

# **The meeting of Lord Buddha, Ramalingasamy, Ramana Maharishi with Modern Management**

*Where people lack vision, they perish – the holy Bible*

## ***Impossibility is 'possible'***

On one hand, 'such a meeting' implied title connotes impossibility, which obviously is so due to time, matter factors and on the other hand, a question with a plausible answer is available to the Generous who are blessed with a vision.

The question: can faithful thoughts being the same for two or more persons, be christened as a 'meeting' point? And the answer is a 'Yes', at least at the intellectual reasoning levels.

## ***Linguistics and message understood***

English as a language is very powerful as it absorbs words and meanings from other sources considered necessary for evolution and in many cases the words from other languages are adopted verbatim. Davis and Newstorm in their book - Organizational Behavior, quote that there are 500 most commonly used words in English language, each of them having at least 28 different meanings, connotations and usages. They have quoted an example of the word "round", which is said to have a usage: in 42 places as a noun, 23 adjectives, 16 verbs, 16 adverbs and in 13 places as a preposition.

Under Semantic barriers and principles of communication, it can be deduced that effective communication is a mutual responsibility for both the sender and the receiver; rather we cannot always blame the communicator or medium, for failures.

## ***The power of Generalization***

The two lined quotes by Kabir<sup>1</sup>, known as *dohas*, are popular even today, as they comprehend existence and the way to exist. Besides, they gave an acute reasoning acceptable to the mind and heart. *Dohas* were short control programs, which could work its way into the neurons of one who understood them and regulate or even modify behavior.

It is the same case with the Thirukurral written by Thiruvalluvar<sup>2</sup>, for example one of his saying is “theyenal suta puun ullaaruum, aarathey navenaal suta vadu” meaning an injury caused by a fire-burn can be cured or be endured over a period of time, but an injury caused by the tongue (words that sting and arise from a mind that intends to give the most unkind cut) will never heal. Further, we can interpolate that due to ‘such’ words, we as intellectuals may even tend to forgive the sender but will not be able to forget them or the incident.

The power of generalization withstands time and place. The question is whether it can withstand different ethos and belief systems, implied by the title in this article.

Buddha, Ramalingaswamy and Ramana Maharishi<sup>3</sup> are enlightened souls whom the concerned worlds would revere as people who have mastered life and beyond. Management as an art and science is here to stay and *kaizen* (*in Japanese, it means* continuously improve).

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<sup>1</sup> Kabir: a mystic who brought harmony and unity among Hindus and Muslims.

<sup>2</sup> Thiruvalluvar: an ancient Tamil poet, who gave 1130 poetic verses covering and instructing all aspects of healthy and prosperous living for the individual, society, nation and world. Scriptures say that even the Almighty God Siva gave direct signals to his critics for validating his contributions.

<sup>3</sup> Buddha is said to have lived 400 years before the birth of Christ. He is a contemporary of Mahavira. Ramalinga Swami is an 18<sup>th</sup> century Tamil Saint who advocated peace and harmony. It is believed that he attained moksha i.e. merging with the universal self along with his body. Ramana Maharishi is a sage during the 19<sup>th</sup> century who advocated silence as a method for enquiry and enlightenment. His contemporaries are Shri Aurobindo and the holy Mother, Pondicherry, India and also His Holiness Bhramananda Saraswati, Shankaracharya of Jyothir Mutt. All of them have followers from different parts of the globe.

Consider the table given below:

400 BC	18 <sup>th</sup> Cent.	New Millennium	19 <sup>th</sup> cent.	Observations
<b>Buddha</b> a.k.a. Sankyamuni	<b>Ramalingaswamy</b>	<b>Management thought</b>	<b>Ramana Maharishi</b>	<b>Congruent thoughts</b>
Don't look	<i>Pasithu Pusi</i> , 'Pa'	Goal focus	Who am I	Grounding the thinker
Don't touch	<i>Thanithu irru</i> , 'tha'	Differentiation	Who are we What are we	Stabilizing the thinking process
Be Alert	<i>Vizhirthu irru</i> , 'Ve'	Emotional Quotient, presence of mind	Who is all	The key to discovering the final outcomes and reaching out to other levels

**Lord Buddha** narrated the famous story of the two monks and an unknown girl who crossed the river<sup>4</sup>, to Ananda who was his disciple wanting to get the final instructions for leading a complete and fulfilling life. It was then that the Buddha said “Don't Look”, “Don't touch” and “Be Alert”. However, Ananda pleaded that in society; following such instructions are close to being impossible. The disciple had understood only the literal meaning of the master's words and failed to see the subtle message in the instructions.

In the case of instructions given by **Ramalinga swami**, “*Pasithu Pusi*” in Tamil language means - eat when hungry and otherwise implies do only what is needed, “*Thanithu irru*” means- be alone without mixing with others i.e. protect your identity or difference and don't become a commonality and “*Vizhirthu irru*” when translated means- be awake and

<sup>4</sup> It was raining heavily and two monks were crossing a forest on their way to the monastery. They came upon a river, which was gushing down noisily over slippery rocks. At one edge, they noticed a pretty girl with fair limbs struggling to cross the river. One of the monks without uttering a word, lifted the girl on his shoulder, crossed the river and set her down on the other side and continued to walk. The other monk was aghast at the sudden turn of events, he remained silent for a few hours till they reached the monastery and then he started questioning and abusing the other monk as to how he could have touched an unknown girl who had not asked for help, and what was the intention behind such a help, besides helping one with an unknown background might lead to increase in negative karma...after sometime with the last questioning abuse the monk paused for breath, there was silence, and then the Buddha said “ the other monk asked the question – I left the girl by the river side, are you still carrying her?”

alert. When we combine the first syllabus of all the three instructions, 'Pa'+ 'tha'+ 've' we get 'Pathave' in Tamil language the literal meaning being 'status' or position, this connotes success both at the personal and occupational levels. Ramalinga swami a.k.a Vallalar even defined God as "the light, within light, within light".

The **Management** thoughts of the new millennium with respect to business and leadership success lay emphasis on the following:

**Goal focus** (market oriented)

**Differentiation** (cost, information, product, and technology)

**Emotional Quotient** (presence of mind)

Dr. Daniel Goleman founder of Emotional Intelligence Services, Boston, USA, summarizes Emotional Intelligence into five parts viz. Self Awareness, Self Regulation, Self Motivation, Empathy and Effective Relationships. The first three parts pertain to the individual and the last two parts involve the external i.e. other individuals. Intellectually, one can get a 'feel' that he has missed out on man's response to the natural environment and artifacts. But a deeper analysis on his findings connote that he has covered the same from within.

**Ramana Maharishi** directed his followers towards inquiry and therein towards the source of all thoughts and actions. His master query method was to self-inquire with the question 'Who am I?'. This question, when ardently persisted upon would lead to other questions and self-answers within the consciousness of the inquirer.

## **Inference**

Knowledge to the path of success and full living has been almost the same over the centuries. This implies that the natural laws governing nature and human action have been unbiased and omnipotent. What was being communicated before as abstract essentials for control, are the very same aspects propounded and further improved by modern management thinkers. The time has come for moving from knowledge integration across the worlds to wisdom integration for the purpose of realizing the truth that 'heaven exists'.

**An attempt at poetry is made before concluding** where the busy intellectuals and executives - may tarry to hear the voice of a little sparrow, awakened from the morning sun and dew, voicing a song with soothing breeze and words translated few...

***Surrendering the 'I'***

“My life is full of impossibilities  
Searching every grain done strain  
Perils within lie many a diversities  
Preaching spring tells of rain

If life carry impossibilities full  
Doubt ye not on what I may tell  
For if life as such is possible  
Then me a little bird too... I 'm' possible!”

- *Author*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The author: Vijay Kumar Jayaram, Adjunct Faculty, Maharishi Institute of Management (MIM), Chennai. His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh yogi, direct disciple of Jagat Guru Bhramananda Saraswati, Shankaracharya, Jyothir Mutt, Himalayas, founded MIM. Maharishi Mahesh yogi is the well known for his contributions to the world viz. TM – Transcendental Meditation and Siddhi programs, currently his movement is in the process of establishing 'Heaven on earth'.