
Oh... Jawaharlal
(based on the booklet of Tamil poems
of the same title
by the same author
published by
AGARAM Sivaganga in 1979)

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Name of the Book : Oh Jawaharlal
Author : K.Veeraian
Edition : First Edition 2014
Right : to the author
Size : Dimmi 1x8
12 Pons

Pages : 34
Computer Type : Front Line Computer
Thanjavur

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FORE WORD

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Jawaharlal Nehru's 125th Birth Anniversary was celebrated in India recently. In 1978 Thiru.Veeraiyan sent his Tamil poems on Nehru and requested me to write a Foreword to the poems. Prof. M. Rajendren, poet and publisher with whom I was in daily contact also urged me.

I wrote the Foreword in Tamil and I received copies of Veeraiyan's booklet.

Subsequently I received an invitation from Progrees Publishers Moscow to Join the Tamil Sections as Translator. I joined the international publishing house in september 1980. I lived in Moscow for eight years (1980-88)

I translated Karl Marx, Lenin, Pushkin, Leo Tolstoy and some other writers.

It was exciting to live in a multi storied flat near Kremlin and travel by the under ground train to my office.

One day I was requested to translate a biography of Jawaharlal Nehru by the soviet historians, Drs, Gorev and Zimyanin. My translation sold 40,000 copies in Tamil Nadu which was a record for a translated biography. In 1993. I translated Nehru - Years of struggle edited by

Arjun Dev for the National Book Trust, New Delhi.

I read Nehru's auto - biography as a student in 1950's and became his admirer.

Nehru was a poem, a promise and a prophecy. He gave millions of Indians Faith and Hope. But he was not particularly popular in the southern states of India. In Tamil Nadu the D.M.K. organised some agitations protesting against his casual utterances. But Nehru dominated the political scene in India.

After the First General Elections a dozen communists were elected to the Lok Sabha. Coms. A.K. Gopalan, Ravi Narayana Reddi, Hiren Mukerjee, Indrajit Gupta entered the Parliament as militant fighters and opposed Nehru ingorously. In the Rajya Sabha Coms. P.Sundarayya, Bhupesh Gupta and Parvathi Krishnan were equally unsparing in their attacks on the Congress Party.

In the heat of the debate, Hiren Mukerjee taunted Nehru as **a Minor poet who has missed his vocation.** In any other country in the Third World the speaker would have been arrested and tortured. But Nehru took it in his stride.

Later he invited Hiren Mukerjee for break- fast at his residence.

The guests included some journalists and Congress leaders. When Nehru died in 1964 after a short illness Hiren Mukerjee was overcome with grief. He took up

pen and wrote a book, **The Gentle Colossus** in less two weeks.

Similarly Rajaji's criticisms of Nehru after he started the Swatantra Party hurt Nehru. But he felt that Rajaji's criticism of the **Permit- License- Quota Raj** was nothing compared to the treachery of the chinese leaders.

In the 1980's in Moscow. I read Dr. S.Gopal's biography of Nehru (3 Vols.) It is a splendid portrait of a great Indian and should be translated into some of the major Indian Languages. The Nehru Memorial Fund should take necessary steps.

When Nehru was alive the Socialist Party Leader Dr. Lohia joined the Rightist forces in attacking him. When Nehru died Lohia said **He led us with a sensitive charm when we were young.**

Dr.S.Radhakrishnan said: " He was an earnest of an age to come the age of world men with World Vision"

In the condolence meeeting held inthe U.N.O. the delegate who represented the African continent said "Nehru was the sculptor of the elthics of our part of humanity"

I am very thankful to Thiru Veeraiyan for requesting me to write the Foreword for this booklet.He contacted me in 1978 and has again contacted me in 2014.

By God's grace I am alive . I wish him long life and happiness.

I hope his booklet of poems on Nehru will be read and appreciated by all.

N.Dharmarajan
01.12.2014.

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Sivaganga 630 561.

Oh Jawaharlal

I

Two forces moulded you
one, Gandhi the Mahatma
the other, Indian peasants
enchained in poverty.
Because of Gandhi,
your outrage against exploitations
and atrocities of foreign domination
did not end in adventurous
individual extremism.
Instead,
you became
the most popular warrior under him.

Your real education did not commence
in schools and universities abroad.
When you met Indian farmers
suffering and suffocating
under the unbearable weight of
land lords
you realised then and there
'the day for their liberation
would be the nation's liberation day.'
This was the first lesson you studied .

After Gandhi,
this education alone
made you deserve,
Oh, Jawaharlal,
to be the future architect of India.

II

Non – Violence,
an expression of universal kindness
also an Indian religious practice
was converted into a formidable weapon
by a wizard Gandhi,
-a past master in the art of
people uprising.
Socialism was approached
in the logical straight line
without any wavering
by Lenin, a revolutionary
in the real sense of the term.

In the battle field itself
Arjuna, the greatest epic warrior,
was torn by emotions
involving human relations.
You were also in the same boat
at times.

Gandhiji,
who fought and
conquered human instincts.
Lenin,
whom the Mahatma himself
called a Mahan.
Both of them
have been more regarded
and respected than you. But,
in spite of your shortcomings
Oh, Jawaharlal,
it is you dearer to the simple heart.

III

The imprisonment tortures
were merely an experiment with truth
in the case of a Mahatma.

But to a person
who delighted at the very sight of
flowers and flowerlike children,
they were more terrible.

As a singing bird
tolerating the falcon's nails
Oh, Jawaharlal,
the price you paid
was too much indeed,



IV

Winston Churchill
-a fearless fighter
and able leader
but an imperialist at heart.

He ridiculed Gandhi
as 'a half-naked fakir'
and slighted down Gandhi and you
as 'men of straw' .

When he came to know that
you had fought him without ill-will
but with respect
his heart felt sorry
for what he had said.

Time changed and
perceptions bettered.

The same Churchill paid you a real tribute .
Yes,
in your heart
Oh, Jawaharlal,
no place for fear and hatred.

V

As the Prime minister,
you, at the helm of affairs,
were bound to face
problems, challenges and also
conspiracies old and new.

In the country
not all but in large numbers
politicians wedded to profit,
bureaucrats looking down upon
the common people,
media persons for their personal and
paymasters' interest
and also
national leaders,
aspiring to be partners with
industrialists
to compensate their past sacrifices.

Within the party itself
conservatives always not for your
pro-people programmes.

In the world
the powerful western countries
and particularly the U.S.A.
targeted you,

as the representative of the third world
developing countries.

You were cornered but not isolated
as was Abimanyu, the son of Arjuna
in the battle field .

Oh, Jawaharlal,
the people of India were always with you.



VI

Even after the independence,
in the struggle against the imperialists
and their Indian subordinates
you had to play
the political gamblings,
cunningly devised and schemed
by their Sagunis.

But your bet was not
the country and others
as in the case of
the epic hero, Dharma.

Your bet was yourself,
yourself alone.
Oh, Jawaharlal,
you are dearer to the simple heart.



VII

Well ahead of others,
you were aware of Hitler's intensions
but failed to read the Chinese scheme.
They attacked India in 1962.

Under the garments of communism
they were not only nationalist
but also empire building fanatic
as you were an internationalist
to a fault.

Their socialist slogans,
the age old cultural relations between the
two countries
and above all
your good intension about them
clouded your reasoning .

A temporary set back to a great nation
India.
In the history of nations
it happens often.

In the end,
imperialism and empire - building
are going to be out of date
Oh, Jawaharlal,
as you visualized.

VIII

‘You bold enough only
in copying others’ economic plans’
some intellectuals accused.
‘ You not up-to-date in reading
economic books’,
some academic persons lamented.
‘There going to be over production in
cement’
a renowned economist pinpointed.
All of them were proved wrong
by the unfolding time.

Wearing the dark glasses of arrogance
the so called intellectuals and experts
saw nothing but darkness
in the bright day light.

The arrival of time
to uplift the down – trodden
was identified well in advance
by Vivekananda .
In the same wave length
you also saw the Visva Roopam of
the New Age.

With a mother’s tender instincts for
the people
Oh, Jawaharlal,
you grasped what the time offered.

IX

You did not allow
to sacrifice the people's welfare
at the alter of the profit Goddess
and also determined
to have the basic industries
in the public sector.

When the developed countries
decided not to help,
the erstwhile Soviet Union
first came forward.

After the war and draught,
India successfully faced an
economic crisis in the sixties,
declaring by that
its unstoppable progress.
Even after you,
Oh. Jawaharlal,
your success continues.



X

Skeletons of the past
as phrased by Vivekananda
asked for the impossible,
the rolling back of time.

They lost their medieval period paradise
once for all,
not to be regained any more.

Education and modernization
started changing
the unjust social order.

Your mission,
Oh Jawaharlal,
has been
gathering momentum.



XI

Your heavy investment plan
for education in general,
for science and technology in particular
“ a wrong priority in a poor country “
contested the doom – sayers.

Undeterred
you pursued your programmes
and
personally requested
Homi Baba and other scientists
to help in the nation building.

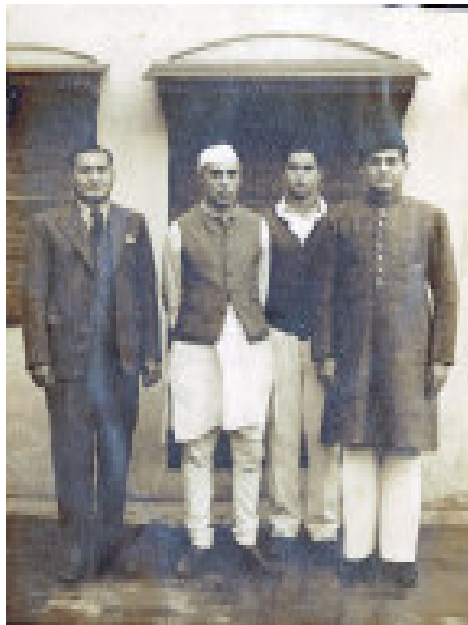
Of all the developing countries
India became the only one
the science oriented.

In the past,
India was unaware of the
Agrarian Industrial revolutions.
No other alternative for it
under the foreign rule.

Presently
India is in the forefront of the
Third Revolution or
Wave as it is called.

Now it is an atomic power,
also an emerging super - power
with mounting invisible exports
in the twenty first century
because its army of
trained scientists
has won the day for India.

Your fore-thought and vision
leads not India alone
but all the developing countries
Oh Jawaharlal,
from darkness to light.



XII

Convinced by the Soviet's experiment
with planning and its development
in the shortest period,
you opted for
the Five Year Plan in India

The opposition, used to oppose you
also criticized it.

Intellectuals,
the twentieth century Adam Smiths
- advocates of freetrade
and the trickle down theory-
and those with business interest
were bound to oppose
the Five Year Planning.

But,
what happened was important.

When the opposition came to power
it was bound to continue
the Five Year Planning.

What you initiated
Oh, Jawaharlal,
has become a time tested one.

XIII

Comparing with Pakistan
intellectual experts in foreign policy
always blamed you and India.

America and China
needed Pakistan
as Pakistan needed them
for mutual benefit
with an ulterior anti - Indian motive.

With all the outside supports,
the clever opportunist Pakistan
split into two
in the very presence of the 7th fleet
of the United State of America.

It has been more easier for the USA
to deal with and manipulate
Pakistan and dictators
than the powerful democratic India.

A simple truth, the most clever Indian
experts
Oh! Jawaharlal,
failed always to understand.

XIV

The movement of non - aligned nations
-a movement to protect the interests
of developing countries
and to safe guard them
from being used as tools,
-a movement ignored and neglected
in the fifties
but respected in the seventies.

When Pakistan applied for the membership
in the Colombo conference of
non - aligned nations
you,
the moving spirit of the movement
were not physically present,
but
Oh Jawaharlal,
your statesmanship was vindicated.



XV

Bharathi,
the great poet from the south,
a follower of Thilagar
in the freedom war.

The British were more
afraid of his words
than anything else.
Even those who helped him
were hunted down.
Undeterred he continued
from the territory under the French.

As a freedom fighter,
a senior to you
senior enough
to bless Gandhi in person.

Both of you,
in the same war,
-in different fronts,
-in different periods,
but in the same wave length.

Both of you
fought for freedom
-freedom from poverty
-freedom from ignorance.

Also not to forget
to discover the glorious past of India
in order to enlighten the ignorant
you attempted in your easy English
to reach the heights
attained in his rich Tamil poetry.

The mission was to destroy and create
as in the West Wind of Shelly

Legislations for reforms,
establishing key industries
to rapid up economic growth
and to become self dependent
in defence production
and many other things.

In passing the Hindu Law Bill
you were really
right in the foot-steps of Bharathi.

His passion for woman's education
and emancipation
cannot be matched
by anybody else,
other than you,
to an extent.

“ India belongs to the Indians one and all
and all the Indians should be equal
to one another in importance.

This Bharathi's ideal
shines as the North Star
to guide the direction and actions

Even though not known to each other
your measures and steps
were in the same direction
O 'Jawaharlal,
laid down by Bharathi.



XVI

India's
Parliamentary democracy
is the most excellent in the world.

Under the able leadership of
Dr.Ambethkar,
the drafting committee
did a wonderful job
in drafting the constitution.

As a model
the parliamentary democracy
of England
was preferred to the
presidential form of the government
of the U.S.A.

The three divisions,
in the Indian constitution
the legislative, the executive
and the judiciary
are well balanced.

The parliamentary democracy
had been well settled here
- well settled once for all

and not to be unsettled anymore
by any force -
in the Indian Republic's
first decade itself,
because of you
being the executive head
and also the other parliamentarians
in no way inferior to
the great Edmund Burke
who impeached Warren Hasting.

The right to disagree and criticise
is the very back bone of the
parliamentary system.

In upholding this fundamental right
you were in league with
John Milton, the greatest English poet
and the Latin secretary of
Oliver Cromwell.

At a stage
Hitler was glorified
in England itself.

But sensing his intension
earlier than others
you had forewarned that
he was going
to endanger democracy.

You, a freedom fighter
turned down the offer
to meet Mussolini,
the Italian dictator
while going through his country.

You did not tolerate
the enemies of democracy
at any cost
at any time.

At the same time
if crossed the limit in words
you did not hesitate
in extending an apology.

The thought of dictatorship
and the other anti-democratic
tendencies
did not dare to enter
even into your dream.

Even though no shortage
in the number of politicians in India
in declaring themselves or their masters
as the guardians of democracy,
the lively demagogue spirit
in your name and fame here
Oh! Jawaharlal
shines brightly forever.

XVII

Villains in the tragedies of democracy
enacted in developing countries
one after another
and their masters
in the developed world
were afraid of you
as you represented
the enlightenment of a developing country
and the guiding spirit of democracy
rolled into one.

Dictators are always
in the grip of fear.

But the true democrats are fearless.

Oh' Jawaharlal,
as they have nothing to lose.



XVIII

You had been always
under attack
but it unavoidable.

Being a unifying force
as your mentor Gandhi was
you invited naturally
the various divisionists
and extremists on either side
to target you from different directions.

Not disturbed and deviated
tirelessly you pursued
your goal,
Oh' Jawaharlal,
the people's welfare



XIX

The war
Raja Ram Mohan Roy started
to safeguard women
from the age old atrocities,
was continued by you.

As a step
when the Hindu Law Bill
was introduced
all the conservatives
in your party and government
lined against.

Even the constitutional head
lent them a helping hand.

But the resistance was overcome and
the bill was passed
all because of you.

After thousands of years
the Sakthi Goddess
in the social temple of India
Oh Jawaharlal,
came to life.

XX

Your socialistic tendency
was belittled by some
heartless intellectuals.

Intellectual arrogance
and socialistic tendency
are mutually exclusive.

Even the sharpest intelligence
if aided by kind heartedness
will naturally side with
the tendency of socialism.

If a nationwide - confusion arises
about the right and wrong
of a particular matter,
the deciding authority
should be the persons
with large heartedness
Oh' Jawaharlal
as a Maha Kavi
Kalidasan says.

XXI

Arnold Toynbee
a renowned historian
clubbed both Gandhi and you
with the great Asoka
as persons who brought about
great cultural changes
peacefully.

India won the freedom
with peaceful means.

India's parliamentary democracy
can also peacefully solve
the arising problems then and there.
Also you devised
the non- aligned movement
to further the peace in the world
and to avoid military confrontation.

Nations with other
aggressive methods
may over take India
in the short –run.

But in the end
India is going to win the race
Oh' Jawaharlal,
with peace and development.

XXII

‘If not intervened in Goa
your chance to win the Noble
might not be lost’,
some informed persons
lamented.

When Gandhi was not awarded the noble
not a credit loss to Gandhi.

Your actions only
intended with the people’s welfare
and no time to think of
awards and other things.

Only your glorious achievements are
Oh, Jawaharlal,
the ever memorable awards.



XXIII

Not done enough
to meet the down – trodden people's
aspirations
even for a small recreation
you felt the pain
at your heart.

You determined more and more
to work hard tirelessly
to secure their bright future.

So you had
Robert Frost's words
'promises to keep'
Oh Jawaharlal,
always in front of you.



XXIV

Jinnah in the congress party
a senior to you
not pleased with you
being in the forefront.

Even after becoming
the undisputed leader of Pakistan
he did not forget it.

The Politician was always a politician
but the poet was different.
The great Iqbal
was always very fond of you

Sheik Abdulla,
the lion of Kashmir
even though imprisoned by you
became overwhelmed with grief
when you left the world.

In faith and spirit
nobody was more closer than you
to the Mahatma Gandhi
who paid the price with his life
for the Hindu –Muslim unity.

His nomination of you
as his successor
was a well considered move.

In the first opportunity available
in the late seventies
the Godses prayed
the Gandhi's name
Oh' Jawaharlal,
against you.



XXV

You are praised and remembered
not for being the person
the son of Mothilal
and not for the party
you belonged to.

But you are praised
and remembered
for the principles you stood for
and the battles you fought.

You must be more and more praised
and remembered for ever
for the sake of,
Oh' Jawaharlal,
the future India.

