of this Act for the work of the field work organizations, today called NGOs, has many lessons to teach.

Thus, the government of the day with volition established parallel systems. While institutions of ‘education’

(which we identify as ‘modern education’) gave precedence to ‘European knowledge’ to be spread in India through English and vernacular, the Surveys were to collect the data and specimens of the natural and cultural heritage of the country. The data and the specimens were then equally divided between the institutions set up by the British in India, e.g., the Indian Museum, the Asiatic Society, and those in the U.K., e.g., the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the India Office Library. There were two parallel systems in place, each insulated from the other. Overall, however, the ‘Anglicans’ were more powerful than the ‘Orientalists.’

The insulation of these institutional mechanisms from each other had both positive and negative effects. The ‘modern’ educational system did succeed in nurturing many whom we consider as intellectual as also political leaders. To refresh our memory, let me refer to J.C. Bose (1858-1937), P. C. Ray (1861-1944), Srinivasa Ramanujam (1887-1920), Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), and C. D. Deshmukh (1896-1982). Equally important was the fact that having gone through the system, many returned to their roots by a ‘U’ turn. However, by and large, the formal system of education prepared the majority of Indians as human resources for administrative purposes (white collar jobs). They did prepare a generation of Indians to govern this country. This fulfilled another goal, where it was said that ‘through this educational system we shall prepare a class of Indians who will be our representatives when we are no longer there to govern.’

Although the indigenous systems and institutions continued, some institutions gasped and others shrunk – they were certainly marginalized – and the official educational system was in place. It is against this background that we have to underscore the role of the civic society. There was an aspiration by the new nationalist fervour to establish institutions, which would not deny themselves of the ‘new knowledge’, and yet would serve as a bridge between the old and the new, the traditional

and the modern. Many such initiatives were taken in different parts of the country, sometimes spreading all over India. A notable example is the establishment of the all-India network of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic (DAV) institutions, first established in Punjab, but spread all over India. These institutions sought to strike a balance between the indigenous and the modern. This was also true of the social action and educational initiatives, such as the Prarthana Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj. Maharshi Karve's Strishikshan Samstha in Maharashtra had another motivation – that of the upliftment of women. To these movements should be added the work of Sri Phule who explicitly interrogated the Brahmin hegemony in education.

At the same time, there were similar significant movements in respect of the arts, especially music and dance, and later extended to the crafts. These were the initiatives of men and women of vision who wished to and succeeded in providing a new kind of institutional framework for the transmission of skills and techniques in the arts, particularly music and dance. In this context, the first and foremost name that comes to our mind is Vishnu Digambar Paluskar (1872-1931). The Gandharva Mahavidhyalaya was his vision and the fruits of this vision are evident in the all-India presence of the institution as distinct from the earlier *gharana* tradition of transmission from father to son. Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860-1936), on the other hand, sought to systematize the notation of music. Rukmini Devi Arundale (1904-1986), with a Theosophist orientation, gave another turn to the imparting of content, skills and value by incorporating traditional masters and traditions in dance into a new institutional framework called Kalakshetra. However, with different attitudinal orientation, Mahakavi Vallathol Narayana Menon (1878-1956), a poet and a progressive of the day, collected together the fragments and gems of the living tradition of Kerala to reconstruct what we today call Kathakali. He placed this in a new institutional framework - the Kerala Kalamandalam. All

these initiatives were obviously both educational and artistic.

We have referred to the establishment of the Surveys and their work of the collection of data and specimens. Here it is necessary to acknowledge the contribution of the British archaeologists or administrators in many fields, particularly Archaeology. James Princep (1799-1840) drew attention to Indian scripts. Cunningham (1814-1893) identified sites. His reports are indispensable for any student of archaeology. The work of these pioneers has been significant. It continues to be the bedrock of the work in the field of archaeology for the last 150 years or so – his surveys and methodologies continue to be largely valid, although techniques have been questioned. The difference of opinion and changes that have occurred are at the level of interpretation. Understandably, there was a marked bias in assessing India's past, especially archaeological remains and architecture and sculpture, with those of Greece. These opinions have been considerably modified in intervening years, but at the time shaped attitudes toward Indian artistic production.

The Botanical Survey and the Zoological Survey have played a most important role in the study of the botanical and zoological wealth of this country. However, as in the case of the Archaeological Survey, it would appear that there is no structural link between these and the educational institutions.

To sum up, the situation was and to an extent remains somewhat as follows: 1. 'modern' educational institutions; 2. institutions in the field of archaeology, botany, zoology and geology; 3. institutions devoted only to Oriental studies, e.g., The Asiatic Society; 4, the indigenous system of *gurukul* and *gharana* systems; 5. the institutions started with nationalist fervour or reformist zeal; and finally, 6. institutions which gave the traditional arts a new lease of life, e.g., Kalakshetra and Kerala Kalamandalam.

Understandably, some chronological overlap is inescapable. The ferment that I have tried to describe covers the latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. At this point, it is time to recall the role of the three visionaries who preceded and inspired the movements mentioned above. Each of these visionaries began with the three words *Svabhav*, *Svadeshi* and *Swaraj*. The enunciators of these are well known - Gandhi, Tagore and Aurobindo. Exactly a century ago – 1909 – Mahatma Gandhi wrote the *Hind Swaraj or the Indian Home Rule* (13). About the same time Sri Aurobindo wrote several essays on National Education. (14) Rabindranath Tagore with a purpose established Shantiniketan (Visva-Bharati) in 1921 and Sriniketan in 1923.

All of them independently voiced their concern in regard to the state of education in the country. They may or may not have been conscious of the Anglican-Orientalist debate; but they were intensely aware of the political motivations of the formal system of education and the deliberate exclusion of the indigenous knowledge systems and the living art and craft traditions. From different perspectives each of them drew attention to the need for integrating different faculties of the human - the hand, heart and the head. Also, they urged that education had to be inclusive and equity established between different economic strata. They advocated integration of manual and cerebral activities. At the level of value there was subscription to a future generation of Indians who would neither be derivative, imitative nor parochial. This is evident in the writing of the three. From their several ideas and initiatives to establish an alternate system of education, let me refer to three different schemes.

Sri Aurobindo (1872 – 1950) was one of the first to voice the need for an alternate system of national education. He excelled in his studies in England, Tripos and all, and in the ICS examination, but did not want to serve the British and

skipped the horse-riding examination and was thus disqualified. He returned to India in 1893 and a sudden transformation took place. His journey from Baroda to Calcutta is well known, so is his Uttarpara speech in May 1909. In his essays on National Education he gives several arguments both against the narrow parochial view as also against distancing the student from his cultural moorings.

The following excerpts from the Preface on National Education (published in *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education* by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry (1956) may be relevant:

....The acquiring of various kinds of information is only one and not the chief of the means and necessities of education: its central aim is the building of the powers of the human mind and spirit, it is the formation or, as I would prefer to view it, the evoking of knowledge and will and of the power to use knowledge, character, culture - that at least if no more...

...A language, Sanskrit or another, should be acquired by whatever method is most natural, efficient and stimulating to the mind and we need not cling there to any past or present manner of teaching: but the vital question is how we are to learn and make use of Sanskrit and the indigenous languages so as to get to the heart and intimate sense of our own culture, and establish a vivid continuity between the still living power of our past and the yet uncreated power of our future, and how we are to learn and use English or any other foreign tongue so as to know helpfully the life, ideas and culture of other countries and establish our right relations with the world around us. This is the aim and principle of a true national education, not, certainly, to ignore modern truth and knowledge, but to take our foundation on our own being, our own mind, our own spirit...

...I must be sure what education itself is or should be before I can be sure what a national education is or should be. Let us begin then with our initial statement, as to which I think there can be no great dispute that there are three things which have to be taken into account in a true and living education, the man, the individual in his commonness and in his uniqueness, the nation or people and universal humanity. It follows that that alone will be a true and living education which helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life all that is in the individual man, and which at the same time helps him to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs and with that great total life, mind and soul of humanity of which he himself is a unit and his people or nation a living, a separate and yet inseparable member ...

...India has not understood by the nation or people an organised State or an armed and efficient community well prepared for the struggle of life and putting all at the service of the national ego - that is only the disguise of iron armour which masks and encumbers the national *Purusha* - but a great communal soul and life that has appeared in the whole, and has manifested a nature of its own and a law of that nature, a *Swabhava* and *Swadharma*, and embodied it in its intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, dynamic, social and political forms and culture. And equally then our cultural conception of humanity must be in accordance with her ancient vision of the universal manifesting in the human race, evolving through life and mind but with a high ultimate spiritual aim...(14)

It was necessary to quote somewhat extensively to underline Sri Aurobindo's insistence on the concepts of *Swaraj* and *Swadharma*.

Mahatma Gandhi wrote his *Hind Swaraj* or Indian Home Rule in 1909. There have been many national and international seminars on this little great book. Each of Gandhiji's ideas has assumed even greater importance at a global level and is being actively discussed during this year, a hundred years later. Why? Obviously, Gandhiji's concepts of *Swaraj*, *Swadesh* and *Swadharma* encompassed all aspects of life, i.e., social and political. Impregnated into these concepts was the fundamental conviction and commitment to the principle of values. It is not without reason that the United Nations has declared October 2 as a Global Day of Non-Violence.

These concepts also were the backbone of his vision and goals on Education. Naturally he stressed freedom (*Swaraj*), a commitment to authentic identity – *Swadeshi* – and most of all *Swadharma*, the duty of the individual self. His scheme of Basic Education was thus an integral part of his total vision at the level of the ultimate goal of nurturing a future generation, who would be capable of integrating different faculties of the human, i.e., the head and the heart and the skills of the hands. Each faculty of the individual was the instrumentality of creating almost self-sufficient village republics at the socio-economic level and for an oceanic spread to the community, to the country and the world. The spindle was a symbol of a global vision. It denoted the processes of refining the material into the non-material. The cotton of the soil was refined to fine yarn through concentration of the mind and the skill of the hand. It also was a method of communication of knowledge and value.

Stated differently, the *charkha* and the spindle were analogous to the act of extracting the salt from the ocean. It was salt of freedom through dedicated altruistic motivations. The seemingly simple act ignited the consciousness of a country.

The Wardha scheme enunciated in 1938 was an instrumentality of Gandhiji's educational philosophy that education was for the individual, the community and the world.

Inclusivity was indispensable at the individual and the community level and, of course, in its oceanic spread, at the international level. For him, the future Indian would be as much at home in his immediate environment, rooted and committed, as capable of communicating freely with the world. Don't we often quote his famous statement, 'I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible'?

The *Hind Swaraj* elucidates his concept of *Swaraj* thus:

...You and I and all Indians are impatient to obtain *Swaraj*, but we are certainly not decided as to what it is. To drive the English out of India is a thought heard from many mouths, but it does not seem that many have properly considered why it should be so. I must ask you a question. Do you think that it is necessary to drive away the English, if we get all we want? You (the Reader who poses questions to Gandhiji) have drawn the picture well. In effect, it means this: that we want English rule without the Englishman ... that is to say, you would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but *Englistan*. This is not the *Swaraj* that I want....I shall, therefore, for the time being, content myself with endeavouring to show that what you call *Swaraj* is not truly *Swaraj*.

This concept of *Swaraj* he extends further to expound on his idea of civilization:

Let us first consider what state of things is described by the word 'civilization'. Its true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. We will take some examples. The people of Europe today live in better-built houses than they did a hundred years ago. This is considered an emblem of civilization,

and this is also a matter to promote bodily happiness... This civilization takes note neither of morality nor of religion... This civilization is irreligion, and it has taken such a hold on the people in Europe that those who are in it appear to be half-mad. They lack real physical strength or courage.... This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed... Civilization is not an incurable disease, but it should never be forgotten that the English people are at present afflicted by it.

And, finally, it is here that Mahatma Gandhi enunciates his concept of *Ahimsa*. Non-violence, to him, was not isolated from the goals or the processes of education. Therefore, he expressed himself unequivocally on the meaning of education:

What is the meaning of education? It simply means a knowledge of letters. It is merely an instrument, and an instrument may be well used or abused... I have not run down a knowledge of letters in all circumstances. All I have now shown is that we must not make of it a fetish. It is not our *Kamadruk*. In its place it can be of use and it has its place when we have brought our senses under subjection and put our ethics on firm foundation. And then, if we feel inclined to receive that education, we may make good use of it. As an ornament it is likely to sit well on us. It now follows that it is not necessary to make this education compulsory. Our ancient school system is enough. Character-building has the first place in it and that is primary education. A building erected on that foundation will last...

Answering a question whether he did not consider English education necessary for obtaining Home Rule, Gandhi says:

The foundation that Macaulay laid of education has

enslaved us. I do not suggest that he has any such intention, but that has been the result... (But) we are so much beset by the disease of civilization, that we cannot altogether do without English-education... I think that we have to improve all our languages... Those English books which are valuable, we should translate into the various Indian languages... Every cultured Indian will know in addition to his own provincial language, if a Hindu, Sanskrit; if a Mahomedan, Arabic, if a Parsee, Persian; and all, Hindi... (and) some Hindus should know Arabic and Persian; some Mahomedans and Parsees, Sanskrit. A universal language for India should be Hindi. (15)

While some of his ideas on language projections may be questioned today, it was necessary to let Gandhiji's voice speak directly, because his views on education had to be placed within the context of his total philosophy of moral and ethical values, economic self-sufficiency and the goals of preparing an individual to be multi-lingual, locally rooted but globally empowered.

The third towering figure was Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), a poet, a visionary and the founder of an institution, which represented his vision for an alternate system of education. Tagore began by seriously critiquing the existing system of education. Like Gandhiji and Aurobindo, Tagore wanted to evolve a system of education which would not uproot the child from his or her own local mooring. It was not without purpose that he looked at Shantiniketan and Sriniketan as parts of an integral whole. Sriniketan was the traditional centre of the craftsmen and artists of the Birbhum area. For Tagore, this was a great source to be used for the 'modern' system of education. Shantiniketan was to be the site for developing the highest and most refined cognitive capabilities. Also, it was his initiative which resulted in the establishment of the Cheena Bhavan, the Hindi Bhavan and the Kala Bhavan. All those were strategies

to attune the Indian to his or her moorings as also to become a universal being. It was in this context that there was the evolution of the concept of combining nature, tradition and originality. In order to achieve this goal, Tagore mobilized others from many parts of the world. These included Okakura, Japanese painter and educationist, and the art historian A. K. Coomaraswamy, not to speak about personalities like C. F. Andrews, Gurdial Malik, Stella Kramrisch and others. In bringing together creative personalities, whether they were the Santhals or the terracotta workers, or art historians or philosophers, he succeeded in breaking down narrow walls of insulation of disciplines as also cultures. He succeeded because he gave a creative structure to his vision. How else could these values be inculcated except through the organization of seasonal festivals within a university campus?

In our context the following would be relevant:

Even if a person has developed his book-oriented intellect to the extent of becoming capable of certain activities, but has not learnt to use his hands in a constructive manner, his education will be incomplete. If the education of the body does not go parallel to the education of the mind, the mind too does not get the strength and inspiration necessary for its full growth.

The main purpose of education is not only to gather loads of information, but to know humankind and to learn to express the self within.

The highest education is that which does not merely give us information, but which brings our lives in harmony with all existence. (16)

One is tempted to go on quoting Rabindranath Tagore, but this is not possible in the present context. But it should be noted that Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore had a unique relationship. They communicated, they differed, admired and loved each other. In the field of education there was agreement

as also sharp differences, especially in regard to the study of languages. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya has dealt admirably with this in his book. (17)

The three concretized their vision through the schemes they evolved and the institutions they established. A retrospective study of these schemes as also the trajectory of the development of the institutions they established would be – and for me, has been – a very educative exercise. It has brought home the fact that to translate a vision without an institutional framework is not an easy task. The task becomes even more difficult when free and flowing thoughts have to be contained in inflexible structures. There is the possibility of a lack of organicity in the growth pattern of the institutions.

While Aurobindo's vision was concretized in the educational philosophy of Pondicherry and now Auroville – the scheme of integral education – it has not been widely replicated. Mahatma Gandhi's Wardha Scheme on Education, operationalized by Aryanayakam in Madurai and also established in Jamia Millia, and advocated by Dr. Zakir Husain, slowly but surely faded away in the corridors of official bureaucracy. Professor M. Mujeeb's narration is as poignant as it is heart-rending on this gradual fading. (18) He admits that Mahatma Gandhi's vision was inclusive and the crafts essentially an instrument of the educational processes. The spindle was a symbol, yes; but Basic Education could not be identified with spinning. He also points at the inherent problem of carrying out a vision through an administrative machinery, which could not translate the vision into a programme of action.

Shantiniketan has since been recognized as a central university, but in this process Sriniketan has been excluded and this exclusion is tantamount to a fracturing of the original vision of the poet.

Distant from our own times as all this may sound, a

deeper reflection will convince any educationist that the vision of the three great minds I have referred here is as relevant today, as it was a century ago. Why? In the new scenario of 'Education for All' and the emphasis on the development of local community, it is necessary to ensure that there is both local rooting and global reaching.

Now to turn our attention to the fifth decade of the 20th century. The Second World War (1939-45) was not only a period of confrontation between the Axis and the Allies in Europe, it affected the whole world. In India, Gandhiji took a definite stand. It culminated in his call of 9. 8. 1942 - 'do or die'. Education was still close to him. But more urgent was the call of political freedom. The ideological position taken by the Axis and the Allies divided the Indian intelligentsia - those who subscribed to the Axis position and those who subscribed to the ideological perspectives represented by the Allies. In addition, there was also a tension between those who were committed to broad liberalism and others who were adherents to Marxist ideology.

Alongside, political freedom was on its way with its concomitant tragedy of Partition. The experience of the Partition and its aftermath was reflected in literature and the arts. I have tried to deal with this in my Yusuf Meherally Memorial Lecture, *Political Freedom and Creative Response* (19).

Come 15th August 1947. Jawaharlal Nehru gives the historic speech, 'Tryst with Destiny'. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad assumes office as the Minister of Education in independent India. As an eminent scholar and thinker, he was anxious to initiate debates in Parliament with regard to education, and was responsible for piloting some of the earliest bills. Besides, it was under his leadership that soon after Independence a series of Education Commissions was set up. Some of his views

converge with the views of the three visionaries we have spoken about. He stated:

It is universally recognized today that a system of national education is one of the fundamental tasks, which faces any government. Not only is the existing condition of society determined by the quality of individuals composing it but its future as well. Nothing has a more important bearing on the quality of the individual than the type of education imparted. A truly liberal and humanitarian education may transform the outlook of the people and set it on the path of progress and prosperity, while an ill-conceived or unscientific system might destroy all the hopes, which have been cherished by generations of pioneers in the cause of national freedom.

India is today on the threshold of freedom. It is, therefore, imperative that we survey the prevalent systems of education in order to find out how far they meet our national requirements. There can be no denying that the existing system of education was shaped by non-nationals in non-national interests. Macaulay is primarily responsible for our existing educational methods and ideals. He never concealed the fact that his chief aim was to create in India men who in training, outlook and loyalties would be devoted to the interests of Great Britain. Nevertheless, the great services which the existing system of education has rendered to the Indian people need not be denied. It opened to them a new world of science and modern technology. It inculcated a progressive spirit and brought Indian educational standards in line with the standards obtaining elsewhere. It has led to a reawakening of the national spirit and a growth of modern and progressive outlook in all affairs of the world. There is equally no denying that this system has led to the creation of a

small intelligentsia separated from the mass of the Indian people. It has also at times tended to divorce the educated class from the currents of India's traditional life. Dazzled by the achievements of the West, it has at times encouraged a tendency to disown or look down upon our national heritage. It has also tended to encourage fissiparous tendencies. The greatest charge against the present system of education is that it has not led to the development of a national mind.

Macaulay's contempt for oriental studies is well known. History has not justified the sweeping condemnation which Macaulay extended. Nor can history justify the method, which Macaulay adopted for the promulgation of learning in this land. Macaulay's contention that Sanskrit and Persian were unsuited to be the medium of instruction in India is no doubt correct, but English could serve the purpose no better... The Indian languages today have attained a development where they can serve as the medium of instruction upto the highest stage. The experiment of imparting instruction in the mother tongue up to the Matriculation standard has already been tried with success, and the time has come when the process must be extended further and all education in the land made accessible to the people in their own language.

All such developments, however, presupposes a sound system of basic education. If the foundations have not been truly and firmly laid, no abiding superstructure can be built. The whole edifice of education and culture ultimately rests upon the teaching imparted to the early stages.... (20)

On the occasion of the laying of the foundation of the Central Institute of Education on 18.4.1949 in Delhi, Maulana Azad said:

The Central Institute will, therefore, both train teachers for higher and secondary schools and also carry on research on the problems of basic and secondary education. The stage at which a child should be introduced to a craft as distinct from activity, the relative emphasis on craft and academic subjects and their correlation, the production of a new type of school education to bring out the social functions of all human activity, the degree of abstraction possible in the earlier stages of education, the stage at which there may be some bifurcation between academic subjects and crafts, the grouping of children according to aptitude, taste and ability, the place of art in the school curriculum – these are only a few of the many problems which arise out of a new conception of basic education and require constant and careful study in a research institution. (21)

The words above sound familiar. Maulana Azad returns to the objective of Macaulay, does not discard what India has received through the ‘new freedom of modern education’, but beckons us to develop a sound system of basic education that is uniquely our own.

A re-reading of Maulana Azad’s speeches and his writing on education today gives clear proof of the depth of his understanding and the width of his grasp.

I have already referred to Maulana Azad’s conversation with Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya on the establishment of the Akademies. He may or may not have been so keenly aware of the insulation of the institutions of education, the Surveys and the institutions of culture from one another, but with some confidence I can say that, as a very junior advisor in the Ministry at that time, he stressed the need for an integral approach.

It was at the active initiative of Maulana Azad and Shri

Jawaharlal Nehru that steps were taken to establish the first University Education Commission under the leadership of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (1948-49). Soon after the acceptance of this report, another Education Commission was established (1952-53) under the chairmanship of Dr. A. L. Mudaliar. This Commission looked into the question of Secondary Education. Both these reports gave importance to character-building and inculcation of values as well as learning. Naturally, both reports addressed themselves to changes which were required in structures as also systems.

In our context, we have to draw attention to the report of the Mudaliar Commission for its advocacy of diversification of secondary education. It advocated the establishment of a second stream of vocational education. Today we know of the active debates in regard to these two streams. Some are of the opinion that there should not be a pure vocational stream. Others have stressed the need for an integrated approach. These debates are relevant for the present discussion in view of the renewed stress on skill development as also specialization in sub-disciplines of the sciences and the humanities.

Fourteen years later, an Indian Education Commission was set up under Dr. D.S. Kothari. The Kothari Commission Report (1964-66) remains the most comprehensive statement in regard to the state of education, structural edifice and values. It considered education as an instrumentality for developing a total human being. The Commission thus advocated that neither the system nor the content would be value-free.

I have been witness to and participator in the arguments as also the dynamics of the establishment of this Commission and the manner in which some of its recommendations were implemented and others not. I can refer here only to two recommendations of the Kothari Commission which need to be looked at carefully. The first is in regard to neighbourhood schools and the second is with regard to value education.

Dr. D. S. Kothari and his colleagues were quite clear that if neighbourhood schools were set up there would be equity between the poor and the rich. The neighbourhood schools, they felt, would bring together the children from different socio-economic communities and would then be able to integrate or establish parity between skill development and cerebral knowledge. Alas, this was never concretized.

It is important to note that a Parliamentary Committee looked at this report and stressed the fundamental goal of education to develop character. It said:

...Education should deepen national consciousness, promote a proper understanding and appreciation of our cultural heritage and inspire a faith and confidence in the great future, which we can forge for ourselves. These objectives should be achieved by a carefully planned study of Indian languages, literature, philosophy and history and by introducing students to India's achievements in the positive sciences, architecture, sculpture, painting, music, dance and drama.

... Curricular and co-curricular programmes should include the study of humanism based on mutual appreciation of international cultural values and the growing solidarity of mankind.

...The formation of character should receive due emphasis in the total process of education. It is true that education alone cannot promote the appropriate moral, social and spiritual values which are generated by several institutions and organs of society. It must, however, contribute significantly to the moulding of the outlook and values of the youth and the strengthening of its moral fibre... (22).

At this point, it may be tangentially relevant to remind ourselves of the initiative taken by C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) in 1963, as Chief Minister of Madras Province, just before the

Kothari Commission. Rajaji advocated an education policy, which would enable children to go to school in the morning for a limited number of hours, and which would enable them to return home to carry on the traditional occupation and skills. In short, Rajaji was of the view that while the schools should provide the learning of the 3-Rs, the traditional skills which were transmitted from generation to generation should continue to be imparted to the children, so that they would be adept both in the written word – the 3-Rs – as also not be torn away from the learning of skills and techniques. The scheme was logical and it may have provided the necessary bridging between different levels of society as also different streams of knowledge and skills. However, we have to recognize that particular skills were the prerogative of special communities, who were low in the socio-economic ladder. Thus, there was opposition to Rajaji's scheme because of the caste and socio-economic stratification aspects. It was dubbed as a hereditary education policy, and thus, it never took off.

This is not the occasion to comment further on the mechanisms by which equity could have been established between levels of society, as also diverse systems of transmitting knowledge and imparting skills. I am keenly aware of the fact that Rajaji's advocacy of establishing equity and maintaining the transmission of skills was not and cannot be dissociated from the policies of reservations.

Finally, one has to refer to the continuous concern of the Government of India with both the systems and the structure of education. This is obvious from the nation-wide debate which took place before finalizing what is today called the N.P.E. [National Policy on Education] of 1986.

The decisions of the Government of India to set up several commissions on education during the last six decades have to be juxtaposed with its acceptance and continuation of

the responsibility of administering the several Surveys, such as the Archaeological Survey, established by the preceding regime.

The independent Government of India also took note of the chain of institutions established by the British, which were devoted to Oriental learning. Legislative steps were taken to declare some of them as institutions of national importance, e.g., the Indian Museum and the Asiatic Society in Calcutta. The government also supported partly or fully the Schools of Art that had been established – we know them as the Madras School of Art (now called the Government College of Fine Arts), Chennai, the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta and the Sir J. J. School of Art in Bombay. I have traced the history of the institutionalization of art (visual arts) in my keynote address to the seminar on ‘Sanyal and the Art of his Times’ organized by the Lalit Kala Akademi in April 1992.

In addition, the Government of India was keen to acknowledge the work and dedication of those who established institutes of higher education with a nationalist orientation and private funding. The government adopted the instrumentality of declaring each of these institutions as a Central University. In short, these institutions of higher learning, each with its own individual stamp and identity, were now brought together under a uniform regulatory mechanism. The Banaras Hindu University, the Aligarh Muslim University and Shantiniketan (Visva-Bharati University) are outstanding cases in point.

The commitment and hopes were idealistic, but the structures and instrumentalities proved a double-edged sword. They provided for government support and funding; by the same token there was a shrinking of civic society participation and an inevitable loss of total autonomy.

The Government of India’s initiatives to set up its own national institutions in the field of art, particularly the three Akademies – Sangeet Natak Akademi, Sahitya Akademi and Lalit Kala Akademi – are also well known.

To sum up, from the early 1950s to the 1970s there were three distinct circuits: (1) institutions of education; (2) institutions dealing with conservation of the heritage, e.g., Archaeological Survey, Anthropological Survey, Museums; and (3) institutions which had been set up by individual effort, now declared as institutions of national importance and the State-run institutions such as the Akademies. The contribution made by the institutions in these three circuits is, of course, commendable. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that while there may have been an integral vision at the policy level, at the programming level there was an aggregated and not an integral approach. For instance, the National Advisory Boards of Education did not recognize the need to ensure the presence of those who were responsible for looking after the conservation of the cultural heritage or responsible for the indigenous systems of transmission of skills.

Through all this, it may appear that Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya's spearheading the cooperative movement was not directly related to the field of education, but in fact it was. For, this movement sought to empower the craftsmen, who were the holders of an indigenous system of knowledge as also adept in diverse skills and techniques. Understandably, handlooms and handicrafts were central to the cooperative movement. All these initiatives led to the establishment of the All-India Handicrafts and Handloom Board. The tireless dedication of Kamaladevi and her colleagues gave the crafts a new dignity beyond the spindle and khadi as national symbols. The handlooms and handicrafts gradually became fashionable for the elite and are today, as I said before, a signature of the affluent. Besides, they are a foreign exchange earner. Today, crafts are the second largest source of employment in India after agriculture.

However, with as much admiration as some genuine lurking regret, one has to point out that, like cultural heritage, crafts also remained outside the pale of the institutions of

education, as neither were crafts introduced nor were the craftsmen brought into the educational system as teachers for imparting skills and techniques.

The above outline has been intended as a reminder of the multiple initiatives, as also notable achievements in the domain of education, knowledge and societal values, but at the same time it underscores a lack of coherence both at the policy and the programming level.

Based upon this historical review, questions directly related to the work of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya emerge: (1) Was there an integral vision at the level of policy and a well conceived system of ensuring synergy between the institutions of education, and those now grouped together in the domains of archaeology, anthropology, arts and crafts? (2) With the widespread dissemination and presentation of the arts at the urban level without ensuring support at the local level, have not the arts been subject to the pressures of elite consumption and tourism? The popular word today is 'show-casing' of the arts at the urban level. If the answer to these questions are 'yes,' then this is tantamount to not recognizing the basic reality that the arts, especially the rural arts, are strictly related to function, be it food gathering, animal husbandry and, most important of all, agriculture.

De-contextualization and relocation is also a double-edged sword. If the arts are not recognized and nurtured at the local level of the community, as also given the opportunity for presentation at the national or international level, there is the possibility of their shrivelling. However, if these creative efforts are considered only as a product to be presented at ceremonial occasions, then they can lose their inherent vitality and become merely tinselized, packaged marketable goods. It is at the local level that an integrated approach is of the essence. It is here that the institutions of education should bring into the educational processes and curricula local knowledge and skills and involve

the community which has the expertise. Equally important is the need for a robust critical discourse at the intellectual level in academia. In the absence of training and sensitivity of the local administrative machinery within a wooden educational system, along with the absence of an insightful theoretical discourse, there would be pressure on these arts and crafts to become simply products in a market economy, and for education to be just an instrumentality of upward mobility in status at the cost of the loss of pride in creativity. Addressing the fragmentation of a holistic vision has been, and perhaps remains, India's greatest challenge.

What I have voiced above is not new. These concerns were uppermost in the minds of our peers, such as D. S. Kothari, C. D. Deshmukh and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya alike. Dr. D. S. Kothari, especially in his last years, bemoaned the fragmentation of knowledge, and particularly the insulation between culture and science. He made a distinction between science and anti-reason or irrationality, but gave value to a realm beyond reason. He said, 'Science through understanding of nature enables us to transform matter into energy, clay into gold, as it were, and faith – my word 'culture' – transforms men of clay into love, compassion and fearlessness'. Further he said, 'Science provides an understanding of and control over nature, but it is the moral and spiritual insights which give meaning and purpose to life, individually and collectively'. (23)

Chintaman Dwarkanath Deshmukh, a member of the Indian Civil Service and later India's Finance Minister, Chairman, University Grants Commission, and Vice-Chancellor, University of Delhi, did not advocate using the educational system to bring out human resource for a market economy. Speaking about character and human experience, he said:

....On the major objective, we are all agreed that the objective of education is to secure a fully developed and

integrated individual by means of drawing out the best in him on the basis of our past human experience and in the light of the requirements of the modern environment. Then analyzing this a little further, we have noted the fact that this means not only attaining competence to the highest level to which competence can be achieved, but also some other aims such as a sense of social responsibility or character and attitude or philosophy of life, that is to say, a preference for a spirit of service rather than advancing the interests of self....

...To my mind, character is the product of innate endowment, influence of environment and constant self-introspection in the light of that indefinable, imponderable and intangible conscience. It is very much the private business of everyone, subject to a variety of influences all through life. Good acts and good habits are the basis of good character, and therefore, character formation is a continuous process from birth to death, a process in which constant introspection can play an important part... (24)

Like D. S. Kothari and C. D. Deshmukh, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, in her ripe years of ripeness, reflected on the future of the crafts. Writing in *Temenos*, on '*Crafts and the Future*,' she said:

Let me first of all clarify what I mean by craft as skilled labour in materials, not necessarily mere handwork that is simply manual dexterity as opposed to cultivation of the mind. Here I take craftsmanship as referring to a total operation involving the emotions, mind, body and the rhythm, which such coordination sets up. Nor is craft divorced from a degree of mechanism, because from earliest times man started evolving tools as an extension of his being and did not rest content with the unaided skill of his physique.

...Craft has always been a basic activity in human society; in fact, it is considered more cohesive and permeating in human relationships than even language, for it can penetrate many barriers to communication.

...Crafts have been the indigenous creation of the ordinary people, a part of the flow of events of the common life, not cut off from the mainstream. They grew up on the peace and seclusion of the countryside, where the community evolved a culture of its own out of the steady flow of its own life, and of the nature around.

The community acted as a single personality because of its communal activities, in response to common occasions and landmarks that stood out in the flux of time, and the change of seasons. Out of a million coloured strands of traditions and memories filled with song and verse, legends and myths, fables and local romances, from the core and substance of their daily existence and out of nature's own rich storehouse, was woven a refulgent creative and forceful culture.

...What was of great significance in this context was the status assigned to and security provided for the craftsmen, to preserve and provide continuity to the crafts and save them from the gnawing of anxiety and the paralysis of insecurity. A craft-oriented society was based on personal relationship, not contracts and competition.

...Two significant characteristics of a craft are that aesthetics and function are integrated, and ornamentation and decoration are not divorced from utility. And even where craftsmanship is based on tradition, the dangers of stagnation are minimized by freeing each productive act from imitative intention and linking it with the stream of life, making it a dynamic

manifestation of man's endeavour to express universal human emotions and interests.

Even though craftsmanship has always been considered hereditary, passed on from generation to generation, inheritance of actual skills was not assumed. The emphasis on the contrary was on proper education and the right environment for the growing generation. In the family workshop, the young craftsman learnt as an apprentice the techniques in their entirety in direct relation to basic production by practice. In fact, he was just as much engaged in learning metaphysics and the true value of things; in short, in acquiring a culture. There was no isolation of the school from the larger life, for in this setting the child learnt little tasks as part of the daily routine, picking up skills even as he did other components of his way of life. The problems were real, not make-believe, as the aim of education was understood to be the unfolding of the personality in all its fullness.

...The public must bear with this great heritage of mankind in its period of mutation, and remember that even though its birth and flowering belonged to another age, another atmosphere, a totally different pattern of living and tempo, it nevertheless has something significant and important to bring to the modern context. (25)

It will be clear that the voices of D. S. Kothari as a scientist, C. D. Deshmukh as an educationist, and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya as a person dedicated to the vitality of craft production virtually echoed the thoughts of the visionaries of a century ago. Their concerns are also reminiscent of those expressed at another level by Eric Gill and A. K. Coomaraswamy, quoted earlier.

Of significance in this context today is also the philosophy and work of J. Krishnamurti (1895 – 1986). He addressed himself to the fundamental role of education for human kind. He propounded a system of integral education, where the head and the hand and the heart would work in synchronization. This is being done through the Krishnamurti Schools, such as the Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh and others. Krishnamurti, acknowledged as an unparalleled seer-philosopher of our time, was deeply committed to ensuring a system of education, where learning would be through experience, and the context of an active dialogue with the immediate environment. The Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh and the Rajghat Besant School in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, have sought to concretize this vision. We return to our original formulation of the nature-culture divide and the need for returning to nature. In J. Krishnamurti's words:

Nature is part of our life. We grow out of the seed, the earth, and as we are part of all that, but we are rapidly losing the sense that we are animals like the others. Can you have a feeling for that tree? Look at it, see the beauty of it, listen to the sound it makes, be sensitive to the little plant, to the little weed, to that creeper that is growing up the wall, to the light on the leaves and the many shadows? One must be aware of all this and have that sense of communion with nature around you. You may live in a town, but you do have trees here and there. A flower in the next garden may be ill-kept, crowded with seeds, but look at it, feel that you are part of all that, part of all living things. If you hurt nature you are hurting yourself. (26)

Further, he evolved a system of self-directed learning in mathematics and was anxious that the voice and the human body should be trained for concentration, reflection and action. The philosophic underpinnings of this holistic system of education bear testimony to the efficacy of an alternative system of

education. The Krishnamurti Schools are an attempt to integrate cerebral and manual learning, to interact with nature, to be responsive to society and to be citizens of the globe.

We are now back to our initial statement of the nature-culture divide and the need for integration of nature-culture. Although from different perspectives, we can see that be it Mahatma Gandhi or Aurobindo or Tagore, Radhakrishnan, Kothari, Deshmukh or Krishnamurti, each has been committed to conceiving the human being as a total entity with multiple capacities, be it through the processes of education or culture. Ultimately, it is the development of the individual so that he or she can serve the community by being not only a productive but creative person, at home with himself or herself, and with the world, that is at stake.

Some of these concerns have been echoed at the global level as well. In Europe, the aftermath of the Second World War brought about many changes at the level of reflection. UNESCO was established in 1945, because the two World Wars had left Europe torn and tattered. Wars had been won, but there were no conquerors, only many vanquished. Thus the UNESCO Charter began: 'That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed'. While Dr. Julian Huxley and other intellectuals articulated these concerns in UNESCO, others voiced their concerns through poetry, painting and music.

In this context the following extract from a letter written by Mahatma Gandhi to Huxley on 25. 5. 1947, with its emphasis on citizenship duty, should be of interest:

I learnt from my illiterate, but wise mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from duty well done. Thus, the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this one fundamental statement, perhaps it is easy enough to

define the duties of Man and Woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be usurpation hardly worth fighting for. (27)

Others who were pioneers in affirming UNESCO's convictions and stressing the need for education, culture and science as instrumentalities of a new human order naturally included Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. And there were others in Europe, who were similarly keenly aware of the fragmentation and the insulation of value, knowledge and skills. Amongst these was Herbert Read. In his remarkable book, *Education through Art* (2nd edition, 1945), he places the discourse on education as also the arts in its then new context of a post-Second World War situation. He redefines the objective of education thus:

Education is the fostering of growth, but apart from physical maturation, growth is only made apparent in expression – audible or visible signs and symbols. Education may, therefore, be defined as the cultivation of modes of expression – it is teaching children and adults how to make sounds, images, movements, tools and utensils. A man who can make such things well is a well educated man. If he can make good sounds, he is a good speaker, a good musician, a good poet; if he can make good images, he is a good painter or sculptor; if good movements, a good dancer or labourer; if good tools or utensils, a good craftsman. All faculties of thought, logic, memory, sensibility and intellect, are involved in such processes, and no aspect of education is excluded in such processes. And they are all processes which involve art, for art is nothing but the good making of sounds, image, etc. The aim of education is, therefore, the creation of artists – of people efficient in the various modes of expression. (28)

In other words, to make a 'total human being', Read stresses the role of art, imagery and imagination in the development of sensibilities, sense perceptions, and most of all, inculcating values beyond the mere utilitarian.

Herbert Read did not restrict himself to writing and lecturing, but established the International Society for Education through the Arts with unparalleled zeal and commitment. The purpose of this International Society was not to be another art academy or another pedagogical institution for education or even art education. It was a Society, he said, to continuously seek to provide a forum for an international dialogue on the multiple ways in which diverse forms of art and crafts in different parts of the world could be the vehicle of making formal education more relevant and meaningful. Thus, over these years through its several conferences and programmes, it has stressed the necessity of accepting the rich diversity of arts and crafts' contributions in different parts of the world. It has brought together people who have been the inheritors of long continuities of creative faculties, who were denied the freedom or opportunity to bring in the richness of this activity into the fold of the formal systems of education largely because of colonization. Through this forum, it has been possible to establish equity between the fluidity and continuity of the artistic and creative and the pedagogies of the educational system. The need to integrate life experience and values which permeate life cycle and cycle of annual functions with teaching of disciplines such as that of language, mathematics – in short the Three R's – can bring about a sea-change in the methods of transmission of knowledge, skills and values in the educational system.

Thus, through different paths and environments and with different perspectives over the last few decades, we return to underscore the fact – so important in the life and work of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya – that education, to be fully affirming, must necessarily incorporate the arts, impregnating

both with value, developing skills – cerebral and manual – to make the human being at home with himself, his immediate environment and the world.

I hope that, through this long narration of the history of developments over the last two centuries, I have been able to perhaps refresh memories of the trajectory of developments in the fields of education and the arts in the context of the socio-politico-economic history of India. Perhaps, I may have been able to make explicit the insulation of the two fields of education and arts in the administrative structures of post-independent India, and may have succeeded in bringing home the fact that for one reason or the other the vision of the visionaries could not be quite realized. Kamaladeviji with her knowledge, experience, commitment and passion was aware of this; she was also aware that although many institutional frameworks have been thought of, there was none, which sought to integrate the richness of the techniques and skills inherent in the arts and crafts with more academic pedagogies in the educational system.

Nevertheless, through a series of dialogues with her and in the face of opposition from many important quarters that there was no need for another institution, since there was the National Council of Education and Research Training (NCERT), the Centre for Cultural Resources Training (CCRT) was indeed established in 1979, as testimony to her vision.

The main objectives of the CCRT include: to collect cultural resources for educational purposes and to acquaint the young growing generation with the rich cultural heritage of the country; to draw upon all the cultural resources and interweave them into the educational system of all stages of formal and non-formal education; to promote national integration through visual, performing, plastic and other arts, both traditional and contemporary; and to acquaint the educated with the richness of the rural and tribal culture, and to make use of traditional art forms for educational purposes.

CCRT's main thrust has been 'to make students aware of the importance of culture in all development programmes by conducting a variety of training programmes for in-service teachers, teacher educators, educational administrators and students throughout the country'.

Thus, the CCRT was established with the purpose of bringing into the educational fold the rich cultural resources of the community in the innumerable arts and craft traditions, and to evolve methodologies and pedagogies of using this for purposes of teaching subjects, such as arithmetic, language, etc. The purpose was also to establish some equity between those who may have been illiterate or semi-literate, but highly artistically talented and carriers of dexterous skills and techniques although socially and economically disempowered, and those who were in educational system, and who had cognitive skills, but were somewhat averse to arts and craft traditions. The intention was not to teach about the arts and the crafts, it was to develop cultural resources to evolve systematized methodologies of education through the arts.

It has been my privilege, if in a very tiny and insignificant manner, to be part of the history of the discourse on institution building in India for the last fifty years. Both the charter and the work of the CCRT stand as landmarks in advocating the need for breaking the insulation of the multiple systems spheres and levels of society. As I said in the beginning, the CCRT has done much; but I would add that there is much more to do. The challenges, not only before the CCRT, but before all of India for the future, are to address directly the fact that the domains of education and culture have largely remained separated – lest we unconsciously continue to replicate the 'Anglican-Orientalist' mindset, a legacy we have worked so hard to move beyond....

End Notes:

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ABOUT THE CCRT

The Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) was established in May 1979 as an institution to bridge the gap between the systems of formal education, and the diverse, rich living cultural traditions of India. Its principal aim and objective is 'to draw upon all the cultural resources and interweave them into the educational system at all stages of formal and non-formal education'. As, for example, to use the traditional arts – ranging from pottery, carpet-weaving, print-making, block-making, different forms of puppetry, and multiple forms of music and dance – as pedagogical tools in disciplines such as mathematics, chemistry, physics, not to speak of history and the social sciences.

In order to meet these goals, several innovative schemes have been evolved. At the level of programmes, regular workshops are held for educational administrators and teacher trainers; orientation and refresher courses for teachers; and workshops and camps for students. Finally, for the identification of cultural talent and scholarships, the CCRT serves as an institution for a Government of India scheme.

Towards fulfilling these objectives, the CCRT collects and documents material, and prepares audio-visual kits, which are used in different configurations, to promote, say, the study of a regional culture or a specific art form, and knowledge about the people who create these art forms.

Institutionally, the CCRT has established a wide network with the SCERTs and, of course, the NCERT. Today it has three regional centres – in Udaipur, Hyderabad and Guwahati.

The CCRT has played a vital role in concretizing the noble ideals of fostering national integration and cultural identity amongst the student and teacher community in India. In a

land of such rich and diverse natural and cultural heritage, it is important for young people to grow up with an understanding and deep appreciation for their culture and that of others.

The CCRT owes its genesis to the vision and efforts of Shrimati Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, who served as its first Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, respectively, and to the support of the Government of India, Ministry of Education, Social Welfare and Culture, during the 1970s.

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

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