

# Newsletter

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**Nehru  
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## 100 Years of Non-Cooperation Movement (contd.)

Dear Reader,

The Covid-19 pandemic caused major disruptions in the regular services of many institutions all over the world. Nehru Centre, too was affected in the most unexpected manner. We had to close our offices and our programmes as the safety of all of us and all of you was of primary importance. Thus, the printing of our monthly newsletter too had to be suspended. As we limp back to normal, we have begun with the printing and circulation of the Newsletter from this month. Since our programmes are still kept on hold, the contents are largely of an academic nature. We hope it will interest you to read the politico-historical, scientific, cultural, artistic and literary features in the following pages.

Except for May and June 2020, all the other previous issues may be read online on the Nehru Centre website

[www.nehru-centre.org/  
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We always look forward to your feedback and suggestions.

Chief Executive,  
Nehru Centre.

Last month's article on 100 years of non-cooperation covered the period from the day of its launch on August 1, 1920 to the day it was called off throughout India on February 10, 1922 after the Chauri Chaura incident.

All through the non-cooperation movement, Gandhiji was not arrested. Lord Reading, the Viceroy resisted the demand of many in London and India who wanted Gandhiji arrested. In fact, he waited for the entire campaign of non-cooperation to be cancelled before he decided to arrest him. The order was issued on March 1, 1922 and it was executed on March 10, 1922 at half past ten at night.

Gandhiji had anticipated his own arrest for a long time and had published an appeal just a day before the arrest took place, asking the people to be calm if the event occurred.

Gandhi and Shankarlal Banker, the printer and publisher of his magazine *Young India*, were tried for sedition at Ahmedabad Circuit House on 18<sup>th</sup> March. Gandhiji's three *Young India* articles, published in September and December the previous year and in February 1922 were presented as evidence. Both the accused pleaded

guilty to the charge. The judge, Justice Robert S Broomfield, asked Gandhiji if he wished to say anything more and he made the following statement:

*"I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him..."*

*She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages just the supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources.*

*Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they realize that the government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye.*

*I have no personal ill will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But*

contd. on page 2

*I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system.*

*I knew that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and, if I was set free, I would still do the same... I wanted to avoid violence. I want to avoid violence. Non violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips.*

*I do not ask for mercy. I do not ask for any extenuating act of clemency. I am here to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is deliberate crime and what appears to me to be that highest duty of a citizen."*

Gandhiji was sentenced to six months simple imprisonment and Bunker for a year with a fine of Rs. 1,000.00. While delivering the judgement, Justice Broomfield made some remarks which were extraordinary and must have shook the conscience of the Empire:

*"Mr. Gandhi, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless, what remains, namely the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face.*

*You are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try...In the eyes of millions of your*

*countrymen, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and even saintly life.*

*But it is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be grave offences against the State.*

*I do not forget that you have constantly preached against violence and that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence, but having regard to the nature of your political teaching and the nature of many of those to whom it is addressed, how you could have continued to believe that violence would not be the inevitable consequence, it passes my capacity to understand...*

*If the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I."*

Summing up the non-cooperation movement Rajmohan Gandhi writes, *"In 1920, the fates appeared to bring Indian liberty and Hindu-Muslim partnership within reach, and all that seemed needed was the application of Indian will. Surfacing all across India, Gandhi looked capable of mobilizing that will."*

In February 1922, Lala Lajpat Rai said, *"Never before in the experience of living men did a leader so successfully and unfailingly appreciate the genius of his people and feel their pulse as Mahatma Gandhi has done over the last three years. I wonder if ever in the history of India a*

*single person has had so much influence over the masses of India."*

Lord Lloyd, who was the governor of Bombay when, in his province, the Bardoli Satyagraha was planned and abandoned, had this to say to a British journalist in 1923, *"He gave us a scare. His programme filled our gaols. You can't go on arresting people forever, you know, not when there are 320 million of them, and if they had taken the next step and refused to pay our taxes, God knows where we should have been. Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in the world's history, and it came within an inch of succeeding. But he couldn't control men's passions. They became violent, and he called off the programme."*

An important outcome of the non-cooperation movement was the continuing commitment of many Hindus and Muslims to a united struggle for Indian independence. Afzal Iqbal, the future biographer of Mohammad Ali described it thus, *"These events formed a psychological watershed in the development of modern India... For the first time India witnessed a mass movement which shook the country and nearly paralyzed the British rule. For the first time India realized a new pride and discovered a sense of unity... For the first time, in a rare manifestation of amity and accord, Hindus and Muslims drank from the same cup."*

(This article is largely based on the chapter 'The Empire Challenged' in Rajmohan Gandhi's book titled *Mohandas: A true story of a man, his people and an empire.*)

## What Nehru said....

In 1921, prison was almost an unknown place... Frequent references to gaol-going from 1920 onwards, and the march of many of our comrades to prison, gradually accustomed us to the idea and took away the edge from that almost involuntary feeling of repugnance and reluctance. But no amount of previous mental preparation could prevent the tension and nervous excitement that filled us when we first entered the iron gates.

*....From 'An Autobiography'*

## Types of Variable Stars

In 1873, John Goodricke discovered that the second brightest star in the Perseus constellation changed its brightness over 2 days, 20 hours and 48 minutes. This was a sensational discovery and before this time, no one thought that the brightness of stars could change. John not only showed that the brightness of the star varied periodically and with absolute clockwork but also proposed a theoretical explanation for this change in its brightness. His explanation was that it was not a single star but a stellar system consisting of two stars orbiting each other. The proximity of the stars prevented one from seeing them separately.

Goodricke suggested that when the cooler and fainter star obscured the brighter and hotter star, there was a drop in the total brightness of the system. He also suggested that the star may have some cooler region on its surface. When that region faced the earth, its brightness appeared to have decreased in intensity. (Please see our Monthly Newsletter - November 2020)

This observation by the young man opened up an entirely new branch in the study of astronomy - the study of variable stars. A graph of brightness versus time is called 'light curve' and is used to measure the brightness of variable stars. The stars are generally called 'primary' and 'companion'. Variable stars are identified as Star A, Star B etc. although they are two individual stars.

Some astronomers rightly raised the question about the eclipsing nature of the stars proposed by John. (See the figure 1 below). In positions 1 and 3, the primary and companion stars are positioned side by side and their total

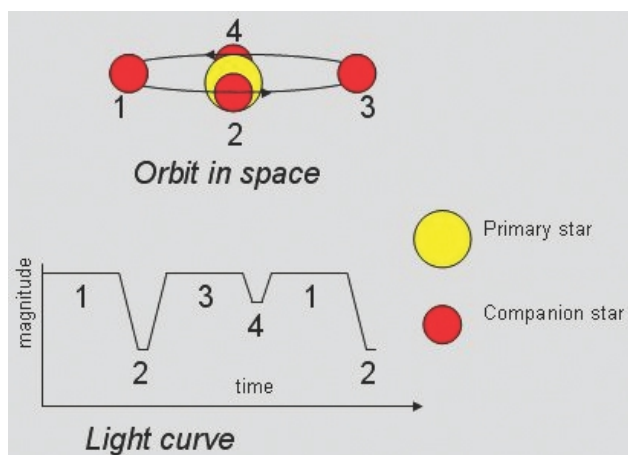


Figure 1

brightness is constant. In position 2, the companion star comes between the earth and the primary star. In position 4, it was argued that when the primary star eclipsed the companion star, one should also see a drop, although a small one, in the brightness of the system. However, this was never observed by any astronomer even after carefully observing the star.

The figure shows the light curve of Algol and its orbit in space. Position 2 and 4 are called 'primary minima' and 'secondary minima' and the time difference between the two primary minima is called the 'phase'.

The mystery of the eclipsing nature of stars was solved in 1910 by Joel Stebbins, an American astronomer, Director of the University of Illinois Observatory. Stebbins is credited with pioneering the measurement of the magnitude of stars by using an electronic device called the photoelectric photometer. He observed the complete sequence of Algol's light curve to an accuracy well beyond the limitations of the human eye. He found out that halfway between the minima of Algol, there was a small drop in the magnitude of its brightness. This drop in the magnitude was so small that the human eye could not notice it.

In the meantime, the astronomy of variable stars flourished - both observationally and theoretically.

More and more variable stars were discovered. It was observed that the light curves of stars had a set of patterns and these curves indicated their physical properties.

Some stars were observed to have had light curves similar to the light curve of Algol. These stars were classified as Algol type eclipsing binary stars. Other stars showed different kind of light curves.

Figure 2 below shows the light curves of three different types of eclipsing binaries. Light curve of Star A indicates that though the stars are far from each other, there is not much difference in the brightness of the primary and

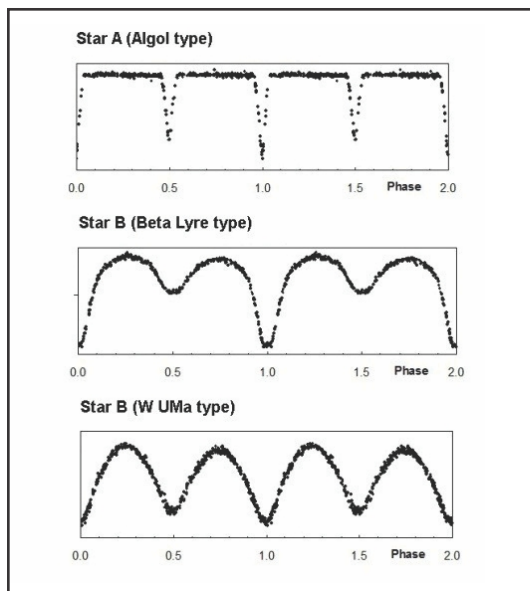


Figure 2

companion stars. Note that the secondary minima are nearly as deep as the primary one.

The light curve of star B indicates that the physical distance between the primary and companion stars is not very large and the companion star does not have less brightness than the primary star. Stars with this kind of light curve are called Beta Lyre type stars. Beta Lyre is the second brightest star in the Lyra constellation. It was the first star that showed this kind of light curve.

The last one, Star C, is the W UMa or the W Ursa Majoris type of variable star. The companion is nearly as bright as the primary star and both the stars are nearly touching each other.

Eclipsing variable stars are also called extrinsically variable stars as the cause of the variation in their brightness is external. There are other types of variable stars where the variation in their brightness is due to physical changes that are taking place inside the star causing their brightness to change. Such types of stars are called intrinsic variable stars.

Lastly, there are eruptive and irregular variable stars. Eruptive variable stars are those that brighten up without any warning and irregular variable stars are those that show no apparent periodicity in their light variation.

# INDIAN CLASSICAL DANCE: SATTRIYA

Sattriya classical dance of Assam gets its name from the Sattras, the Vaishnavite monasteries where this dance was performed as a form of worship. This living tradition from the monasteries has been practiced for over 500 years by celibate monks in the form of mythological dance-dramas written by the Vaishnava saint and social reformer Sankaradeva and his principal disciple Madhavadeva in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Sattriya dance possesses all the elements of classical dance, following the principles of *natyashastra*.



The Sattriya dances include a number of *hastas* (also called *hat*), choreographic patterns, distinctive costumes and a variety of masks. The music mostly depends upon the *khol* (*mridanga*), and cymbals (*patial*, *bhortal*) supporting the ragas and songs. *Daba* or *damala* drums and *kaliya* (pipes) are also seen in sattras.

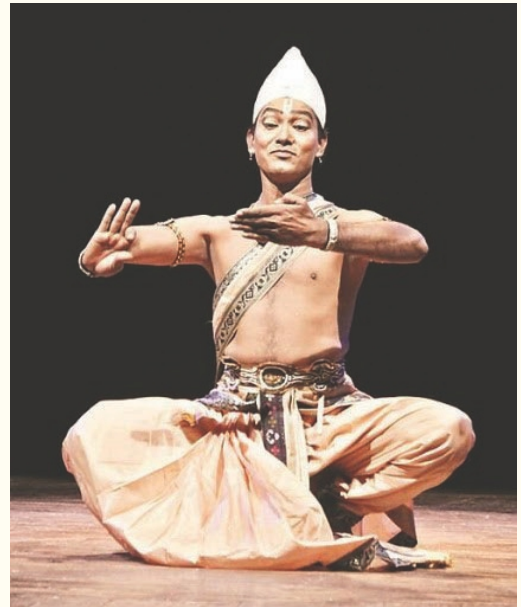
Most of the Sattriya dances are tough in nature and are meant for the males only. This is the reason why, in early times, females were not permitted to participate in Sattriya dance. In village performances, female roles were played by young boys. It is only recently that women have also started performing in public.

There are two kinds of Sattriya dances- Nriya and Nritta. In Nriya dance each moment and every *bhav* (feeling) has a meaning of its own. Nritta includes gesticulation and an expression of dramatic feelings. *Chali*, *Jhumura Nadu*, *Bhangi*, *Natua*, *Baha* and other dance forms are a part of the style of dancing.

The Sattriya dance costumes for males are *dhoti*, *chadar* and *pagri* (turban), and the female dancers wear *ghuri*, *chadar* and *kanchi* (waist fabric). Traditionally the costumes were in white or raw silk colour with use of red, blue and yellow for specific dance numbers. In earlier times, velvet and satin materials were mostly used for the costumes.

Dancers wear jewellery made in gold. They wear *Kopali* (on the forehead), *Muthi Kharu* and *Gam Kharu* (bracelets) and different types of neck pieces like *Mata Moni*, *Golpata*, *Dhulbiri* (shaped like the musical instrument *dhol*). Earrings are made in similar designs. Female dancers wear white flowers in the hair.

In the year 2000, the Sangeet Natak Akademi recognized the Sattriya dance form as the eighth classical dance form of India. Today, this graceful dance has moved out from the monasteries to the metropolitan stage, performed both by male as well as female dancers. Retaining its basic core of *bhakti*, Sattriya dance has metamorphosed into a form with high aesthetic appeal.



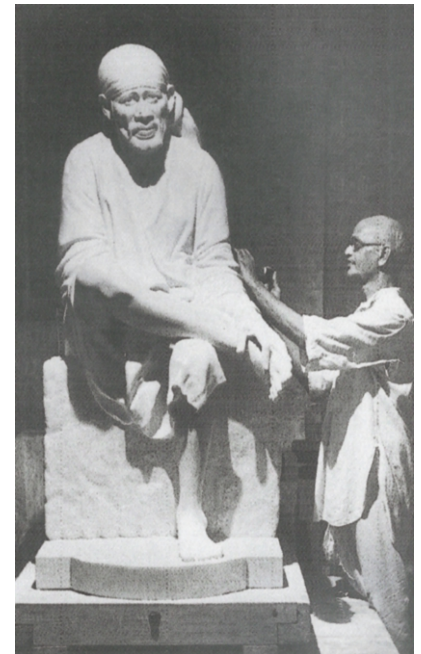
## Shilpamaharshi Balaji Vasant Rao Talim

Shilpamaharshi Balaji (Bhausahab) Talim was born in 1888 in Hyderabad. After completing his school education, Balaji joined the Sir J. J. School of Art in Mumbai to learn sculpture. He was awarded the prestigious Dolly Khurshetjee scholarship which helped him complete his education in sculptures.

In 1918, he set up his own studio and called it Talim's Art Studio. Mr. Cecil Burns and Mr. William Ewart Gladstone Solomon, the then committee members of the Beautification of Mumbai Committee allotted the work of making a model statue of Dr. Dadabhoi Naoroji to Balaji Talim and a British sculptor. Balaji Talim's work was selected and he was entrusted with the work of making the statue in July 1923. This statue is now situated in Flora Fountain. The statues of Chief Justice Lawrence Jenkins in the High Court, Mumbai and Rao Bahadur Petigara, the first Indian to reach the rank of Deputy Commissioner of Police are some of his famous works.

In 1924, at the International Art Exhibition held at Wembley in Britain, Talim's sculpture 'Snake Charmer' in bronze was widely appreciated by British journalists. His sculptures of 'Beggar and his Son' and 'Spinning Reel' got a Gold Medal from the Bombay Art Society in 1923 and 1933 respectively. Talim's beautiful Italian marble statue of Shree Saibaba in the temple in Shirdi is an outstanding work of art.

Balaji Talim taught sculpture to students at the J. J. School of Art in Mumbai. His students remember him as a true friend, philosopher and guide.



Balaji Talim working on the statue of Shree Saibaba



Hutatma Smarak at Hutatma Chowk

## Harish Balaji Talim

Harish Balaji Talim was born on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1923 in Mumbai. He studied fine art painting under the able guidance of Kalamaharshi Shri S. L. Haldankar and Shri G. S. Haldankar, who were master painters. He chose sculpture as his profession and worked under his father Shri B. V. Talim who himself was an eminent sculptor of India.

Harish Talim was the President of The Art Society of India and Indian Sculptor's Association. Shri Talim has created many big statues in and outside Mumbai, some very significant among them being the 16 feet tall Hutatma Smarak at Hutatma Chowk and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's statue at Uran which is 9 feet in height.

Harish Talim excelled in creating larger-than-life statues. In fact, he created Mahatma Gandhi's largest statue in India in a sitting position in *panchadhata* which is 19 feet tall. It can be seen at the Mantralaya in Mumbai.

## UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India

### 15. Sun Temple, Konarak

The temple of the Sun at Konarak, also spelled Konaraka or Konarka, was built by King Narasimha Deva I (A. D. 1238-64) of the Eastern Ganga dynasty which ruled over Kalinga (Orissa) sometime in the middle of the thirteenth century. A vast terrace forms the temple foundation on which twelve pairs of large, beautifully fretted and profusely carved wheels, each with eight thick spokes symbolizing perhaps the eight *praharas* or divisions of the day and night, have been sculptured. Four stone horses on one side and three on the other flank the steps to the main entrance of the temple itself. The twelve pairs of wheels represent the twelve months of the year and the seven horses represent the seven days of the week.

The fine carving and fretwork of the chariot wheels as well as of the horses testify to the skill of the Kalinga sculptors, carved as they are with wonderful patience and admirable skill. So also do the many figures in green chlorite or soft pink sandstone embellishing the temple walls, many of the sculptures being of a highly erotic nature.

Inside the shrine stands a beautifully fashioned throne platform on which the presiding deity of the temple must have once stood. The main hall, measuring 90 square feet, is however built of laterite stone and pink sandstone. The entrance is on the eastern side in conformity with the canons of Indian temple architecture. It stands eternally guarded by stone lions with deeply carved manes and lifted paws, resting lightly on the backs of much smaller elephant figures.

A non-Hindu textual source, the Akbar-era text *Ain-i-Akbari* by Abul Fazl dated to the 16th century, mentions the Konarak temple, describing it as a prosperous site with a temple that made visitors 'astonished at its sight', with no mention of ruins. 200 years later, during the reign of the Marathas in Odisha in the 18th century, a Maratha holy man found the temple abandoned and covered in overgrowth. The Marathas relocated the temple's Arun stambha (pillar with Arun, the charioteer seated atop it) to the Lion's Gate entrance of the Jagannath Temple in Puri.

In 1904, clearance of some stone debris led Sir John Marshall, then the Director-General of Archaeology in India, to declare that no monument in India was more beautifully proportioned or more stupendous than the Sun Temple.

UNESCO has declared the Sun Temple as a world heritage site in 1984.



Sun Temple



Carvings on chariot wheel



Sculpture of human figures

*Further reading at Nehru Centre Library:*

- Konarak: The sun temple of love by Rustam J. Mehta; D. B. Taraporevala Sons and Co. Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1969. Call No. R732.4(54)/Meh. Barcode - 2442

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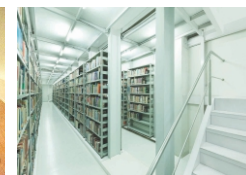
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