

A Study in Guilt

What Readers Say....

“Superbly written and strongly recommended.”

—Dr. Dolphy M. Abraham, Independent Researcher and former Professor and Head of the Doctoral Program, Alliance University, and former Dean, St. Joseph’s Institute of Management, Bangalore.

“A remarkable exposition on the theme of Guilt; a fascinating book which will be of interest to all discerning people.”

—Professor Dr. Ray Titus, Pro Vice Chancellor, Alliance University and Dean, School of Business, Alliance University, Bangalore.

“Deeply thought out and sensitively written.”

—Dr. Kishan Rao, former Professor of Finance, Alliance University, Bangalore.

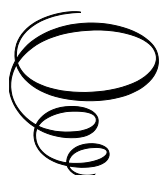
A Study in Guilt:

The Supreme Manifestation of the Mind-Forged Manacle

By

Mohan Gopinath and Edwin Castelino

**Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing**



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For Chinnam and my parents - MG

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Mohan Gopinath Ph.D.

Mohan Gopinath holds a BA (Hons.) degree and a Master's degree in English Literature from St. Stephen's College – Delhi University, where he later joined as a member of the faculty. In between, he joined the Indian Police Service which he quit after one week. After the two-year stint in the college, he joined the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, and worked as a senior-level banker for almost 21 years in India, the UK and Hong Kong, after initially completing a two-year training attachment in the London branch of the bank. Subsequently, he left the industry and worked for a doctoral degree which he obtained from Osmania University on the topic, Organizational Learning (in the banking industry). His career in HSBC also included an attachment to the all-India HR function.

After obtaining his doctoral degree, Mohan worked as a management consultant in India and the Middle East. He has also worked as a lead consultant for a World Bank-funded Institutional Development Study conducted for the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department.

He reverted to academia after working as a consultant for more than one decade and joined as the Dean of St. Joseph's Institute of Management, Bangalore. He later shifted to the Alliance University's School of Business, Bangalore, where he worked as a Professor in the Department of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource till September 2019. His areas of interest are leadership, management of change, conflict resolution, banking, and protection of the environment. He has written and published papers and case studies across a range of subjects (Banking, Organizational Behaviour, Human Resource, Finance, the Environment, and the Performing Arts). He is also a keen tennis enthusiast.

Mohan has conducted Management Development Programs for senior managers in his areas of specialization in the organizational development area in India and the Middle East. His first book was co-authored and titled Business Drama: How Shakespearean Insights Help Leaders Manage Volatile Contexts. His interest in Kathakali (he has trained in Kathakali

music and sung for many performances) led him to write (in 2015) *The Actor Who Could Connect: the Genius of Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair*. This book was selected by the American Library of Congress for inclusion in their database and also exhibited at the Paris World Book Fair in March 2019. The book was later completely revised and expanded and published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle in 2022 under the title, *Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair, The Mozart of Kathakali*. His other theme based book on Kathakali and Shakespeare is *Vignettes Relating to Kathakali and Shakespeare: the Thirashoola versus the Curtain*. The last book in the trilogy is *Shakespeare Meets the Indian Epics: Comparative Themes and Interpretations*. All three books are published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle.

Books Written by Mohan Gopinath

- Guilt: the Supreme Manifestation of the Mind Forged Manacle (to be published in November 2025)
- A Comparative and Exploratory Overview of the School Stories of P.G. Wodehouse, Richmal Crompton and Enid Blyton (to be published by November 2025)
- Luminaries of Investigative Fiction: a Comparative Analysis of the Writing Styles of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Ian Fleming and John le Carre (to be published by November 2025)
- The Shakespearean Linkages in Unnayi Warriar's Nala Charitham: A Literary and Exploratory Analysis
- Tracing the Literary and Symbolic Significance of the Messenger through History
- Shakespeare Meets the Indian Epics: Comparative Themes and Interpretations, with Sabina Zacharias
- Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair: the Mozart of Kathakali
- Vignettes Relating to Kathakali and Shakespeare: the Thirashoola versus the Curtain, with Vellinezhi Achuthan Kutty, Nagesh Bharadwaj and Asha Prabhakaran
- Jim Collins's Leadership Levels Spiced with Shakespeare, with Sabina Zacharias and Suprabha Bakshi
- Managing Human Foibles and Human Dilemmas
- Team Roles: through the Eyes of Shakespeare and Dr. Meredith Belbin
- The Myers Briggs Type Indicator: a Shakespearean Validation
- Why People Fail: Through the Eyes of Shakespeare and Sumantra Ghoshal
- Leadership Nuances in Shakespeare's Plays
- Fiction - Double Oh Seven (for private circulation only)

The Actor Who Could Connect: the Genius of Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair

(this book was selected by the American Library of Congress for inclusion in their database and exhibited at the Paris International Book Fair in March 2019)

Fiction (novel) – The Intruder – a Nocturnal Interlude

Memoir – Does the Spearmint Lose its Flavor on the Bedpost Overnight?

Business Drama: How Shakespearean insights help leaders manage volatile contexts, with Dr. Debashish Sengupta and Dr. Ray Titus

Professor Edwin Castelino

Prof. Edwin Castelino holds a M.Sc. degree in Physics from the University of Mysore and a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He worked as a senior manager for the first 20 years in the field of Banking and the next 20 years as an academic in the field of Management. He was the Professor and Dean at the St Joseph's Institute of Management, Bangalore till he retired in October 2018. He has published cases relating to Management and takes a keen interest in the state of the economy in India and other countries.

Papers Written by Professor Edwin Castelino

Case Study Publications

(Principal Author – Dr. Mohan Gopinath)

The Launching of the New Performance Appraisal System', in Journal of Applied Case Research, a publication of the Southwest Case Research Association, Vol 12 No 1, January 2015, with Dolphy Abraham, Asha Prabhakaran, Edwin Castelino

'Janalakshmi Financial Services Pvt. Ltd: Strategic Innovation to Achieve Financial Inclusion', in Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies, Vol. 2, No. 8, 2012, pp. 1-18, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, with Dolphy Abraham and Edwin Castelino

'Man vs. Machine – The Society for Case Research', in Business Case Journal, University of Nebraska at Kearney – Fall/ Winter 2013, Vol 20, Issue 1, with Dolphy Abraham, Edwin Castelino and Asha Prabhakaran

'The Promotion', in Business Review, Journal of St Joseph's College of Business Administration, December 2012, with Edwin Castelino and Dolphy Abraham

- ‘A Comedy of Errors’, in Aweshkar Research Journal (Welingkar Education) Volume XIV, Issue 2, September 2012, with Dolphy Abraham and Edwin Castelino
- ‘The Auditor’, Indore Management Journal Vol 3 Issue 1 April – June 2012 (IIM Indore) with Edwin Castelino and P Janaki Ramudu
- ‘An Occasion for Making an Overtime Payment - Management and Labor Studies’, in the Journal of XLRI, Jamshedpur, May 2011, Vol 36, No 2, with Edwin Castelino and Dolphy Abraham
- ‘The Transformation’, in Aweshkar – Research Journal (Welingkar Education), Volume XII, Issue 2, September 2011, with Edwin Castelino and Dolphy Abraham
- ‘The Auditor – Emerging Markets’, in Case Studies Collection, compilation of selected cases presented at the International Case Conference 2010, organized by the Institute of Management Technology, Nagpur, Excel India Publishers, 2011, with Professor Edwin Castelino and P Janaki Ramudu
- ‘The Encounter’, in Asian Case Research Journal, National University of Singapore, Volume 15, Issue 1, 2011, with Edwin Castelino

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And my very special thanks to Dolphy Abraham on whose patience and analytical skills I depend so much for getting the manuscript into shape. He frequently and cheerfully goes through the manuscript in its various stages of development and gives his views. Thanks a million Dolphy, as it means so much to me.

MG

*“Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sickled o’er with the pale cast of thought;
And, enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.”
William Shakespeare, Hamlet - Act 3, Scene 1*

*“Farewell happy fields,
Where joy forever dwells: Hail, horrors, hail. Infernal World! and thou,
profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor—one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
John Milton, Paradise Lost - Book 1*

*“Oh, ‘tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot’s cheek, beautied with plast’ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
Oh, heavy burden!” – King Claudius
William Shakespeare, Hamlet - Act 3, Scene 1*

L’Envoy

**Go, little Book; from this my solitude,
I cast thee on the waters:—go thy ways!
And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
The World will find thee, after many days.
Be it with thee according to thy worth:—
Go, little Book! in faith I send thee forth.**

by Robert Southey (1774 – 1843)

FOREWORD

DR. M. J. SRIDHAR PH.D.

FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR- ERMG MANAGEMENT
CONSULTANTS PVT. LTD. BANGALORE

This is the second Foreword which I am writing for a book which is the joint effort of Mohan and Edwin – the author and co-author respectively. The first was for their book *The Messenger: a Divine Surrogate* and what I said at the beginning of that book's Foreword applies here as well. When I was requested to write the first Foreword, I had said that, "I did not hesitate as I have known Mohan for a long time and knew that he was interested in writing on esoteric subjects such as the theme of this book; in fact our association is many decades old." This book is based on the theme of guilt which for many may not appear to be a very apt subject for a book. But the fact remains that the two member team has produced a book which is not only well written but also shows guilt in its many avatars.

The book is an academic book and is targeted mainly at the person who is interested in history and human psychology and is keen to see where and how they merge; this process has happened for a very long time and will continue to happen. The book is unusual insofar as it is an exercise in detailing the fascination which the human emotion of guilt entails and how people like to hear and read about what caused the feelings of guilt in other people. To do this the book has used unusual examples and elaborated on them. It is not that the book is proving something already well known to people – preaching to the converted as it were – but the contents of the book has given the topic of guilt a different perspective.

The leitmotif which runs throughout the book is the phrase 'mind forged manacles' first used by William Blake in his poem 'London' and this has been used to connect the incidents described which triggered or did not trigger guilt in various people.

It could also be argued that all the other human emotions can also have mind forged manacles which are equally powerful; then the question will arise as to the basis on which we said guilt was the most susceptible of causing the

manacles to fall on the wrists of a guilty person. The as detailed in the book is that guilt carries with it certain unique qualities which the other emotions do not have. In fact, it was their study of the four great tragedies of Shakespeare that was also a main trigger for the idea of calling guilt the biggest mind forged manacle. In all four of them i.e. *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, it was guilt which ultimately caused the death of the protagonists. That was one of the reasons for the genesis of this book and the title.

The arguments in the book are cogent and unique and these are not trying to force comparisons where none existed; because of the similarities present, these comparisons were logically possible. When I spoke with Mohan he said that the comparisons came more or less without any effort and took on a life of their own. This is unusual as on the face of it would seem that it is difficult to compare incidents which are separated by centuries and are also from totally different milieus. Milieus in terms of countries, people, culture, beliefs, religions, behaviour, prejudices *et al.* But then as explained in the book, there are logical reasons for the comparisons to fall in place. The examples range from the events of World War II, PG Wodehouse, Enid Blyton, Oscar Schindler, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the Andes air crash, the Jallianwala Bagh murders, the partition of India, the fall of Barings Bank, and a couple of divine interventions when the Gods punished the guilty, and other examples where guilt was evidently manifest. The examples as I said are from a wide range of genres in order to prove the point about the invincibility of the emotion. The manacles of guilt are very subtle but strong and take myriad forms.

The book will therefore be of interest to a wide range of readers, primarily academicians. This does not preclude others from having an interest in reading the book – and by this I mean the informed general reader. The book can well be used in classes on comparative studies and the psychology of human behaviour and the arguments made in it be used to show how we can find uniqueness and similarities in things which we thought were residing at polar opposites.

I would like to add something to this Foreword and that is the specific reason why I found the theme of this book of special interest. And that is that the two who wrote the book have successfully managed to write about a topic without emotional outbursts or moralizing. Their analyses of the examples is factual and clinically correct.

The message of the manacles comes through all the more effectively because of this.

I will end by saying that it was a pleasure to write the Foreword and I wish the book all success. I have told Mohan and Edwin that I look forward to reading such books in the future also.

M. J. Sridhar
Bangalore

London

William Blake

*I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.*

*In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear*

*How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls*

*But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse*

— — —

A FEW PERTINENT FACTS

This book has analysed characters ranging from a wide span of material and covering many types of people and the crimes they committed. Some of them felt guilty for what they did and many did not. We have tried to analyse the reasons for these different types of reactions of the characters in these chapters. The overarching theme of the book is guilt and so the chapters look at the guilt perpetrated by these various people and the reasons why they acted in the way they did. Because of the nature of the subject, the individuals were chosen very carefully so that the maximum impact would be there on the reader in terms of what we are trying to achieve in this book. The examples of guilt we have delineated range from the ones found in many types of literature and move into the territory of politics, world wars and other areas also. But we have tightly controlled the examples so that they remain within the province of the subject matter dealt with by this book. It would have been easy to give more examples from other areas and genres but then the focus - naturally - of what we are trying to say would have been diffused. In chapter 1 we have tried to set the tone of the book and what the reader can expect in the chapters to come.

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In the book the term manacles of guilt and mind forged manacles will in some cases have been used interchangeably. In all these cases, we have assumed the meaning to be the same with the ‘weight’ falling more on the second term in line with the title of the book.

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Why did we choose guilt as the main theme running through this book? We could as well have chosen a half dozen other themes and they would also have been equally relevant. The main reason is that guilt holds a fascination for readers which is difficult to overcome and we thought it best to focus on this theme which exists more in the shadows of the mind of many people and sometimes in the sunlight of the mind of a lesser number of people.

— — —

The broad focus of the book is based on people from the various walks of life; some of them are real life people and some are from literature/ stories and so on.

While Shakespeare and the epics figure in the book, they have taken a back seat to a certain extent and we have also focused on (for example) World War II and the Nazi Party and the Jallianwala Bagh murders in our choice of representative subjects relating to guilt (amongst other areas). We have discussed the guilt in *Hamlet* but this is from the point of view of the Prince's two friends – Rosencrantz and Guildenstern based on the play by Tom Stoppard. By doing this, the perspective of guilt and the interpretations changed and took on a different focus.

In his book *The Difficulty of Being Good – on the Subtle Art of Dharma*, (we have referred to this book in the main text), Gurcharan Das turns to the Maha Bharatham in order to answer the question, 'why be good', and discovers that the epic's world of moral haziness and uncertainty is closer to our experience as ordinary human beings than the narrow and rigid positions that define most debate in this fundamentalist age of moral certainty. It is this moral haziness which guilt sometimes represents and which is of such great interest to people which again made us choose guilt as the underpinning theme of this book.

The Maha Bharatham is obsessed with the elusive notion of dharma – in essence, doing the right thing. When a hero falters, the action stops and everyone weighs in with a different and often contradictory take on dharma. The epic's characters are flawed, but their incoherent experiences throw light on our familiar dilemmas. The guilt they feel is something many of us can relate to and this makes them come closer to us.

To go back to Gurcharan Das once more, in his book *The Difficulty of Being Good – on the Subtle Art of Dharma*, says something which is of relevance to what we have written as the reader will make out. He says that, "I have learned that the Mahabharata is about the way we deceive ourselves, how we are false to others, how we oppress fellow human beings, and how deeply unjust we are in our day-to-day lives. But is this moral blindness an intractable human condition, or can we change it? Some of our misery is the result of the way the state also treats us, and can we redesign our institutions to have a more sympathetic government?"

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One point needs to be addressed here and that is that Shakespeare often uses the soliloquy to express feelings of guilt. So a specific and somewhat unusual use of the soliloquy in Shakespeare is that he uses this mechanism both to move the action forward as well as to give vent to feelings of guilt in the speaker. For those readers who are not familiar with this mechanism, a soliloquy is a literary device, most often found in dramas, in which a character speaks to him or herself, relating his or her innermost thoughts and feelings as if thinking aloud. In some cases, an actor might direct a soliloquy directly to the audience, such that rather than the audience “overhearing” the character’s spoken thoughts, the character is actively sharing his or her thoughts with the audience. Usually, no other characters are present when one character is giving a soliloquy. If other characters are present, the play is typically—though not always—staged to indicate that these characters cannot hear the soliloquy being spoken.

Some additional key details about soliloquies:

The term soliloquy comes from the Latin, *soliloquium*, which means “talking to oneself.”

Because soliloquies allow the audience to know what a character is thinking or feeling, a soliloquy often creates dramatic irony, as the audience is made aware of thoughts and events that the other characters in the play are not. Soliloquies were once very common in dramas—they appear frequently in Shakespeare. But as plays shifted toward realism in the late 18th century, soliloquies became less frequent (the contents of the foregoing paragraphs are mainly from the website <https://www.litcharts.com/literary-devices-and-terms/soliloquy>).

Soliloquies in Shakespeare’s plays often serve as a way for characters to express their innermost thoughts and feelings, including feelings of guilt. In many cases, characters use soliloquies to confess their wrongdoing or express remorse for their actions. For example, in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, the titular character delivers a soliloquy after he has just ordered the murder of his friend Banquo. In this soliloquy, Macbeth expresses his guilt and remorse for the murder, saying, “But now, I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in / To saucy doubts and fears” (Act 3, Scene 4).

Similarly, in *Hamlet*, the character Hamlet delivers several soliloquies throughout the play, in which he expresses his guilt and anguish over his inability to take action against his father’s murderer. In one famous

soliloquy, he says, “To be, or not to be, that is the question / Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune / Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them.” (Act 3, Scene 1). Overall, while not all soliloquies in Shakespeare’s plays are focused on guilt, they are often used as a tool to explore the inner workings of a character’s mind, including their feelings of guilt and remorse.

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We have not touched on a significant pair in this book who between them are the architects of guilt in terms of how they caused guilt to ruin their lives. We are referring to Hamlet and Nalan and the reason we did not touch upon them is because our earlier book *Shakespeare Meets the Indian Epics: Comparative Themes and Interpretations* has already dealt with the two people in detail. We have (as we said earlier) in this present book focused on Hamlet but through the perspective of his old friends who are summoned by King Claudius to find out what ails his nephew. This was unfortunate as both the friends were pulled into situations which were unfamiliar to them and over which they had no control, and finally resulted in their deaths. This in a way also happened to Ophelia.

— — —

Few things in the law are as exciting as a criminal confession. Confessions, in turn, are no fun without an interrogation to produce it, with its blurry lines between clever police work, hard-edge persuasion, and coercion. Small wonder that the process of inducing people to say something destructive about themselves is a subject of such enduring fascination to both lawyers and the public.

Enter George Thomas and Richard Leo’s terrific book *Confessions of Guilt: From Torture to Miranda and Beyond* (Oxford University Press 2012). Thomas and Leo take a familiar subject and infuse it with serious historical research, colourful (sometimes grisly) examples, and sophisticated legal analysis, then tie it all together with larger themes that synthesize, explain, and predict the regulatory regime.

One hallmark of interrogation law is the shifting focus on why we regulate. We can quickly identify the considerations: confessions that are unfairly extracted might be unreliable; even reliable confessions might be extracted by the government in abhorrent ways; and, the 5th Amendment says that we can’t be compelled to be a witness against ourselves in a criminal case. But the contours of voluntariness, impermissible pressure, and compulsion are

not self-evident, and as the book nicely shows, are often given different shapes by the society and the times. (From the website <https://clcjbooks.rutgers.edu/books/confessions-of-guilt/>).

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Many people think that guilt is a natural experience. It's a familiar experience, but it's not healthy or productive. It serves no constructive purpose. Here are five things to think about the next time you are feeling this way:

Guilt comes from a frightened part of your personality. The actions that you regret also came from a frightened part of your personality. Following fear with fear moves you in the opposite direction that your spiritual development requires, which is toward love.

Guilt impairs your ability to learn from your experiences. When you see something that you could have done differently, or wish you had done differently, remember how you could have spoken or acted in love instead of fear. This helps you apply what you have learned and keeps you from feeling more guilty. Your experiences are designed to inform, support, and benefit you, not cause you to contract into fear and remorse.

Guilt keeps you from being honest with others and yourself. It keeps you from seeing that you cannot cause another person emotional pain. You can trigger emotional pain in others, but their pain comes from inside them, not from you. Their pain is an opportunity for them to learn about themselves. Your pain is an opportunity for you to learn about yourself. Guilt distracts you from that crucial lesson.

The relationship between guilt and forgiveness may surprise you. Guilt is actually a twisted or manipulative way of seeking forgiveness. It is the belief that if you inflict suffering on yourself for your choices, another will forgive you for them. This belief keeps you in pain because only you can forgive yourself.

You cannot give the gifts that your soul wants you to give while you are feeling guilty. Your gifts may be to raise a family, create a new kind of business, write a book, or dance. When you choose not to forgive yourself, you choose not to give the gifts your soul wants to give. You can choose otherwise. You—like everyone—have gifts and you were born to give them.

— — —

In Christopher Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus* we see Faustus struggling with doing what is right and being pulled between good and evil. In *Doctor Faustus*, good and evil are presented as two feuding ideas: God and Heaven on one side, and the Devil and Hell on the other. Opposing views of this division also are represented through characters such as the old man and the Good Angel opposed to Mephistopheles and the Bad Angel. Initially, this struggle between good and evil is Faustus' major internal conflict as he is deciding whether to make the blood bond. However, by the time Faustus views the seven deadly sins, evil persists as the dominant force and is the path that Faustus follows to his final damnation. But even early on Faustus is plagued on where to align himself.

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Some of the characters in this book on which our arguments in terms of the mind forged manacles if guilt revolve are from real life while some are fictitious. This does not make any material difference as what is important are the inferences drawn from their behaviour and circumstances of existence. It is the conclusions which are important for the purposes of this book and not the type of the character.

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Finally, we have positioned this book as an academic one which should be of interest to a wide range of people. We have tried to project the theories and similar material in such a way that the reader can make a quick and easy connection with them. So the book should be of interest to both academicians and the general reader who is interested in looking at guilt from a new perspective. This is a point we will again be mentioning in the book because of its importance. It shows that irrespective of time and distance there is a commonality in the feelings which bind people which is inerasable. The additional realisation will come to the reader that whatever the cultural, historical, temporal and political distinctions between the different varieties of humanity, ultimately human behaviour tends to be uniform if the factors people face are identical across the ages and over vastly varied environments. In other words a deeper truth is revealed: the reality of that old cliché – we're all the same.

This is the truth which we are trying to establish in this book.

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INTRODUCTION

MOHAN GOPINATH

The idea of writing a book which focuses in the theme of guilt came slowly into my mind. This thought was then discussed with Edwin till we had crystallised our thoughts as much as we possibly could. The genesis is still not clear to me but it could be because of the conflation of many things. The first would of course be the university degree in English Literature which I obtained and for which a number of plays of Shakespeare had to be studied; many of these had guilt as a theme or a sub-theme. The second influencer would be my exposure (albeit not a deep one) when I was a young boy to the narratives of the two Hindu epics; these were instilled into me by my father. But these influencers were only the triggers and we have ranged far beyond these genres in this book in order to make the analyses as rounded as possible.

The question will inevitably be asked; so what's the unusual and new thing which this book will uncover? Everyone should know that guilt causes problems in the minds of the people who initially ventured and did something they felt guilty for later. So isn't that obvious and aren't we preaching to the converted?

The answer is that what we are establishing in this book through various means is that:

- Guilt is the primary cause for people reacting in non- premeditated ways to situations.
- It is not like other emotions - yes, we feel guilt is an emotion- where the effect on the person concerned is milder.
- It can unwittingly cause mind forged manacles to develop and destroy rational thinking processes.
- These manacles will be different for different people even though the primary cause of the guilt could be the same.

In short if one compares guilt with any other emotion, the veracity of what we just said will stand out. So though it may seem from the title of the book

that we are stating the obvious, in fact we are not and the examples we have given from different sources in the book will and should prove this point. Guilt has the power to override other emotions and this is the unique feature which we are addressing. We are also proving this by means of rational arguments and reflective thinking which are backed by the examples to which we have referred just now.

To summarise all this, what we are saying is that guilt is a complex emotion that can arise from a wide range of circumstances. It is a feeling of responsibility or remorse for an action or inaction, and it can be a powerful motivator for change. Guilt has been studied extensively in psychology, and researchers have found that it is one of the most powerful and pervasive emotions that humans experience.

One reason why guilt is so powerful is that it can be linked to our sense of morality and our understanding of right and wrong. When we feel guilty, it is because we believe that we have done something that goes against our moral code or that we have failed to live up to our own standards. This sense of moral responsibility can be incredibly compelling, driving us to take action to make things right and to avoid similar mistakes in the future.

The subject of guilt is of interest to writers as they can establish a quick rapport with the reader by pursuing this emotion in their narratives to hook them. According to us the popularity of detective novels is a prime example which proves what was just said. There is invariably a guilty person/persons in this category of novel and the more the writer delays in exposing the guilty person, the more the reader gets pulled into the story. This is one of the reasons why we chose to write about the manacles which are there on people carrying this burden. There is also an undercurrent of excitement coupled to this and the dual combination is difficult to resist. And this is why the incidence of the same detective appearing in a series of novels or short stories is high. The mind forged manacles of guilt are meat and drink to a good writer.

Another reason why guilt is so powerful is that it is closely linked to our sense of self-worth. When we feel guilty, we may experience shame, which can lead us to question our value as a person. This can be a deeply uncomfortable feeling, and it can motivate us to take action to restore our sense of self-worth. For example, if we feel guilty about neglecting a friend, we may feel compelled to make amends to show that we are still a good friend and a valuable member of our social circle.

All these points will be covered in the coming chapters.

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One of the most guilty persons who figure in the epic Maha Bharatham is King Nalan who ruled the kingdom of Nishadha. His story is the main theme of a book I wrote titled 'The Shakespearean Linkages in Unnayi Warriar's Nala Charitham: A Literary Analysis' which was published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle in 2024. As the book analyzes the story in detail, only a very brief discussion will now be presented and the assumption will also be made that readers are familiar with the story of the king, which is one of the most popular stories in Kathakali. It was written by Shri Unnayi Warriar who has superbly captured the king's guilt, most of which was self inflicted. Under the influence of the evil spirit Kali, he does things completely out of character like deserting his wife Damayanthi in the forest.

Two points are relevant here; is Kali the evil spirit a figment of Nalan's imagination? Secondly, were his acts of cruelty to his wife a sudden impulse or was it carefully planned? If planned, what was the motive behind his actions? Warriar does not touch on the macro level issues of guilt in the king but focuses more on the manifestations; obviously the latter would be popular with the audiences. But one main point in the story is that cruelty to people who genuinely loves someone is the worst kind and will haunt the person who commits the actions for all times; nothing can absolve the guilt.

Nalan was also a weak minded person which exacerbated his weak impulses/ actions and later completely prevented him from acting decisively or thinking logically. This is a common phenomenon and the literature of India and the West abound in similar characters. So we have (to give a very few examples), Ravana, Sugriva, Kaikeyi, Dr. Faustus, King Lear, Othello, and Adam and Eve who are members of this Society of Weak Minded People. This is as the reader will realize, is not a very deep observation, but is typical of the foibles in which many humans and demigods find a place.

This point was brought in here to highlight the power of guilt which is the theme that permeates the arguments in this book. In fact, it is our belief that the religious epics of a nation reflect the broad mindset of its people. Indians are by nature drawn to sentimental stories and the two epics written in India found an ideal birthplace as the people who read them saw in them a natural delineation of many of their sentiments which were now couched/ cloaked as a religious narrative and this latter fact naturally made the epics venerated

and ensured their longevity. It is our view that the language and the stories in the epics were couched in the way they are as their authors (Valmiki for the Ramayanam and Veda Vyasan for the Maha Bharatham), realized this trait in Indians.

One of the points we often make in our books is about the popularity of a comparatively new Kathakali story (*Karna Sapatham*) about Karnan the eldest Pandava who did not know who his parents were initially; this story opened the gates for sentimentality to flood the narrative and hit a chord in the audience. We are not denigrating sentiment in the foregoing paragraphs but merely making a factual statement.

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The laws of enlightened countries are so framed that a person is considered innocent until proved guilty. As Benjamin Franklin said, it is better that a hundred guilty people should escape than one innocent person is punished.

This proves (if proof were really needed) about the power guilt can wreak on innocent people if the country's legal system is rickety.

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Each of the books we have written earlier including this one, are stand-alone books and are independent of each other. That is, each one is complete by itself. I have said that the catchment area from which we have chosen the characters and topics for analyses is bigger in this book. But as we have made some references in the chapters to Shakespeare and the two Indian epics, we felt it necessary that some type of background material is given so that readers who are unfamiliar with these can relate better to our flow of analyses. So the reader will find sub-sections on Guilt in Shakespeare and Guilt in the Two Epics in this Introduction. But we reiterate that these are there only for the sake of clarity and that the book looks far and wide to garner examples for the analysis of guilt. We did this to give the reader a look at guilt in all its main manifestations, along with a look at the unique manacles which formed a part of the guilt. We chose the examples based on certain specific criteria. These were:

- Relevance in terms of the subject matter of the book.
- The interest it would have for the reader.
- The impact it would have on the reader in terms of convincing him/her of what we were writing in this book.

- The different forms guilt could take and the impact it would have on a guilty person

So the selection is not a random one and we have linked the examples from the different fields as homogeneously as possible. This was not easy but we feel the end result was worth the effort though the final verdict lies with you, the reader. We could of course have ranged farther in our choice of examples and found more of them, but felt we had made the point with the ones we focused on in the book. It is an eclectic selection and proves that guilt is indeed the last word in mind forged manacles; that was the fundamental message we wished to convey. It is the emperor of mind forged manacles, to put it in another way.

But the main point we wish to emphasise once more is that this book goes beyond the two Indian epics and Shakespeare and by doing this we identified a number of people who exhibited unique symptoms of the guilt they had in their minds and which was there for various reasons.

We wish to emphasise at this point that It is a strange pull which Shakespeare has on many of us. We may not be familiar with all his plays but the ones we know exert a pull which time cannot lessen and all of us keep coming back to the familiar characters. And often we see facets of their characters which had not struck us earlier. This is why some of these characters automatically found a place in this book; no further explanation is felt required for their presence. This same pull we referred to just now ensured that the five books I have published so far through Cambridge Scholars Publishing have a strong presence in them of the Bard. The same pull from the Bard has influenced hundreds of thousands of people over the centuries and for us the one person who felt the pull the most was Sir Laurence Olivier who is for us the greatest Shakespearean actor and also figures prominently in the three books we published.

In his 52 years, it is estimated that Shakespeare penned 38 plays, 154 sonnets and a number of poems. In addition, Shakespeare is the most quoted English-speaking writer and arguably the most important figure in the history of literature. Although his work was popular during his lifetime, Shakespeare has arguably become more acclaimed and has gained prominence culturally and academically since his death.

Considered the finest English speaking actor of the twentieth century and the greatest performer of Shakespeare's works in modern times, Sir Laurence Olivier, or 'Larry' as he liked to be called, could apparently speak

Shakespeare's lines as if he were "actually thinking them" and performed the Bard's work for four decades on stage and screen. Tony Richardson said "At heart Larry was what the French call a cabotin. The term is difficult to translate - not exactly a ham; a performer, a vulgarian, someone who lives and dies for acting." This devotion to the performing arts was recognised by the Academy for Motion Pictures, Arts and Sciences, who awarded him an honorary Oscar in 1979 for "the full body of his work, for the unique achievements of his entire career and his lifetime of contribution to the art of film." (The last two paragraphs are written by David Becket and is from the website <https://www.myreviewer.com/DVD/95629/Laurence-Olivier-Shakespeare-Collection-UK/95666/Review-by-David-Beckett>. It is titled - A Review of Laurence Olivier – Shakespeare Collection).

There are many other examples of people (other than the ones given in this book) we could have referred to and analysed in order to make our point. But we feel we have chosen a fair representation of people from various areas and did not wish to over emphasise the point. So we could have brought in Macbeth from Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* who is consumed by guilt after he murders King Duncan in order to become the king himself. Others would be:

Raskolnikov from Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is another guilt-ridden character who commits a murder and is tormented by his conscience.

Hester Prynne from Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* feels guilty for committing adultery and wears a scarlet letter "A" as a constant reminder of her sin.

Amir from Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* is a character who feels guilty for betraying his childhood friend and servant Hassan and spends much of the novel trying to redeem himself.

Pip from Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* feels guilty for his treatment of his adoptive brother Joe and his benefactor Miss Havisham and tries to make amends for his actions.

But then, the list would have been endless and the points we were making would have got diffused.

The concept of guilt is deeply embedded in many of the stories. We have also not given the flow of the chapters in a predetermined manner for the