CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

“Literature is the humanization of the whole world” said, Goethe.

If literature means humanization, spiritual leaders, especially those from India have contributed significantly for the humanization of the whole world. Their mission was not just the humanization, but elevation of humanity to divinity. It is the spiritual leaders that have stirred up the humanity and morality. If literature and spirituality are considered the two sides of the same coin, then, it is the spiritual masters that have integrated both to transport the mankind into higher realms of consciousness.

The influence of the spiritual leaders on mankind has been profound. Essentially, the spirit and the voice of Asia has been religious and spiritual while the voice of Europe is that of politics and material wealth. The very fact of the birth of all the major religions in Asia confirms this. In the spiritual soil of India, every facet of life is dealt with from the background of religion and spirituality. This can be seen even in politics also. The independence movement of India was impacted by religion and spirituality. Mahatma Gandhi was known for spiritualizing politics and the freedom movement, ‘a devout philosophical tradition’, as Sir Ernest Barker described. From the background of spirituality, and the Indian mythology, he steered the massive movement of independence and shook the foundations of the British Empire. In the history of the world, Mahatma Gandhi became the only leader who fought a colonial
power with the weapons of non-violence and Satyagraha. The roles of a fervid nationalist and a great saint were combined in the personality of the Mahatma.

Though the liberation of India from the clutches of British seemed to be the only goal of Mahatma, there was a higher purpose of his movement. Restoring the pristine glory of India by reawakening the spiritual vitality that was dormant among Indians was always uppermost on his mind. So also many prominent leaders of the freedom movement were deeply influenced by the spiritual leaders and driven by ‘vedantic energy’.

All over the world, religious leaders influenced the state directly or indirectly. In India, their influence extended to all walks of life. Spiritual leaders, in the modern age, have come to influence even the business people and industrialists by instilling noble values in them such as service and charity. The most powerful tool for the spiritual leaders of India has been English language for accomplishing their mission.

The following letter, written to the Maharaja of Mysore by Swami Vivekananda, from Chicago is an instance in this regard.

My noble prince, this life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive. One such high, noble-minded, and royal son of India as your highness can do much towards raising India on her feet again and thus leave a name to posterity which shall be worshipped.

(June 23, 1894- this letter is titled as “Our duty to the Masses: 363 of volume IV of The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda)
In a letter of just two sentences, it can be observed how powerfully the message is conveyed about the ephemeral nature of human life. The use of the simple adverbs- ‘alone’ and ‘more’ –brings out the quintessence of life. These are not mere sentences, but are profound philosophical truths.

It is not just a single ruler but a host of kings such as – Chamaraja Wodeyar, Maharaja Ajit Sing, Gaekwar of Baroda who were immensely influenced by Swami Vivekananda. A great entrepreneur, a visionary of modern India the one who laid the first solid foundation for the industrial development of India, Jemshedji Tata is yet another example of drawing inspiration from a spiritual leader, Swami Vivekananda. Jemshedji Tata who was sailing from Yokohama (Japan) to Vancouver (the USA) on the ship, ‘the Empress of India’, happened to meet Swamiji; the meeting of two visionaries-a great monk, the first Indian to take the Indian philosophy to the West and a great visionary, the first Indian to bring the Western technology to India.

Jemshedji was crossing the Atlantic Ocean to bring steel manufacturing technology with the intentions of setting up a steel plant in India. For this purpose only, earlier Jemshedji made attempts to pursue the British steel manufacturers of England for their cooperation, but he was met with derision and ridicule. “If Indians would make steel, Britishers would eat it”, were the words of the colonial industrialists. When Swami Vivekananda came to know of the noble purpose of Jemshedji Tata, he encouraged and blessed Jemshedji for all his endeavours and told him to bring to India not just the material technology, but motivated him to build material science within the country.
Swamiji felt that it would be wonderful to combine ‘the scientific and technological achievements of the West with the asceticism and humanism of India.’ This instantaneously triggered a dream in Jamshedji’s visionary mind.

Jamshedji was successful in bringing steel technology from the USA and eventually the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) was established in Jamshedpur. A few years later, Jamshedji N. Tata wrote a letter (23rd November 1898) to Swami Vivekananda:

Dear Swami Vivekananda, I trust, you remember me as a fellow-traveler on your voyage from Japan to Chicago. I recall the ideas in connection with my scheme of Research Institute for Science of which you have doubtless heard or read. ……I am of the opinion that, if such a crusade in favour of an asceticism of this kind were undertaken by a competent leader, it would greatly help asceticism, science, and the good name of our country; and I know not who would make a more fitting general of such a campaign than Vivekananda. (Indomitable Spirit: 125)

With the blessings of Swamiji, Jamshedji paved the way for the establishment of the Indian Institute of Science in 1909, a world-class institution born out of the vision of two great minds. Religion always supports science, since science is a search for truth in the external world, and spirituality is an inner search of the self. The very fact of the two great minds meeting ‘over seas’- outside the jurisdiction of any state, indicates that the pursuits of science and spirituality are beyond borders. Scientists and the spiritual masters
are not confined to certain limitations, but belong to the whole world, for they are the world citizens.

The former President of India and a renowned scientist Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam says that ‘science and religion can lead to the transformation of religion into a spiritual force.’ For the religion, to be transformed into spirituality, science is a powerful tool as it chops off undesirable and unwanted aspects of religion. The following incident is an example of how fruitful and wonderful the meeting of science and religion would be. A scientist and a religious head transformed a church into a place of ‘space research station.’

Prof. Vikram Sarabhai, the visionary of India’s space research programme was in search of a suitable site for establishing a space research station in the equatorial region and he finally selected Thumba in Kerala as the site, as it was near the equatorial region and was ideally suited for their needs. Prof. Vikram Sarabhai met several politicians and bureaucrats for the approval of ‘Thumba’ as a site for the work of space science research, but all his efforts were in vain. Then he met Bishop of Trivandrum, His Excellency Rev. Dr. Peter Bernard Pereira who asked him to come to the church the next day. In the Sunday morning service in the church, the Bishop told the congregation,

My children, I have a famous scientist with me who wants our church and the place where I live, for the work of space science research. Dear children, science seeks truth by reasoning. In one way, science and spiritualism seek the same divine blessings for doing good for the people. My children,
can we give the God’s abode for a scientific mission?” There was a chorus of ‘Amen’ from the congregation and the whole church reverberated. (*Indomitable Spirit: pp127-128*)

It is not a Tata or a Maharaja (of India) that were inspired by Swami Vivekananda, but a wealthy American like Rockefeller also was influenced by him. When the wealthiest American, John D. Rockefeller came to meet Swami Vivekananda, Swamiji made it crystal clear that the money that he had accumulated was not his, and indeed, it was given to him to be a channel to do service to the world. Rockefeller was annoyed that someone dared to talk to him that way and tell him what to do. He left the room in irritation, not even saying goodbye. But about a week later, he entered Swami’s room and handed over a paper informing his plans to donate an enormous sum of money for raising a public institution.

“You must be satisfied now and you can thank me for it,” were the words of Rockefeller to Swamiji. Swamiji didn’t even lift his eyes, did not move. Then taking the paper, he quietly read it, saying: “It is for you to thank me.” (*Life of Swami Vivekananda by his Eastern and Western Disciples: 452*)

That was Rockefeller’s first large donation to the public welfare. In later life Rockefeller felt that there was more to life than the accumulation of money. Money is only a trust in one’s hands and using it improperly, is a great sin.

The influence of the spiritual leaders on the Indian statesmen has always been very deep. As mentioned earlier, the very fight of the leaders for Indian independence is from the background of spirituality. Swami Vivekananda has
been a great reservoir of inspiration not only to non-violent nationalists like Mahatma Gandhi but also fiery leaders like Subhash Chandra Bose. From the first Indian Governor General C. Rajagopalachari to the scholar Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the Philosopher President Sarvepalli Radhakrishna to the recent scientist President Dr. Abdul Kalam, the influence of the Spiritual leaders and the scriptures has been profound.

One of the driving forces to Mahatma Gandhi was Swami Vivekananda about whom Mahatma said- “After going through the works of Swami Vivekananda thoroughly, the love that I had for my country became a thousand fold.” (World Thinkers on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda: 44)

The first Prime Minister, the architect of the nation’s destiny, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote,

Rooted in the past and full of pride in India’s heritage, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life’s problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present …I can tell you that many of my generation were powerfully influenced by him.

(The Discovery of India: 356.)

It is not just the somber statesmen like Jawaharlal Nehru who were influenced by Swami Vivekananda, but fiery nationalists like Subhash Chandrabose, Bala Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Paul were also influenced by him.

The words of the great leaders of India stand as a testimony to the impact of the spiritual writers on the statesmen of India. The statesmen and the
spiritual Leaders – these are the most important personalities that decide the
destiny of a nation. Especially, in India, the influence of the spiritual leaders
(who have imbibed impressive language skills) over statesmen is inestimable.
In a way, the spiritual leaders of India reflect the soul of this nation.

Sri Aurobindo described the Swamiji’s work –

The visit of Swami Vivekananda to America
and the subsequent work of those who followed
him did more for India than a hundred London
Congress could effect.

(My India, the India Eternal:196)

Enormous time and money are spent by the politicians in organizing
national and international level summits in the name of peace and harmony, but
the outcome is usually not very fruitful. It is only through the noble work and
teachings of the spiritual masters that a climate of peace is created. Though the
governments of some nations are antagonistic to one another, people of those
countries are friendly with one another due to untiring efforts of these spiritual
leaders. These spiritual masters are the unacknowledged ambassadors of the
world. For these are the enlightened souls who do not carry any shades of
region, dogma or nationalism.

“Paramahamsa Yogananda is a man, whose inspiration has been
reverentially received in all corners of the globe,” writes Riders Review,
London.
The former ambassador of India to USA says, “In him, I found a true ambassador of India, carrying and spreading the essence of India’s ancient wisdom to the world.” (The cover page of ‘An Autobiography of a Yogi)

Named one of the 100 best spiritual books of the twentieth century, Paramahansa Yogananda’s life story is an extraordinary exploration of the world of saints and yogis, science and miracles, death, birth and resurrection. With amazing wisdom and wit, he expounds the subtle secrets of life and the universe-opening hearts and minds to the joy, beauty, and unlimited spiritual potentials that exist in the lives of human beings. Paramahmsa Yogananda, even after his physical departure, has been influencing millions of people for the past six decades across the globe. His immortality was proved even with his mortal body, which after being separated from the soul had not decayed for several days and amazingly it was very fresh and fragrant setting a record in the medical history stunning the expert medical practitioners who even issued an official certificate in this connection. The religious and philosophical concepts that he introduced to the world decades ago are now finding expressions in the fields of education, health, psychology and other branches of knowledge.

The lives of the spiritual writers and their autobiographies are the treasure houses of wisdom and they are received by one and all by the people of all religions and regions. Religious literature – even the holy books are confined to a particular section of people, to those who belong to that religion. Religious books, without the analysis of the spiritual writers, can be misunderstood and misinterpreted; philosophical books might lead men and
women to false satisfaction and undigested knowledge but the works of the spiritual writers cannot be mistaken. Their writings and messages are beneficial in stimulating desire for inward realization as the masters use a present day vocabulary and modern day examples for motivating the people.

Though Master E.K. left his body nearly three decades ago, his personality has been a mighty source of motivation to many people. His disciple Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar, who is leading the spiritual organization ‘The World Teacher Trust’, founded by Master E.K. has been annually touring all the continents to disseminate the messages of the Masters and he composed more than one hundred and fifty books. Many of his disciples have been in the service of the humanity through Homoeopathy system of medicine. More than three hundred books were written by his disciples on diverse subjects. One of his followers was awarded a doctoral degree for the research work done on his works, written in Telugu language. Youths have been more attracted to him and are very actively participating in many service based organizations. Being influenced by his teachings, many have chosen teaching profession and are guiding students in different fields of study at different levels – from elementary level to the university- from a primary teacher to a vice-chancellor. Master E.K.’s followers can be found in different departments of the government serving the people with heart and soul. According to the Master, from polishing a shoe to worshipping Almighty, everything is spiritual when it is done in the true spirit and in awareness.
The background force, after listening to his speeches and reading his books and meeting his followers especially those who have not seen him, seems to be Master E.K.’s repertoire of spiritual wisdom with the keys of practical application. He is endowed with an unusual flair for language- an impeccable oratorical excellence in English. They are often punctuated with witty references, humorous anecdotes and lively jokes. His teachings and writings constitute a kaleidoscopic mosaic of various branches of knowledge (wisdom) such as Puranic lore, Vedic wisdom, Astrology, Astronomy, Palmistry, Homoeopathy Mythological exposition.

K. Ram Prasad, who translated Master E.K.’s “The Science of Man” into Telugu, a widely spoken regional language, says that when one listens to Master E.K.’s lectures, they sound like a well-orchestrated symphony of words, which are a feast to the ears. His preaching is always spontaneous and is studded with resonant phrases and vibrant thoughts. Master E.K. magnetized many across the globe through his teachings and he was always less dogmatic and more pragmatic in his approach to life. There was never a gap between precept and practice in his life. He virtually lived the tenets and gospels of the scriptures in letter and spirit.

As Master E.K., Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is impacting the lives of all ages and professions. In the words of Jeetendra Jain, the author of JOY 24X7, an engineering graduate with a management degree from India’s one of the top six B schools, IIM- Bangalore-
Sadhguru is a fascinating story teller, who has the most incredible sense of humour and presents the deepest concepts most lucidly through anecdotes. He is an amazing person to have a discussion with on any topic ranging from Frisbees to books to BMW bikes to politics. He is quite incisive and has great clarity about anything, he speaks. He can make anything sound simple. His precision with words and the ability to put across the most profound thought in a way that “you” will understand is most precious for the listener. (JOY 24X7 : ix)

There are thousands of young engineering and management students from the best institutes of the world that have drawn immense inspiration from Sadguru and are using their ‘management skills’ in serving the society through their professions. The very motto of the master is to motivate the youth and change the face of the world; otherwise, in his view ‘talking spirituality is just entertainment.’ (Of Mystics & Mistakes: 25)

Arundhati Subrahmanyan, the author of three volumes of poetry, co-editor of ‘An Anthology of Contemporary Indian Love Poetry in English’ and ‘Confronting Love’ - writes in her introductory chapter of Sadhguru’s biography-

With his pulsating razor-sharp intelligence, astringent wit, modern day vocabulary, and commitment to varied social causes, he is in growing demand as an international speaker. He is equally at home at a satsangh (a group gathering for some discourse) for thousands of meditators in India as he is at the World Economic Forum in Davos; equally at ease with a group of Tamil peasants or prisoners as he is at the United Nations Millennium Peace Summit. (Sadhguru- More than a Life: 3)
Arundhati Subrahmanyam is an acclaimed writer and is a popular name among the lovers of literature. She is one who has been irresistibly inspired by Sadhguru and is capable of inspiring thousands of her admirers and readers. Sadhguru’s influence on the entrepreneurs is, indeed, incalculable. G.Mallikharjuna Rao is the one who, in many ways, changed the ‘first’ face of India — the Airports. Major airports are his making and now he is building airports across the world. He is one who has been under the major influence of Sadhguru. He claims himself that he is a devout disciple of Sad guru and is contributing in a big way to some of the social projects of Isha foundation in particular and many other activities in general.

K.V. Kamath, who is a staunch follower of Sadhguru, has built the banking mechanism in India in a big way. He is the Chairman of Infosys Ltd., (succeeding N.R. Narayana Murthy) the second-largest IT services company in India, and Non-Executive Chairman of ICIC Bank, India's largest private bank. He is on the board of directors of many an International company. Kamath is a member of the Governing Board of the prestigious B schools such as Indian Institute of Management, (Ahmadabad), Indian School of Business, National Institute of Bank Management etc., Kamath is also a member of the National Council of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). He takes part in the training programmes for the entrepreneurs along with Sadhguru at the Isha centre, Coimbatore.

Ram Charan, who is today the most sought after management and leadership teacher in the world, conducts workshops for the business
entrepreneurs along with Sadhguru. It is the belief of Sadhguru that no nation has ever been built without energetic entrepreneurship. Nations which were built without entrepreneurship have gone down and collapsed within a short span of time. Pratap C. Reddy, the Director of Appollo Hospitals, of the popular chain of hospitals in India, is known for his admiration of Sadhguru and is a practitioner of his teachings.

Contrary to the popular belief that the spiritual leaders are only concerned with and confined to an ‘ashram’ (a secluded place where religious training takes place), Sadhguru shows a keen interest in the economic progress of the country. He feels that politicians unfortunately are not bothered about the economic well being of the people. They are just interested in their power games, whereas business community is interested in the economic development of the people even if it is for their own selfish interests. They are very practical and profit-oriented and are not bothered about the regions, religions and nationalities since their aim is to proliferate their business. Hence they are dynamic and result oriented. What Sadhguru says is that ‘people are asking for an ‘economic solution’ and politicians think that they are just the enforcers of law but do not think of an economic solution. What Sadhguru feels is, it is only because of economy and business solution, in due course of time, national boundaries would drop. Another interesting aspect that Sadhguru speaks about is the link between the economic development and caste and religion. He says that when people are in poverty they will not leave all the rigid ideas related to religion and caste. In poverty, usually there is a greater scope for exploitation.
So, if entrepreneurs are motivated to tread on the path of spirituality, then they would emerge as the best leadership to guide the people on the globe and lead the nations. Sadhguru has given inspiring speeches in the World Economic Forums and motivated the entrepreneurs of India and Pakistan to invest heavily in each other’s countries so that the age old barriers of enmity would slowly disappear. If great deals of investments are made in one another’s countries, then, even the governments hesitate to take any aggressive steps. His serious concern for raising the economic status of the nation is reflected in his participation of high level economic conferences on invitation. His avalanche of interest in the economy can be seen in the launch of ‘BSE Mobile Streamer Launch’ (Bombay Stock Exchange) which alerts the investors through SMS alerts. (9th March 2010)

In one of the Economic forums, Sadhguru happened to ask the President of Pakistan Gen. Pervez Musharraf to much of his embarrassment whether the Pakistan government had any plans of big investments in India after the President’s lengthy speech about cooperation between the two countries. The Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh, a well known economist did not hesitate to use an economic term ‘inclusive economics’, coined by Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. (Source – from the official blog of Isha) The impact of Sadhguru is seen even in the field of economy, in fact in every sphere of life. Virtually, there is no field that he has not touched. His influence is wide ranging from an ordinary cinema goer to a film director like Sekhar Kapoor and a prominent actor like Anupam Kher, all big names in the Indian cinema.
Another unusual feature of Sadhguru is that he is an environmental champion, who has designed pioneering projects to transform the lives of rural poor and has motivated over two million volunteers towards participating in an ecological initiative of 7,00,000 saplings in Tamil Nadu in a single day on October 17, 2006, by 2,50,000 volunteers of the Foundation. He was awarded the prestigious Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar (IGPP) for the year 2008 for Isha Foundation’s Project Green Hands’ efforts. In the past four years, in the entire Asia, only in Tamil Nadu the green cover has increased by 4 percent due to Isha Foundation’s tireless work.

His interviews are featured in the New York Times, BBC, Bloomberg, CNN and CNBC and he is the co-author of the Amazan best seller ‘Midnights with the Mystic’ and his public talks frequently draw crowd over 3,00,000.

(Ceylon Express- 1st July, 2012)

Sadhguru was named (2008-2010) one of “India’s fifty Most Powerful People” by ‘India Today Magazine’, one of the few largely circulated English magazines of the country.

When one seeks to examine of how these spiritual masters could influence thousands of people and initiate them into action, to serve the society with unflinching commitment, it is mainly due to the expression of their love in myriad forms. In contrast, in spite of huge spending by the governments, non-governmental organizations and the UNO, not much progress is made in eradicating poverty and economic misery. With only one tenth of the amount
spent by the spiritual organizations on the similar projects, a great deal of work is being materialized. In the spiritual organizations, there are only ‘volunteers’ who are not paid, whereas, with the rest of the organizations, there are ‘employees’, who are paid.

Sadhguru has taken up the cause of education in a big way in the rural areas and funds are never a problem to the organization (Isha foundation). What these two masters proclaim is that money comes on its own way when commitment and integrity are exhibited in the work taken up. When anyone asks why and how service should be done? The only reply from these masters is that ‘one should serve society only to be joyful as service alone breaks one’s limitations. It is only one’s limitations that are hurdles for enjoying life. Unless one serves society, it is impossible for anyone to be happy and ecstatic. Serving society is only an opportunity but not at all a sacrifice. Master E.K. says that ‘one should serve society till one forgets that he is serving.’ Master E.K. always warned the people that there is an impending possibility of being damned by ‘service’. If a person constantly conscious of one’s own so called ‘service’, ‘that service’ certainly spoils the individuals. In the background light of this ‘message of service’, of the masters, the volunteers are highly motivated to render their service as a thing of joy in all possible perfection. Master E.K.’s socio-spiritual organization ‘The World Teacher Trust’ has been carrying out numerous service activities silently without even appealing for any funds. This is the reason why Sadhguru’s Isha foundation has been recognized as an NGO
in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations

Only if you can take up and do anything in this world, then there is a possibility that you may be fit for spirituality, not otherwise. If you have the strength and the courage to just take up anything in the world and do it well, then maybe you can be spiritual.

(*Indo-American News- April 19, 2012*)

What all has been done by the spiritual writers of modern era in general and the two select masters in particular, is through English language which has been a perfect medium for spreading the message of the scriptures and the science of spirituality across the world. They also have demonstrated to the world that English can be a big resource for the effective dissemination of wisdom. The passionate learners of English language have always been advised to study Bible for the mastery of English language. So also, the study of the spiritual writers not only would help one learn subtler aspects of expression and higher range of knowledge of all dimensions of life, but also help a person in realizing one's own self. For the masters have found an adequate outer expression of their inner wisdom through English language, which has been crowned the language of the world.