Cultural Reintegration

VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM
'The whole world is but one family'

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The optimism that greeted the end of the Cold War and the prospect of the creation of a new world order quickly dissolved, to be replaced by an overriding impression of global disorder. While initiatives continue in the quest for new and more inclusive ways of ordering global affairs, these must be backed up by a constant and unrelenting effort to maintain and enhance freedom and democracy. But this is impeded by what might be termed a "slide toward fundamentalism," which takes the forms of ethnocentrism, chauvinism, racism and a dogmatic adherence to various ideologies, including those of the market, as well as religious fundamentalism. Restoring people and humanity to the role of central protagonist is the key to confronting and halting this slide toward fundamentalism. This requires a ceaseless spiritual effort and is the essence of the kind of humanism our times require. Buddhist humanism is inspired by the bedrock determination to respect all people—understanding that not only sectarian differences but also differences of ideology, culture and ethnicity are never absolute. These differences, like the order and organisation of human society itself, are only relative and should be treated as flexible, fluid concepts to be constantly renegotiated. What is required is that people—and not abstract principles—be accorded centrality. In the realm of religion this calls on us to tackle the challenge of the "humanisation of religion." We cannot permit this challenge to remain unanswered: to do so would be to allow religion to be a factor in conflict and war, to undermine its potential as a force for the construction of peace.

Does religion make people stronger, or does it weaken them? Does it encourage what is good or what is evil in them? Are they made better and more wise—or less so—by religion? These are the questions we need to ask of all religions if we are to succeed in fully "humanizing" them. By rising to this challenge, we must ensure that religion always functions to elevate and enhance our humanity, contributing to the realisation of human happiness and peace. The twentieth century—in which ideology attained the status of an absolute value, and fanaticism of all kinds stirred storms of war and violence—offers painful testimony to the fact that the smallness and frailty of individuals make them act against that which is human, thwarting our attempts to be the protagonists in the creation of history. With regard to religion, with its tragic legacy of fanaticism and intolerance, nothing is more vital than dialogue—dialogue that transcends dogmatism and is predicated on the exercise of reason and self-mastery. For any religion to relinquish dialogue is to relinquish its reason for being. To manifest our true worth as Homo loquens requires that we bring forth our highest virtues as human beings: our goodness, strength and wisdom. Religions must offer us the means for unleashing these qualities: they must promote positive change in human beings.

**Human Rights Education**

This year will mark the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which gave voice to a universal vision of human rights and established the goal of bringing into being a world free from fear and free from want. To make this anniversary substantive, it is vital that governments and civil society work together to actively promote concrete programs that bring human rights education to all. To that end, an international conference—organized by civil society and specifically dedicated to the theme of human rights education—should be held with a focus on civil society and its contributions.

**Ecological Integrity**

Ecological integrity is the shared interest and concern of all humankind, an issue that transcends national borders and priorities. Any solution to the problems we face will require a strong sense of individual responsibility and commitment by each of us as inhabitants sharing the same planet. The United Nations is the global institution that can serve as the focus for such efforts: global environmental issues will constitute one of the UN's principal missions in the twenty-first century. To this end, the United Nations Environmental Programme should be strengthened and upgraded to the status of a specialized agency, enabling it to exercise strong leadership toward the resolution of global
environmental issues. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is one area where global participation is vital, particularly in creating a new framework to replace the Kyoto Protocol, a framework that includes countries not presently participating. Combating climate change is a challenge that requires governments to break away from the negative approach of minimizing national obligations and burdens and instead adopt a positive focus on the achievement of larger, global objectives. Specifically, the major emitters need to actively support the efforts of other countries. We need to focus on the transformation toward a low-carbon no-waste society. The first step toward this must be the promotion of renewable energy and energy conservation measures. The proactive setting of goals and commitments will unleash the kinds of positive thinking that take, for example, the form of technological innovation. Japan has a wealth of experience and achievement in this field and needs to play an active role. It is crucial to broaden grassroots engagement and empower people toward collective action. Empowerment through learning brings out the unlimited potentials of individuals and creates currents that can fundamentally transform the world. The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development exemplifies this belief in the power of learning. To make the Decade meaningful, it is vital that individuals perceive the irreplaceable value of the ecosystem of which they are part, and make a commitment to its protection. This awareness is best developed through hands-on experience, such as tree-planting projects like the Billion Tree Campaign. We need to think about what we—on the individual, family, community and workplace level—can do in our immediate environment to build a sustainable future, and work together to this end.

The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is committed to playing an ever more active role in building an action network for a sustainable future, which need not be limited to environmental issues but can embrace such areas as poverty alleviation, human rights and peace, to build the foundations of a common struggle to resolve the shared problems facing humanity.

Infrastructures of Peace

We need to establish consensus regarding the fundamental illegality of nuclear weapons. The proposed establishment of an Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) is one element of this. There is an urgent need to prohibit military activity in the Arctic region and build a legal regime to conserve it as a common heritage of humankind. NWFZs serve as a powerful curb against nuclear proliferation and also help strengthen momentum toward the outlawing of nuclear weapons. More than half the governments on Earth have become signatories to these agreements, thus expressing their view that the development and use of nuclear weapons is or should be illegal under international law. A similar approach would be effective in terms of nuclear nonproliferation in Northeast Asia. Japan should reaffirm its uncompromising commitment to its own nonnuclear policies and deploy its full diplomatic resources toward the more encompassing goal of establishing a NWFZ covering the whole of Northeast Asia.

A treaty banning cluster bombs would greatly enhance the infrastructures of peace. Such a treaty, as called for in the Oslo Process, should be signed and in place by the end of this year. The success of such efforts, with strong civil society support, will have a definite and positive impact on momentum toward disarmament in other fields.

The Century of Africa

The future of Africa is critical in building a global society that upholds human dignity. An African Renaissance will herald a renaissance of the world and of humanity. African nations, which have refused to succumb under the historical burdens of the slave trade and colonialism, are striving to forge solidarity as they unleash their potential and confront their common challenges. The Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) is an opportunity to center on concrete measures to ensure the empowerment of youth. A program for African youth partnership should be established as one of the pillars of TICAD, helping foster the talents of the young people who will play a critical role in creating a brighter future for Africa.

This year, designated the Japan-Africa Exchange Year, provides the opportunity for the creation of a network of and for youth, facilitating ties of exchange between the young people of Africa and the youth of Japan and countries throughout the world, as a platform for confronting the challenges faced by Africa and the world. Ultimately, young people hold the keys to the future: humanity is in their hands. All the members of the SGI are determined to maintain a focus on youth and young people, fostering their limitless potential as we strive to build grassroots solidarity to resolve the complex issues facing our planet.
Editorial Page

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Lawless Society and Right-less Citizens

Constitution is the fundamental law of a country, representing the political, economic, cultural and moral aspirations of the people. Political pundits, therefore, say that Constitution shall highlight and give emphasis to systems, suitably to the genius of the people.

Based on this Constitutional theory, Mahatma Gandhi remarked: “By political independence I do not mean an imitation of the British House of Commons, or the Soviet Rule of Russia, or the Fascist rule of Italy, or the Nazi Rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their genius. We must have ours suited to our systems”. To Mahatma Gandhi “the true source of rights is duty” and that “every community shall be on a par with every other under the Swaraj Constitution”. Maharshi Aurobindo was of the view that democracy to be successful in India shall be rooted in *dharma* i.e. duties, the forerunner of rights.

In India dharma is the main factor that shapes the character of an Indian. The development of a complete personality is possible only if a person is committed to the national ideals like ‘sacrifice and service’ and ‘civic duties’ which undoubtedly form part of dharma. Rights and duties thus are two sides of the same coin. Andre Malrux, a Minister of the De Gualle government in France had obviously understood this cultural background of this nation when he told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that “when India is free let the great Shankara guide India”. Arnold Toynbee and Sir Julian Huxley have also expressed similar views.

Justice K. P. Radhakrishna Menon (Bhavan’s Journal Vol. 53 No. 16 March 31, 2007) observes: Alas! We ignored these Gandhian ideas, our heritage which takes in its fold human values and human rights, Aurobindo’s declaration and the views expressed by the political leaders of the west, and made a Constitution borrowing western political theories not suited to our genius. As Swami Vivekananda said, “in Europe, political ideas form the national unity” whereas “in Asia religious ideas form the national unity”. Swamiji accordingly said that “the unity in religion, therefore, is absolutely necessary as the first condition of the future of India”. The Western political theories ingrained in our Constitution gave a disastrous blow to the enduring principles referable to Gandhian ideals, namely, “Compassion of the strong towards the weak, and the suppression of immediate gratification for the more rewarding goals of the national glory and progress”.

In Australia the political leaders and genre of the community leaders might be considering moving away from the allegiance to the Royal monarchy (of the Queen of England) to a Republic. That will necessitate substantial amendments to the Constitution. I hope that the political leaders learn from the mistakes of the past and give emphasis to systems, suitably to the genius of the people of Australia while making amendment to the Constitution.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) demands the alignment of business operations with social values in the interests of all the stakeholders in the business. Some refer to CSR as “corporate citizenship in work places, in the government and in the communities”. Others refer to CSR as “establishing a positive company reputation and brand in the public eye through good work while contributing to others”. The society has the ethical, legal, commercial and public expectations of business which it must meet or exceed.

Globalization and liberalization have provided conditions which have led to a situation where multinationals control most resources. More than fifty percent of world’s largest economies are not nation states, but corporations. At the same time over 1.2 billion people are barely able to survive.

CSR is the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economical development, working with employees and their families the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life in ways that are good for business and good for development. CSR as a public movement has gained momentum over the past few decades as result of which business managers are becoming more transparent and socially responsible for their actions. But much more needs to be done.

Gandhi Talisman: "I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away."

One of the last notes left behind by Gandhi in 1948, expressing his deepest social thought.

*Source: Mahatma Gandhi [Last Phase, Vol. II (1958), P. 65].*
Thailand, which had seen rapid and double digit economic growth in the seventies/eighties, has gone through several ups and downs and is deeply impacted by the Asian Financial crisis of 1997. Recently (2007), the King of Thailand, His Majesty Bhumibol Adulyadej, has wisely observed: "...It is not important to be an economic tiger. It is, however, important to have a self-sufficient economy, which means being self-reliant. This self-sufficiency does not mean that every household produce its food or weave its own clothing. That will be too far-fetched. But, in a community or district, there must be a certain degree of self-reliance".

Under his guidance there are over 3000 rural projects in Thailand to ensure self-reliance in all aspects of rural development - from healthcare to agriculture, irrigation, reforestation, education and revival of local cultural traditions, often involving local knowledge and modern technology. For instance, in battling drought, the King is a champion both of low tech dam and high tech artificial rain-making. In his development work, the King has always espoused the need for self-sufficiency, cultural preservation and environmental protection, cautioning against a headlong rush towards progress and a craving for the superficial trappings of modernity.

The international community has hailed King Bhumibol Adulyadej's lifetime accomplishments over the years. Most recently, he was presented with the inaugural UNDP Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award besides the Dr. Norman E Borlaug Medallion by the World Food Prize Foundation. But the same international community operating through what is called the "Washington consensus," is promoting a consumerist-oriented, centralised and globalised model of economic growth and development. This system is implemented through banking systems, multinational and national mega corporations and through national governments, essentially based on artificial expansion of money supply. Money is no longer essentially created by governments through currency notes. A substantial part of the money in the world is created through loans by private banks. Real economy is based on production of goods and services needed for existence of man, while the artificially bloated money economy is based on creation and satisfaction of unnecessary wants and superfluities and "entertainment" and "time-pass" activities of all kinds. This bloated unreal economy sucks away essential resources such as land, water, power etc., leaving the real economy in shattered condition unable to provide employment, health and nutrition at a satisfactory level to vast numbers. Apart from vast inequalities and relative and absolute poverty of large number and sections of society, the artificially bloated double digit economy causes serious environmental damage. It is recognised by one and all that the standard of life promoted by this economy is not sustainable if it is extended to vast number of people in India and China. It is strange and a reflection on the values and wisdom of the leadership in China and India, that despite knowing this non-sustainability and non-applicability to the majority of people in these countries, their leadership is promoting this model and gloating over the double digit growth. As a result, resources and energies are diverted to flippant tasks such as advertising, marketing, entertainment, games, fashion shows, five star cultures and other "time-pass" activities. The criticism will be condemned as puritanical. It will be claimed that consumerist expansion led by the markets will ultimately eliminate poverty for all and, until then the very poor can be taken care of through special programmes. It would be argued that any other model will keep us poor for ever and it is better we live with this model than be mired in dire poverty. This argument would be valid if there is no alternative. But the Thailand monarch's model does provide a viable alternative. It may lead to a double digit
growth, but more equally, soberly if slowly, with less pain, fewer ups and down and with cultural and environmental preservation. No doubt markets are supreme and determine economic activities, but we create the markets. We need to change our mindset and convince people that we do not need the malls, nor the mega shows and events, nor so many cars nor the fashions and the media mania. We must understand that man’s life is limited and time is the most valuable resource that should not be wasted in harmful or meaningless activities and must be utilised with some seriousness and purpose, unless we think that life is nothing more than a Beckethan absurdity. Not only life gets wasted in the prevalent Western model of development but nature is harmed and destroyed. The rapid economic growth of some groups, areas and nations suck resources much like fast growing cancer cells which deplete their own organism and cause pain and ultimate death. Meanwhile, the cancer cells are having double digit growth presumably enjoying their "high" standard of life. The moot question for man in the 21st century is to consider if he wants to be a cancer cell or a healthy one and if he chooses the latter, slow down the pace of life, simplify it, localise it and have plenty of time for family, friends, neighbours, the community and or communion with nature or for voluntary solitude if he so prefers.

Desmond Morris, the well-known author of The Naked Ape, was asked by BBC as to why he retired so soon after making money from his famous book. The author replied that the money he made helped him for the first time in his life to pursue his real interest, namely to travel and to indulge in his hobby-painting. A model of development that deprives people of the simple joys of life and their most valuable resource "time" and substitutes for that artificial entertainment and a high paced life is neither necessary nor desirable. The King of Thailand’s proposed model is consistent with a noble human destiny and steers clear of both Jihadism and Mcworldism. As the King puts it, his objective is to improve people’s lives without destroying their equilibrium, their traditional values, their identity.

-J Veeraraghavan, Director Bhavan’s Delhi Kendra; Bhavan’s Journal April 30 2008

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Fundamentalism, terrorism and violence, have created an atmosphere of tension and fear in different parts of the world (The LTTE violence is confined to civil strife in Sri Lanka). Countries like USA and Britain had to tighten their laws and security arrangements much to the inconvenience of citizens to prevent the repetition of 9/11 type attack on Twin Towers in New York and serial bombings in London resulting in the death of ordinary citizens. All peace-loving citizens want to see this menace ended. They are not opposed to any particular religion as such. People can follow any religion to which they belong. They can follow the doctrines and practices of that religion, though within the framework of the law of the land and without confrontation with other citizens who wish to follow their own religion or no religion at all. But observance of religion should be a personal matter. There should be no indulgence in religious bigotry and fanaticism. Religious extremism should not be such as to cause hatred towards other citizens. There should be tolerance towards other religions. That is why in USA and Britain, they talk of mild or moderate Islam, which is acceptable, but radical Islam is not.

This kind of "simple-minded" thinking is good enough for ordinary mortals but not to "immortal", Amartya Sen (pun intended) who must invent his own "Theory of Identity" to deal with religious fundamentalism and terrorism - the Theory of Pluralism of Identity. His theory is that religion is not and cannot be the only mark of the "identity" of an individual. There are many marks of identity of which religion is only one, neither singular nor unique. There are many other factors shaping the identity of an individual like original nationality, language, literature, gender, food habits, cultural manifestations like music and art, profession etc. Religion has no priority or precedence over other identities, which become more relevant according to circumstances and situations. An individual cannot be put in the box of only one identity, viz., religion irrespective of varying circumstances and situations. Every individual has freedom to choose his/her own identities as he/she wishes. Circumstances should be created to make this possible. From this point of view, Sen is vehemently opposed to Samuel Huntington's theory of "Clash of Civilisations". In his famous book (or according to Sen, notorious) Huntington has divided humanity into major civilisations, viz., Christian (subsects, Protestants, Catholic, Orthodox Christianity), Buddhist (China, Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand etc.), Islam, Hindu and Jew. He predicted that while clash based on ideology (Capitalism viz. Communism) characterised the second half of the twentieth century, clash of religion and civilisation will emerge in the twenty first century. The validity of a conceptual framework is often established if its predictions come true. Huntington's "Clash of Civilisations", becomes a reality as we entered into the twenty-first century, however, abhorrent it would have been to us. Its existence cannot be denied. Yet Sen refuses to acknowledge it. On the other hand, he accuses Huntington of deliberately putting humanity into narrow boxes of identity and thereby fomenting hatred and violence. To be fair to Huntington, he does not "advocate" classification of humanity on the basis of religion nor does he "advocate" clash of civilisations. One cannot be blind to reality or fly in the face of facts - as Sen's theory does. Hence, despite his vast learning and sharp sword of logic, Sen fails to persuade his readers about the validity of his theory nor does he convince the governments of countries when he resides, in Britain and USA to change their policies to promote moderate Islam but give no quarters to Islamic extremism.

Sen's whole exercise to formulate his theory of plural identity seems to be directed to play down the calumny attached to Islamic fundamentalism and militancy by portraying Islam as a victim rather than a destroyer, a contributor to civilisation rather than to destroy her (recent example being the wanton destruction of Bamiyan Buddha, universally held as a heritage of civilization, by the ousted Taliban regime which finds no mention in Sen's selective historical review). Sen mentions more than once the gory incident to which he was a witness as a child of eleven years. One Kader Mia, a Muslim labourer in search of work, stumbled into the compound of his father's house in Dacca (now capital of Bangladesh), a victim of ruthless "Hindu thugs". This left a deep mark of horror on the tender mind of the child. But surely the elderly Sen in his seventies recalling the incident should know that this incident was but one of many hundreds and thousands of killings that took place as a part of the holocaust that followed the partition of the country.

In his comprehensive historical review, Sen does not mention the major event of partition of India even once.
Jinnah who made a claim to it on the basis of Muslim State of Jammu and Kashmir hesitated to join Pakistan, address. When the Hindu ruler of the Muslim majority followers however, did not live up to the precept of his institutions got special protection. Jinnah and his discrimination on religious basis. Indeed, minority fundamental rights granted to all its citizens without any India was declared a Secular Republic with equal Christians and people of all denominations will be equal to the Constituent Assembly said that Hindu, Muslims, after he became President, Jinnah in his first address migration both ways became an unorganised chaos. Soon this was not accepted and the migration of Muslim from India to Pakistan and of Hindus suggested that the two states should organise a systematic Constitution, had earlier suggested this and going further Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian leader of the depressed castes, who later became the Prime Ministership of the rest of India could have been declared as a Hindu State. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar the culture to this day. But just to decry the Ram temple have a pervasive influence on Indian life, literature and India being termed as a "Hindu Civilisation" though the was a secular Republic). On the other hand, he resents and an Islamic Republic of Bangaldesh (which originally given by the voters for Gujarat killings. Sen approvingly BBC as a Hindu nationalist party) in the general elections the defeat of the NDA led by BJP (often described by Sen is delighted that India had a Muslim President (till recently) a Sikh Prime Minister and a Christian Supreme political leader of the ruling Congress Party. He is equally delighted that more Muslims live in India than in Pakistan. The complexity of the events that followed has delighted him as a sound punishment given by the voters for Gujarat killings. Sen approvingly mentions the existence of Islamic Republic in Pakistan and an Islamic Republic of Bangaldesh (which originally was a secular Republic). On the other hand, he resents India being termed as a "Hindu Civilisation" though the rest of world considers India as a predominantly Hindu nation-state because 80% of the population is Hindu. In Sen's peculiarly selective perspective on Indian history, Hindu contribution to Indian history and philosophy finds no place. The Sanskrit epics of Ramayana and Mahabharat have a pervasive influence on Indian life, literature and culture to this day. But just to decry the Ram temple movement in Ayodhya, Sen, makes the statement (In is nor does he deal with its causes and consequences. Mahatma Gandhi whom he often quotes was opposed to the partition of India till the last moment saying that vivisection of India would take place over his dead body. Mahatma Gandhi offered even Prime Ministership of free India to Jinnah but he rejected it with disdain. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Muslim scholar and then the Congress President who was opposed to Partition of India, was no match to Jinnah, a pork eating, westernized Muslim married to a Parsi lady, who slighted Azad as a Congress puppet. Muslims followed Jinnah not Azad in his famous clarion call for the establishment of an independent Muslim nation carved out of united India in which they sought an "identity". Jinnah created misgivings among the Indian Muslims by acting on their fear "Islam Khatre Men Hai" - Islam is in danger. It is surprising that where Sen quotes Mahatma Gandhi repeatedly, he does not mention Jinnah even once and his success in sharpening a Muslim identity. Jinnah called for "direct action" and with the help of the British with their "divide and rule" policy, succeeded in establishing Pakistan and becoming its first President. After Pakistan became an independent state for Muslims, the rest of India could have been declared as a Hindu State. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar the leader of the depressed castes, who later became the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution, had earlier suggested this and going further suggested that the two states should organise a systematic migration of Muslim from India to Pakistan and of Hindus from Pakistan to India. But this was not accepted and migration both ways became an unorganised chaos. Soon after he became President, Jinnah in his first address to the Constituent Assembly said that Hindu, Muslims, Christians and people of all denominations will be equal citizens of Pakistan.
Argumentative Indian) that Rama is only an epic hero and not God and there are no Rama Temples in Bengal. But India is bigger than Bengal (Sen with his fervour for Bengal and Bangladesh should realise this) and there are innumerable Rama temples in different parts of the country. He does not explain why Buddhism faded away from India and Hinduism returned as a pervasive force without any war or military support from any royalty, thanks to a single handed effort of a lone scholar Sankaracharya of Kerala who before his early death at the age of 32 established four centres of learning in four far flung corners of the country - Srinagar (Kashmir), Dwarka (Gujarat), Puri (Orissa) and Sringeri (Karnataka). Such breath taking achievement binding the country together when no modern road transport existed does not find mention even once in Sen's sweep of history! He gives credit to Buddhist Emperor Asoka and Muslim emperor Akbar for promoting liberalism and free exchange of views amongst representatives of different religions.

He fails to go back to ancient times to recollect the Upanishdic ideal of "Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam" (the whole world is a family) and "Ekam Sat Vipraha Bahudha Vadanti". "One (ultimate) truth is perceived differently and expressed differently by those who know". It is thoughts such as this which have provided the basis of tolerance and broad mindedness to the Hindu civilisation which welcomed with open arms to Indian shores people of different faiths and religions such as, Christianity (some of oldest Christians are the Syrian Christians of Kerala, the Southern Indian State), the Jews (who were persecuted in different countries of Europe but never in India) and Parsees (of Zorastrian religion) who were persecuted by the Islamists in Iran and had to leave that country to find safe haven on the Gujarat coast. The continuous internal reform movements in the Hindu religion gave birth to several religions like Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism (in recent years). The method of the Hindus has been accommodation rather than confrontation. It is that same tradition of tolerance and broad mindedness that has given birth to the concept of "Sarva Dharmasamabhav" or equal treatment to all religions which according to some is the basis of Indian secularism rather than the European concept which arose from the revolt of the kings against Papal dominance which led to separation of things temporal from things spiritual. Sen's theory of multiple or plural identities does not seem to work or to apply to problems because it suffers from the basic flaw of assuming or pretending that all the identities he mentions are of the same type or on the same level of intensity. An identity like religion is what one is born in and affects one's upbringing. Its impact is often indelible and cannot easily be changed. On the other hand, nationality, language and profession though of long-term significance can be changed with some effort. In these days of migration attendant to globalisation, "green cards" for extended stay in US if not acquiring new citizenship have become routine. New languages other than one's mother tongue can be learnt and become a necessity on migration to another country. Though one acquires a profession by a long course of studies, the profession often changes in later life. A doctor becomes an actor, a wrestler becomes a musician or a lawyer becomes a hotelier. Choices of food (e.g. vegetarian) take place with migration to another place (e.g. South India taking to chapatis on moving to Delhi or an Indian taking to "pasta" in place of rice). Membership of interest groups (like music or cinema or book clubs) can be a fleeting occurrence. To lump together all the identities and bring them to the same level is a logical fallacy, which Sen has committed and therefore, has gone wrong.

- P.R. Dubhashi, Bhavan's Journal April 30 2008
FootyBazaar: AFL in Schools

School visit & Exhibition match

- Relationships have been made with 3-4 schools in Kolkata for a FootyBazaar program. All schools have shown interest in the new game and the FootyBazaar concept.

- The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan School in Saltlake, Kolkata invited the AFL India members as well as the AFL India players to take part in a curtain raiser to their intra-school soccer final.

- The AFL India team played 2 x 15 minute halves to show the 700 kids and teachers the game of Australian football. The day was a success with great feedback from the teachers and students. AFL India and the AFL would like to further their relationship with the school.

- This demonstration showed that elements of the AFL Auskick junior development program for Australian Rules Football can be introduced into Indian schools in the future.

Bhavans Growth from 1938 to 2006

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Death Penalty, A Horrendous Revenge

The United Nation’s Human Rights Committee moved a resolution seeking to freeze the execution of death penalty which was adopted by an overwhelming majority. The minority group which opposed the resolution includes India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh and others. India’s argument was that only in rarest of rare cases death penalty is inflicted and there was no execution in India after 1995. That is not true. In Kolkata Dhananjoy Chatterjee was hanged by hangman Nata Mallick on August 14, 2004, as he was awarded death penalty for having raped and murdered a minor school-going girl, Hetal Preksh, in her flat where the accused was a lift-operator. The penal law in Islamic jurisprudence provides death penalty for murder, rape and adultery. The crux of Islamic criminal law is based on the dictum, "eye for eye, tooth for tooth". Ancient tribal culture and tradition awarded death penalty for even minor offences.

In Pakistan, a parallel criminal justice system is in force and is run by tribal heads. The story of Makhtaran Bibi alias Mukhtar Mai is a classic example to show that rude, ruthless and blind justice is meted out to the alleged offender. Mukhtar Mai, of the peasant Gujar caste, aged 33 years, living in the village of Meerwala in southern Punjab of Pakistan, was convicted and sentenced to undergo gang-rape as per the tribal panchayat verdict for the offence committed by her little brother Shakur, 12, who was accused by the upper caste Mastois community of speaking to Salma, a young woman of their clan. Mukhtar Mai was gang raped and quite naturally she would have committed suicide. But the determined will of Mukhtar Mai who knows no language other than the minority language of Saraiki, who read and taught holy Koran, prompted her to fight back against a barbarous tradition that almost destroyed her. The trial court convicted all the accused and sentenced them to undergo death penalty.

On appeal, the Multan Bench of the Lahore High court acquitted six accused against which Mukhtar Mai preferred an appeal before the Supreme Court of Pakistan. This tribal justice is a truth of the contemporary period where modern governments run by democratic constitutions reign. The death penalty found a place in the penal codes at the tribal criminal justice system. Whether the tenets of such a system are to be followed by the modern society is the question to be discussed here. In the history there were great men who exhorted to take sword to kill man by man in the pretext of annihilating the evil and to restore values and virtues. Mahatma said an eye for an eye will only make the world go blind.

Jurists have distinguished punishment as deterrent, preventive, reformative, and retributive. The main purpose of the law of Crime is to make evildoer an example and a warning to men of a similar mind with him and therefore, punishment is essentially deterrent. Offences can also be prevented at change of motives or change of character as they are committed by influence of motives upon character and punishment aims at such changes is reformative. The purely reformative theory thus conflicts with the deterrent theory of punishment. Though the object of punishment ought not to be merely the prevention of offences but also the reformation of the offenders, the theory cannot be followed to its logical conclusion of reforming the criminal to the extent of doing away with penalty like death.

The modern concept is not to do away with the criminal but take away the criminality, in the criminal. Death penalty is a justice of revenge. The modern criminal law
aims at the liberation of the accused from all evil tendencies and to mould him as a model citizen. An individual commits an offence of murder by reason of circumstances. Provocation and mistake may cause the death of a person but there are those who commit murder with motive and with premeditated designs. The Indian Penal Code distinguishes both. When Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay drafted the Indian Penal Code, the colonial culture, the sociopolitical context and the criminal justice system prevalent in Islamic countries might have influenced him. Basically, a human being is not a criminal. This fact may be recognised by all systems and he may be afforded with a chance to reform. It is brutal to remove him from this earth without a chance to reform.

R.T. Paget and S.S. Silverman in their book, "Hanged and Innocent", unearth a number of cases in Britain where death penalty was inflicted on persons who were later found innocent. The investigating agency may go wrong. The evidences collected by the investigating agencies may accidentally or by mistaken identity connect the accused with the crime. The prosecution arguing the case may definitely be moving in the wrong direction. When the investigation and prosecution are in the lurk and on surmises, the court adjudicating upon may definitely be in the dock, which may certainly lead to a judgement which may be a contaminated document. When the judiciary puts to seal and signature on such mistakes it becomes the mother of all mistakes. When a person is executed, no one can retrieve the life lost. The authors narrate eye-opening incidents of several cases where truth came out after the execution. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer in an essay, "Death Penalty : An Unmitigated Evil?" contained in his book, "Perspectives in Criminology, Law and Social Change", stated thus : "Capital punishment is a cruelly callous investment by unsure and unkempt society in punitive dehumanisation and cowardly strategy based on the horrendous superstition that cold-blooded human sacrifice by professional hangmen engaged by the state will propitiate the goddess of justice to bless Mother Earth with a crimeless community.

The authentic voice of the divinity and dignity of humanity, echoed in many national constitutions and now underscored in the universal declaration, has been that of the Buddha and Gandhi and not of Manu and Hammurabi, Beccaria and Bentham, not Bradley and Bosanquet, are the torch-bearers in this area". A former Law Commission Chairman had suggested the execution of condemned prisoners by use of intravenous injection of toxins. That was opposed to by the medical fraternity but for professional ethics. The suggestion was to avoid the horror of hanging procedures. In Nepal, there is no capital punishment. The international criminal, Charles Sobraj, was awarded with life term only. When the society advances the barbaric style must part ways with the modern criminal justice system. A civilised society cannot retain death penalty.

The trouble with death penalty is that it cannot be corrected. Death is beyond correction as it is a finality. What is done is done and cannot be undone. In all the legal systems there are sincere policemen, counsels and judiciary, but error is humane. This aspect has to be kept in mind while we continue with death penalty. Why not the legislatures and judiciary have a humanitarian approach in this matter. The human right activist of Pakistan and United Nations Special Rapporteur, Ms. Asma Jahangir, is now on a mission to abolish death sentence in Pakistan and India.

In 1989, only three states had permanently abolished the death penalty for all crimes - Costa Rica, San Marino and Venezuela. When the universal declaration of human rights was adopted in 1948, the number stood at eight. By the end of 1978 it was 19. During the past 20 years, the number has almost tripled. In 1998 the trend continued with Azerbaijan and Bulgaria. Now it has risen to over one hundred. The first murder on earth was committed by Cain, the son of Adam and Eve. Abel was a shepherd but Cain was a farmer. Cain gave his harvest as an offering to the Lord. But Abel offered the first lamb born to one of his sheep to the Lord. The Lord was pleased with Abel and rejected Cain and his offerings. The infuriated Cain took Abel to the fields and killed him. God did not like it and punished Cain. Has the human beings got the authority to take the life of a man which the God desisted? Why not we think of amending Sec.302 IPC by expunging death penalty and instead, insert imprisonment till death.

- V.P. Ramesan, Bhavan's Journal April 30 2008

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion over-riding morality. Man, for instance, cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side.

It may be long before the law of love will be recognised in international affairs. The machineries of government stand between and hide the hearts of one people from those of another.

- Mahatma Gandhi
A Mantra for Women Leaders

Although the concept of mentoring started in the West only in the 1980s, the growing popularity is a response to compelling needs. Mentoring is now widely recognised in the West for its impact in leveraging personal and organizational development and as a highly effective way to quickly ramp up an employee's performance. It has just started emerging in India. The challenge before organizations today is profitable, sustainable, inclusive growth with a dire need for care for the environment. The challenge before executives today is containing attrition, recruiting the right talent and retaining high performers. In the process, executive after executive works longer hours whilst helplessly witnessing a deteriorating work-life balance.

Escalating corporate profits provide mounting performance bonuses, but little opportunities for executives to enjoy the fruits of their labour. Every one is stretched, and this tells on nerves and on family harmony. The acceleration of productivity in businesses brings along with it challenges in managing and enhancing relationships. Today, executives expect emotional intelligence from supervisors and colleagues, but find its supply scarce. Organisations implement mentoring at all levels of a company structure, from graduate recruits to top management. However, as with any programme or initiative, success is dependent ultimately on a high degree of senior level buy-in and commitment. Without such support, programmes risk death through lack of co-ordination and focus. Women in mentoring Deepak had met Nick socially at my place once and they had hit it off. Being in the same work sphere helped the meeting of the minds; the fact that Deepak was more into formal mentoring and Nick into informal mentoring did not matter. Deepak knew the potential that existed for sharing of ideas between them, and being a people-person himself, knew the value that a professional yet informal exchange with Nick would yield. He went over the points he had wanted to clarify that morning for his meeting with Nick, points that any experienced mentor like himself would come across from time to time, points that help reinforce ideas, affirm practices and develop convictions.

Nick had mentioned to Deepak in their first meeting of how informal mentoring works for him. Deepak, who had interacted with women in his formal mentoring sessions, opened by enquiring about Nick's experiences during his informal mentoring meets. Indeed, he was reinforcing his own ideas on what it is that mentors have. Deepak wrote feverishly as Nick recounted. "Given that women are sensitive yet practical, emotional yet strong, logical, intuitive, empathetic and are inherently endowed with powers of reasoning, they make excellent mentors. They are quick to spot undercurrents in organisations, and their ability to effectively detect nuances often helps bring in a timely delicate touch to defuse fragile situations. The West has numerous examples of successful women mentors. The same will apply in India as the mentoring space opens up. It would also be easy for women in India to move in to occupy this specialised niche, considering that many of them lead their companies or head the people domain in highly successful careers. The increasing number of women entrepreneurs and women executives breaking glass ceilings in an otherwise male-dominated bastion augurs well for an increasing number to choose mentoring as an area of core competence." Mentors have to possess a real interest in others and specifically in their development and learning. This is crucial, as it is this that drives their ability to put the issues and concerns of their mentees ahead of the other things that the rest of us find more important. Surely, the mentors' role is essentially to accelerate the rate at which a person learns. Hence, mentors fundamentally provide individual leaders the objective feedback needed to nourish their growth and help them excel. It is possible to develop mentor competence, but only for those who possess interpersonal skills - either potential or existing. The paradox is that those most keen to become mentors do not have the innate people skills, and that equally, many intuitive, 'natural' mentors do not recognise their own abilities. Mentors also have to accept that in all likelihood, they will have to put a lot more in than they get back. Effective mentoring
requires a lot more than common sense and enthusiasm. And like in leadership, the individual needs to have the basic ingredients of active listening, empathy, building trust, love for people, a genuine interest in their well-being and development. There are some individuals who are additionally gifted in the art of encouraging and inspiring others and providing them positive, corrective feedback in a manner that is received in the right spirit.

With these basics, it is possible for mentors to evolve and aspiring mentors with potential can imbibe and hone mentoring skills.

**Women as Mentees**

Women make good mentees too, but more often when they get to choose their own mentor as outlined by Nick. A formal "triangular" mentoring programme will of course work well if the company-chosen mentor is himself sensitive to appreciate the woman's perspective and recognize her worth as an achiever in a male-dominated organization. Those who have appreciated the learnings from Chakde India! will readily recall the journey of the women's hockey team in becoming world champions. It is worth recapitulating their key success factors that Deepak outlined when he was explaining the nuances to a keen, ever-learning Nick -

1. The importance of humility, the absence of arrogance, avoidance of narrow parochialism and that no employee is bigger than the organization he/she serves.
2. That there is only one leader in an entity and his/her direction must be followed with respect and without demur.
3. That self-discipline and teamwork wins matches on the field and orders in business. Trying to play solo, not sharing information at work or not seeking timely support only helps competition win.
4. Team spirit is born out of respect for team mates, appreciation of their skills, reveling in their success and sharing in their joys and sorrows.
5. For sustained success, never underestimate competition, but analyze their strengths and weaknesses.
6. Celebrate team success big time.

The learnings from the film become more important and relevant for women, now that the glory of Indian Men's Hockey has evaporated from the international scene. It is perhaps an opportunity for women to show the way. As in sport, companies too can reclaim their glory or market position if leaders were to let the spotlight shine on the team members instead of hogging the limelight themselves. After all, we know that Gandhi became a Mahatma by serving, not by seeking.

- Pradeep Mallick, former MD Wartsila India, Past Chairman CII(WR), Past President Bombay Chambers and Founder Chairman of the Listening Post.

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**Bhavan's Gandhi Institute of Computer Education and Information Technology**

Bhavan's Gandhi Institute of Computer & Information Technology Australia which is aimed to providing subsidised Computer Training Education Programme to the poor / underprivileged or anyone who is eager to be educated in basic Computer knowledge but cannot afford it. The programme will focus on basic computer courses teaching topics like using Windows XP, MS Office. The programme will also a short course to teach new migrant students how to perform research and analysis in the way the Australian Universities expect. Microsoft who actively support the Gandhi Institute of Computer Education and Information Technology in India have extended their support to this project as well. Initially the following courses will be offered at the Institute.

- Microsoft Windows XP – Level 1
- Microsoft Windows XP – Level 2
- Microsoft Windows XP – Level 3
- Microsoft Office – Level 1
- Microsoft Office – Level 2
- Research & Analysis for University & High ts

Other short courses such as Networking (Wireless and wired) concepts, DVD Video editing and Authoring, Computer Hardware will be started on demand.

For details contact www.bhavanaustralia.org Ph: 1300 BHAVAN info@bhavanaustralia.org
For Anoushka Shankar, there is legacy and then there is destiny. She is equally respectful of both, but bound to neither. Her ever-growing audience cannot help but acknowledge the familial roots of the young woman coaxing spellbinding spiritual sounds from her sitar, but neither can they deny that she is an innovator in her own right. Her name may have brought her to the stage for the first time as a young girl, but it is her talent and vision that have kept her there. Schooled in the Indian classical music tradition by the greatest teacher any student could hope to have, maestro and father Ravi Shankar, Anoushka had already dazzled thousands with her accomplished musicianship by the time she had reached her teens. "The younger Shankar revealed herself to be a remarkably promising sitarist," said Time Out New York magazine of the 16-year-old Anoushka in 1997, while a few years later Dubai's Gulf News Panorama noted, "She has accomplished far more than many musicians would do in a lifetime."

Anoushka made her recording debut at 13, appearing on the album In Celebration, a tribute to the works of Ravi Shankar. Two years later she made her debut as a conductor on her father's Chants Of India album produced by close family friend, George Harrison. Anoushka, her 1998 solo debut, established the younger Shankar as something of a prodigy. That same year, the British Parliament awarded Anoushka with a House of Commons Shield, making her both the youngest and the first female recipient of that high honor. Anourag (2000), Anoushka's sophomore release, expanded upon and refined what she had offered on the debut, and 2001's Live at Carnegie Hall truly brought Anoushka into the international spotlight, garnering her first Grammy nomination and making her the youngest person ever nominated in the World Music category. Although she did not release any new recordings under her own name for the next four years, Anoushka was by no means idle. In 2002, at the historic Concert for George, a tribute to the late George Harrison in London, she conducted a new composition of her father's, "Arpan," which featured a guitar solo by Eric Clapton. Anoushka also performed Harrison's "The Inner Light" that evening. That same year saw the release of Anoushka's book Bapi: The Love of my Life, an intimate biographical portrait of her father's exceptional journey, as well as a BBC-produced telecast documentary Anoushka Shankar: Sitar Trek, a 30-minute glimpse of life on the road with the emerging queen of the sitar.

In 2004, Anoushka earned a best supporting actress nomination from India's National Film Awards for her debut role in Dance Like a Man, a film by the Delhi-based director Pamela Rooks. Also in 2004, leaving no doubt that Anoushka's impact was being felt around the world, she was chosen as one of 20 Asian Heroes by the Asia edition of Time magazine. 2005 brought a return to the recording studio and the release of her fourth and most ambitious album, Rise (Angel Records). Previously, Anoushka had recorded and performed primarily as a soloist, interpreting the music of her father. Rise marked a breakthrough for Anoushka who composed, produced and arranged the album. For the first time she performed with a handpicked ensemble comprised of several other brilliant musicians, elevating her music to a new level. "I felt like I was rising into that," she says. "Rise signified growth. It was a step up for me. Not even up, just more into my own."

When Rise arrived, it marked a radical departure for Anoushka. Although she still loves performing in the Indian classical realm and continues to work closely with her father, Rise was all about Anoushka finding her own musical voice. On the album she fused East and West using both acoustic and electric instrumentation to take her music someplace altogether new. It received glowing reviews throughout the world and gave Anoushka another Grammy nomination in the Best Contemporary World Music category. Anoushka also became the first Indian to play at the Grammy Awards when she performed a piece from the CD at the pre-telecast ceremony in February 2006.

Anoushka toured extensively in the wake of the release of Rise, working with a band and expanding on the concepts she had brought to the album. "Rise was very freeing," Anoushka says. "I feel like there are so many things I'm starting to do now creatively. Seeing people connect to the middle ground that my music now exists in, it's really inspiring me. I'm thinking in alternate ways. I've been working on a lot of music since then, pushing further, trying to see how far I can go."
Those who witnessed Anoushka's own rise throughout the years could not have been too surprised to see how far she had come in so short a time. Born June 9, 1981 in London, Anoushka recalls that it was actually her mother, Sukanya Shankar, who encouraged her to train on the complicated Indian stringed instrument that Anoushka's father had made world-famous. She first sat down with a sitar, custom-made to accommodate a child's hands, when she was only eight. Further is the only direction Anoushka Shankar knows. "I'm pushing the envelope on a personal level and trying to see how far I can go," she says. "On the one hand it means so much to me explore the Indian Classical music my father taught me, and on the other hand I am so deeply excited to be discovering my own creative voice, and I hope to be able to explore and express it to my full potential. I really hope to create that balance, because that is who I am. And at the end of the day," she concludes, "you've got to be making music because you love it, and because it's honest."

-Jeff Tamarkin, November 2006; www.anoushakashankar.com

THE ANOUSHKA SHANKAR PROJECT
A SITAR STAR FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Anoushka Shankar is a young artist with stunning musical maturity and a pedigree to die for. She is the beautiful, supremely talented daughter of legendary sitar maestro Ravi Shankar; is Norah Jones' half sister; and has already played with the likes of George Harrison, Sting, Herbie Hancock and Elton John.

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Mother India herself will be puzzled to look back into her history and repent for not retaining her great offspring - Buddhism. As a proud religious land that welcomed Christians way back in the 1st century A.D. itself and sedimented many religious sects from many different clans (especially from Central Asia), it is now beside the mark to look back at the country's failure to hold Buddhism. Later, many religions found their root and support in the country in spite of the brutal force used by some. As a civilisation of great stature, India too, went through many stages and has the environment now for a peaceful and harmonious living of people belonging to different religious faiths.

But the disappearance of Buddhism is always a puzzle. Why did Buddhism disappear from its land of birth (historians generally say by around 10th century)? As Nehru mentioned in his book, "Glimpses of World History ", "India in spite of being ruled by many fragmented rulers and kingdoms, its roots were always the villages and their governing assemblies. To the average Indian, the whole India was a kind of 'punya bhumi' - a holy land. "Thus, there rose a common Indian consciousness which triumphed over, and partly ignored, the political divisions of the country especially this was so as the village system of panchayat government continued, whatever the changes at the top might be." India also witnessed another feature, of many clans, who kept migrating and settling down in it, and ruled it as a customary feature. These rulers generally kept themselves away from village administration (political unit) and had interest (one of the major one being religious freedom) only to have a smooth governance. Though there are incidents of violent transgressions, conversions and brutal punishments by and large, the spirit of religious freedom - to choose a religion, stick to it and even modify it, was intact, which is why there were over 72 forms of Hinduism by the time Sankara came into the scene at the end of the 8th century. Buddhism, as we know, was born out of quest to come out of suffering at a time when ritualism and extravagant pujas were at their peak, and even the ruling class, 'Kshatriyas' were challenged and social stratification based on caste was at its peak and the people, by and large, were gasping for a change.

The revolt came in the form of Buddha who stressed that the general well being of the people is more important than rituals, and he summarily rejected pujas and rituals, and encouraged meditation. Buddhism came as a major social relief for the masses and as a power struggle for the Kshatriyas. Naturally, it found the patronage of the kings as well as the masses. It spread faster, backed by illustrious kings like Asoka and Harsha, who had greater influence both in the widest (geographic) and deepest (heart) sense. Buddha formed 'sangas' for learning and correct conception. These Buddhist 'sangas' and 'vihars' were established from Kashmir in the north to Nagapatinam in the south. True to the tradition of respecting the village assemblies and the masses (to safeguard against any revolt or to avoid the masses supporting an invader), most kings never thrust any religion on their people though they proclaimed their patronage to a religion. Maybe as an individual quest or to keep god and the king away from religious leaders' power transgression as a political strategy, the ruling class encouraged intra competition by welcoming and organising religious debates. Meanwhile, through Kushans to China and through missionaries and invading seafarers merchants of South India, Buddhism spread to East Asian countries.

Disappearance of Buddhism

It is not easy to reason out why Buddhism disappeared in this country, or how it was assimilated by Hinduism as proclaimed by many including Vivekananda. But the following could be some of the reasons:

- Buddhism in due course took to rituals and split into sects.
- The concept of meditation was not new to the land of Yogis and Siddhas and some of the central theories of Buddhism also existed in Hinduism. The concept of middle path was beautifully captured in Bhagavad Gita, explaining the requirements of a moderate food, sleeping habit etc., in Chapter 6, Slokas 16 to 19.
- Pure logic-oriented Buddhism had a setback following the influence of bhakti and story telling (Ramayana, Mahabharata, Saiva puranas) as evidenced by various sculptured temples and literary works that dot various
parts of the country at various points of time. This influence was felt even in some East Asian countries.

- The attempt to distance away from extravagant methodology like pujas, rituals etc., from the people found the swimming tough in the land of idolaters. ("Man cannot think without symbols and words," said Swami Vivekananda in his Chicago address).

- The open-minded and flexible Hinduism was affecting the ingredients of Buddhism.

**Sankara and Resurrection of Hinduism**

There is an interesting anecdote in Sankara's biography ('Sankara Vijayam' by Thozhuvur V. Velayudha Mudaliar) that Sankara was none other than Siva himself who incarnated on earth as Adi Sankara upon request from Devas to save and resurrect Hinduism against atheist-oriented Buddhism. Along with Siva many 'devas' came to earth, like Saraswathi, Brahma, Murugan etc. to aid Sankara's assignment. Sankara was undoubtedly the king of logic (like Buddha) who dominantly streamlined and resurrected Hinduism at the expense of Buddhism.

Though Sankara was born in Kerala, later gripped Bharat with his logic and intellect and made a mark in India. Buddhist monks and other religious leaders had to submit to the power of logic of Sankara, who campaigned like a warrior and conquered many religious leaders in India and also in Nepal. Sankara bridged the gap between god and man by his concept of Advaitam which emphasised God's existence within self. This appealed to the kings and the masses. Interestingly we need to note here that though Vishitadvaitam propounded by Alwars who lived in the 5th and 6th centuries, the discipline attained prominence in the 12th century through Ramanuja. This emphasised duality (god and self) and bhakthi (artistic and emotional) in spiritual progress were different from Gyan (wisdom-logic) path of Sankara. If Buddhism had faced this concept of duality it might have survived. Sankara was aggressive in his task of resurrecting Hinduism. He walked the whole of India twice and established his math in four corners of India. Sankara produced around fifty remarkable works, which functioned like missionaries for Hinduism. His best is, of course, the churning out of Bhagavad Gita having 700 verses from the vast number of verses of Mahabharata. This great work of Sankara gave a great anchor for Hinduism. Sankara, by his powerful intellect and openminded approach, streamined the five sects of Hinduism, namely worshippers of Siva, Vishnu, Sakthi, Ganapathi, Murugan and Sun. Any further possibility of resurrection of Buddhism was sealed in later centuries when Muslim invaders began to rule the country.

Completely devoid of any political influence, Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa showed to the world that man can take different paths including various religious sects' philosophy and yet reach the goal. He himself practised Islam, Christianity and Hinduism. His disciple, Swami Vivekananda, who can be ranked to Buddha and Sankara, repeated the latter's feat nearly after 12 centuries. He too walked the whole nation, established maths and produced thought provoking, books on religion, mainly on Hinduism and strengthened it. He even went a step further and gave India and Hinduism a respectable status across the globe (Chicago address being its jewel) and spoke of harmony through universal brotherhood. This was followed by Mahatma Gandhi who epitomised the evolution in the perfect conducive ambience of freedom struggle and stressing on universal love and brotherhood. If only the last evolution took place a thousand years ago, mother India would not have lost Buddhism, the fourth largest religion in the world now.

- Sahsson Maitreya; Bhavan'e Journal March 31 2008
Neither Invasion nor Migration

Swami Vivekananda told a Madras audience more than 120 years ago: "Do not believe such silly things as there was a race of mankind in South India called Dravidians differing widely from another race in Northern India called the Aryans. Of late there was an attempt made to prove," he laughed and said, "The Aryans lived on the Swiss lakes." Yet the theory trotted out by Max Mueller in 1848 tracing the history of Hindu Dharma to the invasion of indigenous people by the Aryans around 1500 B.C. has obsessed India since then. It is now a well-known fact that the scholarly work of Max Mueller, once considered independent, was a prejudiced Western view. Even as Swami Vivekananda dismissed Max Mueller's theory as silly, he lauded his work on Indian scripture as next only to that of Sankaracharya. Max Mueller's theory dominated Indian academic and intellectual debate and politics of the 20th century. It wrought havoc in the national psyche since then.

It divided and disturbed the national mind. The pages of textbooks in schools and colleges have since enduringly poisoned and damaged the Indian psyche. And now comes a confession from a source linked to the very perpetrators of this theory, the Western scholars, that the theory, which Swami Vivekananda dismissed as silly, seems silly after all! Western scholars have begun to agree that "There is now ample evidence to show that Max Mueller and those who followed him were wrong." They say that "the Aryan invasion theory was based on the archaeological, linguistic and ethnological evidence". Later research has either discredited this evidence or provided new evidence that combined with the earlier evidence makes other explanations likely.

More important, the Western scholars now admit that such invasions cannot have such great influence on Indian history. Even more important, it says, "It is generally accepted that Indian history shows a continuity of progress from the earliest times to today". More, "the changes brought to India by other cultures" are no longer thought to be a major ingredient of the development of Vedic culture. New scholarly views suggest that Vedic civilisation is authentically Indian in origin. Indian culture is a culture in its own right and not a synthesis of elements from other cultures. This confession of the wrong done to India and high praise for India's endogamous antiquity from the great scholars of today approves just what Swami Vivekananda said over a century ago. The Aryan invasion or migration to India in 1500 B.C. which gave birth to Vedic civilisation, has no legs to stand upon now. The study of Colin Renfrew, a noted archaeologist at Cambridge University, not only debunks the theory propounded by Mortimer Wheeler, but also points at the similarities between the Aryan Vedic civilisation and the Harappan one. Nor can the theory of invasion or migration provide answers to pertinent questions like: How come the Aryans who showed strong attachments to lands, did not carry with them the memories of their previous homeland and nurse no nostalgia about their past? Is it not clear that Rigvedic expressions like 'Sabha', 'Samiti', 'Samrat', 'Ranjan', 'Rajaka', which indicate the existence of organised assemblies and rulers of different ranks, are relevant not to the nomadic invaders, but to the advanced urban society of the Vedic Aryans who were indigenous inhabitants of Harappan settlements. Was not the evolution of chariot more likely in the flat lands of North India rather than in the uneven terrain of Central Asia? The last nail in the invasion or migration theory has been hammered in by the recent genetic studies conducted by scientists in Kolkata with foreign scientists. They analysed the Y-Chromosomes of 936 men and 77 castes, and referred to the work of the international research teams that found that the earliest modern human arrived in India from Africa, trudging along the Indian Ocean coast about...
60,000 years ago. They concluded: "Our findings suggest that most modern Indians have genetic affinities to the earlier settlers and subsequent migrants and not to Central Asians or "Aryans", as they are called." When in 1922, the Harappan civilisation was discovered, only two major settlements, Mohenjodaro and Harappa had been excavated and that too partially. On this basis, views were formulated about the origin of these advanced urban civilisations. It was given out that its roots lay in Mesopotamia. Subsequent excavations of more Harappan sites have shown that these views and assertions were made without adequate evidence. John Reader, a scholar of anthropology and geography, has pointed out that the emergence of cities and civilisations in six widely separated places around Mesopotamia, India, Egypt, China, Central America and Peru was spontaneous and none resulted from contact with one another. Excavations carried out by a French team, headed by Jean-Francois Tarrige, during the last 15 years, at Mehrgarh in Pakistan, have pinpointed the beginnings of civilisation in India and shown that the Indus-Saraswati civilisation had no moorings in Mesopotamia or any civilisation outside India. It has been rightly observed, "The people in Mehrgarh tradition are the people of India today." There are similarities between the social and religious practices of the Harappan people and the people of present-day India. For example, the spiralled bangles of the type found around the figurine of the Harappan dancing girl can still be seen on the arms of women in Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, etc. Again, as was the case with Harappan women, "Sindoor" is applied by married women of Hindu families.

Some other common features of the two periods are: The practice of worshipping trees, putting of Swastika symbol at the entrance of the houses, etc. If all this is viewed in entirety, this is the picture that will emerge: The period 6500-3100 B. C. saw the growth of pre-Harappan and Indus - Saraswati civilisation, corresponding broadly to the times when the Rigveda was composed. Many scholars believe that the Vedas were written about 2500 B. C. But there are others like H. Jacobi of Bonn and Lokamanya Tilak who believe that the Vedas were written about 6000 years ago. Tilak's conclusion is based on a study of the position of the planets as described in the Vedas. Another scholar, Madame Blavatsky, says that the planetary position described in the Vedas repeats itself every 6000 years. So, how can we be sure that the Vedas were not written 60,000 years ago? She was of the opinion that they were written in an extremely remote past.

- Om Prakash Dubey, Bhavan Australia December 15 2007
Concentration, meditation and enlightenment, known respectively in Sanskrit as Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are the last three steps of Raja Yoga, directly concerned with the mind. The other five preliminary steps, concern the preparation of both the body and mind to be fit for Dharana. Concentration in particular calls for self-study and self-preparation, as the goal is to awaken one's inner awareness. This is true of Meditation also. Concentration and meditation go together, akin to floating and swimming. Swimming is not possible so long as one is not able to float. This is true of meditation also; meditation is not possible without learning concentration. Concentration or Dharana, which literally means holding the mind as one would hold an instrument in the hand, is the most important step in Raja Yoga. It connotes complete indifference to the fruits of action, fame, name and such like earthly acquisitions. Meditation and Enlightenment or Dhyana and Samadhi, follow concentration or Dharana as naturally as the newly born ducklings take to water soon after they are hatched.

Concentration of the mind is the criterion for comprehension, reception and transmission of any message. A distracted or an inattentive mind may or may not grasp all the implications of a sublime statement. A brief and pointed pronouncement is sufficient to drive home the point to a keen and attentive listener. Enlightenment is possible only to that mind which is fixed in concentration. The sunbeams gain in intensity as they get converged. A concentrated light is at once highly expressive and capable of revealing things in their native perspective. A concentrated mind sees and understands the self and the non-self, and, as they are. A mind in concentration is free and is said to be in its natural state. Day and night or light and darkness do not co-exist. Akin to this, knowledge and ignorance do not co-exist. The former reveals things as they are, while the latter distorts them.

A figure in dim light is viewed in different ways by people of different dispositions. A thief passing by it doubts it for a policeman, the policeman in turn for a thief, and the lover for paramour. A timid man gets frightened thinking it to be a ghost. But the fourth man who had seen it in broad day light understands the figure to be a stump of wood. With the dawn of true knowledge, all apparitions of ignorance vanish on their own accord. To quote Lord Krishna, in stanza 71 Chapter XVIII of the Bhagavad Gita: "Has this been heard by you, O Partha, with an attentive mind? Has the delusion of your ignorance been destroyed, O Dhananjaya?"

To sum up, concentration is the key, Meditation is the means for right knowledge, both secular and sacred, as exemplified by the following elucidations. Many students work at a problem in mathematics. Wrong answers they get are numberless and keep constantly cropping up and shifting. But when the right answer is arrived at by a smart student, he no more deviates from it. Akin to this, earthly hankerings are innumerable and people go on changing from one thing to another. But to the seeker of the Divine, the purpose is one and all endeavours are concentrated on it. Firmness of the mind comes to one who learns concentration, which is serviceable both to the sacred and the secular. When the divergent sunbeams are focused with the aid of a lens to one point, their power of heat and light get intensified. Ignition of a thing combustible then becomes possible. Even so, the mind trained in concentration can both know and do a thing to perfection. Among the disciples of Drona, it was possible for Arjuna alone to shoot his arrow successfully at a target within a grove. His success was entirely due to concentration.

When Swami Vivekananda was in America, he had an occasion to watch a few students practicing shooting. Their target was a few egg shells tethered to float and dance on a rustling brook. The failure of all of them in their attempts brought a smile on the lips of the Swami. The provoked youths challenged the ability of this strange observer. Handling a gun for the first time in life, the Swami shot and smashed the shell that he aimed at. "The
The secret of success lies in concentration," he said, while others wondered how he could achieve, what they could not, at the very first attempt. Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose, the world famous Indian scientist, demonstrated to the world that all the feelings and sensations found in human beings are in the plants as well. When questioned how he could probe into the mystery, his reply was simple "To know all about the plants, I myself became a plant mentally." He meant to say "Unknown becomes known through concentration and attention."

Reaching godhood, the hardest of all, is possible to none but to the firm-in-mind. The one-pointed devotion of Radha to Sri Krishna illustrates this aspect more convincingly. Her mind and sense organs function exclusively for communion with Sri Krishna. All her manifestations are directed to Him. Whatever, her eyes saw were all associated with Him. The ears ever bring to her the message pertaining to her Beloved. The food she eats comes from Him. He is her life. Another extraordinary phenomenon presents itself through this humble milkmaid. When her mind gets fully concentrated, the sense organs assume special powers. They are able to function one for the other. The melody emanates from Sri Krishna's flute; it comes floating in the air until it contacts Radha's ears. Instantaneously, her mind becomes the receiving as well as the broadcasting instrument of that sound. The within and the without become one symphony. According to her experience, Sri Krishna alone is contacted at all levels as the all pervading Nadhabrahman.

There is nothing strange in her ears sensing the Sound-Reality; the olfactory experience. The fragrance in It; consistent with its capacity, the sense of touch feels the presence of the Sound-Reality; and the tongue tastes the Sound-Reality in its own way. All the five senses pay homage in their respective ways to the Sound Reality, which is Sri Krishna. A concentrated mind opens up the realms of the Reality unknown to the ordinary. Through one-pointedness, realisation of the Reality and atone Tient or communion with It becomes possible. The one who is firm in mind is the best among men. To quote Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita "To the firm-in-mind, O joy of the Kurus, there is in this but one decision; many branching and endless are the decisions of the infirm-in-mind."

When the Vedas are designated as Imperishable, the reference is to which is eternal, and not to the books which run the risk of being destroyed or neglected. More than all these, it is what is constituted of the three and to be bound is not the goal of the enlightened human life. While the life here is entangled, what is beyond is unfettered. The means to get into it is now presented. Heat and cold, pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat - duals such as these are known as pairs of opposites. They are inevitable in the phenomenal existence.

When a person refuses to be affected, favourably or adversely, by these happenings and when he maintains his even-mindedness, he is said to be making progress in Yoga. In this context, the term also requires to be clarified. Yoga also means the act of seeking the needful earthly things for bodily maintenance; and kshema is the act of keeping carefully such of the things procured. But the spiritual aspirant should be unconcerned about getting and keeping them. As all beings get, as a matter of course, the air they require for breathing, the spiritual aspirant gets his bare bodily requirements without effort. Such is the law of spiritual life. When an aspirant gives undue attention to getting and keeping them, he is said to deviate from the spiritual path.

-M.S. Rao, Bhavan’s Journal May 15 2008
The First Boston Brahmin

The term 'Boston Brahmin' became popular in India early in the 20th century when the world famous art historian Ananda Coomaraswamy from India endeared himself to the people of Boston, America, by leading the spartan life of a Vedic Brahmin for thirty years from 1917 to 1947. During these 30 years (till he died in 1947), Ananda Coomaraswamy worked at the Museum of Fine Arts at Boston and built up the unique Indian Arts Gallery. However, the term 'Boston Brahmin' was first coined in America a hundred years earlier to refer to the well-known American philosopher R.W. Emerson who was given that appellation since he was the first American to pioneer a study of the Vedantic wisdom.

In an era of decreasing cross-cultural sympathy, Ralph Waldo Emerson is an inspiring example of a man who devoted his time to studying the highest thoughts of other areas and cultures. Emerson was attracted by the Vedantic wisdom of India which profoundly influenced his thoughts. As his thinking grew Indian philosophy, particularly the Advaitic thought, gained greater importance in America. The lamp of Vedanta thus lit by Emerson in America was successfully carried forward by such other torch-bearers like David Thoreau [1817-1862], Walt Whitman [1819-1892] and Sir Edwin Arnold [1832-1904]. Emerson was born in 1803 at Boston. His father was a clergyman who was probably the first American to benefit from the reading of Indian scriptures translated into European languages. He founded the Anthology Club in Boston in 1804 and edited its monthly journal, 'The Boston Review'—which many articles on Indian philosophy, history and culture during Ralph Emerson's childhood. Reverend Emerson obtained whatever books were available on India evincing more interest on the subject. By the time Emerson joined the Harvard College in 1817, he had developed an interest in Indian philosophy and culture. By the time he graduated from Harvard in 1821, he had read most of the available literature on Indian philosophy, history and culture and understood its universal application and adaptability. He was impressed by the Indian thought about the transmigration of the soul and the concept of reincarnation. He was fully convinced that while it was only the physical body that was subjected to decay and destruction, the soul incarnated countless times as it progressed from ignorance to enlightenment. Emerson obtained his Master's Degree in 1827 and joined the church as a Minister at the Second Church, Boston.

The reading of the literature of India like Wilkins's English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, Burnouf's Bhagavatha Purana, and Wilson's 'Vishnu Purana' as well as a few other translations had fully convinced Emerson about the soundness of the Vedantic philosophy. At a meeting he proclaimed "God is not separate from creation. God is the essence of the universe and it is God's energy that continually sustains the existence of the Universe". Paying glowing tributes to the religious literature of India and acknowledging his debt to it, Emerson wrote in his Essays:

"In all nations there are minds which incline to dwell in the conception of the fundamental unity. The raptures of prayer and ecstasy of devotion lose all being in one being. This tendency finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, and chiefly in the Indian scriptures, in the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita and the Vishnu Purana. These writings contain little else than this idea, and they rise to pure and sublime strains in celebrating it." According to 'Encyclopaedia Britannica 1976', Emerson was the most quoted American in the 20th century Press. He rejected the insidious materialism of the West and sought consolation and comfort in Indian religion and philosophy. His beloved aunt, Aunt Mary [father's sister], an intellectual, nurtured his independent and cultural spirit and kindled his interest in Indian thought. In 1820 she sent him a passage from 'A Hymn to Narayana' by Sir William Jones. He copied it in his diary along with his impressions and wrote to his aunt: " One is apt to lament over indolence and ignorance, when we read some of those
sanguine students of the Eastern antiquities, who seem to think that all books of knowledge and all the wisdom of Europe twice told, lie hidden in the treasure of the Brahmins”. According to Swami Vivekananda, Emerson’s greatest source of inspiration was Charles Wilkins's English translation of the Bhagavad Gita which was presented to him by the well-known Edinburgh scholar Thomas Carlyle [1795-1881]. One of the contemporary American critics, Rod Horton wrote: "Emerson's favourite of all Vedantic writings was the Bhagavad Gita which he read again and again and loaned to his friends till it was worn out". It is learnt that Emerson's copy of the Bhagavad Gita was borrowed and read more often than the copy at Harvard University because Emerson was one of the few Americans who owned it. Emerson's profound harmony with Indian scriptures is best illustrated in his poem "Brahma" [Brahman] derived from Indian scriptures. According to his journals, the theme for 'Brahma' composed in 1850 came to him after he read the Upanishads, particularly, the Kathopanishad. This poem reached the highest level of American Vedantism.

In 1872, when a fire occurred in his home, most of his books were spared. However, it was rebuilt with a spontaneous donation of more than $18,000. People filled the streets of Concord when he died in 1882 and the church bell tolled 79 times, one for each year of his life. Protop Chandra Mazoomdar, the great Brahmo-Samaj leader from Calcutta, paying glowing tributes to Emerson, says: "Yes, Emerson had all the wisdom and spirituality of the Brahmins. — In whomsoever the eternal Brahma breathed his unquenchable fire, he was the Brahmin. And in this sense, Emerson was the best of the Brahmins."

- B.M.N. Murthy, Bhavan’s Journal April 30 2008

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**Common Aim, United Action**

संगच्छद्वः संवदध्वः संवो मनांिस जानताम।
देवा भागं यथा पूवे संजानाना उपासने॥
स्मानो मंत्रः समिति: समानी।
समालं मनः सह चित्तम एषम॥
समालं मंत्रम आलि मंत्रये वः
समानेन वो हविषा जुहोमी॥
समानी व आकृति: समान्या हुद्यानि वः
स्मानं अस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासित॥

Assemble: speak with one another;
Let your minds be of one accord,
As ancient Gods unanimously enjoy their due portions
May your aim be common;
Your assemble common;
Common the mind and the thoughts of these united.
A common purpose do I lay before you;
and worship with your common obligation.
Common be your aim and your hearts united;
Your mind be one so that all may happily live together

Rigveda X.191.2-4
The 7th Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Summit was held in Wellington, New Zealand on 29th March, 2008. The annual World Peace Summit, held under the auspices of the Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Council, is one of the many projects conducted by His Holiness Vishwaguru Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda during four decades of tireless peace work. The World Peace Summit is inspired by the messages of India’s political and spiritual luminaries, Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Swami Madhavananda to “be the change we want to see” and to view “all in one and one in all”. The aim of this Summit is to awaken the consciousness of people to the most significant issues that challenge our world, specifically Climate Change, Protection & Preservation of the Environment, World Peace, Cultural Preservation, Education, Health and Youth.

International and local speakers at the NZ Summit included eminent scientist Dr David Wratt, a member of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning UN International Panel on Climate Change; Mr Ramu Damodaran, Chief of the Civil Society Service, United Nations; climate change authors Gareth Renowden from New Zealand and Timi Ecimovic from Slovenia; Maori academic, Peter Sciascia and yoga and ayurveda experts from India Dr Pushpa Garg and Dr Liladhar Gupta. The Indian High Commissioner in Wellington, Mr KP Ernest, gave a short address and letters of support came from the Governor General of New Zealand, The Honourable Anan Satyanand; South Australian Premier, The Honorable Anan Satyanand; South Australian Premier, The Honorable Mike Rann, the President of Croatia, Mr Stjepan Mesic and Monsignor David Cappo.

The question posed in the Summit theme was “climate change, what to do?” and of the many possible solutions that were suggested from this group of speakers with diverse backgrounds, is that climate change is in our hands, as individuals.

In a message from the United Nations, presented by Ramu Damodaran, Chief of the Civil Society Service, UN Outreach Programme, Ramu used the word “Maori” as an acronym saying that it stands for “Marking the Awakening of the Responsibility of the Individual”. He quoted UN Secretary General Banki Moon, who said in regard to the mitigation of climate change, we require 5 collaborative approaches: the United Nations, government, private sector, civil society and individuals. Ramu said, “Global trade has expanded three times in the last two decades, contributing greatly to the situation of global warming. This situation of climate change marks the responsibility of the individual. In our capacity to draw attention to inequity and contribute to the process of climate change, we have to be thinking individual and adjust our lifestyle and consider our political choices. The individual is responsible to the village, the village is responsible to the nation, the nation is responsible to the world and the world is responsible to the individual, so it’s come full circle: as Sri Swami Madhavananda said, ‘all in one and one in all’”.

The science and economics speakers presented evidence that ignoring this sage understanding of our “oneness” and our interconnectedness is a recipe for disaster. Nobel Prize-winning natural scientists Dr David Wratt and Pene Lefale presented the incontrovertible evidence for man-made global warming. Dr Wratt warned against the risk of maintaining the current path, which may include the melting of Greenland. Pene Lefale outlined some of the conflicts of interest that have slowed down the global response to the scientific imperatives. The US government, on the one hand, has signed a bill into legislation that prohibits the president from entering any international agreement that (1) does not bind the major economies in the developing world (including China and India) to mandatory greenhouse gas emission reduction targets (2) may harm the US economy. On the other hand, the US is the world’s biggest emitter of greenhouse gases. This is a major barrier to progress.

Award-winning author on climate change and New Zealand truffle farmer, Gareth Renowden, argued that we must stop burning coal and oil. He also informed the audience about the shocking news from recent days about the breaking up of the ice shelf in Antarctica, and presented some photos. Mr. Renowden also pointed out that, although New Zealand has only 4 million people, they are the second biggest carbon dioxide (CO2) Zealand’s biggest greenhouse gas emitting industry is agriculture. Mr. Renowden suggested New Zealand must lead the world in creating animal feeds that reduce methane by improving animal digestion.
Economic journalist Rod Oram made the case for carbon trading as the solution to many problems. He pointed out that anybody can send as much CO2 into the atmosphere as they want with no penalty. But as soon as a dollar penalty is applied to greenhouse gas emissions, people’s thinking will change. New Zealand has begun to roll out a carbon emissions trading scheme that will begin to apply to agriculture in the year 2013. The goal is for the whole country to lead the world by becoming carbon neutral by 2040, but this goal is very far from a reality without major changes across the whole board.

Sustainable development expert Dr John Pete talked about the limitations of technology in mitigating climate change, and the need for us to adopt a code of ethics that respect Humanity as a part of nature, not apart from nature. Dr Pete said, “we do not have the technological answers to climate change. Technology can do a great deal, has done a great deal, but it won’t help the root problem: exponential human greed. As Mahatma Gandhi said, ‘the earth provides enough for everyone’s need, but not for everyone’s greed’. The answer, we have to reduce our carbon budget. We have to accept there is a constraint on our use of finite resources on the planet. We have the ability as humans to move into a new stage of development. Instead of being grabbers of everything, we can move into a new mode of life: the dreadful “f” word: frugality. Decent frugality. But most people have been programmed in the last 50 years to expect more. Technology does not hold the answers. But we should look carefully at new technologies. Most technologies in the large scale have enormous side effects. Biofuels are not worth it because current conceived production takes too much land. We need to learn how to make biofuels out of sewage or trees. Hydrogen may be useful in about 20, 30 or 40 years, but we make it using fossil fuels or electricity. It takes energy to get energy. You have to invest energy to get energy. We are at the end of cheap oil. We need to start envisioning a new world. Plan B, Based on morality rather than self-interested economics”.

Dr Raymond Pelly, Dr Timi, Dr Shaw, Dr Garg and Dr Gupta continued the theme of the need for a new individual morality, based on being at one with nature, and following the Vedic scriptures, and the lives of the saints.

Dr Pelly stressed that “all of us must learn to live a simpler, less profligate, more spiritual lifestyle. We are restless, maybe we can counter this by making home a more attractive and spiritual place. What about making a house creative? In most houses there is no room where people can get away from the television, there is no room where people can paint, compose music, do yoga or meditate. The possibilities of making creative spaces in architecture are endless. Instead of being consumers, we need to learn to become producers of energy, and creators of human flourishing, we need to recover the ability to love and create. God may be our last best ally in this task. What we are up against is a fund driven global culture that says ‘I want it all and I want it now’”.

Dr Shaw spoke on “concepts of harmony” asking, “how can we make the world a better place for everybody? Gandhi sacrificed his life to oppose violence. If you don’t oppose global warming you are complicit in the violence that is behind global warming. If we want to achieve our goal, we must have the Vedantic concept of one-ness. This would remove the root causes of terrorism, poverty and global warming – using Vedic concepts to teach non violence and love. If the EU and USA can form united unions, then the world can be one. This can be achieved by people’s hearts, by carrying the message of Swamiji, of universal brotherhood”.

Dr Garg also espoused the Vedas as a solution to global warming, saying “if we want to maintain the climate, we should follow the Vedas. The Vedas are the storehouse of all knowledge and science. The first instruction is ‘be human’, feel for others as you feel for yourself. The second is ‘feel equality’, all living beings are the same in the eyes of the creator. Follow mother nature, living selfishly should be outright rejected. Mahatma Gandhi lived by the creed that everything living belongs to God therefore one should fulfil his basic needs without coveting other’s things. In order to live like this we have to adopt the Yamas and Niyamas. When all human beings practice these disciplines, peace will find a place in the human heart. Sri Swami Madhavananda said satsang, service and sacrifice are the three principles for success in life. Service frees us from attachment and jealousy and increases understanding. Live a life full of love, non violence and friendship, because this is the only way to attain peace”.

Dr Gupta gave an Ayurvedic viewpoint of climate change, saying, “we have to deal with the problem without creating another problem in 30 years. It is natural that nature changes. My physical body is changing day by day. But we have to not worry because new life is coming. If we are creating pollution in our bodies with the food we eat, how can we be relaxed in the brain? Science is great, but we need balance, we can balance the physical body, by practicing Yoga in Daily Life. Simple living and high thinking is what we need to deal with climate change”.

His Holiness Vishwaguru Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda gave the final address of the Summit, emphasising the emergent conclusion that responsibility for climate change is in our hands, and the best way for each of us individually to fight climate change is to be vegetarian:

“In the Vedas, the great seers, the Rishis, communicated long ago exactly what we have to expect in this time of Kali Yuga; that if we don’t follow Vedic principles then we face disaster. My grandmaster Sri Mahaprabhuji said, ‘don’t go against nature or you will suffer the consequences’. Over the last few days I have been thinking about rising sea levels, melting glaciers, floods and mud slides. They are occurring more fre-
quently because we destroyed forests. As Dr Timi said, the first step to recovery is to plant native trees.

Ultimately, this climate change problem will be solved if humans can become vegetarian. We are talking about balancing life but the biggest problem is meat eating. New Zealand has 4 million people and over 60 million sheep and cows — for what? That’s why New Zealand is suffering. I would advise all present to become vegetarian, right now, if you would really like to do something and become an example for others. In the last few centuries, humans started to make a big mistake, to discriminate against creatures other than humans. It is our greatest error to think we are superior. Between our life and the life of the mosquito there is no difference. As Dr Gupta said we are all made out of the five elements and we all represent one God. Sri MadhavanandaJi said ‘one in all and all in one’. If you take twenty cups full of water and put them in the garden, you will see one moon in twenty cups, one God in every creature. You have no right to kill animals, and, as Dr Shaw said, if you do not resist the killing of creatures then you are also implicated in the resulting karma. So, dear brothers and sisters we are one, not two. ‘Ahimsa Paramo Dharma’ the highest principle is Ahimsa. Imagine the pain of a fish when she is caught, she can’t speak to us, but she is suffering. Any animal which will be killed knows this 48 hours ahead, and fear fills the body of the animal. That fear goes into our body. That’s why nowadays many people have psychic problems. Day by day, churches, temples and Ashrams are closing because we fear to know ourselves. If you run away, it’s no solution you cannot run away from yourself. Climate change is not the only problem. The human mind is changing – ‘Mano Matra Jagat’ – the whole world exists in your mind, this world comes form you. Now you have free choice, which kind of meal you will eat this evening. I pray for your good heath, this country and especially for the Maoris. I am reminded of India, when a saint comes, we welcome them like you do. God protect you and your land”.

At the conclusion of the Summit, all participants were invited to sign a Declaration, which will be presented to the United Nations World Environment Day conference being held in Wellington on 8 June 2008.

…..There is an alternative to pleas for modern Machiavellis. Why not seek inspiration from advocates of human rights and nonviolence, from Mary Wollstonecraft to Leo Tolstoy, from Mahatma Gandhi to Martin Luther King Jr, from Vaclav Havel to Aung San Suu Kyi? Why not learn from them how to craft a passion for peace? This book’s response to these questions relies in particular on the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and on the practice of those who he influenced. For example, in April 1945 on the eve of the San Francisco Conference to draft the charter of the United Nations, journalists sought a statement from Gandhi. He responded:

There will be no peace for the Allies or the world unless they shed this belief in the efficacy of war and its accompanying terrible deception and fraud, and are determined to hammer out a real peace based on the freedom and equality of all races and nations. Peace must be just. In order to be that it must be neither punitive nor vindictive. Germany and Japan should not be humiliated. The strong are never vindictive. Therefore the fruits of peace must be shared equally. The effort then will be to turn them into friends. The allies can prove their democracy by no other means.

- Professor Emeritus Dr Stuart Rees, *Passion for Peace; PP 20*
Professor Stuart Rees is the director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at University of Sydney and Director of Sydney
SRI SWAMI MADHAVANANDANDA WORLD PEACE COUNCIL

Declaration of the World Peace Summit 2008
CLIMATE CHANGE – WHAT TO DO?
held under the auspices of the
Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Council
Wellington, New Zealand
29th March, 2008

Today we stand at a decisive juncture in the Earth’s history, a time when humanity must choose its future. The aim of this Summit is to awaken the consciousness of people to the most significant issues that challenge our world, specifically Climate Change, Protection & Preservation of the Environment, World Peace, Cultural Preservation, Education, Health and Youth. To this end we the undersigned declare our commitment to and realisation of the values of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and Earth Charter, and affirm our in principle support for the following conclusions that result from this 7th International World Peace Summit.

1. NURTURE OUR PLANET IN TRUST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS: To actively promote the urgent need for humans at all levels of society around the globe to work collectively for a just, sustainable and peaceful world for present and future generations.

2. COLLABORATION BETWEEN CONSERVATIONISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: To advance the need for the exceptional management and conservation of the Earth’s natural resources whilst wisely sustaining modern progress and development.

3. RESPECT FOR LIFE IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY: To inspire in the hearts and minds of all people a renewed sense of universal responsibility, particularly the need to protect each form of life regardless of its perceived worth to human beings.

4. HOLISTIC EDUCATION: To affirm the importance of ethical, moral and spiritual education to ensure that future generations receive the values, traditions and institutions that support a sustainable way of living on planet Earth.

5. UPHOLD A GLOBAL CULTURE OF NON-VIOLENCE AND PEACE: In the words of Mahatma Gandhi let us ‘Be the Change we Wish to See’. Let us recognize that cultural diversity is humankind’s precious heritage and heighten a global awareness that peace is the wholeness created by right relationship with one’s self, other persons, other cultures and other religions. As Sri Swami Madhavanandaji said, ‘All in One and One in All’.

6. UNITED NATIONS: To support the indispensibility of the United Nations as the central force for global peace and development and to pay tribute to Secretary General Ban Ki Moon for his leadership on action relating to climate change and in the cause of the world’s ‘bottom billion’.

7. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY: To affirm gender equality and to work collectively to ensure universal access to education, health care and economic opportunity.

8. YOUTH, OUR CULTURE OF TOMORROW: To acknowledge that the contribution of today’s youth can make a difference in our world. Recognise the necessity to actively support them physically, mentally and spiritually, and guide them to develop a sense of global citizenship.

9. SECURE THE RIGHTS OF MINORITIES AND INDIGENOUS PERSONS: To protect the rights of all ethnicities, particularly minority populations and indigenous persons, and encourage the preservation of their cultural, religious and linguistic traditions.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN DIGNITY: To support the dignity of each human being and acknowledge the right of each person to live in security with freedom of choice, access to food, clean water and shelter, education and health. We further support each human the right to be governed by rule of law not by rule of power.

May this World Peace Summit be an event remembered for the awakening of reverence for life and protection of Mother Earth. In the midst of a rich diversity of cultures and life forms, let each of us remember we are one human family with a common destiny.
Many communities have a habit of remembering their heroes and people who have contributed or have made great or small sacrifices to the benefit of the community or the nation that a particular community belongs to. For example, those who fought for America’s independence, the war heroes of the first and second world wars, the victims of the Nazi holocaust, and even the victims of the 9/11 are remembered, each for its own reason. However, there are millions of people who the history has chosen to ignore or forget, or both. The millions of people that I am referring to here are the victims of Europe’s colonial expansion since the so-called discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus in 1492. First the European conquerors slaughtered millions of the original owners of the lands in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand and the Island countries in the Indian and Pacific oceans. After capturing their lands, with, as some scholars have stated, ‘gun in one hand and the bible in the other’, the Europeans sidelined the traumatized survivors to reserved lands. Then, in order to work on the vast areas of these captured lands, millions of ordinary African men, women and children were captured and transported to many parts of the colonised world. Some scholars have estimated that approximately forty million Africans were taken away from their homes, but majority of them died during transportation. Those who survived were traded and treated like animals in the colonies. Today not much is heard of the sacrifices of these slaves, upon whose blood and sweat the present day America is founded. The original owners of this so-called great nation are still being confined to the reserves. However, the Americans celebrate fourth of July, the day they claimed their independence from Britain (1776), and when apparently, democracy was born there, with much vigor and penchant each year.

When the African slavery got abolished in the Americas, a great void in labour supply on the colonial plantations were created, because the former slaves refused to go back to the plantations. Then the cunning Europeans turned their attention on the vast pool of labour in India, much of which was under European domination at that time. From 1838 till the end of Indian indenture system (now known as the girmity system in Fiji and South Africa) in 1916, 1.2 million Indians were transported to European colonies, including Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, South Africa, the French Reunion, Surinam, Jamaica and Fiji. Many researchers now believe that the Indian indenture system was, in many aspects, akin to the African slavery. This is especially true in the way they were recruited, transported and treated during the indenture. In accordance to the terms of the indenture agreements, a significant percentage from the total returned to their homes in India. However, the majority of them could never return. Many views, mainly by the white writers, assert that the Indians chose to stay back in the colonies. However my own research in the case of Fiji, conducted since 1996, starkly reveals that the majority of Fiji’s girmityas were prevented from returning to the homes in India. In this way they became permanent slaves to the British colonial government and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company of Australia, which had virtual monopoly of the sugar industry and employed majority of the girmityas there.

It is about time that the pains and sufferings, as well as the unparallel contribution of the girmityas to Fiji, must be seen from the point of view of these exiled and enslaved people, who relentlessly toiled away from their homes in India. Spare a thought for these 35,000 human beings! Each day they were rudely awakened at the break of dawn, forced to do backbreaking tasks at the threat of whips and beatings from the Indian sardars and white overseers, and endure inhuman living conditions in the coolie lines or other shacks they called homes. They did all that with knowledge that they would never return to their homes in
India. We must remember that the majority of the girmityas were plucked away from their homes by the recruiters in India and they did not even say good byes to their parents and other loved ones. Now in Fiji, each moment of their lives, the heart wrenching feeling that they would never see their loved ones back in India must have endlessly tormented them. Many committed suicides and many other developed adverse mental conditions. The bodies of these girmityas battled daily on the sugarcane farms, sugar mills, roads and tramlines of Fiji. The minds of them battled every second with the knowledge that their bodies will not get the last rites in the country of their birth. The physical and mental battle continued until each of these exiled girmityas drew their last breath in Fiji.

These girmityas may not have won any wars or captured any territories from the enemies. They did not ever fire a gun. But they battled everyday and conquered the hostile land of Fiji and planted sugarcane on it. From the same sugarcane they made sweet sugar, which turned Fiji, a country that had appeared to be so useless that England rejected to takeover twice, into a viable economy. While they were doing that, they also sacrificed endlessly in order to ensure that their children did not have to suffer their plights. In a short time they built schools, temples and mosques. They instilled Indian culture and tradition to their children. The girmityas, who were brought to Fiji from many different states of India, with several religions among them, combined their efforts and achieved unparallel successes in these fields. They began speaking one single Indian dialect. By the time the last girmitya drew his last breath in Fiji, their children were reaping the benefits of their pains, sacrifices and hard work. But hardly any of them even remembered them. In the schools, many of them built by the girmityas, they were taught the history of the arrival of the native Fijians to Fiji, the arrival of the Europeans, and about the queen and her castles in England. They were even taught about the wheat farming in Australia and the sheep farming in New Zealand. But not a word about the arrival, the sacrifices and the contributions of the Indians, the girmityas! Fiji had forgotten them and consigned them to the dustbin of its history; just like people do to their worn-out and useless shoes.

Then the 1987 coups struck Fiji. Thousands of Indians, who had forgotten the way their ancestors were treated in Fiji, and thought Fiji was their home, had a rude awakening. Thousands fled Fiji. But after a while, they again began thinking Fiji as a home. What history teaches us is that we never learn from history. They were once again brought to reality in 2000. Thousands fled Fiji again! Even then majority of them failed to remember their Indian ancestors, how they were treated in Fiji. They refused to travel back into the history, study it, analyze it and learn from it. Another coup took place in 2006! Slowly but surely, a very small number of Indians of Fiji; they are still not called Fijians in Fiji, began researching their girmity history. Some began traveling to India in search of their Indian ancestry. Rudely deprived off their Fijian identity, some even began searching their Indian identity. They began to realize that their identity is strongly linked to their girmity identity. It is the girmityas that link them to India, and her thousands of years of history and culture. Those who have found and visited their ancestral villages in India will tell you about the sense of fulfillment that this simple act brings to them.

It has taken more than one hundred year for a few children of the girmityas to start appreciating the sacrifices and contributions of the girmityas towards their own, and Fiji’s success. Each year this number is slowly growing. Some of them have started re-writing history from the perspective of the girmityas. Their efforts are now being appreciated and slowly but surely, the Fiji Indians, especially who are now living away from Fiji, are getting interested in their own history. In countries like Australia, Indians from India are also learning, for the first time, that some of their own were transported to Fiji around a century ago. They are beginning to learn about their pains, sacrifices and contributions in Fiji. The efforts of a few visionary and dedicated people will ensure that the history of the girmityas, that was grossly distorted and neglected in Fiji, will be deconstructed and the truth will be finally revealed. Ultimately, their work will ensure that the girmity history of Fiji will not be forgotten.

Remember the Fiji Girmityas during the Girmity Divas 2008 on 14th June at the Casula Powerhouse, 1 Casula Road, Casula. For more information please contact Satish Rai on rai2@iprimus.com.au or Navneet Choujar on discover@nsftv.com

Satish Rai
Bridge Under Troubled Waters
A mystical, ancient land-link between India and Sri Lanka is under threat
Kerry van der Jagt. - Sydney Morning Herald, May 11 2008

The much-loved story of Ramayana, a famous epic of ancient India, is as timeless as history itself. It is a story of courage that embodies a moral code of ethics and culminates in the triumph of good over evil. In dance performances depicting Rama's life, the story tells of how the demon king, Ravana, uses trickery to kidnap Lord Rama's wife, Sita, and how Rama, with the help of his army of monkeys, builds a bridge of stones from India to Sri Lanka to rescue her. Ram Setu, meaning Rama's Bridge (also known as Adam's Bridge) is the name given to the narrow ridge of sand and rocks between Sri Lanka and India which may or may not be the mythical bridge. For the majority of Indians on the subcontinent and countless more worldwide, particularly across South-East Asia, the 48-kilometre-long underwater feature is physical evidence of the Ramayana and hence has huge cultural significance. The name Adam's Bridge indicates that Christians and Muslims may have reason to revere the bridge. But now it needs rescuing. The Sethusamudram Shipping Canal Project has started dredging the sunken causeway with the aim of reducing travel time for ships going from the west to the east coast of India. Dredging began two years ago and already 20 percent of the bridge has been destroyed. However, after fierce criticism, the project stalled in 2007 and is yet to restart. Perhaps Rama's monkeys are lending a hand again. The bridge has been mentioned in many historical documents and 12th century maps including those of Marco Polo. He called this area Setabund-Rameswara, which means a bridge constructed at Rameswaram, reinforcing the belief that this structure is the ancient bridge.

In 2002, a NASA satellite produced images of what looks like a string of pearls connecting Rameswaram off the south-eastern coast of India with the north-west of Sri Lanka. The question being asked is, "Is it a natural phenomenon or the remnant of something man-made?" Calls for the preservation of the bridge have come from various groups including naval cartographers and shipping specialists who question the usefulness of dredging when the resulting canal will be just 12 metres deep, and only small and medium-sized vessels will be able to use the new passage. The worldwide trend in shipping is to larger ships because it is more economical. The Panama Canal allows vessels of 90,000 tonnes and the Suez 120,000 tonnes - but the maximum for the Sethusamudram would be 30,000 tonnes. It has been suggested that during the December 2004 tsunami, the bridge acted as a natural barrier, deflecting the tsunami and preventing the devastation of a large section of coastline around Kerala in southern India. Tsunami expert Professor Tad Murty, who advised the Indian Government in 2004 , agrees that there is a real threat to southern Kerala from future tsunamis in South-East Asia. However, he has not gone so far as to say that the dredging project will increase the chances of devastation. What is needed is the intervention of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. Professor Snjezana Karinja, curator of archaeology for the Sergej Masera Maritime Museum in Slovenia, says that whether or not the bridge is manmade is irrelevant. "Under UNESCO guidelines for heritage listing, Ram Setu should be allocated heritage status for its cultural significance," she says. In 2005, UNESCO named the legend of the Ramayana and its related oral and cultural tradition on a list of 90 outstanding examples of the world's Intangible Cultural Heritage. Various groups worldwide, concerned with the cultural and environmental devastation that further dredging will cause, are pressuring the Indian Government to preserve the bridge. Dr Kama Maclean, lecturer at the University of NSW's school of history and philosophy, is an expert in Indian history and politics. "The issue is whether an economic benefit, such as the cost-cutting from reduced shipping time, should justify the removal of a site of religious significance," she says. "It is clear that there is much religious importance attached to the bridge and, even if we don't share that, I think we need to respect those that do." Intangible culture includes song, music, drama, skills, oral history and the other parts of culture that can be recorded but cannot be touched and interacted with. Since culture is the highest expression of what it means to be human, the Ram Setu Bridge should be preserved and viewed as belonging to all humanity.

Even a monkey would know that.

- www.smh.com.au
India appears to have made significant progress in many fields. However this progress has failed to improve the living conditions in many remote and isolated areas of the country.

The government machinery is either unable or unwilling to set up schools in these areas. Even if a school is set up in such an area, it is difficult to get and retain dedicated teachers for these schools. Even today over 90% of India's tribal population is illiterate and falls victim to evils like exploitation and frauds.

Ekal Vidyalaya movement offers a unique and cost effective approach to address this important issue and was formally launched in mid nineties. Ekal Vidyalaya literally means a single teacher school.

An Ekal Vidyalaya Class has between 30 and 40 children in the age group of 5 to 14 years, where children are offered 5 years of schooling and primary health care. The class is often conducted under the shade of a big tree or in a hut. The teachers are locally educated youths who are specially trained. The curriculum includes basic language, science and maths skills. Character building, cultural values, health and hygiene are also integral part of education.

Only Rs 15000 (i.e. less than $10 per week) a year is required to sponsor a school. To ensure ownership, a similar amount is contributed by the local community. Administrative cost is less than 10%.

EVF movement has spread to a number of countries including USA, UK, Canada, Hongkong, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. To date over 23000 schools have been established throughout (almost in every state) India. The mission of Ekal Vidyalaya movement is to set up 100,000 Ekal schools by 2011. This will cover nearly all villages in India where no school exists today.

Each sponsor is assigned an internet login name and password so that the sponsor(s) may get any information about, and/or monitor the progress of, the school.

We are indebted to the people of India for our almost free education that enabled us to migrate to Australia and to have our current status. The best way to pay our debt, and our voluntary HECS (from Australian Perspective), is through a gift of education to unprivileged tribal and rural children of India by sponsoring a school and/or joining the EVF movement.

Even the government of Australia has come forward to advance this cause and has granted Tax Exemption status to EVF Australia. Accordingly all donations for sponsoring Ekal Schools are tax deductible in Australia. More than 250 persons of Indian origin living in Australia have joined this movement to sponsor about 240 Ekal Schools and you can do your bit by joining this movement in any way you can.

For more information, please visit our web site at: www.ekalvidya.org

: Nihal Agar, President Australia Tel: 94188824

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**EKAL VIDYALAYA FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA PRESENTS...**

**Ekal Nite Hasya Dhamaka-2 with Shailesh Lodha & Arun Gemini**

**When:** Saturday 26 July from 6:30pm

**Where:** Marana Auditorium, Civic Centre
MacMohan Street, Hurstville

**Tickets:** Tushar Bhatt - 0419 296 183
Savita Gupta - 9764 6604

Also in Melbourne 27 July 2008. For Tickets in Melbourne contact Gopal Verma - 0401 984 610
Addressed in the main article of HRH are: The
conundrum of man’s beginning on earth. The nature and
motivation consciousness provides man. The relationship
of the human brain to consciousness. How consciousness
interconnects all life and underpins all human activities.

The consciousness researchers Penrose, Hameroff & Co
already have the gist of the consciousness mechanism.
See http://www.quantumconsciousness.org/overview.html.
Their work is in complete accord with a specific part of a
talk I came across from 1957, given by the late
Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo during his world
tour in 1957-8 For want of a better title I’ll call
Sumohadiwidjojo a mystic. In 1957 he was describing for
the benefit of the members of the Subud Movement how
consciousness manifests. As his vocabulary didn’t
include the nomenclature of science, his description
lacked the capacity to identify in scientific language the
material/spiritual junction he could see by looking into a
person’s being. This recount doesn’t reflect what he knew
by his inspections, for even though he could see the
tissues concerned he had no names for them; least wise
none that he declared. This retelling of
Sumohadiwidjojo’s witness highlights where
consciousness doesn’t manifest. What Pak Subuh said,
amongst other things, was that consciousness isn’t in the
brain - the part that thinks - but is present and very
difficult to describe Pak Subuh gave many explanatory
talks about different aspects of consciousness but because
of the mental blocks that exist within mankind’s thinking,
he restricted his explanations to those who showed more
than casual interest.

Today those talks remain the private property of the
Subud Movement. Now, in 2008 the mental blockages
within society are still firmly in place...but in these days
the evidence of where and how to look is overwhelming
The nub of this alternate, entirely open and free
explanation is laid out in the next eleven paragraphs (of
the complete HRH). It outlines in a minimalist way the
nature of the critical path that makes up this natural
phenomenon - that of consciousness. It’s only a partial
description, for the whole pattern is deep and beyond any
adequate description. The phenomenon is simply the
Supreme Power’s gift to humanity; and man’s attitude is
the only fetter to its access. The relevance of the late
Arthur M. Young’s work has for this explanation needs a
mention here. Young, the inventor of the Helicopter and a
devoted spiritual man, observed that the core problem in
the worldview of modern science is its common omission
of first cause or free will, which arises from the schism
between theory and application See http://
www.arthuryoung.com/nodstatement.html It seems to me
that what Young calls ‘his theory’ encompasses the
determinism, the free will and much of the aptitude that’s
critical for the right form of application to take place...
Man’s brain is able to initiate thought because the Life
Force is present to enable it. Because man’s will is free
the choices he makes determine how he will interpret the
world. Given that novices (and mankind per se) also have
this radio-like link to their spiritual life, and given that
this spiritual antenna is quite impartial as to whether their
thought processes are right or wrong, any mistakes they
make can only be corrected through their observations
about the quality of the choices they’ve made; until their
inner awareness begins to guide their choices. Also, any
choices made in concert with others tend to steer a
novice’s choice. When man makes good choices the radio-
like link between his thinking and his spiritual
understanding improves his capacity to make better
choices. In increments then, this is part of the process by
which spiritual awareness increases or decreases. This
process can also be instantaneous - for better or for worse.
In short - it is primarily the individual’s focus that
determines the way the world is understood by him.

As novices’ decisions are always subject to changes that
can take place in this material existence, there is - and this
is especially true for novices - much room for their
thoughts to be in error. Earthly experiences accrue to
them, not within their brains for their brains have no
capacity to accrue anything, but with a spiritual outlook
that’s hopeful and growing in its capacity to remember.
This remembering is not corporal in any way whatsoever,
however man has a very limited physical thinking
apparatus - and if the individual is habitually cynical -
such an outlook can disrupt the reception of their spiritual
antenna through the habitual nature of their thought
process when it is best to muster an open quietness. To
put it another way, don’t be led by a chip on your
shoulder. It should be evident then that the
electromagnetic forces that are part of the substrate of
material existence have no direct link to the spiritual
stages that manifest spiritual existence on earth. That is -
there is no link other than what’s manifest by means of
man’s earthly body. The quality of an earthly individual’s
personal relationship with these spiritual forces is only
experienced through man’s body and its radio-like link

Modifed extracts from: Heavenly Rocking Horse (HRH) about:
The Pathology Of Thought Dominance And How To Resolve It -
In regard to Consciousness and Human Motivation
with the ethereal nature of the motivational grid - which is the spiritual part of the earth’s atmosphere. A person’s final transition from this earthly life necessarily involves Heavenly Intervention which oversees man’s transition from his earthly body. The potential of The Great Life beyond the final transition of this earthly life is truly immense. In this earthly life openly inclined people are able to taste the potential of that ongoing life through their senses. Experience of this capacity is enormously variable in society. Man’s degree of acuity in this respect is dependent on what he inherits and also what he attracts to the task of motivating his earthly life; and what attracts him. The symbolism of the fabled heavenly stairway can be understood as a tool of man’s dreams or his intuition. It also represents the stages people undergo during their final transition from this earth, or specifically the function of the fine material bodies that manifest during this transition. They’re all part of the final transition, steps that enable most people to experiencing their transition. Others have already traversed any number of those stages during their earthly life. After the transition’s steps are complete, how and where

The Great Life experience leads man is dependent on the focus of his motivation. The material potential present in nature that man finds so exciting, which is now being exploited by scientists through the Large Hadron Collider in Geneva Switzerland, as well as other similar smaller instruments elsewhere, are only material potentials. They will certainly expand the envelope of man’s knowledge about the material world and how it’s constituted. But the only link that can possibly exist between the ethereal grid and that of the physicality of man’s material existence is the formless form of the Highest Power itself, the Supreme Power. There is no other spiritual link, save the connection described above through man’s body. It’s interesting to observe that the Hadron Collider will use quantum forces to physically ‘light up’ observations about matter. This is somewhat similar to what the Supreme Power does through man’s mental process, except that these mental processes have no basis in materiality at all. As the Hadron Collider is a material apparatus, what it can uncover can never surpass what man himself can achieve through his relationship with the Supreme Power. The Hadron Collider, despite all the excitement it’s generated, and plainly it is a magnificent tool, is of man’s own making and therefore not equal to what man himself can achieve through the spirit, but in theory it should be able to confirm the microtubules hypothesis. But from life experience itself it is already evident that the motivation received through an active inner life is the key to the Heaven man’s seeks. In April 2008 a summary of Heavenly Rocking Horse was submitted to the forum of the Australian 2020 Summit.

The complete article is at: http://www.society4good-feeling.com

Hadrian Judge

The Process of Cultural Reintegration

The process of Cultural reintegration is like the process of nutrition which regenerated the living tissues from day to day. A student of Culture first studies it and becomes a reception centre. He then absorbs its finest elements, if the culture is not alien. This makes him true to himself, his country and his culture. Hem in the next stage, tries to live up the them under the conditions of the age. As soon as he does this he becomes an active centre of reintegration. He radiates the permanent values of his culture; influences his environments; and produces a healthy renaissance by establishing contact with alien influences.

He then grows rich in personality and dynamic effectiveness. And the Culture passing through the crucible of the student’s individual nature, will be an organic creating fresh with new life and tenacious and powerful with its ancient strength. This is reintegration.
Kulapati's Letter - Lawyers Role

One of the worst features of our public life has been the manner in which the prestige of the law courts has suffered on account of deprecatory references made by some of our politicians. Perhaps the concentration of power in the hands of ministers with a huge majority to support them has led to these attempts to belittle the role of the judiciary or to tell it how to behave. Judges are but human, but it is to the high credit of our judges that, by and large, they have stood the test well. Some politicians look upon lawyers as nuisances. Some do not like them even to vindicate fundamental rights and often look upon them as obstacles to swift justice as they conceive it to be; that is, they want their own ideas of justice to prevail over the justice as dispensed by courts according to law. It is a mood, which, if not checked in time, would lead to totalitarianism.

The Greatest Miracle - Swami Sivananda

Mind has immense powers. It derives its power from the Atma or the Supreme Soul. The mind is a collection of thoughts. The mind’s energy is dissipated by worry, evil thoughts, care, anxieties and lack of Brahmacharya. If you can control the immense amount of power which the mind processes through concentration, sublime divine thoughts, you will acquire Siddhis or the power to do supernatural actions. Real Yogis perform miracles to convince their disciples of the existence of transcendental things and God. They will not perform miracles on the platform.

What Life Has Taught Me - Sri Prakasa

In a few words, life has taught me something which, I fear, I have not followed, something which I regret I am not still following, but something, the truth of which I recognise, and wish everyone did so, not only in theory but in practice, knowing full well, at the same time, that no one would do so if it goes counter to his inner nature. We would always be committing mistakes and repenting in vain for it. Such is life, such it will always be. The real truth and injunction for all men for all time, is embodied in the beautiful words of the Bhagavad Gita:

श्रेयाय स्वधर्मं विगुणः परधर्मांत्स्यनुष्ठतात्।
स्वधर्मं निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मों भयावहः॥

“Better one’s own duty, though destitute of merit, than the duty of another well discharged. Better death in the discharge of one’s own duty: the duty of another is full of danger.”

National & Emotional Integration - Humayun Kabir

Our Constitution not only offers, but guarantees, equality of opportunity to all. Such equality can be realised only in an atmosphere of justice and fair play. Once an atmosphere of hope, expectancy and optimism is created, the fears and suspicion which are at the root of fissiparous tendencies will have little scope.
To truly appreciate the capabilities of a helicopter it is necessary to compare its maneuverability with other forms of transport. The train, for instance, can only move forward or backward, while a car can move forward, or reverse, and also turn to the left or right. A car therefore can be moved in four different directions.

Since an aeroplane can fly, this gives it an additional dimension to move about in. While aeroplanes cannot move backward, they can turn left or right, move forward or up and down. An aeroplane therefore can be moved in five different directions.

Helicopters can move forward, backward, left, right, up and down, a total of six different directions. Helicopters are also capable of stopping in midair, i.e., they can be made to hover at one spot, and they can also be made to fly sideways, by using suitable controls. Military helicopters can turn instantly to fire weapons in almost any direction, something that aeroplanes cannot do.

Since helicopters are capable of so many intricate maneuvers they have many controls, and both hands and both feet are required to operate them. Handling a helicopter therefore requires a great amount of training and skill.

Constant attention must also be paid to weather conditions when flying a helicopter as the aircraft is easily affected by strong winds and other adverse conditions, especially when it is hovering, moving backward or spinning at one point.

The great advantage that the helicopter has over the aeroplane is that it can take off or land in a very small space, even on a rooftop. However, a helicopter cannot fly as fast as most aeroplanes, and it requires more fuel to travel the same distance. This makes it uneconomical to use helicopters when aeroplanes are available. So despite their versatility, the use of helicopters remains limited. They are used in places where aeroplanes are unable to operate, and for special tasks like rescue operations, aerial observations, agricultural operations and military missions.

— L. Prabhu

Dimdima
April 2009
This classic book presents an authentic interpretation of over four hundred Indian concepts and day to day practices derived by the author Peggy Holroyde from her personal exploration of India Over a period of fifty years.

This unique volume provides a basic understanding of the Indian culture through an in-depth analysis of the various most commonly used and not so common Indian terms and concepts. Its reading will be useful to not only those ‘foreigners’ to the Indian culture but to the most learned in the Indian culture as well.

- Gambhir Watts

Peggy Holroyde - A Profile

Peggy Holroyde nurtures close ties with India and likes to call her youngest child (a son) who was born in India a real ‘Delhi-wallah’ (belonging to Delhi). She was born September 14, 1924 in Leicestershire, England. She studied Hindu philosophy and Buddhist thinking under Dr Radhakrishnan in an extramural course at Oxford University after her BA Degree in English Literature and Fine Arts at Radcliffe College, Harvard University in 1941-45.

Peggy lived in Delhi from 1953-58 accompanying her husband who was BBC Representative to India and Pakistan. She travelled all over India, returning innumerable times since then both for organization of exhibitions in the UK and later in Western Australia after her husband, Derek’s academic appointment in 1976 as inaugural Dean of Arts and Design at Perth (now Curtin University).

Her stay in India was in the midst of a ferment of intellectuals, writers, actors, musicians and painters of those times. Dr Narayana Menon – Director General of All India Radio was an old friend of the BBC and there was M.F Husain- the world renowned painter, Krishen Khanna, Souza, Gaitonde, Chintamoni Kar the sculptor and Nirad Chaudhuri - writer of a controversial book The Diary of an Unknown Indian, Mulk Raj Anand (writer) who have been their friends and acquaintances. Among musicians, during her visit to South India (June 1955 – Madras), she had met Rukmini Devi Arundale at Kalakshetra and later also had the privilege of staying with the world renowned MS Subbulakshmi –vocalist beyond compare in her home while Peggy was writing a book, Indian Music (1972, Allen & Unwin, London).
Holy & Wise

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side - Rigveda, I-89-I

O God! Bestow on us the best treasures, The efficient mind and good fortune; The increase of wealth, the health of bodies; The sweetness of speech and fairness of days - Rig Veda 2-21-6

Four Things support the world, the learning of the wise, The Justice of the great, the prayers of the good, and the valour of the brave - Prophet Mohammed

Our Father in heaven Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done On earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses Amen - Bible

By donning the garb of Religion, vice does not Become virtue, nor does A wrong cease to be wrong - M. Gandhi

Kulpativani -
Voice of Kulpati - Bhavan’s Founder

Student Indiscipline, Our Misfortune

It is both a matter of agony and shame that, in many parts of I India, discipline is disappearing from among the students. JjTis is the most unfortunate thing. I need not go into the causes of it, but an educational system, or a national life, in which the young men do not observe discipline, is a complete failure. We must save ourselves from this calamity. We must realise that the relation between students and teachers is not that of labour and capital, between employer and employed. It is the relation of persons who are jointly pursuing knowledge in the bonds of mutual confidence. This being so, there is no scope for a strike in an educational institution. It is the influences from outside which are introducing such disruptive elements. The teachers, by their character and their affectionate attitude towards students, must enter into the minds and lives of the students.

There is no greater shaping influence on character than the example of a teacher's life and aspirations. If the students go wrong you can take it that they had never met with a teacher who could provide to them the example of noble life devoted to learning and ideals."

The Test of Bhavan’s Right to Exist

The test of Bhavan's right to exist is whether those who work for it in different spheres and in different places and those who study in its many institutions can develop a sense of mission as would enable them to translate the fundamental values, even in a small measure, into their individual life.

Creative vitality of a culture consists in this: whether the ‘best’ among those who belong to it, however small their number, find self-fulfilment by living up to the fundamental values of our ageless culture.

It must be realised that the history of the world is a story of men who had faith in themselves and in their mission. When an age does not produce men of such faith, its culture is on its way to extinction. The real strength of the Bhavan, therefore, would lie not so much in the number of its buildings or institutions it conducts, nor in the volume of its assets and budgets, nor even in its growing publication, cultural and educational activities. It would lie in the character, humility, selflessness and dedicated work of its devoted workers, honorary and stipendiary. They alone can release the regenerative influences, bringing into play the invisible pressure which alone can transform human nature.
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India Tourism Sydney
Phone: 02 9221 9555
Level 5, Glasshouse 135 King Street Sydney NSW 2000
info@indiaturism.com.au • www.incredibleindia.org
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