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FICTION

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In this epic novel, Bhyrappa examines the very fibre of contemporary Indian life – social, political and psychological – basically in terms of post-independence.

TANTU

the loom of life

S.L. BHYRAPPA

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Every community strived to make sure that a man from their own community became a representative. The good of his own community was foremost in the representative's mind, not the good of the entire nation.

In this epic novel, Bhyrappa examines the very fibre of contemporary Indian life—social, political and psychological—basically in terms of post-independence, post-Gandhian scene. It is panoramic in scope, moving as it does from Bangalore a small village near Channarayapattana, to Mysore, to Banaras and Delhi. Police brutality, *goondaism* at the village level, the phoney five-star hotel culture, the theft of art objects and smuggling them out of the country, betraying a great heritage for monetary benefit by mercenaries—thus the novel progresses relentlessly.

The range of characters, entirely credible is incredible and astonishingly comprehensive—the true Gandhian idealist, who, inspite of all odds holds on to his ideals; an honest and uncompromising journalist-editor, who, in spite of personal tragedy remains steadfast to his professional ethics, demonstrating that he cannot be bought, no matter what the price; the “liberated” career woman who sleeps around in order to gain favours in business; the academic-politician with a carefully cultivated charm seducing gullible and impressionable young women etc. All in all, it is simply a fascinating novel about modern India—surveying as it does the state of the country from Mahatma Gandhi to Indira Gandhi ending with the emergence of the “Emergency”.



About the Author:

S.L. Bhyrappa is a best-selling Kannada novelist. Each one of his twenty-one novels and a stunningly absorbing autobiography *Bhitti* have the same achievement. He is perhaps the most translated novelist of India today. Two of his novels have been translated into all the fourteen official languages of India; quite a few have been translated into many languages, especially Hindi and Marathi. Three of his works have been translated into Sanskrit, a rare distinction. Five of his novels have been translated into English: *Vamshavriksha* (East-West Books, Madras), *Daatu* (B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi), *Parva* (Sahitya Academy, New Delhi), *Saakshi* (East-West Books, Madras) and *Sartha* (Oxford University Press).

The Government didn't do anything about the theft of the Saraswati statue after it appeared in the news. Both the Home Office and the Revenue Department feigned ignorance. They possibly hadn't even read the news. However, a lot of readers sent in letters, several of them angrily expressing the view that the culprits who had stolen and sold the country's heritage should be punished. Some of the letters were published. Ravindra thought about the old broken temple door and how it hadn't been repaired since the last ten years and decided to have a new door made at his own expense... Ravindra decided to convene a meeting of the town's leaders to explain the importance of their cultural heritage and to foster an active interest in the matter.