

# The Creative Launcher

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## Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Dr. Kazuyosi Ikeda: A Humanistic Approach

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### Abstract

A humanistic approach glimpses the personal worth of an individual and the centrality of human values. It reveals the creative, active nature of human beings. A humanistic approach is highly optimistic and it portrays the noble human capacity to defeat hardships, pains and gloom. Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam, 11<sup>th</sup> president of India and Dr. Kazuyosi Ikeda, a Japanese poet are like saints who have flowered their writings with the bud of humanistic approach. Like animals, human beings also show their behaviour as goal oriented yet their abstract thinking and self-reflexive consciousness make them superior to all other creatures in this universe. In his poem 'The Life Tree' Kalam has discussed the rational quality of human being. Kalam says that on this beautiful planet human beings can create an aura of heavenly bliss through the help of their rationality. Both Kalam and Ikeda were aware of the pros and cons of the modern scientific inventions. The present article discusses the approaches of Kalam and Ikeda which have been expressed in their poetic creations.

**Keywords:** Humanism, Self-Reflection, Subjectivity, Rationality, Spirituality

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Kazuyosi Ikeda are the humanists in true sense. They make it clear that the goal of every religion must be the well of human beings. Religion should make us feel the presence of God within us. Religion does not show "a heap of broken images, where the sun beats/ And the dead tree gives no Shelter" (*The Wasteland*, L.22-23). Kalam appreciates the brave, earnest and true work throughout his whole life. Humanity must accept that the continuity of good attempt is the only way to acquire perfection. Kalam utters through his poems that there is a presence of God in the guise of a particular power or potential within each individual. Therefore, one should love and encourage that special power or quality to experience the Almighty within humanity.

Kalam complains through his writings that lack of uniformity creates the wall. The lure for leisure is the root cause of boundaries and borders. It is proved through the creation of 'rock walls' that humanity does not like to live collectively and openly. But it must be pondered that humanity would be happy when there is "no house, only open spaces"<sup>1</sup>

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The term 'humanism' has influenced much the ideas of Kalam and Ikeda. Humanism endeavours to dignify and glorify man. Humanistic attitude regards human beings as the crown of creation. Humanism shapes human personality and makes him realize his potentials to empower himself. Like Swami Vivekananda, Kalam and Ikeda discuss 'overcoming defects'. Everyone has his own virtue and vice but it must be remembered that the wicked man has always looked for follies. Kalam says that to solve the problem of caste system the admirer of one religion should respect the other religion's values and should not see only the defects of that particular 'path of faith'

Kalam and Ikeda suggest to abandon the norms which make humanity coward and timid in achieving our goal. Human beings should try to free themselves from all the obstacles which make them lower in this world. One should have trust in dreams. Dreams energize the capacity to think and to work. Then ultimately, we would get cosmic energy. No one can guide us except our dreams. Dreams give us opportunity and opportunity lead to the top.

According to Kalam, a nation becomes great because of the thoughts of its citizen. Man can fulfil his dreams through the help of two angles work and perseverance. Proper and true effort transforms our dreams into thoughts. Our thoughts, accompanied by proper labour, can be transformed into action. Commitment with action is mandatory to be successful in life. So 'dream-thought action' philosophy must be the goal of our life according to Kalam. Not to reach the stars is not a disgrace but having no star to reach is a disgrace for humanity Kalam desires creativity and innovation in education. Creativity reduces the load of theoretical study. It is important that one should create such an atmosphere where there is no employment seeker but only employment generator. This is one of the remedies of unemployment suggested by Kalam.

To create an atmosphere of questioning is a proper medium to produce the great men. The atmosphere of questioning will pour an intellectual thinking in child's mind. Kalam says that it is the duty of all parents that they should become the role model for their children. Parents should invoke the fire of questioning in the mind of their children. In this way the parents can ignite the minds of their children then the 'ignited minds' would try their best to probe the answer of every question. Such 'ignited minds' would lead their nation to the great height.

Both Kalam and Ikeda accept the fact that mission-oriented learning with value system is essential for building a good nation as well as a good human being. 'We can do' are the words that are essential in any education. These high-spirited words can do anything in this world and beyond too. People must accept that to enhance the dignity and to increase the self-respect, human beings should emanate the high-spirited enthusiasm. It must be the duty of our government and every educational institution that higher education should be helpful toward employment opportunities because when knowledge is lit, economy flourishes and when economy flourishes, the hue of harmony in humanity can be visible.

Kalam has an idea that mistakes are the parts of learning process in achieving the great height because nobody can reach the perfection, the only possibility is to touch the height of perfection. One should learn from one's bad results. According to Kalam anticipation of errors

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can prevent anybody from doing mistakes. The best way to prevent errors is to give attention on its bad results. “There are two ways of learning one with tear and the other without tears. When we learn through trial and error, through receiving knocks and shocks, we learn with tears. when we imbibe the wisdom of the sages and follow the precepts of good men and saints, we learn without tears”<sup>2</sup>

When a person understands other people, he has the knowledge of outer world but when he understands the weaknesses, follies, nature of his inner thoughts, he manifests that he is the master of the whole. A man can be wise in a true sense, according to Kalam, when he knows the reality of his own consciousness. Upliftment of soul is possible when a man has the true knowledge of his inner voice. Only after understanding the inner voice a man can contribute the best to the humanity and he would enjoy the fragrance of world peace.

Kalam teaches the humanity through his writings that one should take the things as they come. Do not worry about the negative results. Nothing bad is going on this Mother Earth. All the occurrences are due to some positive reason. Do not bother for the bad condition and misfortune. Try to convert all negative into positive for the whole world.

Kalam gives the idea of unity for progress in his writings. Any work which is done collectively, would flourish in future undoubtedly. An individual thinks according to his own personality. In other words, one can say that a man thinks subjectively but when a group discusses any matter, the variety of thoughts eliminates the possibility of mistakes because when the different personalities mingle together the result are the best. Collectively the humanity can efface all the negativity prevailing in the society.

Like Matthew Arnold, Kalam supports the single mindedness in human beings. The mind of a man, divided into parts cannot achieve the best. Devotion to single goal can show the right path to humanity. Like T.S. Eliot, Kalam supports the idea that it is easier to destruct than to construct. To construct anything new in this world a man has to forget even his identity. Kalam says that one should forget one’s existence to establish permanent existence after the death. Here Kalam is very near to the words of T.S Eliot “Seek the way of martyrdom, make yourself the lowest/ On earth, to be high in heaven.”<sup>3</sup>

Kalam says that education must not be merely informative. It must be the training of emotions. A nation can be strong only when there is a feeling of patriotism in the citizens of that country. This feeling of patriotism and nationalism makes a nation powerful. This feeling of patriotism defends any nation from any danger related to other countries as well as the weakness of its own Power appreciates the power.

A nation is bigger and more important than an individual. Collectivity is more important than privateness. The well of nation is more important than the well of an individual. According to Kalam India has numerous castes, creeds and religions but the only religion of all Indians must be the religion of India and its nationality. With the development of our country we will be able to enhance peace and prosperity in the whole world.

Kalam dreams to see India as a developed nation. He beautifully unfolds his dreams in his poem ‘Song of Youth.’ Like a visionary, he depicts that India can be a developed nation if

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its citizens have the power to transform their vision into action. Humanity should have economic strength with strong value system. The youth of India can fulfil the responsibilities of this dream. Kalam tries all the parents to realize that their children are not their own. They are born on this earth to fulfil the desire of God through a role appointed to them. Do not impose your will on your children because they have their own ability and potential. Only then you would be able to do something better for mankind.

According to Kalam, one should create one's own page in the history of the nation. It is the determination which shows the higher self in an individual and each one of us must be aware of our higher self. It is the duty of human beings that they "should ignite their dormant inner energy and let it guide their lives. The radiance of such minds embarked on constructive endeavours will bring peace, prosperity and bliss to this nation."<sup>4</sup>

According to Kalam and Ikeda gradually, we detach ourselves from the two essential things God and spirituality or the state of living in God-consciousness which are the master conception of the Gita and Hindu philosophy. It would be better to say that "the modern mind is just now the European mind, it has banished God and installed in His place society or politics as its visible idol."<sup>5</sup> Prosperity through wealth generation and cherishing the value system of the people are the two important needs of an enlightened society. "The combination of the two will make the nation truly strong and prosperous."<sup>6</sup> We must regain our broad outlook and draw upon our heritage and wisdom to enrich our lives. It is said that "the creativity of the human mind and the struggles it undergoes to achieve excellence can result in a person doing whatever he or she dreams of."<sup>7</sup>

Kalam accepts that there are two forces within us constructive and destructive. Constructive force forces us to follow the path of progress while destructive force lures to accept the ways of violence and aggression. Both Kalam and Ikeda have advised the humanity to hear the voice of its constructive forces.

A teacher, according to Kalam, is not an instructor but a helper for the "manifestation of the perfection already in man."<sup>8</sup> To attain a deeper level within us, we should know our consciousness. Our consciousness supports us to acknowledge that the outer and inner are not separated. Both are depended on each other. Through the inner awareness, we become able to perceive the world. This awareness is a reward given by the divinity. It would not be a mistake if one accepts this consciousness or awareness as the divine power within us. A "Guru" can show the path to experience this awareness within us. A teacher enriches power and confidence within us. Teacher builds a good character and enhances our capacity to understand our values.

Kalam has an idea that teacher should influence the students to become autonomous learners. It must be the duty of our teachers that the students are not only being taught the theory and practical of the subject but also knowledge of the civilized heritage and value system of the society.

Kalam and Ikeda have expressed the feeling that all men must be given equal opportunities for expressing whatever possibilities they have. There is a challenge before

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humanity to combat and abolish the sufferings like poverty, diseases, illiteracy and a sense of hopelessness. Opportunities can help us to diminish such problems.

Kalam advocates that 'state of wanting nothing'. Satisfaction lies not in getting things but in 'wanting nothing'. It is said by Kalam that at every moment we have a war in our mind. Kalam writes that at the end it is our soul which shows the right direction. This soul is God within us and we are spoiling it in dirtiness and selfishness of the mind. Kalam's words show that our action is permanent. It is not human beings who are being remembered but their works which make them perpetual. Our works present us as good or bad.

The conscience of a man prevents him when there is a deed of filthiness. Conscience is a divine light of the soul. It comes to a man through his 'genetic stock.' In this conscience all our works are registered and recorded. Our conscience haunts us whenever we see any work against righteousness. It is our conscience which is perpetual in the whole universe. So, the happiness of conscience is essential. It can remove all the woes and miseries of humanity. One should sacrifice one's ego if one wants to experience eternal happiness and peace in this world. To leave the feeling of being superior is the best way to have peace among human beings.

Kalam talks about religion and spirituality, when the idea that God is the first principle of being, the ground and substance of all existence comes spontaneously in the mind of human being, it is called spirituality but on the other hand when this idea is forced, it is religion. Religion must not only be the way to God, but the way to man, Kalam as a true devotee of mankind states that every religion has two components religious preaching and spiritual insight. Both of them should be merged into one for the good of society.

Dr. Kazuyosi Ikeda, Professor of Theoretical Physics at Osaka University and a poet has tried his best to eradicate the blemishes on the face of humanity. Ikeda has expressed the ideas which have similarities with William Shakespeare, John Milton, William Wordsworth, John Keats, P.B. Shelley Robert Browning, Alfred Tennyson and other great poets of English literature. Ikeda searches, beauty in human beings as well as in Nature.

The beauty of human mind can create a better world to live in and the beauty of Nature helps man to establish a world free from chaos. His "poetry, singing of the hearts of all things aims at changing this waste land in the present day into a paradise of love and peace ....."<sup>9</sup>

Ikeda has started his poem 'A light For the Fest of the Dead' symbolically. He has given the image of a boat which floats like the soul, released from the dead body Ikeda prays to break the self-deception of human soul which it has to face because of 'the cycle of transmigration'

Very near to Shakespeare, Ikeda in his poem 'The Drop Curtain' ponders that the drop curtains have to be raised. Every individual on this earth has to act according to the appointed action, predestined by God. A multitude is watching, in guise of audience the performance of every actor on this stage of life. Humanity should understand the role appointed by the Almighty.

Ikeda, in his poem 'A Morning Glory' tells us that a poet pours his spirit in his poetry to manage the best words. Morning is the time of worship, the time to study and the time to wake up. Ikeda has depicted morning glory both objectively like a scientist and subjectively

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like a poet. In this poem Ikeda has an idea that nothing is permanent. Morning comes after evening and evening comes after morning. Ikeda has a strong belief in God and he accepts that the “world peace cannot come without theism and the true interpretation of the religion which means to see the omniscient in every particle and being of the world.”<sup>10</sup> Here Ikeda’s notion says that religion means to see good for all humanity.

Thus, both Kalam and Ikeda are the prophets who seek all citizens of this universe to form a harmonious relationship with each other. They have tried to provide a pathway through which favourable ambience can be created for the welfare of humanity. With the help of their writings both have attempted to show the best ways to this world. All of their expressions are prophetic in tones.

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