

## Invitation

To mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the founding of Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics & Other Human Sciences we invite you to the lecture series on the “Key Concepts of General Semantics.”

### # Lecture 05

## Key Concepts of General Semantics: “Critical Thinking and General Semantics”

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019, Friday, 4 pm

Venue: Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics & Other Human Sciences

### Summary of the Lecture:

Alfred Korzybski, the founder of General Semantics considered the attributes of man as a ‘time-binder’ having tremendous potential to bind time, past to present with a futuristic vision by virtue of his power to think, to discriminate, use language as a tool of communication. Thinking as a faculty - critical, creative and innovative – is man’s prerogative that differentiates him from other species, animals and plants and is able to establish him as the supreme creature in the universe. Rene Descartes, the 17<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher and mathematician considered that thought cannot be separated from man, “a thinking thing”. “I think, there I am”, he said. All human beings think but there are some who thought in the right direction, critically and creatively to add to the gamut of knowledge in science, philosophy, literature and arts and progress of mankind. Our thinking is influenced by our environment, natural and man-made – social, political, economic and cultural. Man is ‘an organism-as-a-whole-in-an-environment’; he is part of the environment. Often the environment is of his own making and he cannot escape it in his transaction with the world outside him. On the one hand man is puzzled, often mystified by dogmas, ideologies, theories and conventional wisdom, and on the other, he is awe-stricken by the various facets of media – the TV, radio, internet, propaganda and other airwaves. The persuasive media appeals to him and have a dubious spell on him. As information gathering class man goes on collecting information and ideas but finds himself trapped and manipulated by the media environment. We are a victim of the unforeseen consequences of

technologies and technological revolution. Principles of General Semantics can help develop a sense of scepticism, to find legitimate meaning among all the non-sense that we see, hear, read or feel emotionally. A creative and innovative person is one who is able to look beyond the words and their lexical meaning; he is able to entertain and play with ideas, think critically before being a prey to the sorcerers and their spell. We will discuss how General Semantics approach in day to day life could help develop critical thinking and a scientific spirit.

### About the Speaker:



**Ganath Dash** is a Former Associate Professor in English and Registrar, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore. He taught in different Govt. Colleges of Odisha and lectured on General Semantics. His PhD dissertation on Tennessee Williams’s Plays

has been published with the title *Tennessee Williams Moment*. He has published articles and has completed a UGC sponsored Major Research Project on General Semantics. Eleven scholars including three on General Semantics and related areas have been awarded PhD under his supervision. Currently he is Academic Fellow of Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences.

All are welcome...