

HRISHIKESA

HRISHIKESA
Krishna - A Natural Evolution

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Hrishikesa: Krishna - A Natural Evolution

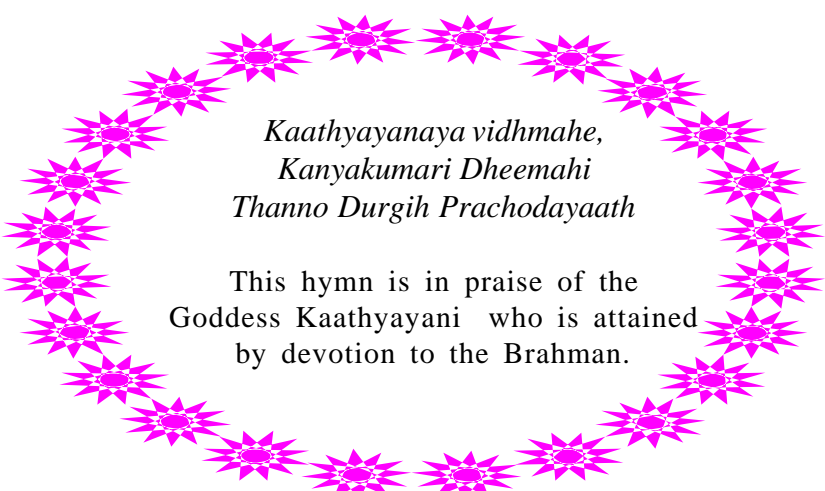
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*Kaathyayanaya vidhmahe,
Kanyakumari Dheemahi
Thanno Durgih Prachodayaath*

This hymn is in praise of the
Goddess Kaathyayani who is attained
by devotion to the Brahman.

Foreword

Ya Devi Sarvabhutheshu Mathruroopena Samsthitha
Namasthasye Namasthasye Namasthasye Namaha

Mathru Devo Bhava,
Pithru Devo Bhava,
Acharya Devo Bhava

Creation is the resultant of the Cosmic force of Shakthi in the forms of ICCHA (desire, will), GNANA (Perception, knowledge) and KRIYA (action, energy). An evolution of Shakthi is through unfoldment of god-power and Shakthi the woman is the mother of all (including the Purusha). May we offer our prayers to the Devi (the mother) in obeisance to her omni-presence in all things. The Mother, Father and the Preceptor (Guru) are also in our prayers for their Godliness.

The story of Krishna is an eternal one that has held the interest of human beings over the millennia, inspiring them from their childhood through their natural phases of aging, continuously egging them on to higher levels in physical and mental activities right through their sojourn on mother-earth. The ultimate endeavor of all humans is to seek their inner selves and realise the real meaning and purpose of their life long pursuits. There can be no better example of such realisation and of godliness than Krishna a living human with all attendant human qualities and yet elevating himself to immortality by virtue of the godliness in him as perceived by fellow human beings and the generations to follow.

A unified view (yet another) of Krishna from his childhood projecting him as a gifted child (prodigy) carries him through his growing image as an ideal human being, facing the worldly pangs with a balanced response based essentially on truth

and its manifestation through Dharmic principles, and a code of conduct in the best interests of social well-being. Krishna is an epitome of the ultimate in liveliness, humanitarianism, in philosophical outlook, as a powerful warrior, in diplomacy, in mental faculty, wisdom, and intelligence. In terms of the Neti Principle, if you ask the Question 'Is Krishna only a Warrior', or 'only a lively person' etc the answer is an emphatic NO! Krishna is not fully describable under a single notion-he is in fact beyond a single or even the assemblage of all notions of human character brought together. Mirabai, a queen of Mewar and a Nayika totally devoted to KRISHNA acclaims HIM as the only PURUSH who existed on earth, the one who is perfect and dwells in the bodies of all humans - the TATPURUSHA (That PURUSHA).

Mythology abounds in stories of persons endowed with superhuman physical attributes as one with a thousand eyes, one with ten heads etc. If today's science recognises that what one sees is more in the mind than what one captures within the eyes from external sources, then there can be those endowed with many views say tenfold or even thousand fold of the single scene. Any study can also impact on the human in a thousand ways depending on the mental frame of the viewer and thus the Krishna Legend can unfold through many many views and viewers compounded!

T.V.Gopal the author of HRISHIKESA has attempted a compilation of the chronology of Krishna's life from Krishna's divine origins as the TATPURUSHA (That PURUSHA) in Chapter 1. The TATPURUSHA is spiritual in character and is essentially in a liberated state with the fullest degree of freedom and ever attempting to bind matter through energy which is primordial in character defined by PRAKRITI (nature), Chitta (or the mind) and its vicissitudes are caused by the impact of the spirit on energy and it is Buddhi (Intellect) which attempts to free the Spirit back to its state of total freedom or Liberation restoring it to the state of TATPURUSHA. Such state transformations are more and

more perceivable through analytical techniques in the physical world and also in the domains of scientific reasoning, currently.

T.V. Gopal the author of this book has compiled information from various Vedic Texts and Commentaries to provide a broad base for eliciting wide ranging views of the life of Krishna and appreciate its increasing relevance in today's mental framework as an exemplar. The breadth of the coverage may lead the reader into a wider search, or in some cases to a cul-de-sac only to gleam at the unravelled sources beyond, leaving many more questions unanswered. The reader would be well advised to jump a step and read on and perhaps would find some of the elusive answers on his own at the end! The author's own experience as expressed by him is that, not being guided by one guru or other formal initiation, he had perhaps allowed himself substantial freedom of thought in seeking information which related to a subject as KRISHNA, would be difficult to concise.

Chapter 2 which enumerates basic systems and philosophies contained in the vedic precepts, analyses 'Creation' in the context of the evolution of man through the Yugas (time cycles) and the avatars (incarnations) of VISHNU the all pervading (Vis + Nuk). The avatars are the various time sequenced redeemers that through the intervention of godliness provide re-orientation to the course of events in the world and are historical bench marks for re-establishing Dharma or Righteousness over evils accumulated over time (spiritual entropy!) Evolution can also be seen as a biological phenomenon (through the Dasavatars) or as a study of the time defined yugas, where human values seemingly atrophy over long time spans and are re-established through appearances of the chosen avatars appropriate to the times. Both these views have congruence with the Philosophic as well as the Scientific beliefs of the present times. The superhuman qualities of the Avatars also seem to shift over the yugas from the prowesses dominated through physical

strength to increasingly mentally driven ones where the intellectual strengths become dominant. Intellectuals find enhancement through different levels of Karma (willingness), Bhakthi (feelings), Rajas (psyche) and Gnana (thinking). The avatar of Krishna at the end of the Dvapara Yuga has laid emphasis on the revitalisation of the intellect in the human to be able to face up to the task of maintenance of Dharmic Principles on the surface of the world. The avatar of Krishna is considered a PURNA Avatar (a Complete avatar) in the sense of the special emphasis on Bhakti and Gnana Yogas and also as an exemplar demonstrating the best of all embracing virtues or qualities of the human being. It is the predominant stress on the intellectual that has prompted the author to title his episode of KRISHNA (Kr-existence (with) Na - Bliss) as HRISHIKESA, the one aspect of VISHNU under whose absolute control the senses subsist enhancing the human form to the level of the TATPURUSHA

Chapter 3 (Enfant Incredible) gives a personalised view of Krishna from his childhood with an expanded chronology of his antecedents and his life as a king, head of a clan, his exploits and the relationships that get him involved in the Kurukshetra War.

The Kurukshetra battle field provides the stage for the exposition of the Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 4). Human pursuits are driven essentially by four values - Dharma (Righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire or pleasure) and Moksha (salvation) The Mahabharata espouses these values most comprehensively and conclusively and is even regarded as the Fifth Veda after the four. If the word Upanishads mean Brahma Vidya or Atma Vidya, the knowledge of Brahman or Atman, the great SANKARACHARYA has characterised the Bhagavad Gita as an Upanishad of Mahabharata of which it is a part. The Gita is composed of three khandas - Jiva (human), Brahma (ultimate) and Aikya (advaita) khandas. The Bhagavad Gita has harmonised the diverse paths sought by savants in search of the ultimate such as through yoga (Gnana, Bhakti).

The Gita has indeed brought out the innate spirit of Bhakti to the fore in extension to the upanishadic stress on Shraddha (faith). The other message driven home by the Gita is that of Nishkama Karma or work without desire or attachment. Such detachment is not to be construed as making karma purposeless and yielding to the quality of TAMAS - ignorance, inactivity and inertness. The realised Nishkamakarmin is one full of Satvic qualities as Enlightenment and calmness under all situations in life be it in adversity or in prosperity.

The Kurukshetra war, even at its start provided the stage for exhibiting the highest ideals of SATVIC qualities which enabled practising wisdom even on the battle field. It is indeed hard to conceive of emotion filled armies, arraigned against each other to break into battle, holding themselves back to permit the soul (embodied in a confused Arjuna on the chariot) with the senses pulling asunder (in the form of the horses) but held together by the mind (the reins under the overall control of the intellect in the form of Krishna) - the soul of Arjuna seeking emancipation through detachment and manifesting a will strengthened by such renunciation leads the cause of Dharma to conquer evil. In a sense, the philosophy of the human spirit conquering the senses and elevating itself to the highest spiritual levels to become worthy of ultimate victory both in the physical and the intellectual planes has been demonstrated in the Kurukshetra war amidst the chaos and the vicissitudes of the illusory world. The lesson if extended to the present day world in which the physical plane is dominated by the impact of scientific tools and concepts causing considerable disparities amongst the world powers, the challenge for a better future is more through the intellectual plane in which the human mind has to develop the innate strength and understanding as to overcome the disparities in the physical levels of control of the mind over the Body or the scientific mind-body issues. Krishna's teachings could be the means to bridge the non-convergence of current scientific and spiritual pursuits and to create a concord to enable human

survival and emancipation. All reality within the transcendental and the metaphysical are within realms of unity.

In this age of materialism every individual is looking for a reason or an established physical norm for accepting any thesis. Einstein has established oneness in matter and energy and foiled concepts of force. However, Science has created an aura of scientific materialism and this has happened inspite of some ancient superstitions based on religion that have been gaining acceptance as having scientific validity. As and when advances in science reveal more and more of the hidden biological and psychological processes, what was metaphysical is increasingly being confirmed as scientific.

If the spiritual doctrine endorses that each human soul is potentially divine, the goal of the individual would be to manifest such divinity through working and controlling not just nature outside of the individual but also through psychic control and intellectual pursuits (philosophy, religion) control the nature within (self control) to elevate oneself. (Chapter 5)

The eternal search by the human spirit endowed within each of us is to unravel creation and also the evolution in human thought processes through the means of self elevation. The story of Krishna (existing with bliss) seeking him as HRISHIKESA (the one under whose control the senses subsist) shows him as an exemplar even if viewed in the contemporary slant in human thought and aspirations. In the present age with a thirst for information accessibility, many radical changes are perceivable in our daily lives. From the age old and still the most consummate means of knowledge acquisition from the guru (be it the teacher, Mother, Father), enhanced further by the information rich external world where the ease of acquisition has to be balanced with analytical syphoning of the information flows that could otherwise cloud the average human thought processes. This calls for enhancement in the skills related to perception, discrimination and knowledge enhancement culminating in

the dominance of human wisdom as generated from within even under extremely stressful conditions as in a battle field. This hallmark of intellectualism in HRISHIKESA (Krishna, a household name) should motivate all individuals to give serious thought as to how all individuals can develop on the potential within to rise up to higher levels of achievement.

In the world around us we perceive many radical changes in our daily lives arising out of easy flow of information across continents and geographical constraints are no more a barrier to communication and exchange of ideas. This has resulted in the need for balancing the voluminous flow of information with an ability to rapidly assimilate the relevant content without allowing the clouding of human thought processes. The age old and even now, most consummate means of knowledge acquisition (from the Guru, the Teacher, the Mother and the Father) can be significantly augmented. The information flows across the society today and channelling this to the advantage of the individual is the challenge.

In the present day world of technological achievements reaching up to a stature as demonstrated by KRISHNA or for that matter by other intellectuals and doers should be within the ambit of human aspiration provided one can develop the right notions, ideals and the environment necessary for proper and harmonious development of the human. In the present information age one would have to contend with glaring signs and symptoms of conflicts from within the human frame which under the pulls of diverse dicta of the external world would threaten to breakdown catastrophically. There can be a future for humanity if only it can survive such a threat. The important discoveries in science have not resulted in the negation of religious thought and the supernatural notions of life in matter and independent existence to life and consciousness are issues to be scientifically rationalised through experimentation. Religion and Science should provide a balanced reconciliation all along the path to the ultimate truth. The urge for lifelong learning is the prime mover up

the path of self realisation. The plethora of technological tools and their ability to enhance human possibilities when confronted with the external world need to be recognised and harnessed. The ultimate progress of the human spirit would be governed by the inner strength of the human intellect, which would retain the heuristic link to the ultimate.

The concepts in the spiritual domain as the basic sounds emanating from the PRANA viz. the Pranava Manthra, Gayathri Manthra, Vaakya Vritti, the various Chakras (centres of energy in the human frame) are concepts very much in consonance with current concepts in Human Physiology. The Kundalini yoga that leads one into the realm of human consciousness, all these from the erstwhile spiritual domain find aspirants whether through rudimentary yoga asanas or other practices and also through seekers from the domains of science as well as god men

Emancipation from the preliminary state of yoga Asanas (the physical) towards self mastery through yoga is not a trivial step and needs to be actively nurtured under guidance of the right guru and controlled by the maturing self. The domain of consciousness though much elusive to the spiritualist as much as to the scientific community at large is very much within the domain of conceptualisation and seemingly humanly achievable.

I would perceive that the intellectual content in this book would kindle many thought processes calling for more intense scrutiny and also throw up many open ended issues for reconciliation through open debate. I am sure the author T.V. Gopal who has laboured to throw this dissertation open would be available for seekers of related information through the INTERNET which opens up immense possibilities for human to human interaction through the media though necessarily as an external interface. The author's first level elucidation in the context of the book and the sources of reference and interaction with other experts from the domains

of godmen and scientists, may help to bring about a wider forum for eliciting more satisfactory responses to questions and questions!

May this venture be a spark that will ignite many a luminary around the world and conjoin them in the spirit of seekers and givers in a global exercise in pursuit of unravelling the truth underlying the human spirit and the powers that may bestow on mankind.

Om Sahanavavatu
Sahanau bhunakthu
Sahaveeryam karavavahai
Tejasvina vadheethamasthu
Ma vidhisha vahai
Om Shanthi Shanthi Shanthihi.

May Brahman protect us both the preceptor and the disciple. May he nourish us both. May we work together with great energy. May our study be vigorous and fruitful. May we not hate each other.

Maj. Gen. A. Balasubrahmanian
AVSM (Retd.)

Preface

Vande Shambumumapathim,
Suragurum Vande Jagatkaranam
Vande Pannaga Bhushanam Sashidharam,
Vande Pashunampathim
Vande Soorya Sasankavahni Nayanam,
Vande Mukunda Priyam
Vande Bhaktha Janaasrayam cha Varadam,
Vande Sivam Sankaram

This is a hymn in praise of Lord Siva. In this hymn Lord Siva is visualised as the husband of Goddess Parvathi, the best of all Gods, the key cause for all Lokas, one whose ornaments are snakes, one who has the crescent moon on the head, one who takes care of all living beings, one who has Sun, Moon and Fire as his three eyes, one who is amicable to Vishnu, one who bestows boons on people who seek refuge in him and one who causes all happiness.

Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa chanura mardhanam
Devakee paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagadgurum

This hymn pays respects to Lord Krishna as a Jagadguru or teacher of the world. Krishna is described as the son of Vasudeva and one who vanquished Kamsa and Chanura. Krishna is described as the cause of immense joy for Devaki, his mother.

Sarva shasthramayi geetha, Sarvavedamayo harihi
Sarva teerthamayi ganga, Sarva dharmamayo manuhu

This hymn praises the Gita, Hari, Ganga and Manu. It describes the Geetha as the embodiment of all Shastras, Hari as the embodiment of all Gods, Ganga as the embodiment of all teerthas or places of worship and Manu as the embodiment of all Dharma.

Lord Krishna is hailed as an eternal teacher par excellence. His Bhagavad Gita is acclaimed as the fifth veda. It is widely acknowledged that the lessons which he taught are relevant even today. Yet, the life and deeds of Krishna are quaint and nebulous to a common man. It is sad that the life story of Krishna is riddled with several controversies.

There is a vast literature depicting Krishna legends. Lyrical presentation of his exploits are in the form of 'Krishna Karnamrithams' by Lila Suka, 'Tarangams' by Yati Narayana Teertha and 'Gita Govindam' by Jayadeva. Jayadeva's work during the 12th century paved way for many sanskrit works on Krishna.

A cogent interpretation of all the deeds of Sri Krishna has been eluding several erudite scholars. Eminent seers like Chaitanya, Vallabha, Mirabai, Surdas, Biharilala, Kesavadas, Rahim have extolled the stupendous feats of Lord Krishna. Thanks primarily to these saints several generations cultivated respect for Krishna. Bright minds left behind scholarly commentaries on Bhagavad Gita.

Other ancient texts such as the 18 Smritis passed down the generations through the medium of chanting and subsequent documentation are the societal rules and regulations derived from the vedas. They are called Smriti-Prasthanas. They define the various facets of societal framework. Manusmriti defines the frame-work of marriages etc. This form of smritis is acceptable as Nyaya-prasthanas or basis for judging right or wrong. Puranas are the purest form of Smriti-prasthanas. The vaishnavites contributed 18 puranas and 18 upapuranas. There are 7 miscellaneous works that are usually called puranas. The life and teachings of Krishna are discussed in Vishnu Purana, Srimad Bhagawatham, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Padma Purana, Brahma Purana and Agni Purana. Garuda Purana, Kurma Purana, Vayu Purana and Narada Purana also provide interesting aspects of Sri Krishna. It is often alleged by learned Scholars that the puranas are fictitious

stories and hence should not be given credence. The Harivamsa and Devibhagavatham are also useful references.

The epics or ithihasas namely Ramayana and Mahabharata (including Bhagavad Gita) are treated on par with the vedas. Sruti-prasthanas are the core of Hindu religion comprising the vedas and upanishads and in the minds of many the ithihasas. These priceless works of literature adequately provide the required background to take an analytical view of the times and deeds of Lord Krishna.

From an ‘enfant incredible’ to the architect of Pandavas victory at Kurukshetra is a transition non-pareil. Krishna lived dangerously all along this amazing journey of his life. Many pages of his illustrious life are soiled by the much trumpeted view of a mischievous and perhaps promiscuous playboy. However, there is little doubt that Sri Krishna displayed talents ranging from a romantic lover to an astute diplomat.

Lord Krishna is regarded as the most enigmatic re-incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It is interesting to observe that excepting Bhishma, Drona and Vidura, there was no other contemporary of Krishna who could comprehend his wide ranging activities. Krishna is a composite figure. Many legends and ideas have combined together in his form. He was a human being deified as God in his life-time. He was an ideal amalgam of the human and the divine.

Cosmic force is the striking feature right through the life of Lord Krishna. As an infant he is said to have had ominous skills in making controlled use of this cosmic force. The usage of this force begins with self-defence. Later on he uses it to protect the good and punish the evil. His formal education begins at a late age. He guides a relatively uncouth Yadava race into believing in itself. Krishna ensured that the Yadava race does not depend only on him and his famed control of cosmic force. His crowning glory is undoubtedly the Bhagavad Gita. This masterly erudition encapsulates the entire knowledge of the Upanishads.

Vedic India was a fountain head of ideas. Many westerners who eventually shaped the destiny of the Western world were benefitted from the richness of oriental philosophy. Unfortunately, two centuries of the British rule has ensured that vital links in understanding the mythological characters are either lost or shrouded in secrecy. Consequently, much of the contradictory and confusing information has permeated into the society.

It is a pity that today we are engrossed only in the materialistic aspects of actions of Krishna. His rich contributions towards constructing healthy and strong societies are rarely explored and thus remain obscure. It is true that several composer saints provided glimpses of his multifarious talents quite lucidly. It is unfortunate that not many relish learning from these works.

Lord Krishna was a visionary beyond compare. His liveliness and humanitarian outlook is outstanding in the entire history of our nation. He was a towering philosopher and a great prophet. He was the best warrior of his times. He was a brilliant diplomat who provided the base for universal development. He avers in his Bhagavad Gita, that he would re-incarnate to establish Dharma everytime evil becomes dominant on Earth.

Krishna displays delectable scientific temperament in all his activities. The fact that he gets the approval of all the leading lights of his era is in itself quite remarkable. Today the story of Krishna is marred by accusations and allegations. This work is a modest attempt to present a logically consistent picture of the life and deeds of Lord Krishna. Throughout this work the author uses the scientific terms in association with religious beliefs. The author is a firm believer in GOD. It is with the unshaken faith in the almighty, the author makes conjectures and speculations where necessary.

This work is aimed at providing a scientific basis for the deeds of Krishna. They are examined in light of the current day expectations of the society. Apart from the philosophical marvel called the Bhagavad Gita, the practical achievements of Lord Krishna are mind boggling by any yardstick.

The poetic work 'Mukunda maala' composed by Raja Kulashekara extols the greatness of Sri Krishna as

Shatruchedaika manthram, sakalam upanishad
vaakya puja manthram
Samsaarothaara manthram, samupachita tamassanga
niryana manthram
Sarvaaishvaryaika manthram, vyasana bhujaga
sandushta santhrana manthram
Jihve Srikrishna manthram, japa tapa satatam
janma saphalya manthram

The quintessence of the above verse is that 'Sri Krishna' mantra ensures not only a successful and righteous living but also salvation. A mantra is a potent combination of several sounds. The author acknowledges that it is impossible to capture the contributions of Lord Krishna between covers. Lord Krishna is believed to be an 'avatara' or reincarnation of Hari. This work is aimed at exploring 'Krishna-avatara' from a novel and totally scientific viewpoint. However, the religious sanctity is preserved.

The precepts of great men are generally sound. Their example is often marred by sins which they had to suffer for. Private morals of such historical figures Julius Ceasar, Alexander, Napoleon were worse than those attributed to Lord Krishna. The 'Taittiriya Upanishad' prescribes that a degree be conferred on a pupil with the words

“Dear Pupil ! Copy in your life only that much of our
conduct which is good and not that which is bad.”

The life of Lord Krishna, a teacher beyond compare is no exception to the above rule. Faith is the pre-requisite for the formation of healthy societies. There is an enormous volume of literary work on Lord Krishna and his times. Contradictory, confusing and derogatory works constitute a fair percentage. Perhaps this is due to the inherent drawbacks of artistic imaginations. Modern day cinematic imagination compounds the confusion with weird attires and special effects that seem unnatural. Faith in the personality erodes. The author makes the conjectures only with a motivation to present a coherent picture of a Philosopher king with a hope that we make use of his works with a purpose and trust.

Lord Krishna is worshipped as a re-incarnate of the supreme being. This supreme being is called 'Tat-Purusha'. Chapter 1 presents a theory of re-incarnation and the vedic approaches to attain the attributes of this supreme being. Chapter 2 captures the evolution of societies through the key incarnations of the supreme being. This approach provides the basis for viewing the life of Lord Krishna as a natural evolution. Chapter 3 discusses the personal life of Lord Krishna from a logical viewpoint. It examines the life of Bhishma, the key individual who had influenced the events in the life of Krishna. Chapter 4 explores the main aspects of the epic Mahabharatha which have eventually made Lord Krishna a complete philosopher-king. It also discusses the meta-physical aspects of the Bhagavad Gita. Chapter 5 dwells on the eternal lessons that can be learnt from the the life and deeds of Lord Krishna.

Prof. M Anandakrishnan's presence at Anna University in the capacity of its Vice-Chancellor is another god sent opportunity. In about an hour on the evening of April 7, 1994 the author was taken on an astonishing intellectual trip around all the facets of modern education. A couple of days passed before the dazzling impact of the intellectual prowess of Prof. M Anandakrishnan settled. The core of this work is in the form of letters communicated to

Prof. M Anandkrishnan. It is largely a result of that memorable meeting and subsequent interactions with him.

The author wishes to place on record his heartfelt thanks to three successive Vice-chancellors Prof. M Anandkrishnan, Padmasri R M Vasagam and Prof. A Kalanidhi for their vision and leadership in encouraging a work of this nature in a technological university.

The runup for the meeting on April 7, 1994 with Prof. M Anandkrishnan was inspired by another eminent individual, Maj. Gen. A Balasubrahmanian, AVSM (Retd.). The author is distinctly fortunate to hone his analytical and design skills under the watchful eyes of Prof. C R Muthukrishnan, IIT, Chennai. His amazing depth of perception in a wide range of fields marks him out as an individual with very few peers. The seeds for the work on 'parallel thinking' were sown while working with him on a paper on concurrent programming way back in 1988.

Prof. S Natarajan (Retd.), Anna University has been an unending source of emotional support and comfort right through my career at Anna University. His unique blend of humane approach and clear reasoning capped with humility and simplicity make him a rare individual.

The author wishes to place on record his sincere thanks to Prof. V Ramarao, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Regional Engineering College, Warangal for his meticulous study of the manuscript and valuable suggestions.

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The blessings of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi have come at a perfect time. In retrospect, the author believes that the letters written to him and a brief meeting with him happened under celestial inspiration. The meeting with Kanchi Acharyas was another divine experience.

The author lived as a member of the broad minded family of Sri Khaja Rasheeduddin, Hyderabad for almost a decade. The soul searching debates with my friend Khaja Asif Ahmed, eldest son of Sri Khaja Rasheeduddin on the tenets of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity have forced the author into an indepth study of philosophy even after moving to Chennai.

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T V Gopal

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