

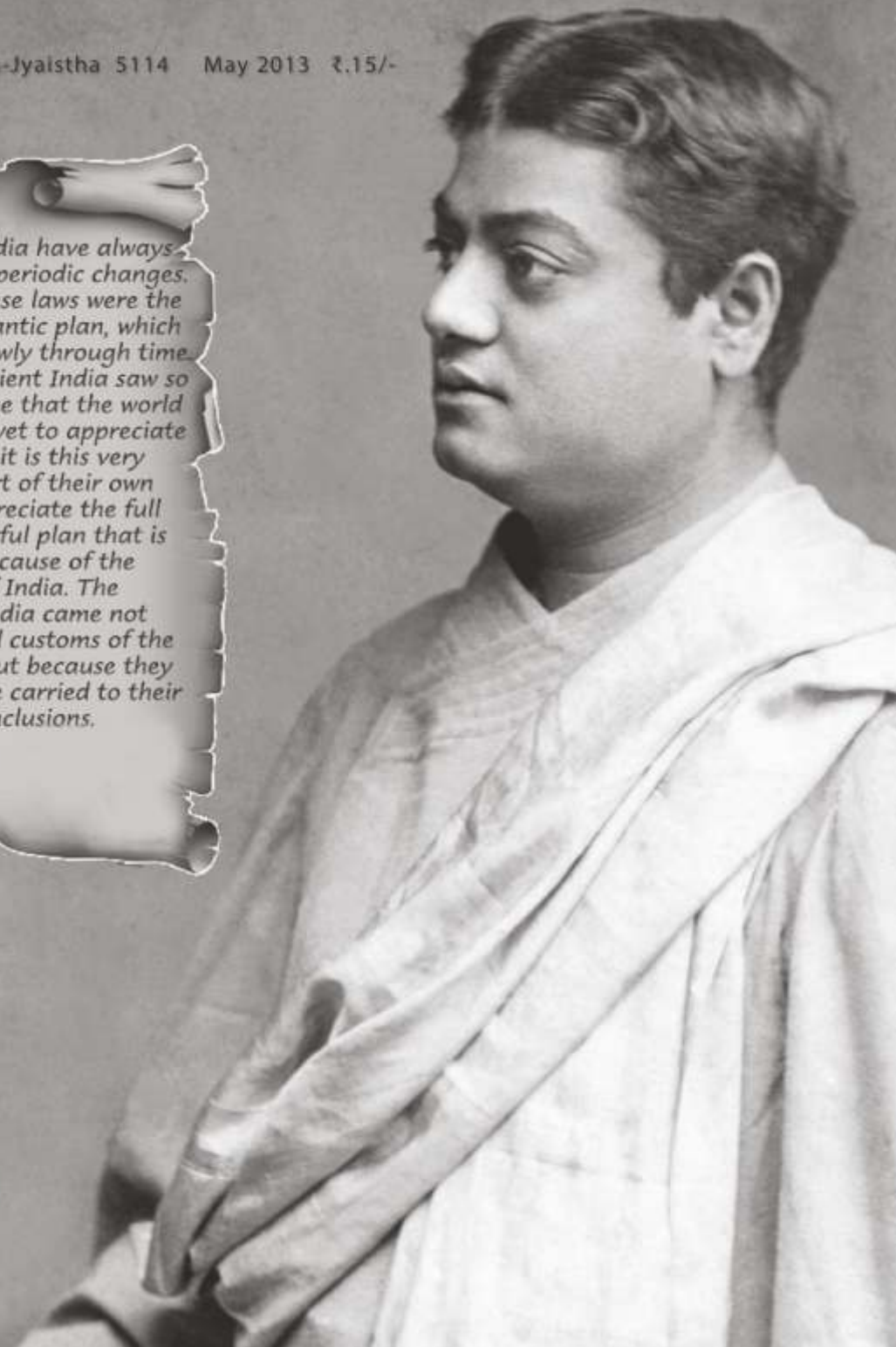


YUVA BHARATI

Voice of Youth

Vol.40 No.10 Vaishakh-Jyaistha 5114 May 2013 ₹.15/-

The social laws of India have always been subject to great periodic changes. At their inception, these laws were the embodiment of a gigantic plan, which was to unfold itself slowly through time. The great seers of ancient India saw so far ahead of their time that the world has to wait centuries yet to appreciate their wisdom, and it is this very inability on the part of their own descendants to appreciate the full scope of this wonderful plan that is the one and only cause of the degeneration of India. The degeneration of India came not because the laws and customs of the ancients were bad, but because they werenot allowed to be carried to their legitimate conclusions.





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CONTENTS

Editorial	03
Swami Vivekananda answers our questions-4	06
Wisdom through Stories told by Swami Vivekananda-4	08
Rebuilding India - 2	10
Buddhism - The Rebel Child Of Hinduism	15
Is Macaulay a Friend or a Foe?	19
Vivekananda's Oratory - A Rhapsody of Divine Eloquence	25
Obsession and Transcendence-3	35

Single Copy	₹.15/-
Annual	₹.160/-
For 3 Yrs	₹.460/-
Life (10 Yrs)	₹.1400/-

Foreign Subscription:

Annual	-	\$40 US Dollar
Life (10 years)	-	\$400US Dollar

(Plus Rs.50/- for Outstation Cheques)

Published and Printed by L.Madhavan on behalf of Vivekananda Kendra from 5, Singarachari Street, Triplicane, Chennai - 600 005. at M/s.RNR Printers and Publishers, 8, Thandavarayan Street, Triplicane, Chennai - 600 005.

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Invocation



**"Aakaashaath Patitam Toyam, Yathaa Gachchhati Saagaramh
Sarvadeva Namaskaaraanh, Keshavam Pratigachchhati"**

Just as every rain drop that falls from the sky flows into the Ocean, in the same way every prayer offered to any deity flows to Lord Krishna. I bow to such great Lord Krishna.

DEMOCRACY TO MIRROR NEURONS: VEDANTIC BASIS FOR SOCIAL EQUALITY AND UNIVERSAL ETHICS



One of the defining characters of the Indologists with western roots is treating Vedic culture as chiefly ritualistic. They ascribe anything ethical to non-Vedic Indic religions like Buddhism and Jainism. A classical instance of this mindset is manifested in the reasoning that the ethical treatise Thirukural should have Jain origin because it speaks about abstaining from meat, abhors consumption of alcohol and emphasizes in general a moralistic life. Many of the history textbooks also inculcate these prejudices in the minds of the children. For example the sixth standard social science book published by Tamil Nadu textbook society talks about the teachings of Buddha and that of Mahavira. The textbook rightly eulogizes the emphasis these two great Indian religions placed on Ahimsa and ethical living. But they are deafeningly silent about the teachings of Vedas and Upanishads.

In fact Upanishads were the first books in human history to provide a rational and holistic basis for the most important ethical tenet of universal humanism – the so-called golden rule: doing unto others what we want others to do unto us. Instead of simply attributing the reason why you should love your neighbor as yourself to the command of a fictional God, Upanishads provide a clear reason why you should do that. Asking people not to covet because of the commandment of God and fear of punishment in afterlife was easy. That is what most religious systems do. But instead of the fear of eternal hell and a punishing God, Vedanta of the Upanishads declared that all existence as being permeated by Divinity and hence the individual greed to covet and consume is a meaningless exercise. Upanishads also provide the psycho-spiritual basis for loving all existence. Isavasya Upanishad for instance, speaks of how the wise who experience all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, can not hate anyone, precisely because of that realization ergo to obtain the realization one should cease hurting others as the others are one's own self.

At his lecture 'The spirit and influence of Vedanta' delivered at the 'Twentieth Century Club' in Boston on March 28, 1896, Swami Vivekananda expalined the ethical implications of the Upanishadic conception of the Self as all:

'Behind everything the same divinity is existing and out of this comes the basis of morality. Do not injure another. Love everyone as your own self,

because the whole universe is one. In injuring another, I am injuring myself; in loving another, I am loving myself.'

In the same lecture Swami further elaborated:

There are moments when every man feels that he is one with the universe, and he rushes forth to express it, whether he knows it or not. This expression of oneness is what we call love and sympathy, and it is the basis of all our ethics and morality. This is summed up in the Vedantic philosophy by the celebrated aphorism, *Tat Tvam Asi* (Thou art That).

This ethical and social impact of the Brahman being the essence of every human being and all humanity as part of the same Brahman did not escape the notice of Baba Saheb Ambedkar, who found in it the spiritual basis for social democracy. He calls the concept of Brahman as 'Brahmaism'. (He had borrowed the term from the work 'The Great Epic of India: Character and Origin of the Mahabharata' by Edward Washburn Hopkins.) Rejecting the criticism of Christian theologians that the Mahavakya '*Aham Brahmasmi*' being arrogant and impudent, Dr. Ambedkar puts forth a staunch defence of the Mahavakya:

Democracy demands that each individual shall have every opportunity for realizing his/her worth. It also requires that each individual shall know that he is as good as everybody else. Those who sneer at *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahma) as an impudent utterance forget the other part of the Mahavakya namely *Tat tvam asi* (Thou art also Brahma). If *Aham Brahmasmi* has stood alone without the conjunct of *Tatvamasmi* it may have been possible to sneer at it. But with the conjunct of *Tat tvam asi* the charge of selfish arrogance cannot stand against Brahmaism.

Baba Saheb Ambedkar also demonstrates how the Advaitic Brahman-based spirituality forms the best basis and bed-rock of a democratic way of life. He contrasts it positively against a belief-based Abrahamic concept of religion:

To support Democracy because we are all children of God is a very weak foundation for Democracy to rest on. That is why Democracy is so shaky wherever it was made to rest on such a foundation. But to recognize and realize that you and I are parts of the same cosmic principle leaves room for no other theory of associated life except democracy. It does not merely preach Democracy. It makes democracy an obligation of one and all. Western students of Democracy have spread the belief that Democracy has stemmed either from Christianity or from Plato and that there is no other source of inspiration for democracy. If they had known that India too had developed the doctrine of Brahmaism which furnishes a better foundation for

Democracy they would not have been so dogmatic. India too must be admitted to have a contribution towards a theoretical foundation for Democracy.

If Dr.Ambedkar found in *Tat Tvam Asi* the spiritual basis for democracy, brain researchers have discovered that there is a neuronal basis to ethics, which again echoes at the neuro-biological level the fundamental oneness of Self and all existence as proclaimed by the Upanishads. In 1995 brain-researcher Iacomo Rizzolati of the University of Parma discovered what are today popularly known as 'mirror neurons' or 'empathy neurons'. Neuro-biologist Dr.V.S.Ramachandran explains:

Researchers at UCLA found that cells in the human anterior cingulate, which normally fire when you poke the patient with a needle ("pain neurons"), will also fire when the patient watches another patient being poked. The mirror neurons, it would seem, dissolve the barrier between self and others. I call them "empathy neurons" or "Dalai Lama neurons". ... Dissolving the "self vs. other" barrier is the basis of many ethical systems, especially eastern philosophical and mystical traditions.

One of the most eminent brain researchers of the world today, Dr.Ramachandran further explains:

The question of whether "you" would continue in multiple parallel brain vats raises issues that come perilously close to the theological notion of souls, but I see no simple way out of the conundrum. Perhaps we need to remain open to the Upanishadic doctrine that the ordinary rules of numerosity and arithmetic, of "one vs. many", or indeed of two-valued, binary yes/no logic, simply doesn't apply to minds — the very notion of a separate "you " or "I" is an illusion, like the passage of time itself. We are all merely many reflections in a hall of mirrors of a single cosmic reality (Brahman or "paramatman").

In other words, '*Tat Tvam Asi*' the formula arrived at by the seers of the Upanishads at least three thousand years ago still continues to inspire social reformers, still gets validated by cutting edge research in science and still gets ignored by those who construct the discourse of history and polity in India. In this 150th year of Swami Vivekananda's birth, it is our duty to make sure that Vedantic basis for universal human values is projected and given the due importance it deserves in every aspect of Indian life— not merely in words but also through our deeds.

Aravindan Neelakandan

YB-ET

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS~4

(Words in Italics are by the compiler)

Compiled by
Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

Question 4: *Swamiji, we see many of these so-called sadhus and sanyasis roaming in India. During Kumbhamela we can see them in thousands. Are they not vagabonds? They beg for their food from the society, they do not earn it, are they not parasite on the society?*

You are able to understand it because of your education. The education that you are getting now has some good points, but it has a tremendous disadvantage which is so great that the good things are all weighed down. In the first place it is not a man - making

education, it is merely and entirely a negative education. A negative education or any training that is based on negation, is worse than death. The child is taken to school, and the first thing that he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books are lies! By the time he is sixteen he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless. (Volume III page 301 302)

In this country (USA), the clergymen sometimes receive as high salaries as rupees thirty thousand, forty thousand, fifty thousand, even ninety thousand a year, for preaching two hours on Sunday only, and that only six months in a year. Look at the millions upon millions they spend for the support of



their religion. *That you do not see.*

The ever - travelling Tyagis of the various orders, Dasanamis or Vairagis or Panthis bring religion to everybody's door, and the cost is only a bit of bread. And how noble and disinterested most of them are! There is one Sannyasin belonging to the Kachu Panthis or independents (who do not identify themselves with any sect), who has been instrumental in the establishing of hundreds of schools and charitable asylums all over

Rajputana. He has opened hospitals in forests, and thrown iron bridges over the gorges in the Himalayas, and this man never touches a coin with his hands, has no earthly possession except a blanket, which has given him the nickname of the "Blanket Swami", and begs his bread from door to door. I have never known him taking a whole dinner from one house, lest it should be a tax on the householder. And he is only one amongst many. Do you think that so long as these Gods on earth live in India and protect the "Religion Eternal" with the impenetrable rampart of such godly characters, the old religion will die?

But Young Bengal has been taught that these Godlike, absolutely unselfish men like Kambli - swami (*Blanket Baba*) are idle

vagabonds. "Those who are devoted to My worshippers are regarded as the best of devotees."

Take even an extreme case, that of an extremely ignorant Vairagi. Even he, when he goes into a village tries his best to impart to the villagers whatever he knows, from Tulasidasa, or Chaitanya - charitamrita or the Alwars in Southern India. Is that not doing some good? And all this for only a bit of bread and a rag of cloth. Before unmercifully criticising them, think how much you do, my brother, for your poor fellow - countrymen, at whose expense you have got your education, and by grinding whose face you maintain your position and pay your teachers for teaching you that the Babajis are only vagabonds. IV 339

Who feels there for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out? Who feels for them? They cannot find light or

education. Who will bring the light to them -- who will travel from door to door bringing education to them? Let these people be your God -- think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly -- the Lord will show you the way. Him I call a Mahatman (great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a Duratman (wicked soul). Let us unite our wills in continued prayer for their good. We may die unknown, unpitied, unbewailed, without accomplishing anything -- but not one thought will be lost. It will take effect, sooner or later. My heart is too full to express my feeling; you know it, you can imagine it. So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them! I call those men who strut about in their finery, having got all their money by grinding the poor, wretches, so long as they do not do anything for those two hundred millions who are ...hungry!(Volume V page 58)



That love which is perfectly unselfish, is the only love, and that is of God.

India's contribution to the sum total of human knowledge has been spirituality and philosophy.

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WISDOM THROUGH STORIES TOLD BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA~4

(Words in Italics are by the compiler)

Compiled by
Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

4. What would Jesus tell? 'Living is important and not just believing'

To be unselfish, perfectly selfless, is salvation itself; for the man within dies, and God alone remains. All the teachers of humanity are unselfish. *They do not crave for name or any exclusive claim over Truth.*

Suppose Jesus of Nazareth was teaching, and a man came and told him,

"What you teach is beautiful. I believe that it is the way to perfection, and I am ready to follow it; but I do not care to worship you as the only begotten Son of God."

What would be the answer of Jesus of Nazareth? "Very well, brother, follow the ideal and advance in your own way. I do not care whether you give me the credit for the teaching or not. I am not a shopkeeper. I do not trade in religion. I only teach truth, and truth is nobody's property. Nobody can patent truth. Truth is God Himself. Go forward."

But what *his* disciples say nowadays is: "No matter whether you practise the teachings or not, do you give credit to the Man? If you credit the Master, you will be saved; if not, there is no salvation for you."

And thus the whole teaching of the Master is degenerated, and all the struggle and fight is



for the personality of the Man. They do not know that in imposing that difference, they are, in a manner, bringing shame to the very Man they want to honour -- the very Man that would have shrunk with shame from such an idea. What did he care if there was one man in the world that remembered him or not? He had to deliver his message, and he gave it. And if he had twenty thousand lives, he would give them all up for the poorest man in the world.

If he had to be tortured millions of times for a million despised Samaritans, and if for each one of them the sacrifice of his own life would be the only condition of salvation, he would have given his life. And all this without wishing to have his name known even to a single person. Quiet, unknown, silent, would he work, just as the Lord works.

But, what would the disciple say? He will tell you that you may be a perfect man, perfectly unselfish; but unless you give the credit to our teacher, to our saint, it is of no avail. Why? What is the origin of this superstition, this ignorance? The disciple thinks that the Lord can manifest Himself only once. There lies the whole mistake. God manifests Himself to you in man. But throughout nature, what happens

once must have happened before, and must happen in future. *The Truth is not unique – happening once, but it is universal.* There is nothing in nature which is not bound by law; and that means that whatever happens once must go on and must have been going on. (Volume IV page 150 - 151)

They have no particular principle to which to refer, and therefore the world does not believe. If a man comes to me and says a prophet disappeared into the air and went through it, I have the right to see that. I ask him, "Did your father or grandfather see it?" "Oh, no," he replies, "but five thousand years ago such a thing happened." And if I do not believe it, I have to be barbecued through eternity!

What a mass of superstition this is! And its effect is to degrade man from his divine nature to that of brutes. ... We shall believe in them when we see such prophets among ourselves. We shall then find that they were not peculiar men, but only illustrations of certain principles. They worked, and that principle expressed itself naturally, and we shall have to work to express that principle in us. They were prophets, we shall believe, when we become prophets. They were seers of things divine. They could go beyond the bounds of senses and catch a glimpse of that which is beyond. We shall believe that when we are able to do it ourselves and not before. (Volume VI page 12-13) Thus religion is not in believing but in being and becoming, in realizing.

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NEED FOR CHANGE IN THINKING

Prof. P.Kanaga Sabapathy

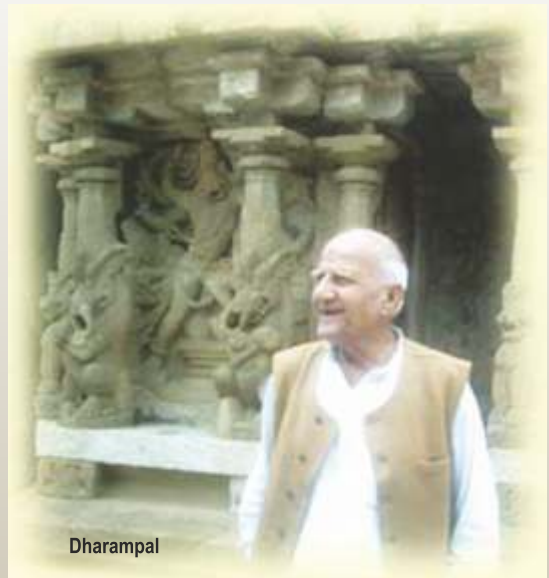
India was known for her original thinking since the ancient periods. One of the basic factors that differentiated India from the rest of the world had been her unique thoughts. It is those thoughts that made India excel in diverse fields, enabled her to attain higher levels of prosperity, helped the nation to develop stable institutions and influenced her people to strive towards higher aspirations.

Unfortunately the alien domination, especially under the British, made Indians lose their confidence in the native thoughts, systems and institutions. Moreover, Indians were made to believe in the superiority of the west. The education system introduced by them made Indians feel that the Indian traditions and systems are of no use. Swami Vivekananda underlined as to how their education system made the Indian child to hate his/her own family and backgrounds and lose their originality from a young age.

To quote: "The child is taken to school, and the first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth, that all his sacred books are lies. By the time he is sixteen he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless. And the result is that fifty years of such education has not produced one original man in the three presidencies. .. We have learnt only weaknesses." The systematic attempts by the

Europeans at different levels made Indians lose their spirit at all levels. Durant noted in 1930: "The result is a pitiful crushing of the Hindu spirit, a stifling of its pride and growth, a stunting of genius that once flourished in every city of the land."

Unfortunately, even after the country attained Independence there were no efforts to rekindle the original thinking process. With the result the dependent mentality continued. The ruling classes and the policy making circles took all possible steps to follow the western ideas and practices. After four more than decades of freedom, Dharampal noted: "The shock and manner of the British conquest and the prolonged terror which accompanied it



Dharampal

had not only disrupted Indian society, its localities, the interrelationships between its numerous localities as well as extended kinship groups; but worse yet, made them dumb."

He explained as to how with the breaking up of the local institutions and established systems, the educated Indians replaced the Europeans to implement the western practices and lord over the natives. To quote: "With the weakening of the locality structure and the interrelationships amongst localities which made them whole and functional, the interrelationship of the various extended kinship groups came under heavy pressure as well. Further, with the breakdown of Indian political and administrative institutions, men from the more scholarly and more literate groups allowed themselves to be co-opted into the system created by the British. Though their co-optation till the early 20th century was mainly to fill the subordinate positions in the governing and coercive apparatus, later they became the immediate instruments of terrorising their own people."

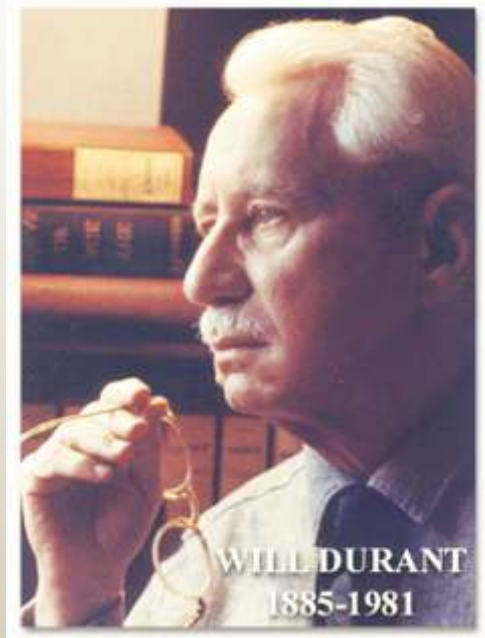
Swami Vivekananda warned against the imitation of the western systems, well before the other thinkers took it up. In his comprehensive essay on Modern India in 1899, he noted: "On one side new India is saying, "If we only adopt Western ideas, Western language, Western food, Western dress and Western manners, we shall be as strong and powerful as the Western nations", on the other old India is saying, " Fools! By imitation, others' ideas never become one's own; nothing, unless earned, is your own. Does the ass in lion's skin become the lion?"

On one side new India is saying, "What the Western nations do is surely good, otherwise how did they become so great?" On the other

side old India is saying, " The flash of lightning is intensely bright, but only for a moment look out, boys, it is dazzling your eyes. Beware."

But in spite of the warnings from the noble minds, the Indian establishment has been following the west. We ape them not just for their economic and political ideas, but also in matters relating to society, family and culture. Even after more than six decades of independence, we have failed to realise that the nature and backgrounds of India and the western countries are different.

There is no use in aping them without any reason. We will not able to get the desired results unless we follow systems suited to our national ethos and practices. The rise of the Indian economy and business over these years reveal the strength of the Indian fundamentals. The functioning Indian methods and approaches are getting recognized at the global levels for their strengths. In fact the western experts advise



their countries to follow the Indian methods. After conducting studies on the leadership system at the corporate levels in India, Peter Cappelli and others note: "The success of the India Way is important in its own right, of course, as it is crucial to the economic and social health of what will soon be the world's most populous country. It may turn out to be just as important as a model for countries elsewhere, not just those struggling to modernize but also those that are already economically developed."

We have to understand that India has enormous strengths. This is the reason why the top educational institutions from the western world have been coming to India to study our functioning systems. Recently the Harvard institutions from the US were in Prayag to study the Kumbh Mela. Indian systems have many positive features. India has natural, human and intellectual resources to the required extent. India has a long history which has critical lessons to offer to emerge as a successful nation. But we need to use them.

We need to think on our own to make the best use of the available resources and build the future that we want. Studies conducted at the field levels reveal that the functioning of our systems is based on the native strengths. India's developments over the last sixty decades have been due to her unique thoughts,

practices and approaches.

In spite of success at different levels, India has not been able to solve the critical problems at the economic, social and cultural levels. The reason for this is our attitude to depend on others and follow them even in small matters. Besides, we have failed to understand and develop suitable concepts and theories in spite of the successful models functioning at different levels.

All this have to change. It can happen only when the educated and elite sections of the country realize the need for a reorientation in thinking. We should begin to think along the nation-centric lines, as India has everything in her. It is the first step to achieve for all that we aspire as a nation.

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Good is our nature, perfection is our nature, not imperfection, not impurity.

Only those individuals who have believed in themselves have become great and strong.

BUDDHISM ~ THE REBEL CHILD OF HINDUISM

N. Krishnamoorti

Sowmya: Guruji! Is Buddha Dharma a separate religion?

Guruji: No. Buddha was accepted as the Ninth Avatara of Vishnu. Jayadeva, the Odisha poet in his **Gita Govinda** describes the Buddha as an avatar of Sri Krishna. In Gaya, the Pujaris worship the Vishnupada uttering BAUDDHAYA NAMA: Parashara Bhatta, the disciple of Sri Ramanuja, has written a commentary on the Vishnu Sahasranama. He has interpreted Namas 787 to 810 as the Buddha Avatara of Vishnu. Sri Lankan Buddhists worship Vishnu as the Guardian of their Western border. The Mahayana Buddhist temples in SE Asia are modelled on Hindu temples. Dr. Radhakrishnan the philosopher-President of India writes:- "The Buddha did not feel he was announcing a new religion. He was born, grew up and died a Hindu. He was restating with a new emphasis the ancient ideals of the Indo Aryan Civilization"

Sowmya: Then in what way did Buddha's teachings differ from mainstream Hindu Dharma?

Guruji: The moral values of

Yama and Niyama of Patanjali and Krishna were accepted by the Buddha as essential qualities for spiritual life. But the Buddha did not accept the Puranas and rituals. He was against animal sacrifice, **bali** in yajnas. He laid great stress on Desirelessness. It was exactly like Taittiriya Upanishad's teaching of AKAMA stithi. His concept of Nirvana was like Krishna's teaching of Brahma Nirvana.

Sowmya: Then, how did so many stories like the Buddha Jataka stories and temples and forms of Bauddha viharas come to be part of the Bauddha Dharma?

Guruji: As Sri Ramana Maharshi says, It is impossible for the ordinary human mind to conceive God without form. Therefore Buddha the Man who spoke great words of



wisdom was Deified. The popular mind understands the events and teachings of saints only with the help of Forms, Rituals and Anecdotes. Further, the original teachings of Buddha stayed in Bharat as Hina Yaana – the weaker path. The Maha Yaana or the strong path which went to SE Asia was like the Hindu culture, full of Mythologies, worship, temples and rituals.

Sowmya: We talk so much about the Buddha Sangha.

Guruji: Yes. Swami Vivekananda mentions that the Western religious organization and its Secular structures learnt the concept of organized work from the Buddhist Sangha. According to Swamiji, the ideal of Sangha itself was of Vedic origin. Buddhism standardized the collective life and work of the monks. Further, After Buddha's death (MAHAPARINIRVAN) four councils were held where Buddha's teachings were organized into a religious code. Such well organized body of ethical behaviour was easy to propagate. Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Ladakh Nepal, SriLanka, Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Combodia, VietNam and Indonesia became Buddhist countries, some totally and some partly. The Buddha himself has said - from the individual (Buddha) the Sadhaka should shift his loyalty to the group (SANGHA) and then to the ideology (Dharma). These are called the three refuges THREE SHARANAS. Asoka, the emperor, also helped in the propagation of the Buddha Dharma. Buddhism got much political support.

Sowmya: I hear there are so many interpretations of the Buddha's teachings.'

Guruji: Yes. Based on the teacher who interpreted the Dharma, the emphasis on the book and the method of Dhyana, India itself has got 14 schools of Buddhist philosophy. China has 8 schools or variations, Japan five sects. Other countries have their own. But all of them owe allegiance to the Buddha and his moral teachings based on Ahimsa and Tyaga.

Sowmya: Naturally all these sects would have created a great wealth of Buddhist literature?

Guruji: Right from the beginning Buddhist religious literature was well organized. In Pali language there are the TRIPITAKAS the earliest and most complete collection of the Buddhist-sacred literature.

They are 1) Vinaya Pitaka – Book of discipline 2) Sutta Pitaka the popular book of discourses and 3) The Abhidhamma Pitaka philosophy, psychology and ethics. There are of course, the Biographies of the Buddha, commentaries on the chief texts and the books of philosophy of later day monks. Sanskrit and prakrit texts also exist.

Sowmya: Naturally I shall expect you to say something about the Dhammapada.

Guruji: Certainly. (1) The Dhammapada is the most popular Buddhist work. It has 423 verses arranged in 26 vargas. (2) The teachings of the Buddha are contained in this book and may people especially, the Monks memorise it. (3) The Buddhist philosophy and the way of life are described in that Book. (4) Condemning animal sacrifice in Yajnas, and criticizing self-mortification, the Dhammapada stresses SILA (good conduct), Samadhi and sound reasoning (PANNA) (5) Abstain from all evil; accumulate what is good, purify your mind,

Avoid the transitory things - they are ANATTA (ANARTHA). Ignorance is the highest form of Impurity. Avoid Desires, greed, ill will and delusion (MOHA). (6) Avoid the two extremes, take the middle path.

Sowmya: The Middle path sounds exactly like the Gita teaching of SAMATVA. YUKTAHARA-VIHARA.

Guruji: Yes. SAINT Tiruvalluvar also says the same thing. Avoiding the extremes, keeping the middle path is emphasized by the Gita, the Buddha and Tiruvalluvar.

Sowmya: How could Buddhism put up such a huge mass of literature, art, temples, viharas, educational institutions?

Guruji: That is the power of Brahmacharya and Tyaga. The Monks who were generally wandering, used to stay in one place usually mountain caves during the four rainy months. These enforced holidays helped the monks to create a huge wealth of literature, sculptures, bronze images, stupas, chaityas and of course paintings. There were originally eight stupas, then pagodas, were built. The relics of the Buddhist leaders were worshipped as sacred. The Ajanta paintings are world famous. This tremendous out-put of art and literature spread to every country to which Buddhism went.

Sowmya: I remember Swami Vivekananda saying that every social revolution is preceded by a spiritual surge.

Guruji: True. Great empires were built, led by the example of Asoka.

Sowmya: How did Buddhism succeed initially and decline later?

GURUJI: The personality of Buddha, his charm, his sweet language, his great tyaga reminding one of Sri Rama's renouncing the Kingdom, his use of the local language, his wandering along with other Bhikkus taking the message from door to door in North-central India, combined to win great victories for Buddhism on the lands and in the minds of the people. Buddhism declined when rituals reentered the sect and its basic philosophy was reabsorbed into Hindu Dharma or re-recognised as Upanishadic. The Buddha himself was accepted as an avatara of Vishnu. A separate religion was not needed after that.

Sowmya: By the way what is the exact meaning of the word Bodhi Sattva?

Guruji: Generally Bodhi Sattva refers to the Buddha. Sri Aurobindo feels that the expression Bodhi Sattva refers to that stage in the life of the Master, when he was about to enter into the state of perfection NIRVANA, when he voluntarily gave up that state so that he could serve the suffering people. Compassion and service are the practical side of Ahimsa. Bodhi Sattva put public service ahead of personal salvation.

Sowmya: What did Swami Vivekananda say about the Buddha?

Guruji: The Buddha's renunciation would have stunned any ordinary man. For Swami Vivekananda, for whom renunciation was the one ideal of life, the exemplary life of the Buddha would have been one of the most precious and inspiring lights of life.

The Buddha's life of renunciation, according to Sri Ramakrishna, had received light from Vedanta. Swamiji also saw that the

Upanishadic message of receiving strength through renunciation “was proved by the life of Buddha”.

This made Sister Nivedita observe “Buddha taught renunciation. In just two hundred years afterwards, India became a great power”.

At the same time Swami Vivekananda felt that not every one, not every country was fit to receive the ideal of total renunciation. In Swamiji's opinion when some one preaches too much of renunciation, there comes the next social wave of Karmayoga. Where there is too much of worldliness some one comes to preach renunciation.

Sowmya: There are people who try to present the Buddha as antivedic, anti vedantic?

Guruji: Commentators write that the Buddha condemned only, the Sacrifices (Bali) not the entire Vedas. Buddha calls himself BRAHMA BHUTA, He who has become Brahman. (A

vedic expression)

Summing up Dr. Radha Krishnan writes:- The Buddha utilized the Hindu inheritance to correct some of its expressions. He came to fulfil, not to destroy. For us, in this country, the Buddha is an outstanding representative of our religious tradition. He left his footprints on the soil of India and his mark on the soul of the country with its habits and convictions. While the teaching of the Buddha assumed distinctive forms in the other countries of the world in conformity with their own traditions, here, in the home of the Buddha, it has entered into and become an integral part of our culture. The Brahmins and the Sramanahs were treated alike by the Buddha and the two traditions gradually blended. In a sense the Buddha is a maker of modern Hinduism.” Dr. Radha Krishnan says the Buddha had to ASSUME THE REALITY OF AN UNCHANGEABLE SELF (ATMAN).

Yoga Shiksha Shibir at Kashmir

Medium : Hindi Date : 15/07/2013 to 24/07/2013

Place : Vivekananda Kendra, Ramakrishana Mahasammelan Ashram, Nagdandi, Achabal, Anantnag, Kashmir- 192201 (J&K) Camp Contribution : Rs. 3000/-

Any Physically and Mentally fit person in the age group of 18-60 years. The participant should be able to perform various Yogasanas and exercises.

Enroll will be on first come first serve basis and Registration will end on reaching maximum intake number i.e.50.

For any further information Please contact :

Shri Ajeet Kumar Muju : Mob:No:094191-88446 e-mail:panditajey@rediffmail.com

IS MACAULAY A FRIEND OR A FOE?

Dr. K.Subrahmanyam

Macaulay was in India a few centuries ago. He travelled the entire length and breadth of this country relentlessly. A person of keen observation, he studied the people very closely. He was fascinated by the culture of India. He was surprised to find no beggar anywhere in the country. Nobody was found to be a cheat anywhere. There were certain villages in which the houses had no provision to lock the doors. Sometimes, the doors may be closed on account of the climatic conditions, but not for any purposes of safety. No theft was reported in any village. There was peace everywhere. He was also astounded to see people living in contentment with many virtues. Vices were not strikingly present anywhere. The one prominent factor was, people were of great self-respect and everybody was found to be highly religious, God-fearing and God-loving.

While appreciating India and her culture, he also tried his best to find out the secret for the glory of Indian culture. Pondering over the richness of Indian heritage, one day he visited the King of a small kingdom. The King was highly courteous and received Macaulay with due respects. He showered all hospitality on the foreign guest. After the day's exchange of views, the host and the guest went out for a



stroll. On the way, the King found an elderly gentleman on the road. He immediately fell at the feet of the elderly person. After the strange experience, Macaulay asked the King why he fell at the feet of a poor old man. He was curious to know who he was. To his shock, Macaulay was told by the King that the elderly gentleman was the noble preceptor of the King himself during the childhood. The respect shown by the King to the teacher of the past was an eye-opener to Macaulay. He was then and there able to understand the secret of Indian grandeur. The student-teacher relationship was the backbone of any educational system. Education itself is the

nerve-centre of any country's culture. If India is to be made a country of slaves, their educational system should be tampered with.

In the ancient days, there used to be fables. In the fables, there used to be demons and the life-spirit of those demons was kept in a bird at a faraway place in an island, in a top tower and in a small cage. Unless the bird is killed the demon cannot be slain. If the bird is made blind, the demon will become blind. If the bird's legs are broken, the demon would become lame. Similarly, each country has its life-spirit in one area of thought and activity. Indian culture has its life in religion and religious education. In India, education was religious, and religion was educative. Together they built the fort of Indian heritage. If this mansion of rich culture is to be demolished, its educative religion is to be truncated. If possible, the whole system of education should be changed for the worse, if at all India were to remain a slave to the British.

In the light of his observation, Macaulay wanted Indians to be brown in body and British in the brain. They should shun India,

Indian culture, Indian religion and Indian education while living in India. Therefore, he very cleverly worked out a system of education to achieve his goal.

The foreigner had left. India became free. But, the Indian thinking is still on the track laid down by Macaulay. Even after several decades of freedom, we are unable to understand the damage done by Macaulay to our motherland and we still hold on to the pattern of education introduced by the Westerners. Macaulay is indeed a very great person; he was able to understand the nerve-centre of India. Having studied him, by this time, we should have rectified the mistake that we have been blindly following, even today.

Swami Vivekananda repeatedly spoke of reformation in the national education system. He even provided a blueprint for ideal education system. It is high time we moved over to Indianness in education.

Macaulay was a friendly foe, in the sense, he opened our eyes that it is education which can build a country. It is national education that builds a NATION.



Work-this is the time; for the freshest, the untouched, and unsmelled flowers alone are to be laid at the feet of the Lord.

When a man has begun to be ashamed of his ancestors, the end has come.

Man should be taught to be practical and physically strong. A dozen of such lions will conquer the world, and not millions of sheep can do so.



Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose

The Eastern aim has been...that, in the multiplicity of phenomena, we should never miss their underlying unity. After generations of this quest, the idea of unity comes to us almost spontaneously, and we apprehend no insuperable obstacle in grasping it.



Swami Vivekananda

The One becomes many. When we see the One, any limitations reflected through Maya disappear; but it is quite true that the manifold is not valueless. It is through the many that we reach the One.



VIVEKANANDA'S ORATORY ~ A RHAPSODY OF DIVINE ELOQUENCE

Dr.K.M.Rao

Hailing the advent of Vivekananda Sister Christine Wrote:

“Now and then, at long intervals of time, a being finds his way to this planet who is unquestionably a wanderer from another sphere, who brings with him to this sorrowful world some of the glory, the power, the radiance of the far distant region from which he came. ...Such a being is beyond all comparison, for he transcends all ordinary standards and ideals. Others may be great, brilliant, his mind is luminous. ..Others may be great, they are great only as compared with those in their own class. Others may be good, powerful, gifted, having more of goodness, more of power, more of genius than their fellow men. It is only a matter of comparison. ...But with Swami Vivekananda, there could be no comparison. He was in a class by himself. He belonged to another order. He was not of this world. He was a radiant being who had descended from another, a higher sphere for a definite purpose. One might have known that he would not stay long.”

Perfect torrent of Eloquence

The greatest gift that Vivekananda possessed was his ability to create a wave of devotion and spirituality wherever he went. His entire bearing evoked instant appeal, for he spoke with the conviction of one who plumbed the depths of self-realization. Speaking of the Swami S.E.Waldo writes:

“To those who were fortunate enough to be there with the Swami, those were weeks for

ever-hallowed memory, so fraught were they with unusual opportunity for spiritual growth. No words can describe what that blissful period meant (and still means) to the devoted little band who followed the Swami from New York to the island in the St. Lawrence... The place was surrounded by thick woods...miles away from the haunts of men...Beyond the trees spread the wide expanse of the St. Lawrence, dotted here and there with islands...All these were so far away that they seemed more like a pictured scene than a reality. Not a human sound penetrated their seclusion; they heard but the murmur of the insects, the sweet songs of the birds or the gentle sighing of the wind through the leaves. Part of the time the scene was illumined by the soft rays of the moon and the moon's face was mirrored in the shining waters beneath.

The world forgetting, by the World forgot

In this scene of enchantment, “the world forgetting by the world forgot”, the revolted students spent seven blessed weeks with their beloved Teacher, listening to his words of inspiration...The swami always spent two hours with them and more of ten much longer. One glorious night, when the moon was about full, he talked to them until the moon below the western horizon, apparently as unconscious as were his listeners of the lapse of time. We daily served him with Joy and Listened to him with heart felt thankfulness. His whole heart was in his work, and he taught like one inspired. It was not possible to take notes of these talks. They are preserved in the

hearts of the hearers. None of us can ever forget the sense of uplift, the intense spiritual life of those hallowed hours. The Swami poured out all his heart at those times... Many times the Swami seemed hardly conscious of our presence and then we almost held our breath for fear of checking the flow of his thoughts. He would rise from his seat and pace up and down...pouring forth a perfect torrent of eloquence... The swami did not appear to address us directly, but rather seemed to be speaking to himself in words of fire, as it were, so intense were they, and so convincing, burning into the very hearts of his listeners, never to be forgotten. Never was he more gentle, more lovable than during these hours. ...Just allowing us to listen to the outpourings of his own spirit in communion with himself.It was a perpetual inspiration to live with a man like Swami Vivekananda. From morning till night it was ever the same, we lived in constant atmosphere of intense spirituality. Often playful and fun-loving, full of merry Jest and Quick repartee, he was never for a moment far from the dominating note of his life.

And while leaving the islands he said, 'I bless these thousand Islands.'

The swami had been exhausted when he had left New York, at the end of the season's work. Yet after barely two weeks rest at comp perey, he had once again entered upon the strenuous task of continual teaching. Again he gave utterly of himself, no moment of his attention lapse from the instruction and training of these 'students who had come to the retreat though most of them were no voices on the spiritual path, new to its psychological remands and trials; and none were his own countrymen. And yet they were all his own; for all mankind had become his own. He wrote to Mrs.Bull, "Now for the world that gave me the ideas and humanity which allows me to be one of them. The older I grow, the more I see behind the idea of the Hindus that man is the greatest of all beings." And it was to man-not to any particular individual or nation-that he gave

himself.

But despite the swami's overflowing love for humanity, despite his monistic vision and intense spirit of remuneration, he never failed in deep personal tenderness and affection for friends. Even in his most exalted moods he was intensely human.

Class work and Lectures at Detroit

Having finished his work in New York on February 23, the Swami Left on Tuesday March 3, for Detroit, where had been invited to hold classes. The Swami remained in Detroit for two weeks, during which short time he held twenty-two classes. In addition, he gave three public lectures, twice on Wednesday, March 4 morning and evening, on "The Ideal of a Universal Religion", and on Sunday, March on "India's Message to the World". Of this period Mrs. Mary Funke writes: ...He was accompanied by his stenographer, the faithful Goodwin. They occupied a suite of rooms at the Richelieu, a small family hotel, and had the use of the large drawing-room for class work and lectures. The room was not large enough to accommodate the crowds and to our great regret many were turned away. The room, as also the hall, staircase and library were literally packed. At that time-"he was all Bhakti-the love of God was a hunger and a thirst with him. A kind of divine madness seemed to take possession of, as if his heart would burst with longing for the Beloved Mother".

His last public appearance in Detroit was at the temple Beth-El of which the Ruffi Louis Grossman, an ardent admirer of the Swami, was the pastor. It was Sunday evening and so great was the crowd that we almost feared a panic. There was a solid line reaching far out into the street and hundreds were turned away. Vivekananda held the large audience spellbound, his subject being "India's Message to the West", and "The Ideal of a Universal Religion". He gave us a most brilliant and masterly discourse. Never had I seen the

Master look as he looked that night. There was something in his beauty not of earth. It was as if the spirit had almost burst the bonds of flesh, and it was then that I first saw a fore shadowing of the end. He was much exhausted from years of over work, and it was even then to be seen that he was not long for this world. I tried to close my eyes to it, but in my heart I knew the truth. He had needed rest but felt that he must go on.

Our next glimpse of the Swami reveals him in Boston where he worked for nearly two weeks in the second half of March 1896. During this period, one of the most remarkable incidents of his whole mission took place; we find him speaking before the professors and students of the Graduate philosophical club of Harvard University—one of the foremost intellectual bodies in the world indeed, the best; intellectually speaking, that America could afford, numbering among its members such distinguished thinkers as George H. Palmer, William James, Josiah Royce Hugo Munsterberg, and the then young George Santayana. On March 25 the Swami spoke on “The Vedanta Philosophy”. It was a trying experience for him to speak before this great critical gathering, but he was at his best, and his interpretation of his philosophy created an indelible impression on the minds of the professors and excited the most hearty commendation. Indeed, they offered him the chair of Eastern philosophy in the Harvard University. But he could not accept this as he was a Sannyasi.

The Swami's answers to the Harvard Graduate Philosophical club were full of penetrating wit, eloquence, and philosophical freshness and vitality. In his address he had given a remarkably clear exposition of the cosmology and general principles of the Vedanta, showing the points of reconciliation between the theories of science and those of the Vedanta concerning matter and force. Reverend C.C.Everett, Dean of the Harvard Divinity school writes: “It is a rare pleasure to see a form of belief... as the Vedanta system represented

by an actually living and extremely intelligent believer. This system is not to be regarded merely a curiosity as a speculative vagary. Hegel said that spinozism is the necessary beginning of all philosophizing. This can be said even more emphatically of the Vedanta system. We occidentals busy ourselves with the manifold. We can, however, have no understanding of the manifold, if we have no sense of the 'One' in which the manifold exists. The reality of the 'One' is the truth which the East may well teach us; and owe a debt of gratitude to Vivekananda that he has taught this lesson so effectively.”

He answered questions asked in a critical spirit pertaining to the influence of Hindu philosophy on the stoic philosophy of the Greeks...and the theory of the Absolute... He added that the highest spiritual power embodied itself in a demonstration of spiritual freedom and in a constant accession of spiritual vision and insight, “Nirvikalpa Samadhi” being the climax thereof. When asked by the professors, “What is the vedantic idea of civilization?” the Swami answered that true civilization was the manifestation of the divinity within man and that land was the most civilized wherein the highest ideals were made practical.

The Swami gave two afternoon talks to a group of Harvard students at Mrs. Bull's house in Cambridge on March 22 and 24. He also spoke at the prestigious and social-reform conscious twentieth century club in the afternoon of March 29, on “The Vedanta: Its practical Bearing; How it differs from other philosophies.”

In Boston, the Swami was one of the distinguished guests of precopiea club, a metaphysical society of high standing. He delivered five public lectures at this club before large audiences, on the evenings of March, 23, 26, 27 and 28. His subjects were respectively: “The Science of Work”, “Devotion”, “The Ideal of a Universal Religion”, Realization or the ultimate of

religion, and the Upanishads". "The Ideal of a universal Religion" was one of his most favourite subjects on which he spoke almost in every city and town he visited. It was a title that encompassed one, of his basic teachings – the fundamental unity of all religions and the necessity for variety in religious expression and practice. He pointed out that if a universal religion could ever exist, it must be a religion of principles whose background should be Advaita and which should vary according to the individual temperaments of nations and personalities.

The Harvard professors and all those who came into contact with him, found that Swami Vivekananda's philosophy was more highly moral and emotional than intellectual. It included logic and philosophical form, but in its essential nature it was religion, holding up realization and spiritual freedom as its aim. His Harvard experience was only one of many hundreds; wherever he went, whenever he taught, he was always confronted with a host of questions, and his answers, being always extempore, kept him constantly on the intellectual Qui Vive. Whatever the question asked, his answer invariably related it to his own actual realization. In all his teachings in America and England the Swami's main theme is found to be that of the Advaita Vedanta, the philosophy of infinite oneness. In the Advaita, he taught, there is no dependence, all manifoldness is lost, all fear is blotted out, and only light shines forth—the light of the self-manifesting soul. Human personality is transfigured in the revelation of pure Divinity. The "Boston Evening Transcript of March 30, noted the Swami's activities during his stay in Boston. The journal gave a summary of the lectures delivered there:

The Swami Vivekananda, has, during the past few days, conducted a most successful work in procopeia. During this time he has given four class lectures for the club itself, with constant audiences of between four and five hundred people at the Allen Gymnasium, 44st. Botolph Street, two at the house of Mrs. Ole Bull in

Cambridge; and one before the professor and graduate students of the philosophical department of Harvard University.

One of his lectures during the week has been.... "The Ideal of a Universal Religion".... The Swami is not a preacher of theory. If there is any one feature of the Vedanta philosophy, which he propounds, which appears especially refreshing, it is its intense capability of practical demonstration. We have become almost wedded to the idea that religion is sublime theory which can (not?) be brought into practice and made tangible for us only in another life, but the swami shows the folly of this. In preaching the Divinity of Man he inculcates a spirit of strength into us which will have none of those barriers between this life and actual realization of the sublime which appears as insurmountable to the ordinary man.

Quoting the sum and substance of the swami's lectures on Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga and Vedanta philosophy before Harvard University, the Journal concludes with the following resume of his lecture on Raja-Yoga in Boston:

In discussing Raja-Yoga, the psychological way to union with God, the expanded upon the power to which the mind can attain through concentration... This is the one key, the only power-concentration. In the present state key, the only power-concentration. In the present state of our bodies we are so much distracted, the mind is frittering away its energies upon a hundred wort of things. By scientific control of the forces which work the body this can be done, and its ultimate effect is realization. Religion cannot consist of talk. It only becomes religion when it becomes tangible, and until we strive to feel that of which we talk so much, we are no better than agnostics, for the latter are sincere and we are not.

To be continued...

A nice letter from Swamiji to Manmathanath Bhattacharya.

the letter gives swamiji's ideas on western habits

Manmathanath Bhattacharya, was the Accountant General of Madras Presidency when Swamiji visited TN.

Manmathanath Bhattacharya was with Swamiji at Kanyakumari and Swamiji performed Kumari Puja to his daughter in the KK Bhagavati Temple.

U.S.A.

5th September, 1894.

DEAR MR. BHATTACHARYA (Mr. Manmatha Nath Bhattacharya),

I was much pleased to read your affectionate letter. I shall make inquiries about the weaving machine as soon as I can, and let you know. Now I am resting at Annisquam, a village on the seacoast; soon I shall go to the city and attend to the matter of the machine. These seaside places are filled with people during the summer; some come to bathe in the sea, some to take rest, and some to catch husbands.

There is a strong sense of decorum in this country.

You have to keep yourself always covered from neck to foot in the presence of women. You cannot so much as mention the normal functions of the body: nobody knows when anyone goes to the toilet — one has to live so circumspectly. In this country, you can blow your nose a thousand times into your handkerchief — there is no harm in that; but it is highly uncivilised to belch. Women sometimes are not embarrassed to expose their bodies above the waist — you must have seen the kind of low-cut gown they wear — but they say that to go bare-foot is as bad as being naked. Just as we always dwell on the soul, so they take care of the body, and there is no end to the cleaning and embellishing of it. One who fails to do this has no place in society.

Our method of cooking with cow-dung fuel and eating on the floor they consider eating like pigs: they say that the Hindus have no sense of disgust and that, like pigs, they eat cow-dung. The word "cow-dung" is taboo in English. On the other hand, numbers of people will drink water with the same glass without thinking of washing it, and they rarely observe the rule that things must be washed before cooking. But should the clothes of the cook be a little soiled, they will throw her out. The table-ware is all spick and span. They are the richest people on earth; their enjoyments and luxuries beggar description.

In Rajputana they imitate the Mohammedans in their mode of dining, which is, on the whole, good. They sit on a low seat and place their plate of rice on a low table. This is much better than spreading a banana leaf on the earthen floor plastered with cow-dung and filth. And how disastrous if the leaf gets torn! The Hindus did not know much about clothes or food. Moreover, whatever Hindu civilisation there was existed in the Punjab and the north-west provinces. . . .

Our women lose caste if they put on shoes, but the Rajput women lose their caste if they don't put

on shoes! Says Manu: "One shall always wear shoes". There is no denying that people should have a decent enough standard of living. I say they should be neat and clean even though not luxurious. . . . I say, why do we have to be Englishmen? It is enough for the present if we imitate our brothers of the western provinces. If group after group of Indians travel all over the world and back for some years, the face of India will be changed within twenty years by that alone; nothing else need be done. But how will anything happen if the people of one village do not visit the next? However, everything will take place by and by. By and by, the stubborn Bengali boys will awaken the country. But Manmatha Babu, you will have to stop this shameful business of marrying off nine-year-old girls. That is the root of all sins. It is a very great sin, my boy. Consider further what a terrible thing it was that when the government wanted to pass a law stopping early marriage, our worthless people raised a tremendous howl! If we don't stop it ourselves, the government will naturally intervene, and that is just what it wants to do. All the world cries fie upon us. You remain shut up in your homes, but the people outside spit upon you. How far can I quarrel with them? What a horror — even a father and mother allow their ten-year-old daughter to be given in marriage to a full-grown fat husband! O Lord, is there any punishment unless there has been a sin? It is all the fruit of Karma. If ours were not a terribly sinful nation, then why should it have been booted and beaten for seven hundred years?

Now, just as in our country the parents suffer a lot to have their daughter married, here in the same way the girls suffer — the parents only a little — it is the job of the girls to capture husbands. I am now closely associated with them in all their affairs; I am, as it were, a woman amongst women. Therefore, I have seen, and am seeing, all their play. To give dinners, to dance, to go to musical parties, go to the watering places — all that is all right. But all the while the young women are scheming within themselves how to capture husbands. They hang round the boys. The boys, on the other hand, are so cautious that, though they mingle with the girls and flirt with them all the time, when it is time to surrender they run away. The boys place the girls above themselves; they show them respect and slave for them; but the moment the girls stretch their hands to catch them, they run away beyond their reach. After many efforts of this kind, a girl succeeds in capturing a boy. If the girl has money, then many a boy dances attendance upon her, but the poor have great difficulty. If a poor girl is exceedingly beautiful, she can marry quickly; otherwise, she has to wait all her life. Just as in our country, so here, one marriage in a thousand takes place through love and courtship; the rest are based on money. After that, quarrel, and then, 'Get out!' — divorce. We do not have this; the only way out is to hang oneself. It is the same in all countries. Only, here the girls take matters into their own hands; and in our country, we get the help of the parents to give their married life a decent appearance. The result is the same in either case.

Nowadays, however, American girls don't want to marry. During the Civil War a large number of men were killed and women began to do all kinds of work. Since then, they have not wanted to give up the rights they have acquired. They earn their own living, and therefore they say, "There is no use in marrying. If we truly fall in love, then we shall marry; otherwise, we shall earn and meet our own expenses". Even if the father is a millionaire, the son has to earn enough before he marries. One may not marry depending on an allowance from the father. The girls also want the same thing now. When a son marries he becomes like a stranger to his own family, but when a girl

marries she brings her husband, as it were, into her parents' home. Men will visit their wives' parents ten times, but rarely go to their own parents. Yet they are very much afraid of having their mothers-in-law on their neck.

In this country, there are rivers of wealth and waves of beauty, and an abundance of knowledge everywhere. The country is very healthy; they know how to enjoy this earth. . . . When princes of Europe become poor they come to marry here. The average American doesn't like this; but some rich, beautiful women fall for the titles. Yet it is very difficult for American women to live in Europe. The husbands of this country are slaves of their wives; but the European wives are slaves to their husbands — this the American women don't like. In everything, the men here have to say, 'Yes dear'; otherwise the wives lose face before people.

The women in America are very sentimental and have a mania for romance. I am, however, a strange sort of animal who hasn't any romantic feeling, and therefore they could not sustain any such feeling toward me and they show me great respect. I make all of them call me "father" or "brother". I don't allow them to come near me with any other feeling, and gradually they have all been straightened out. . . .

The ministers in this country . . . are eager to throw sinners into hell. A few of them are very good, however. . . . I have a great reputation among the women in this country. I have not as yet seen a single unchaste girl among the unmarried. It is either a widow or a married woman who turn unchaste. The unmarried girls are exceedingly good, because their future is bright. . . .

Those emaciated Western women, looking like old dried-up fruit, whom you see in India, are English, and the English are an ugly race amongst the Europeans. In America, the best blood strains of Europe have been blended, and therefore, the American women are very beautiful. And how they take care of their beauty! Can a woman retain her beauty if she gives birth to children . . . every hour from her tenth year on? Damn nonsense! What a terrible sin! Even the most beautiful woman of our country will look like a black owl here. Yet it must be admitted that the women of the Punjab have very well-drawn features. Many of the American women are very well educated and put many a learned professor to shame; nor do they care for anyone's opinion. And as regards their virtues: what kindness, what noble thought and action! Just think, if a man of this country were to visit India, nobody would even touch him; yet here I am allowed to do as I please in the houses of the best families — like their own son! I am like a child; their women shop for me, run errands for me. For example: I have just written to a girl for information about the machine, which she will gather carefully and send to me. Again, a phonograph was sent to the Maharaj of Khetri: the girls managed the whole affair very well. Lord! Lord! It is the difference between heaven and hell! "They are the goddess Lakshmi in beauty and the goddess Saraswati in talents and accomplishments." This cannot be achieved through the study of books. I say, can you send out some men and women to see the world? Only then will the country wake up — not through the reading of books. The men here are very clever in earning wealth. Where others do not see even dust, there they see gold. Whoever will leave India and visit another country will earn great merit.

Keeping aloof from the community of nations is the only cause for the downfall of India. Since the

English came, they have been forcing you back into communion with other nations, and you are visibly rising again. Everyone that comes out of the country confers a benefit on the whole nation; for it is by doing that alone that your horizon will expand. And as women cannot avail themselves of this advantage, they have made almost no progress in India. There is no station of rest; either you progress upwards or you go back and die out. The only sign of life is going outward and forward and expansion. Contraction is death. Why should you do good to others? Because that is the only condition of life; thereby you expand beyond your little self; you live and grow. All narrowness, all contraction, all selfishness is simply slow suicide, and when a nation commits the fatal mistake of contracting itself and of thus cutting off all expansion and life, it must die. Women similarly must go forward or become idiots and soulless tools in the hands of their tyrannical lords. The children are the result of the combination of the tyrant and the idiot, and they are *slaves*. And this is the whole history of modern India. Oh, who would break this horrible crystallisation of death? Lord help us! (This paragraph was written in English.)

Gradually all this will come about: "One should cross a road slowly and cautiously; one should patch a quilt carefully and cautiously; so should one be slow and cautious in crossing a mountain".

The papers have arrived duly and in good shape; there has not been any difficulty about that. The enemy has been silenced. Consider this: They have allowed me, an unknown young man, to live among their grown-up young daughters, and when my own countryman, Mazoomdar, says I am a rogue, they don't pay any attention! How noble they are, and how kind! I shall not be able to repay this debt even in a hundred lives, I am like a foster son to the American women; they are really my mother. If they don't flourish in every way, who would?

A while back several hundred intellectual men and women were gathered in a place called Greenacre, and I was there for nearly two months. Every day I would sit in our Hindu fashion under a tree, and my followers and disciples would sit on the grass all around me. Every morning I would instruct them, and how earnest they were!

The whole country now knows me. The ministers are very angry; but, naturally, not all of them. There are many followers of mine amongst the learned ministers of this country. The ignorant and the stubborn amongst them don't understand anything but only make trouble, and thereby they only hurt themselves. But abusing me, Mazoomdar has lost three-fourths of what little popularity he had in this country. I have been adopted by them. When anyone abuses me he is condemned everywhere by the women.

I cannot say when I shall return to India, possibly next winter. There I shall have to wander, and here also I do the same.

There is nothing more to add. Please don't make this letter public. You understand, I have to be careful about every word I say — I am now a public man. Everybody is watching, particularly the clergy.

Yours faithfully,

VIVEKANANDA.



UNDERSTANDING MIND

Prof. P.T.Santha

Kee the right company, company of good books, good literature or good TV programmes. God has given us shutters. Open them when it is fine, if there is danger shut them! Be watchful; detect the negative forces and remove them. Sublimate the mind with a greater vision of higher love.

Body is the chariot and the Self is the master, intellect is the charioteer, mind the reins; the senses are the horses, sense objects their paths; the man whose mind is preoccupied with sense gratification through the senses that are unmanageable like the vicious horses of a charioteer, does not reach his destination but goes through the cycle of birth and death

Indriyaani hayaanyahuhu vishayan teshugocakaan

*A t m e n d r i y a m a n o y u k t a m
bokteragurmaneeshinaha*

He, who has understanding as his (guide) charioteer, and is able to control his senses (the horses) reaches the end of the journey, the supreme abode of the All Pervading, Vishnu (the Lord)

Yada sanharate cayamkoormangaaneeva sarvasaha

*Indriyaaneendriyarthbhyastasyapragna
pratishtita*

When like the tortoise which withdraws its limbs from all its sides, he withdraws his senses from the sense objects, then his wisdom becomes steady (2.58)

5. By withdrawing the sense organs from their field of activity, we conserve a tremendous amount of energy. This newfound energy has to be immediately harnessed. Otherwise, this dynamism is likely to be spent in mentally dreaming of sense-indulgence

karmendriyani samyamya ya astemanasamaran

Indriyartan vimoodatma mithyacarasocate

He who, restraining the organs of action, sits thinking in his mind of the sense objects, he, of deluded understanding, is called a hypocrite. (3.6)

To be physically restrained but mentally sensuous develops a distorted personality. Therefore, do not suppress the mind but give it a new direction. This is the act of sublimation. When there is love for something higher, a higher goal or a higher principle, the mind finds it easy to sacrifice anything at the altar of

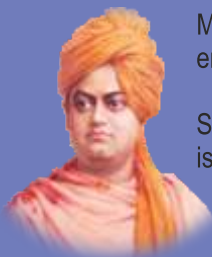
love. Sacrifice is a joyful giving up due to growth; compromise is a reluctant giving up due to suppression. When the mind is exposed to higher, subtler and purer joys, it easily gives up the lower. How many fathers have given up smoking for the well-being of their children! That is the power of love. If the mind is inspired, the petty, paltry pleasures of the world do not distract it.

6. The Complete mastery over the senses can be gained by meditation upon the All-Perfect. One of the easiest ways to keep the mind busy is to take the name of the lord - any name; Chant the name of the Lord. Keep it busy. Positive tendencies are created by constant repetition. Constant awareness of the Divine Self within, is the secret of holding the mind away from its traps. Take everything as the lord's Prasad - His gift. Perform all action as an offering to God. Whatever comes, accept as Ishwara Prasad, His gift? Once that acceptance is developed there will be no anger, no frustration, no depression, no dejection or laziness.

Mind is an incessant flow of thoughts. Each thought is made up of the consciousness and an object. pleasure and pain are experiences of the mind. The mind experiences sense pleasures through the sense organs. Whenever one sees,

hears, smells, touches or tastes a fascinating and beautiful object, the mind begins to enjoy the sensation through the five sense organs. Each of these sense organs is so powerful that indulging in just one of them leads to destruction. For example, the moth attracted by light burns itself in the flame, the bee and the wasp, intoxicated by the smell of the lotus, are trapped in its soft petals when it closes itself at night; the fish is hooked by the fisherman because of its weakness for taste. The fast running deer is easily trapped by the musical sound of the hunters, even the mighty elephant is snared by its desire for the touch of the she-elephant. Such is the power of the senses. how do we escape these traps?

From continuous thinking of objects, attachment is formed; from attachment desire is born; from desire comes anger, from anger delusion, from delusion loss of memory; from loss of memory, destruction of discrimination; from ruin of discrimination, he perishes. For example, when you see the latest car, your mind starts imagining. I should drive it. The desire to possess comes. Obsession for wealth creates greed, preoccupation with sense objects creates lust. imagination creates desire; if desire is not fulfilled, anger comes, leading to delusion, loss of memory, loss of discrimination. The individual perishes not knowing how to act.



Multitude counts for nothing. A few hearts—whole, sincere, and energetic men can do more in a year, than a mob in a century.

Sympathy for the poor, the downtrodden, even unto death—this is our motto.

YOGA –THE WAY OF LIFE BASED ON THE VISION OF ONENESS

Satish Shamrao Chowkulkar

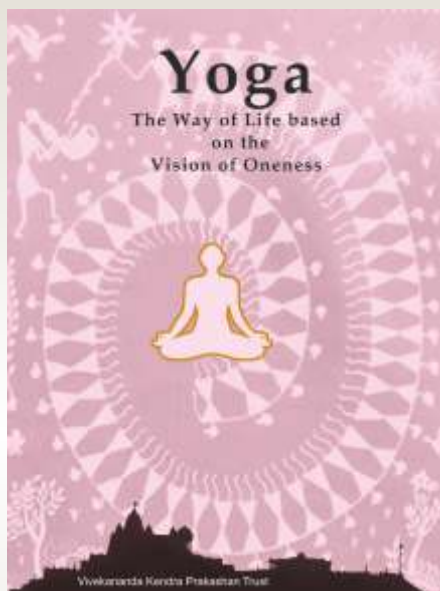
The book under review is a new addition to list of books on yoga published by Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari.

Vivekananda Kendra has been propogating yoga right from its inception. Mananeeya Eknathji Ranade founder of Vivekananda Kendra had time and again stated “yoga is the core of Vivekananda Kendra.”

Vivekananda Kendra has been counducting residential Yoga Shiksha Shibirs at its training center in kanyakumari as well as at in its various zonal centers. Every center also propogates yoga through “Yoga *satras* and Yoga *vargas*.”

Apart form imparting training in performing asanas, pranayama, kriyas and various types of meditations, kendra has been insisting on adopting yoga way of life. Through all the aforesaid modes of imparting yoga the concept of yoga as enshrined in our Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Yoga Vasisthha is being explained through talks and lectures by the speakers in the *Shibirs* and *Vargas*. There was a long time demand from the participants for a conscise and compact literature as a material for continuing study. The book under review will be fullfilling this long felt need.

The book has four chapters to satisfy the four pronged curiosity of the seekers.



The first chapter **Understanding Yoga** deals with various definitions and approaches to define, understand and get clarified the term yoga as it appears in various places in our scriptures in variety of contexts: such as Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Srimad Bhagavad Gita and Yoga vasisthha .

The second chapter **Yoga Based on Dharma** seeks to specify the place of yoga in the way of life lived by millions of Hindus for thousands of years. Concept of Yajna told in the Yoga shastra of Srimad Bhagavad Gita is the secret of retention of moral and ethical values in Bharat through *Pancha Yajna* has been explained in detail. This itself is the secret of

Bharatiya Sanskruti being eternal, withstanding the onslaught of cultural invasions for centuries together.

The third chapter **Eight Limbed Practice of Yoga** specifically explains *Ashtanga Yoga* given by sage Patanjali. Here emphasis is rightly on the oft-missed limbs, namely *Yama* and *Niyama*. Every one of the five *Yamas* and *Niyams* have been dealt with in detail so that the practitioner gets a crystal clear idea of these values.

In the fourth chapter **Yoga The Core of Vivekananda Kendra** the author seeks to explain the socio-cultural application of Yoga shastra as envisioned by Shri Eknathji Ranade founder of Vivekananda Kendra.

Yoga is the solution to resolve all the conflicts with which our society has been infested with and establishing a strife-less society – an ideal social order, will be the best output of adopting yoga way of life based on vision of oneness.

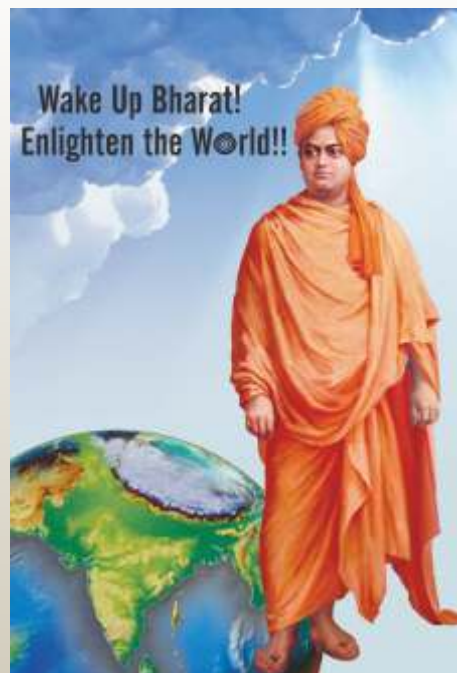
Vivekananda Kendra works for this and seeks to preach yoga with this purpose in mind. It is a must read book for the Yoga practitioners with enlarged vision of life and ofcourse for all the karyakartas of Vivekananda Kendra who are giving their time and energy for Man-making and Nation Bulding .

The book has been appropriately decorated with *Warli arts on the cover page to indicate the vision of oneness in socio-cultural dimension of life.*

WAKE UP BHARAT! ENLIGHTEN THE WORLD!!

The book under review is second presentation of Swami Vivekananda Sardha Shati Samaroha Samiti (The first one being "Life and Message of Swami Vivekananda"), published by Vivekananda Kendra, Prakashan Trust Chennai. The book is authored by Susri Nivedita Raghunath Bhide, Vice President Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari. Swami Vivekananda's 150th Birth Anniversary is going to be celebrated all over India from January 12, 2013 to January 12, 2014. This book gives the genesis of the celebration process and its vision.

Swami Vivekananda who understood the Bharat during his wanderings across Bharat - June 1889 to December 1892, also had known the world, West in particular, during his stay in



US and Europe - July 1893 to January 1897. Thus having known the complete scenerio in its totality, his utterance “Up India ! Conquer the World with your spirituality” gains a special significance, especially in the context of 20th and 21st century's global scenerio. Therefore rightfully, his teachings carry a special relevance, while world is observing his 150th Birth Anniversary. This is the opening note of the symphony of this book. The book deals in the first chapter certain core issues as to what Swamiji meant by spirituality, when he said this.

The author, as per clarity provided by Swamiji, separates the grain from the chaf and enlists the criteria for the oft - misunderstood word – 'Spirituality, namely :

1. Vision of oneness
2. Essential Divinity of mankind
3. Acceptance of Diversity
4. Following the principle of Dharma – Harmony amidst the disparities around.

In the second chapter focus is taken to the first part of the legend of the logo. Wake Up Bharat!. This phrase is addressed to today's India and Indians – and *Bhaartiyas*. A startled question is bound to come up - “Wake Up means what, Are we sleeping?”

Inspite of the material progress made by us in recent past, the fact remains that we are not yet conscious of our role, the role assigned to Bharat by the Destiny. May be we are awake but now it is in the context of our this assignment we need to get awakened. Author shows the areas where we need to get awakened. This forms the central theme of the second chapter. We have to :

- ❖ Wake Up to our inherent strength.
- ❖ Wake Up to the call of service.

- ❖ Wake Up to the greatness of our Cultural Heritage.

- ❖ Wake Up to the need of rebuilding our Nation.

This awakening invariably gives pointer to some tasks. Only after performing them it will be evident that we are awakened. Author points out them as:

- ❖ Internalise the eternal unifying principles.
- ❖ Develop and rebuild the systems based on these principles.
- ❖ Sacrifice ! Great things are done only by great sacrifices.
- ❖ Never lose sight of the purpose of nation building.

These observations have all been stemmed out from the burning words of Swami Vivekananda. These have been extensively quoted with references of the source, so that inquisite reader can reach the source for further clarity and authenticity.

The third chapter is full with the process of carrying out the task for 'Awakened *Bharatiya*' – namely Enlighten the World!. The often asked question from the India's Inteligentia, quite often laced with inertia and agnosticism “Why should we? Do they want to get Enlightened?”. In the light of what diagnosis Swamiji gave during his time, laced with author's own observation during her recent visit, she emphasises on the need to enlighten the world. In fact, it has been also underscored by social thinkers and world's historians time and again that West's “Adventures”, should have an Indian ending. They go further to state that it is India's responsibility and India is accountable for that, if she does not do so. The reasons for need of Indian initiative have been orderly laid as :

❖ Western religions are unable to face sledge – hammer of science, leading to socio – Cultural chaos and vaccum.

❖ Materialistic mooring have brought the humanity at naught.

❖ Moral and ethical values are getting derided.

❖ Conflicts of religious exclusiveness.

❖ Fundamentalist elements resorting to terrorism.

❖ World's peace is endangered.

Incidently a mention must be made here of the excerpt quoted from an episode in Srimad Bhagavata, on page 36. The episode is connected with advise given by a person Bahuka, minister of a tyrant king Jarasandha to an another tyrant king Kamsa on how to wean out the influence of Sages on the society. Bahuka tells:

“ There is only one way to destroy Sages. Open your purse strings to people; teach them to eat, drink and enjoy themselves; break up their families; teach women that chastity is not worth having at the cost of pleasure; bring up the children to look upon their parents as useless. Once the people begin to believe in unrestrained pleasures as the goal of life, they

will look upon ascetics as deranged; they will laugh at those who talk of duty, *tapas*, love and compassion. When wine flows, self-restraint will disappear; men will be like well - fed cattle at the mercy of their cowherds. Whatever you do to them they will bear as patiently as uncomplaining beasts; and obey your lash as if it were a favour from you.”

As rightly observed this has what precisely happened in US - European society. As we are aping them our society may also follow the same fate. And therefore :Up India! Conquer the world with your sprituality !!

The book ends on a note that unless we as a nation/society take up this task, we may stop to grow and degrade. The world needs the Vedantic teachings. If we fell to do so there is no other alternative for the world to look toward.

This book gives a precise reason and insight as to the various facets – *Ayams* of the celebration of the 150th Birth anniversary of Swami vivekananda namely 1) *Yuva shakti* 2) *Samvardhini* 3) *Gramayana* 4) *Asmita* 5) *Prabuddha Bharat*. Therefore this book is of **must read category** for one and all.



So long as millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor, who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them.

Life is good or evil according the state of mind in which we look at it, it is neither by itself.

In eating, dressing or lying, in singing or playing, in enjoyment or disease, always manifest the highest moral courage.

VK SAMACHAR

Four stamps released on Swami Vivekananda's 150th birth anniversary

The **Department of Posts** (DoP) today released four special postage **stamps** and the **First Day Cover on Swami Vivekananda** on his 150th birth anniversary. These stamps have been brought out by India Post to commemorate the 150th Birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda whom the world acknowledges as great visionary, philosopher and thinker.

The department has already released two stamps on Vivekananda in 1963 and 1993. Further a special stamp has also been released on Vivekananda Rock Memorial in Tamilnadu in 1996. Sri Lanka post has also issued a special stamp on Vivekananda in 1997.

(Newspaper Report: courtesy Times of India)



Vivek Express, a mobile museum /exhibition, which depicts Swamiji's life and message at Hyderabad

The Indian Railways, is celebrating the 150th Birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda by dedicating a train by name Vivek Express, a mobile museum/exhibition, which depicts Swamiji's life and message. This train runs through the country stopping at numerous places and allowing the citizens of the place know about Vivekananda.

The train is well decorated. It is fully air-conditioned and a comfortable place to be in for as long as it takes to go through the exhibits. The exhibition is only two bogies length.





Pedalled all the way



Shri Thangaraj, a staff of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari, undertook a Yatra of a different kind to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. He started from Kanyakumari and followed Swamiji's trail reach Chennai exactly on the same day Swamiji reached Chennai (February 6th). In all he travelled 995kms. facing challenges in a way of life for Thangaraj (a Physically Challenged Person) and he braved all odds for 19 days. Overcoming all hurdles and discouragement, he reached Chennai on February 6th, where a warm welcome was given to him by Swami Takshajananda of Ramakrishna Mutt.



If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed P u n y a Bhumi,.... The land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of spirituality –it is India.

Man-Making

Nation-Building

Vivekananda Kendra Calling !

(a Spiritually Oriented Service Mission)



“ A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion’s courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up, the gospel of equality.”

**Are you among those who Swamiji had in mind
for awakening our people to the mission of our Motherland ? -
The JAGADGURU BHARAT**

You can serve humanity through the Man-Making and Nation-Building projects in education, culture and sustainable development, and branches spread all over India.

Come, dedicate yourself for the service of the nation as a full-time worker.

It is a mission for the nation your basic needs like food, clothing & accommodation will be taken care of by the organization.

Contact on the following address with full bio-data:

General Secretary
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