

## Obituary

Avadhesh Kumar Singh (20<sup>th</sup> June 1960 - 12<sup>th</sup> August 2019)

PRATTIPATI MATTHEW

Avadhesh Kumar Singh, an eminent intellectual, who grew as a multilingual, self-disciplined, soft-spoken, friendly personality, was philosophically and ideologically a lover of Mahatma Gandhi. Professionally he was a doyen of multidisciplinary fields such as English Language, English, Hindi, and Gujarati Literatures, comparative poetics. His Cultural competence proves that he was an interdisciplinary illuminator, well-versed with the feminist discourse. A visionary for Indian Higher Education especially the University Education System and a restless explorer to find threads of the nativity to intertwine within the pluralistic perceptions encompassed around the antique collections and even West, apply these discoveries to modernity, an Indologist who became a shareholder of the dictionary of Indian Culture, as a critic, reflections poured into *Critical Practice*, an architect and convener who shaped the Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat. Beyond all, he was a highly accomplished teacher of Translation Studies who's based his arguments and ideas on historical perspectives.

Singh presupposed that translation can be a bridge between the ancient knowledge system and the continuous flow of cultural traditions. He explicitly conversed on St. Jerome, Kumarajiva, Dara Shukoh, and so on. The Indian Literary heritage while contextualizing the western thought "World Literature", he tries to provide a model for the Comparative Literature of India. His exploration ponders over concepts like Vishva Sahitya, Vishva manava, Dharma, Shakti, Chiti, and Siksha-Dharma, etc., and the best efforts he made to understand prominent writers like Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Umashankar Joshi, Shamsheer Bahadur Singh, Ahmed 'Faiz' and others.

Singh's scholarship and intellectual pursuits in its entirety ponder over the core issues academically critical, most of them about the writings of the Indian subcontinent. His explorations on the antiquity of classical texts (Ramayana and Mahabharata) and the quest to know that which would be the source text for these texts in an environment like India, having the pluralistic nature of linguistic society over a while that generated from the existing dissimilar multicultural traditions. He reflected with the cultural-historical facts that lead to the breaking of the established notions of the origin of the bhakti movement and other myths on these texts. He also pronounced the missing threads and substantiated with an appropriate acceptable relationship to bridge the gaps. The dialogue on these texts impacted much on the English readership especially the Indian English scholars.

He also strived with his optimum academic excellence to analyze and generated precious discussions on various domains-classification of translational practices of Hindi and its traditional practices of Indian culture in light of the cross-cultural environment, breaking myths of colonial and post-colonial readings and understanding of Indian scholars on the Indian sub-continent countries and West as well to de construct or to reconstruct, and also to internalize the alien traditions. Singh's investigations from little tradition to the great tradition, imaginary novelistic writings to theatre implementation practices, patriarchal thought process to establishment of fortified-self (voice of women) that helps everyone to know him better. His revisiting of literature and deferent genres proposed expensive considerations of field. The enthusiastic nature and devotedness manifested in his editorial work with which 28 volumes of critical practice (broadly covers the areas such as Indian Poetics, English Novels, Contemporary Women's Writing in India, Drama, and so on) has seen the daylight. An incessant reader, a practicing translator, a

translator's trainer, and a fascinator of the concept of “21st Century” left behind a heritage of fountains academic inquiry to explore and to be continued for the generations by the young scholars of India and the west.

He rendered his services as the Vice Chancellor of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmadabad from 2006 to 2009, and the Vice-Chancellor of Auro University, Surat (Gujarat). On Monday 12 August 2019 on an invitation, he had travelled to Tezpur University, Assam, where he breathed his last while delivering an academic talk.

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