CHAPTER V

AN EVALUATION

In this thesis we have dealt with a large body of writing coming under the genre, the 'periodical essay'. The thesis has attempted to do justice by this large body as fully as possible. The initial inspiration for this study was, of course, a personal response, the sense of wonder, that a body of literature so removed in time and in terms of cultural context, should have come to shape the writing and career of a writer in a colonial, Asian situation. On further scrutiny the points of interaction between the two sets of essays, The Spectator and Sakshi, promised a full-fledged study. And such a study was undertaken in a relatively straightforward way in the initial stages. However, a deeper enquiry into the way the form, theme and mode were adapted by the colonial writer, suggested the possibility of a more professional/systematic theoretical reading of the two sets, in terms of the concepts of influence, imitation, assimilation, re-creation etc. This meant examining the groundwork of comparative studies, drawing from different models of approach for formulating in precise critical terms the scope of the thesis. This exercise in turn has enabled me to have a fairly comprehensive acquaintance with the vastly developed
discipline of comparative literature, especially in the post-
war times.

The re-reading of the two sets of the primary sources
in the light of the theoretical props provided by the various
polemical discussions among the world's leading comparatists,
spanning the West and the East, starting from Wellek and
Remak up to Weissstein and Guillen, not to mention Harry Levin,
Fokkema and S.K.Das, Amiya Dev, Srivatsava etc., was helpful
in arriving at a framework suitable for the thesis.

This study has endeavoured to show that a comparative
literary study which brings in two authors from different
cultural milieus and different linguistic milieus is
possible. This is borne out by the making of the periodical
essay in Telugu synthesizing the native Upanyasa tradition
and the essay which has been defined as a loose sally of the
mind.

In this sense, the Telugu writer may be said to have
happily initiated a fruitful process of hybridization of
Western and Eastern legacy. Although a form like the
'novel', which came into a vernacular tradition, say Hindi or
Bengali, directly under the influence of the English tradition,
and has developed in a far richer way than the periodical
essay, the pioneering importance of Panuganti in the forging
of the alien genre of the periodical essay cannot be
overlooked. In fact in the history of Modern Telugu literature, there is much scope for examining the interface between Western and Indian literary traditions. Writers like, Veerasalingam, Gurajada, both contemporaries of Panuganti, have earned credit for forcefully employing the essay and the pamphlet in the vernacular tongue.

The insights that I have had from this study, I hope, will have relevance for future literary history in Telugu. Comparative literary studies have been made in recent times with a knowledge of the European schools of comparative aesthetics. In India since the 1960's comparative studies have sparked off the interest of scholars, although not much headway was made for quite sometime. Since the 80's such studies appear to have developed steadily and systematically.

In a multi-lingual country like India, each region in itself provides the raw materials from its native culture and tradition for comparative studies. A totality of these cultural values and traditions of the country offers a variety of subjects for comparison. Thus literatures of one country also come under the scheme of comparative studies. In India such studies were in vogue and are common since olden days. In the recent past, under the Imperial rule, each of the Indian literatures was influenced by Western culture and thought. 'Influence' was perhaps more profound
in the literary sphere than in the cultural. However, the creativity of the Indian writer always 'survived' in studies of influence too. There is a synthesis of traditional ideas in the matter of forging forms. A creative artist preserves the Indian consciousness in his creative expression. This is pre-eminently true of Panuganti and his Sakshi essays.

Nirmala Jain in the article, "Comparative Literature: The Indian context" observes that "the very political factor that was responsible for the suppression of vernaculars and their literatures is to be given credit for exercising an enormous influence on these very literatures for more than a century" (81-82). There is a resurgence of interest in the native literature in academic circles. To make this endeavour appealing to a wider circle, many scholars felt that studies should be aimed at going across national and cultural boundaries. During the preparation for this research project I came across two comparative studies in English and Telugu, one on Gurajada-Goldsmith, the other on Sakshi with a Chapter in comparison with The Spectator. Both did not seem to evince much interest in grounding their work on internationally recognized theoretical concepts. Further, the latter makes a very slight use of The Spectator in the attempt at comparison. In the present thesis an earnest effort has been made to draw from contemporary comparative theory relevant criteria for judging
as precisely as possible the areas of interaction. Hence the perspective of this thesis inclines it toward the 'international' approach to literature. It entails an examination of two different backgrounds, placing them on one plane, based on the theoretical concepts. Such an approach helps the reader to achieve a composite view of the two societies in one critical study for future research.

The European school of comparative literature focusses on the context, the history and the contents of items compared. Under the influence of positivistic philosophy each literary work is regarded as having a birth, growth and death. This forms a genre study, which is concerned with the deeper relations between the theme, the form and the aesthetic excellence of the work, than mere thematic comparison.

The historical perspective employed throughout the thesis takes us to consider the impact *The Spectator* had on contemporary and later times. To be sure none equaled the original project. The main reason for this could be that later works carried more political news than social or literary. And as Jane Jack says, "from the first, news was not the primary concern of *The Spectator* papers" (210). Nevertheless the influence can be seen in some works at some level.
Hugh Walker in the chapter "Imitators of Steele and Addison" surveys the scene of periodical literature in the eighteenth century (The English Essay and Essayists 129 ff.). Some of the periodicals with tinges of the spirit of The Spectator are The Englishman started by Steele, which was succeeded by The Guardian. Addison himself started The Whig Examiner; Fielding started The Champion. The influence may also be seen in Budgell's The Bee (1733-1735). Ambrose Phillips wrote in The Free Thinker (1718-19) following Addison's style of composition. Aaron Hill in collaboration with William Bond brought out The Plain Dealer (1724-1725). At a time when women writers were few, two interesting journals were started by Eliza Hollywood, The Female Spectator (1744-46) and The Parrot (1746). Not all these journals had the ambience that was seen in The Spectator papers. Some of them "are nearly inaccessible, all of them have sunk into oblivion" (130).

There were serious writers too like Henry Fielding the novelist (1707-1754), who it is said thought of an essay form while writing his first chapter of Tom Jones. Some of his essays are said to be in line with The Spectator essays. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) appeared as an essayist in his Rambler (1750-1752) which is ranked as the first of the classical periodicals after The Guardian. Johnson also produced Hawkesworth's Adventurer (1752-1754) and The Idler
(1758-1760). However they were not as successful or as widely read as The Spectator papers.

If there was one person who was ranked equal to or even greater than Addison as a writer with a wide appeal, he was Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). His works The Traveller, The Deserted Village, The Vicar of the Wakefield exhibit the greatness of a sane and well-balanced mind. The Citizen of the World is one of his finest collections of essays which came out as a series. It has, as pointed out by F.W. Bateson, dramatic personae who reappear regularly like the members of the Spectator club ("Addison, Steele and the Periodical Essay" 133). In fact Jane Jack goes so far as to say that if a modern reader wishes to breathe the atmosphere of the eighteenth century,

he can hardly do better than spend a few hours with The Tatler, The Spectator, The Connoisseur, and The Citizen of the World. He will not find in them the spiritual peaks or the abyss of the age, the scarifying satire of A Tale of a Tub or the political insight of Burke; but he will find a faithful and well-composed portrait of the age. ("The Periodical Essayists" 210)

James Boswell (1740-95) produced numerous pamphlets and broadsides. His policy was different in that he did not
resort to the usual devices of the periodical essayist in the use of a character, the club, the short story, the dream, the allegory, the imaginary correspondent etc. He contributed to the London Magazine under the title "The Hypochondriac" (1777-1783), in which he aimed at offering amusement and instruction, as belonging to the tradition of the eighteenth-century essayists.

The Spectator's influence was extended in the writings of Henry Mackenzie (1745-1831) and his colleagues. In their The Mirror (1779-80) and its sequel, The Lounger (1785-87), they carried the reformatory zeal of The Spectator.

To some degree, we note that almost all the essayists of the century were indebted to Addison and Steele. The notion of the essay changed according to the time and the situation. Witness John Butt's view that "periodical writers, who retail sense or nonsense to the world sheet by sheet, acquire a sort of familiarity and intimacy with the public, peculiar to themselves ...." (The Mid-Eighteenth Century 315.) The implication may be that the periodical essay survives in different types of topical writings in keeping with the requirements of a generation.

The credit of making topical subjects worth serious attention goes to the pioneering efforts of Addison and Steele. In the case of Sakshi, its tenor did extend itself
to other later writers. Many scholars and writers in Telugu attempted to capture the beauty and originality of the work in their works, but they did not 'survive'. We may say that the genre, the form, context, mode etc., were born with Panuganti at a particular historical junction, developed with his wit in a style peculiar to him alone, and ended with him. As we do not find an equally successful work in the history of Telugu literature we may assume that *Sakshi*'s style died with *Sakshi* essays. To show to the outside world the uniqueness, the value of such a work, an attempt has been made here to study the Telugu classic as juxtaposed with its model.

Literature helps bridge the gaps between countries and cultures. The British Imperial rule brought in the chance for Indians to learn the English language and master it. The impulse was strong among the youth. Thus when the classics of the English language were introduced, Addison and Steele became an instant success, so to say, for their scriptural illustrations, lessons on morality, code of conduct etc., were very much in demand. The language of *The Spectator* was practised and mastered by the educated Indians. Gauri Viswanathan observes that the citizens of Calcutta spoke the language of *The Spectator*. "Editors of Calcutta journals and newspapers deliberately wrote in Addisonian style" and on
subjects concerning Englishmen and their fashion. (Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India 116).

The British hoped to "revitalize Indian culture and learning and protect it from the oblivion to which foreign rule might doom it, merged with the then current literary vogue of 'Orientalism' and formed the mainstay of that phase of British rule known as the 'Orientalist' phase" (Gauri Viswanathan, Masks of Conquest 27-28). However some like Macaulay advocated Anglicism as the right kind of education for the colonials.

Through Anglicism which vigorously advocated Western instead of Eastern learning, English language and literature was brought into the Indian educational institutions and curriculum. In both Orientalism and Anglicism, "an influential class was to be coopted as the conduit of Western thought and ideas" (ibid 34). Further "the discriminations between English and Indian literature in their relation to Christianity and Hinduism respectively yielded a pure, almost severe understanding of English literature as intellectual and linguistic production" (117).

Gauri Viswanathan points out that "the official stance was on the side of utility and modernization, the kinds of curricular decisions that were being made gave the impression that the real goal was acculturation" (117). Here we must
note that Panuganti differs from other Anglophiles. He has certainly imitated the model, in its outer form and function, but in the manner and matter of exposition we find the native problems taken for discussion and with examples from native literatures, legends etc. His very spirit is so Indian that his assimilation of the English genre is an instance of nativization. The very rendering of 'Spectator' into 'Sakshi' is revealing, for given the spiritual connotation of the word, Sakshi is more than a Spectator. He is a witness to all the play of the world.

As an Indian and as one who lived during the colonial rule, Panuganti's ambivalent position toward foreign influence is obviously reflected in his essays. His essays are an index to the changing mind of the author, who was unable to break the shackles imposed by his loyalty to the local ruler who was directly under the British control. There is an interesting comparison that can be made of the last days of Addison and those of Panuganti. Addison altogether withdrew from the bustle of city life after his late marriage and perhaps was drawing strength from instinctive piety. In fact, Macaulay in his "Essay on Addison" cites Addison's last words to his son-in-law: "See how a Christian can die" (88). That is, his dying moment was marked by composure and serenity. Panuganti seems to have suffered from acute poverty and neglect leading to senility
as K.G.K. Murthy notes in his "Biographical Sketch of Panuganti" (45). But he was well aware that the Indian literary tradition was enormously enriched through the colonial encounter.

One may pause to question why Panuganti chose to imitate Addison and Steele at this juncture of the colonial rule. The answer is simple. As a social critic he had some cogitations to share with his people and he found the English genre of the periodical essay coming in handy. Addison and Steele's moral essays seemed the best choice for Panuganti, as the shorter essays carried out almost with effortless ease the rather heavy task of making a bedevilled people think rationally. In the prevailing Indian situation, people had to be taught to lead a life of integrity, virtue and godliness by assimilating the best in their culture. These ideas may be echoes of The Spectator, but they apply to mankind in general. We may even take it that what Panuganti did was something similar to grafting, in so far as the utility of the periodical essay is concerned.

How does one respond to a type of literature which was inevitably conditioned and shaped by a world-view which obtained at a particular point in the history of a people or a nation? Apparently it is difficult to jump out of one's shadow and accept many of the opinions and perceptions of the
writers concerned in this thesis. Bonamy Dobrée, for example, who has so ably chronicled the period in the series Oxford History of English Literature, in the late 50s of this century, can hardly conceal his temperamental incompatibility with Addison's approach to life and particularly his rather genteel manner of discussion. He scorns Addison's "short-faced gentleman's air of omniscience, his patronage, his assumption of the position of censor morum ..." (English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century 1700-1740, 109). Addison and Steele's reformist zeal may appear even more distasteful to the post-modern mind, especially in the West, when the very idea that there must be an organized approach to manners and morals is resisted. Even in India where the overall spirit has not turned so radical, there is a reluctance to swallow moralizing, be it bitter or sweet. But on a closer scrutiny one must grant that societies do change over generations and we must, while assessing any given literature, do so by reconstructing its milieu. Bonamy Dobrée does justice to Addison and Steele when he points out, "If Steele had raised, and with him continued to raise, the standard of manners, Addison raised the intellectual level of the emergent middle-class society" (English Literature 106). Dobrée recognizes the fact that they are indeed "civilizing essays" (107). At a time when religious and political passion ran high Addison
guaged the temper of his time - in this he was a journalist of genius - and the language he used to instil urbanity into a somewhat brutal society was well adjusted to persuade.... The tone may have been necessary, since his most important work was produced in the years of violent feeling 1710-14. (Dobrée, English Literature 103)

Jane Jack makes an important observation how there was a trend towards 'secularization' and the periodical essayists had taken over "many of the functions fulfilled by the Church". She therefore describes Addison as "a sort of lay Archbishop of good Taste" given his "quasi-episcopal characteristics" (214). She draws our attention to the merit of Addison and Steele in approaching the problems of etiquette, good conduct, social morality etc.:

The strength of Steele and Addison lay in their ability to take a middle course, and they refused to go to the lengths advocated by many members of the Society for the Reformation of Manners, whose spiritual ancestors were the Puritans of the previous century. (215)

She justly concludes that "The great work of The Tatler and its successor was a work of civilization through conciliation" (216).
There is a remarkable degree of relevance to the present day Indian society in Panuganti's writings. Politics has become no cleaner after Independence. There is rank corruption and exploitation of the illiterate. An intellectual today will share Panuganti's concern and contempt for the self-serving politicians. Again, we find a tension between tradition and modernity in our culture after a much greater exposure to cosmopolitan cultures and values. A sensitive decent average man is at the cross roads and will find a reading of Panuganti quite liberating. Further still, Indians, who are truly religious will find Panuganti's cogitations on religious bigotry and superstitions astoundingly advanced and productive of a true mental culture. His scathing attack on charlatanism in religion and the political use of religion is an eye opener. At the same time Panuganti has lifted reason and rationality far beyond mere intellection and has made it the guiding principle of life. Surely he could have done nothing better to win the attention of a responsible reading public now.

The periodical essay has, indeed, led to a proliferation of a variety of shorter writings which mark the sphere of journalism and magazine culture today. In the same way, awareness of the audience and the concern for commercial success and intellectual appeal remain. We may, therefore, see how the spirit of a periodical essayist like
Panuganti has survived in even unrecognizable forms. There is a boom in the interesting coverage of matters of topical interest in various types of popular journalism. The standards may vary from magazine / paper to magazine / paper. How this type of writing has generated an average Indian reading public endowed with intelligence and common sense is an interesting topic for study. Fashions of various kinds still constitute a subject for social writing. Politics, certainly, is the most prominent subject. Some cater to the institutional changes which have altered the face of society. Thus casual writing in the form of an essay has indisputably survived. We may even say, it is flourishing.

On a higher intellectual plane, turning to the West, particularly in the English speaking world, there is a general lack of sympathy for the Enlightenment philosophy and its view of man. This is partly because of the prestige of the Marxist and post-Marxist thinking which suspects legitimization of hierarchy in any form. The Spectator papers share much of the spirit of the Enlightenment thinking. Panuganti's Sakshi essays, we must say, reflect the Essentialist view of man which has governed Indian intellectual tradition and much of Hindu religious thinking over the centuries. However, there is a difference between the Western version of it and the Indian. In the West the focus of Essentialist thinking is the continuity of certain
stable traits in human nature. This has led to a tendency to homogenize human behaviour across cultural and social barriers. And this has been the target of much of the ideological attack on Essentialism in England and the USA in particular since the 80's. Indian Essentialism differs somewhat from its Western counterpart in as much as it has confined its monism to spiritual and philosophical spheres but goes on to recognize variety at the individual and socio-cultural levels. (eg. it recognizes that 'desachara' and 'kalachara'- customs relating to regions and times - are variables and not constants). Panuganti's treatment of some of the issues relating to caste and customs will illustrate this. Hence we may say that any critique one makes of the Essentialist tendency in The Spectator or Sakshi must be made with discrimination. Having such caution in mind, I wish to make the following observations:

As social documents of two different periods in two different cultures, the essays, indeed, hold a mirror up to society. The question is not whether their thought is directly relevant to our age and generation. Rather, our interest is to see how certain paradigms have operated in certain specific cultural contexts, and their schemes of value survived for some time after the writers too. This shows that a form like the periodical essay served the purpose perfectly, helping the authors to throw light on certain
ideas, taking the reading public to a rational, humane and intellectual response. The same response may not be there today, as the times have changed and the demands too have changed.

In the treatment of women, the English authors' ideas may sound absurd to a modern reading public and the values advocated may be viewed as productive of prudery rather than virtue in women. In fact Bonamy Dobrée designates Addison as the "first Victorian" (English Literature 107) because "the tone of the voice in which they are discussed", sounds "sometimes school-ma'amish, sometimes arch, sometimes imbued with a sturdy manly common sense" (ibid). Elsewhere making a trenchant attack on Addison's attitude to women (Swift thought it was 'condescending') Dobree says, "Addison's ideal was to create the Victorian helpmeet..." (Milton to Ouida 68). Sarcastically calling Addison "the suave and homely Marcus Aurelius of the tea-tables, Dobrée remarks, "nothing was too little for Addison's commonsense philosophy" - not the wearing of patches, the use of rings, the frivolity of the Gallic race.... The journal became a manual of deportment" (Milton to Ouida 67; emphasis added). Jane Jack too agrees that the 'Reform of Manners' Addison and Steele were creating "in some ways point forward to the strained 'gentility' of the Victorian age" ("The Periodical Essayists" 214). But she points out (and even
Dobrée grants it at some stage) that there was a tremendous "revolution of manners" in the English society on account of reading *The Spectator* papers. She cites the redoubtable Mrs. Thrale's testimony to the reform of female manners: "I was reading the letter in the third volume of *The Spectator* (No. 217) where the man complains of his indelicate mistress: I read it aloud to my little daughters of 11 and 12 years old, and even the maid who was dressing my hair burst out o' laughing" (Ibid. 215). Steele must be however, exonerated from any charge of prudery because he was full of warmth toward women's welfare. In fact as Jane Jack observes, he was against the "wenching attitude" (216). It is remarkable as all literary historians of the period have acknowledged, that the women themselves welcomed the suggestions of the authors of *The Spectator*. Jane Jack notes, that "the remarkable absence of irritation speaks volumes on the position of women before this time". What is more significant, "Attention to the interests of 'the fair sex' became one of the invariable conventions of the periodical essay and there can be little doubt that the essayists did much to improve the status and education of women" (216). We cannot therefore, go the lengths of F.R. Bateson, another modern commentator, and attribute Addison's treatment of women to 'misogyny' ("Addison, Steele and the Periodical Essay" 126). The limitation of Addison, as
Thackeray pertinently remarked, lies in the fact that "He sees only the public life of women" (English Humourists of the 18th Century, 73). Thackeray also noted how Steele "was the first of our (English) writers who really seemed to admire and respect them". He went on to point out that "It was Steele who first began to pay a manly homage to their goodness and understanding as well as to their tenderness and beauty" (93). On the other hand Panuganti's views on women are also certainly conservative. Though an educated Indian woman today may not accept some of his old-fashioned views, she will not quarrel with him either over any of the fundamental issues. The freedom of the spirit that Panuganti acknowledges as central to human existence redeems him from male chauvinism. In the modern times an Indian woman's reaction to some of Addison and Steele's admonitions to the fair-sex may border on amused contempt, for their paternalistic tone may not be agreeable to our sensibility. But when viewed without rancour some of the comments they make may not seem harsh or cynical.

As an Indian woman reader of these essays in the post-feminist times, I find that in the papers devoted to women and their betterment in both The Spectator and Sakshi series, their discussion of some of the topics, especially fashion and its negative consequences as they saw it, is well meaning but today it sounds somewhat sexist. (Dobree's sarcasm at
this is irrespressible: "Petticoats might be judged too wide, bonnets too high...." \textit{[Milton to Ouida 70]}. 

There is an unmistakable conservative tone underlying their admonitions. Some of the specific interests of the English authors such as checking the size of the head-dress and the hoops in ladies' petticoat do not find any echo in Panuganti's essays. But all the three authors share an orthodox concern for women maintaining decorum in appearance so that they may protect themselves from social ruffians. Today this concern has given way to adopting a challenging stance towards threat to a woman's person.

Regarding Panuganti's comments on women we may say that they are a broadside on women's place in the society. An activist feminist will not certainly agree with some of his remarks on women's organizations and their clamour for liberation. There are at the same time some women in India who may agree with Panuganti's observations regarding the place of women and their role in a domestic circle. I personally feel that Panuganti was not as concerned as, say, Steele was, towards the enlightenment of women. There is a general ambiguity in Panuganti's writings on women's movement in Indian society. We saw in Chapter II how his contemporary Veeresalingam was more active than the activist feminist of the twentieth century in fighting for woman's rights.
Panuganti's position may be described as one of liberal orthodoxy.

After a comparative assessment of the two sets of periodical essays in respect of their survival in journalistic writings and their present relevance, we turn finally to an appraisal of Panuganti's handling of the genre. I have stressed all through the thesis, especially in Chapter IV, how Panuganti's essays are the result of a synthesis. The two forms involved are the periodical essay in English and the Katha or narrative discourse so common in all languages in India for centuries.

The periodical essay is part of the larger genre of the essay which has a rich tradition in Western literature running from Montaigne down to the moderns. As J. B. Hardison Jr. notes in his most recent review of the genre, the word 'essay' comes from the old French 'essai', meaning a trial or an attempt. The English sense is derived from this. Hardison also draws our attention to the two German words "Abhandlung" meaning a dealing with and "Aufsatz" meaning a setting forth. The former is ponderous whereas the latter has a lighter touch ("Binding Proteus. An Essay on the Essay" 12). The essay has emerged in the West as a flexible and durable form; and as the opposite of the art of oration the essay loosely strings together ideas. Hardison cites (13) the well known definition in the Oxford English
Dictionary: "Essay. A composition of moderate length in any particular subject, or branch of a subject, originally implying want of a finish... but now said of a composition more or less elaborate style though limited in range. The use in this sense is apparently taken from Montaigne, whose essais were first published in 1580" [The entry in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary reads as follows: "A short composition on any particular subject; orig. 'an irregular undigested piece' (J), but now said of a finished treatise 1597" 682]. However Hardison shows how the essay has pitched itself between two poles in the West, one represented by the 'libertine' style of Montaigne and the other by the 'Tecitean' style of Francis Bacon (Hardison 15). What is interesting about Hardison's graph of the line of development of the genre is that it balances two impulses: the thrust in Montaigne is toward "a self-realization in a world 'without order', and the thrust in Bacon is an assertiveness in a world that threatens to reduce assertions to black comedy..." (23). Hardison goes on to cite Addison and Steele's Spectator as combining both these inherited traits although the eighteenth century itself approved of the idea of cool detachment. Largely speaking the essayist is detached in his observation of life. But occasionally as in The Spectator No.420, Addison admits how the human mind boggles at the revelations of science and for a moment allows emotion to
break into the orderly thinking in the world of his essay. The twin thrust of openness and closedness is described by Hardison as 'Protean' and 'Persian'. The former suggests that which constantly changes. The latter is explained by Hardison by citing the epigraph of the last Spectator from Persius: "Throw away what you are not" i.e. it suggests an essential which never alters (27).

Located within the larger essay, the periodical essay emerged as a sub-genre in April 1709 in English, when virtually invented by Steele, it developed as a tool of edification. Sir Richard Blackmore who acknowledged his indebtedness to Addison and Steele wrote in his first number of his 'Hypochondriack' essays (1777): "A periodical paper of instruction and entertainment is truly of British origin". And he went on to say, "It first appeared in London; and from the great lustre with which it was produced to the world by the constellation of wits in Queen Anne's reign, it would at any rate have for a time had eminence and imitators...." (quoted in Jane Jack 209). Bonamy Dobrée has, long before Hardison, pointed out how Addison himself gathered all those elements of the essay as it had so far existed and "welded them into an amalgam which satisfied the needs of a century" (English Literature 75). The elements are "Bacon's epigrams and sententiae, the character-writing of Overbury, epistolary writing, description, the personal intimate note of Cowley,
the discursive musings of Temple (the last two knew their Montaigne)" (Ibid). The form so welded became "a vehicle that could carry all that the average intelligent reader would ask of usable philosophy, of sagacity of contemplation" (Ibid). The point in citing Dobbée is, it confirms my contention that the English essay has had a literate audience whereas the Katha tradition of India is basically aimed at a generally knowledgeable but formally illiterate audience.

The essay deals with a prominent topic with a number of accessory interests added to it. The Katha (meaning story or legend) usually has a legend or story illustrating a theme. And both share a certain amount of liberty to freewield one's articulation on a given subject. On the other hand the essay is more abstract, less immediately in touch with its reader. The Katha or Upanyasa form is nothing if it does not create a dialogic situation. Kirin Narayan, an anthropologist who has researched in this rich semi-folk living tradition in India, observes:

Katha are told in villages, towns and cities alike. Some Katha are informally organized and take place in houses.... Other Katha have a more collective orientation. In villages, a local temple or some other communal place may be used; in towns and cities, the performances may even be held in large halls and auditoriums.... (Story
Kirin Narayan points out how the tellers of Katha could range from a non-specialist to a Brahmin Pandit to professional story teller called Kathakar or Pauranika (One who expounds a Purana or a religious tale). Emphasizing the use of extempore exposition and narrative for religious and moral instruction, Narayan rightly observes, ".... Katha and other folk performances (such as drama, bhajans and so on) are indigenously recognized as a means of implanting values and attitudes". The most significant observation she makes is what follows:

Especially if one looks at a performative tradition through time, the imbedded messages can be seen to change with social concerns. For example, starting from colonial times, Katha in Mahabharata were used as a plot for nationalism.... the purpose was to pinpoint the misdeeds of the British rulers, to spread discontent among the audience, and to goad them to suitable action. (Ibid. 225)

Katha and Upanyasa are thus far more dramatic than the essay, concrete and give room for improvisation. An Upanyasa is different from a formal lecture in as much as it has
greater spontaneity and looser rhythms. Panuganti has taken advantage of the inherent features of this form and grafted them on to the English essay form. Thereby he has successfully recreated a foreign literary genre in a tone and spirit absolutely natural to his native milieu. His audience would not have been discomfited by the new periodical essay. His goal was, of course, not to invite them to action but to think. In fact he has managed to bring in the impression of many 'voices' so that his discourse won't be monological. It truly makes his discourse 'communal' in the Bakhtinian sense. As an intellectual and writer he is able to distance himself from a given topic that he takes up for scrutiny, by presenting it from as many angles as possible given the limited space of the essay. This method enables him to avoid a dogmatism which will be incompatible with his rational thinking. The employment of devices discussed in detail in Chapter IV such as fable, dream, letter, personas etc., realizes its potential more fully in the Telugu essays than in the English essays from where Panuganti has drawn them. The greater openness of the native Indian Upanyasa tradition allows for this freedom and enriches Panuganti's product. It confirms our initial hypothesis that Panuganti as a colonial writer has, no doubt, drawn from the Imperial literary tradition a very leading, even prestigious form, but by meticulous craft and creative imagination, has cast the material into a mode and shape that is convincingly
indigenous. Further, Panuganti has struck through this hybridization a via media between elitist genres such as poetry and drama and a simple popular genre like a casual essay or a pamphlet. This was possible, firstly because he was an erudite scholar, secondly because he was able to assimilate the popular oral tradition with his scholarship. Hence the uniqueness of his Sakshi essays.
WORKS CONSULTED

PRIMARY SOURCES


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