

YUVA BHARATI

Voice of Youth

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Editor : P.Parameswaran.

Invocation



"Yaa Devi Sarva Bhooteshu Buddhi Roopena Samsthita
Namastasyai Namastasyai Namastasyai Namaha"

I bow again and again to the Goddess, who dwells in all creatures in the form of
intelligence.

DADHICHI LIVES



Hindu Dharma has always exhorted the sons of Mother India to sacrifice. The great epic Mahabharata has the story of the golden mongoose which showcases a family which down to the last child was ready to embrace death by hunger willingly in order to feed a stranger who has come as a guest to their house. Saivaite devotional literature tells repeatedly of the sacrifices of

individuals who sacrificed their lives, their dear ones, their very vital organs including the eyes, their children without the least hesitation for the Divine. Kannapa the tribal devotee of Shiva piercing his own eyes to give it to Shiva is an enduring image in the devotional iconography of South India.

Sister Nivedita the disciple of Swami Vivekananda was the first to design the national flag of India. In that first design of the national flag of this ancient land, she rightly introduced the Vajra – the thunderbolt – the weapon of Indra against the forces of darkness. It was the Vajra that was made by the backbone of Dadhichi. Sister Nivedita says about this design of the national flag thus:

...The gods, it is said, were looking for a divine weapon, that is to say, for the divine weapon, par excellence-and they were told that only if they could find a man willing to give his own bones for the substance of it, could the Invincible Sword be forged. Whereupon they trooped up to the rishi Dadhichi and asked for his bones for the purpose. The request sounded like mockery. A man would give all but his own life-breath, assuredly, for a great end, but who, even to furnish forth a weapon for Indra, would hand over his body itself? To the rishi Dadhichi, however, this was no insuperable height of sacrifice. Smilingly he listened, smilingly he answered, and in that very moment laid himself down to die-yielding at a word the very utmost demanded of humanity. Here, then, we have the significance of the Vajra. The Selfless Man is the Thunderbolt. Let us strive only for selflessness, and we become the weapon in the hands of the Gods. Not for us to ask how. Not for us to plan methods. For us, it is only to lay ourselves down at the altar-foot. The gods do the rest. The divine carries us. It is not the thunderbolt that is

invincible, but the hand that hurls it. Mother! Mother! Take away from us this self! Let not fame or gain or pleasure have dominion over us! Be Thou the sunlight, we the dew dissolving in its heat.

One may say that these are all mythologies and legends. A skeptic may argue that in real life such sacrifices seldom happen. History has shown that the unbelievable acts of sacrifices by Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Govind Singh were vital in preserving Sanathana Dharma. A skeptic may still say that they too belonged to a bygone era and in the modern society where selfishness reigns and consumerism prevails such sacrifices may well be nothing but a figment of imagination.

Maruthachalam and Kalavathi are daily laborers living in Coimbatore, the financial capital of Tamil Nadu. For decades they had toiled and through their sweat and sacrifices, made their son Rajagopal a computer science graduate. The boy was both intelligent and patriotic. After graduating he joined a software firm in Coimbatore. He was also a leader in the local BJP unit. On September 4th 2013 Rajagopal met with an accident when driving his two-wheeler. Unconscious he was taken to a hospital nearby. Soon the parents arrived at the hospital. The parents were informed by the chief physician of the hospital that their young boy, hope of their future has suffered brain death. The parents struck as they were by this monumental tragedy, at their moment of extreme grief made a decision of supreme sacrifice. The boy's two eyes were donated to 'Arvind Eye Hospital'. His liver, heart and kidneys were also donated to different ailing patients. One of his kidneys provided a new life to a Muslim sister. That the parents even at this moment of grief decided to act with such a sense of sacrifice should make even the toughest of the skeptics stand up and take notice that in this land of Dadhichi, the tradition continues to this day. Rajagopal's parents when they decided to give the body parts of their son to provide healed lives to the ailing humanity have made us all aware of the lineage of sacrifice into which each one of us is born. In this 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda let us all salute these great parents and let us rededicate ourselves to the national ideal of sacrifice which Swamiji emphasized again and again in his soul stirring words:

Who will give the world light? Sacrifice in the past has been the Law, it will be, alas, for ages to come. The earth's bravest and best will have to sacrifice themselves for the good of many, for the welfare of all. Buddhas by the hundred are necessary with eternal love and pity.

Aravindan Neelakandan
YB-ET

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS~8

(Words in Italics are by the compiler)

Compiled by
Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

Question 8: *Why do Hindus worship idols?*

God is infinite. How do we worship infinite God?
As we find that somehow or other, by the laws of our mental constitution, we have to associate our ideas of infinity with the image of the blue sky, or of the sea, so we naturally connect our idea of holiness with the image of a church, a mosque, or a cross. The Hindus have associated the idea of holiness, purity, truth, omnipresence, and such other ideas with different images and forms. *Thus all worship God in some form or other whether Church, crescent or idol.* But with this difference that while some people devote their whole lives to their idol of a church and never rise higher, because with them religion means an intellectual assent to certain doctrines and doing good to their fellows, the whole religion of the Hindu is centred in realisation. Man is to become divine by realising the divine. Idols or temples or churches or books are only the supports, the helps, of his spiritual childhood: but on and on he must progress.

He must not stop anywhere. "External worship, material worship," say the scriptures, "is the lowest stage; struggling to rise high, mental prayer is the next stage, but the highest stage is when the Lord has been realised. "*Hindus worship God in idols they do not worship idols!* Mark, the same earnest man who is



kneeling before the idol tells you, "Him the sun cannot express, nor the moon, nor the stars, the lightning cannot express Him, nor what we speak of as fire; through Him they shine."

Hindu does not abuse any one's idol or call its worship sin. He recognises in it a necessary stage of life. "The child is father of the man. " Would it be right for an old man to say that childhood is a sin or youth a sin? If a man can realise his divine nature with the help of an image, would it be right to call that a sin? Nor

even when he has passed that stage, should he call it an error. To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth. To him all the religions, from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realise the Infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of these marks a stage of progress; and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength, till it reaches the Glorious Sun.

Unity in variety is the plan of nature, and the Hindu has recognised it. Every other religion lays down certain fixed dogmas, and tries to force society to adopt them. It places before society only one coat which must fit Jack and John and Henry, all alike. If it does not fit John or Henry, he must go without a coat to cover his body. The Hindus have discovered that the absolute can only be realised, or thought of, or stated, through the relative, and the images, crosses, and crescents are simply so many symbols -- so many pegs to hang the spiritual ideas on. It is not that this help is necessary for every one, but those that do not need it have no right to say that it is wrong. Nor is it compulsory in Hinduism.

One thing I must tell you. Idolatry in India does not mean anything horrible. It is not the mother of harlots. On the other hand, it is the attempt of undeveloped minds to grasp high spiritual truths. The Hindus have their faults, they sometimes have their exceptions; but mark this, they are always for punishing their own bodies, and never for cutting the throats of their neighbours. If the Hindu fanatic burns himself on the pyre, he never lights the fire of

Inquisition. And even this cannot be laid at the door of his religion any more than the burning of witches can be laid at the door of Christianity.

To the Hindu, then, the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only evolving a God out of the material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them. Why, then, are there so many contradictions? They are only apparent, says the Hindu. The contradictions come from the same truth adapting itself to the varying circumstances of different natures.

And these little variations are necessary for purposes of adaptation. But in the heart of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has declared to the Hindu in His incarnation as Krishna, "I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls. Wherever thou see extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity, know thou that I am there ." And what has been the result? I challenge the world to find, throughout the whole system of Sanskrit philosophy, any such expression as that the Hindu alone will be saved and not others. Says Vyasa, "We find perfect men even beyond the pale of our caste and creed. " One thing more. How, then, can the Hindu, whose whole fabric of thought centres in God, believe in Buddhism which is agnostic, or in Jainism which is atheistic? The Buddhists or the Jains do not depend upon God; but the whole force of their religion is directed to the great central truth in every religion, to evolve a God out of man. *That is the main purpose of Hindu Dharma.* (Volume 16-19)

(Words in Italics are by the compiler)

Compiled by
Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

Patience and perserverance is required to attain goal of life

"He who hates none, who is the friend of all, who is merciful to all, who has nothing of his own, who is free from egoism, who is even - minded in pain and pleasure, who is forbearing, who is always satisfied, who works always in Yoga, whose self has become controlled, whose will is firm, whose mind and intellect are given up unto Me, such a one is My beloved Bhakta. From whom comes no disturbance, who cannot be disturbed by others, who is free from joy, anger, fear, and anxiety, such a one is My beloved. He who does not depend on anything, who is pure and active, who does not care whether good comes or evil, and never becomes miserable, who has given up all efforts for himself; who is the same in praise or in blame, with a silent, thoughtful mind, blessed with what little comes in his way, homeless, for the whole world is his home, and who is steady in his ideas, such a one is My beloved Bhakta." Such alone become Yogis.

There was a great god - sage called Narada. Just as there are sages among mankind, great Yogis, so there are great Yogis among the gods. Narada was a good Yogi, and very great. He travelled everywhere.

One day he was passing through a forest, and saw a man who had been meditating until the white ants had built a huge mound round his body -- so long had he been sitting in that



position.

He said to Narada, "Where are you going?"

Narada replied, "I am going to heaven."

"Then ask God when He will be merciful to me; when I shall attain freedom." *He urged.* Narada agreed.

Further on Narada saw another man. He was jumping about, singing, dancing, and said, "Oh, Narada, where are you going?" His voice and his gestures were wild.

Narada said, "I am going to heaven."

"Then, ask when I shall be free." *He too requested Narada.* Narada went on.

In the course of time he came again by the same road, and there was the man who had been meditating with the ant - hill round him.

He said, "Oh, Narada, did you ask the Lord about me?"

"Oh, yes."

"What did He say?"

"The Lord told me that you would attain freedom in four more births."

Then the man began to weep and wail, and said, "I have meditated until an ant - hill has grown around me, and I have four more births yet!"

Narada went to the other man.

"Did you ask my question?" Enquired this Bhakta

"Oh, yes. Do you see this tamarind tree? I have to tell you that as many leaves as there are on

that tree, so many times, you shall be born, and then you shall attain freedom."

The man began to dance for joy, and said, "I shall have freedom after such a short time!"

A voice came, "My child, you will have freedom this minute."

That was the reward for his *readiness for perseverance*. He was ready to work through all those births, nothing discouraged him. But the first man felt that even four more births were too long. Only perseverance, like that of the man who was willing to wait aeons brings about the highest result. (Volume I page 193)

. . . Purity, patience, and perseverance overcome all obstacles. All great things must of necessity be slow. . . (Vol 6 p. 344) *Higher the goal more is the need for patience and perseverance*. Nothing shall be done in haste. Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success and, above all, love. All time is yours, there is no indecent haste. Everything will come right if you are pure and sincere. (Vol 6 p. 281)



In no other scripture in the world is this adjective (fearless) applied either to God or to man. Abhih, fearless!

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE TO THE WEST

(Text of the lecture delivered at Saas Fee,
Switzerland on 28. 8. 2013)

DR. M. LAKSHMI KUMARI

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome you have given me. I want to share a special joy with you and that is, it was my childhood dream to come to Switzerland to enjoy the magnificence of nature that is unfolded here. I thank Revered Swami Amaranandaji Maharaj and all the members of the organizing committee for providing me this wonderful opportunity.

“Hear, ye, children of immortal bliss! Even Ye that reside in higher spheres! I have found the Ancient One, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion, knowing Him alone you will be saved from death over again. There exists no other way for liberation.” (S. w. Upanishad)

Thus did the great rishis of India reveal to the world their magnificent discovery of the existence of the One Ultimate Truth, which lies beyond the perceptions of human body, mind and intellect. This very same knowledge of Truth has been handed over through millennia and has remained as the central fulcrum of Indian spiritual heritage or sanathana dharma.

Thousands of years back when humanity had not yet tasted the fruits of culture, civilization, knowledge, religion, etc., when they were still groping in darkness as to the value, meaning, purpose and goal of life, in the blessed land of India there was already a flourishing civilization. The people here, having understood the ephemeral nature of life, as seen and enjoyed through senses, turned to a

life of deep contemplation, steadily withdrawing their senses, mind and intellect from the ever

changing phenomenal world outside and delving into the depths of their being through the perfect technique of meditation.

The realization of the Ultimate Truth that they achieved transformed them totally. Their vision was no more restricted or fragmentary but became unified and wholesome. Their whole life became surcharged with the vision of Oneness, which was omniscient and omnipotent. They also discovered that such a vision was capable of destroying all the miseries arising out of fragmented understanding of the Truth which is a source of infinite indestructible sat chidananda. They also became aware of the highly potential blissful nature of the soul within each and every being. Out of this awareness came the immortal words quoted above. It was this nectar of immortal bliss that Swami Vivekananda was carrying with him all through his life.

On that memorable day 11th September 1893 Swamiji shared with the eagerly awaiting assembly at the Chicago Parliament of Religions and through them with the world at



large – the eternal, the ever fresh, soul stirring vision of the Indian rishis through his famous lecture beginning with the immortal words “Sisters and Brothers of America” which drenched the audience in an unheard of bliss emanating from the wholesomeness of the Indian Vedic Vision of life in totality.

The highly enlightening spiritual unifying force released by Swami Vivekananda on that momentous occasion brought in its wake a resurrection of human faith, reaffirmation of the eternity of Satya and Dharma and a reawakening of human soul to an awareness of its essential divinity. The message of unity and universal love that poured in from the soulful words of Swami Vivekananda drenched the whole of humanity in a new wave of spiritual understanding and universal brotherhood which continue to soothen many a tortured soul even today.

Through his tireless work of 9 years he brought about a synthesis of not only of the East and the West but also of knowledge and action, science and spirituality. The sum total of his efforts was the unfoldment of the philosophy of 'Practical Vedanta' for the elevation of man to the divine, from the much – maligned level of a sinner. No wonder, to this day Swami Vivekananda remains as the best mediator between the East and the West.

More than a century has passed since Swami Vivekananda's sonorous voice echoed these immortal words resplendent with the never diminishing shine of Eternal Truth. In fact, these words were a short commentary on the inexplicably sweet utterance he made at the opening of the Parliament of Religions. His words fell like the first rain drops on the thirsty chataka birds who had thronged the opening session of the Parliament, yearning for a new message, a new vision, a new impulse and a

new command that would make not only their lives fruitful but also bring a new silver lining on the dark clouds that were beginning to gather over the world's horizon. It was this vision that translated itself into the words 'Sisters and Brothers of America' as he stood up and began his address to the assembly.

The sound vibrations that emanated from him have merged with the Universal sound. But the soul stirring expressions that poured out of him over the next nine and half years still remain with us as his own commentary on the vision he had nurtured, thanks to his realization of the Self within. These commentaries are fortunately available to us distributed in the nine volumes of Vivekananda literature. In living form they remain in the monasteries and mission centers for which he had laid foundations in his own life time and in the hearts of millions of Indians for whom they form a never ending source of inspiration and guidance.

Swamiji could think and act as he did because he was a true vedantin. Vedanta is built on principles, not personalities and because of this, Vedanta is a most impersonal religion based on principles and yet with infinite scope for the play of the person.

Essence of Swamiji's Message

The first and foremost attempt of Swamiji was to put across to the multi religious and multiracial audience at the Parliament, the fact, *that varied though they may be in colour, creed, race, religion or other man made denominations, in the final scheme of spiritual analysis they were nothing but 'brothers and sisters', born of and attached to the same stock, the Divine Self. His second emphasis was that all human efforts of reaching out to god called religion, were but different pathways leading man to his ultimate goal of God realization.* His inspired

declarations rooted in his own Self realization made the entire audience one with him, leaving no room for petty doubts or disbeliefs. The telling example of the 'frog in the well' story he narrated in this connection has now become a classic example to demonstrate the narrow mindedness of religious leaders who refuse to accept the truth in other religions. He made *"Universal tolerance and acceptance of all religions as true"* the refrains of the Chicago Parliament of Religions. This was India's message that Swamiji wanted the world religions to adopt for world peace.

He gave a new orientation to the search for Truth and acquisition of knowledge by elevating knowledge to a search for Oneness, of unity in diversity. Such an idea that knowledge is everyone's basic right will let humanity recognize that all of us are citizens with equal right in the global village, which no other idea can. *He provided a new dimension to religion by revealing the science of religion with self realization as its essence.* What the world wants today is a new understanding based on the bedrock of One Ultimate Truth, which can bring human hearts together without the discordant notes of the so called religious dogmas and beliefs. *His lectures on Jnana Yoga brought a brighter vision of the One Truth, which the western minds had not experienced earlier.* Newer realms of knowledge were revealed to the West when he spoke about secular knowledge as different from the imperishable knowledge of the Self in man. *He proclaimed "Advaita – ONENESS" as the "sumnum bonnum" of knowledge and reasoned that "as soon as science would reach perfect unity it would stop from further progress, because it would reach the goal.....and the science of religion would become perfect when it would discover Him who is the one life in a universe of death, Him, who is the*

constant basis of an ever-changing world, One, who is the only soul of which all souls are but delusive manifestations. Thus is it, through multiplicity and duality the ultimate unity is reached. Religion can go no farther. This is goal of all science." Through this beautiful synthesis of science and religion he opened an absolutely new channel of thinking contemplations and research. The result is there for everyone to see, in the new dimensions of knowledge which the quantum science is unveiling before the modern scientists. He argued that secular sciences and secular knowledge by themselves cannot assure peace of mankind, words which we find later echoed in the observation of Einstein "Science can denature Plutonium but cannot denature the evil in the human heart." Today we are charmed by the idea of globalization. Swami Vivekananda touched on this remarkable concept in almost all his lectures. *"The second great idea that the world is waiting to receive from our Upanishads is the solidarity of the universe.* The old lines of demarcation and differentiation are vanishing rapidly.....Our Upanishads say that the cause of all misery is ignorance; and that is perfectly true when applied to every state of life, either social or spiritual. It is ignorance that makes us hate each other, it is through ignorance that we do not know and do not love each other. As soon as we come to know each other, love comes, must come, for are we not one? Thus we find solidarity coming in spite of itself." India's vision of 'Vasudhaiva kudumbakam' – whole universe as one family was echoed and reechoed by Swami Vivekananda in a truly scientific way.

The words of the rishis came thundering through his mouth proclaiming the glad tidings to a beleaguered audience. He virtually pleaded for the deletion of the word

'sinners' so much used by the missionaries in addressing their 'flock'. He pointed out that it is a sin to call a man so; as divinity is inherent in all beings. *He called upon men of all races and creeds to shake off the delusion of limitedness and claim their right to Immortality of Spirit.* He insisted that matter is man's servant and not the other way round.

Swamiji spoke of God emphasizing his formlessness, Omniscience and Omnipotence at the same time holding Him as dear and near one who is Almighty and all merciful. Love for God known to the devout of the West only as a policy of give and take, assuring them of a pleasant afterlife, was elevated by him to the level of Self – knowledge, integrating it with the goal of life thus transforming it into something more sublime and rewarding. He projected Love as the foundation of religion and life and not as a mere sentiment as misunderstood by the majority. Love, rooted in Self awareness was for him a great motivation for right actions. The more one exudes love, the more one moves nearer to god. Only then one develops dispassion and gets released from all bonds of passion. He taught the west how human love could be elevated to the mighty spiritual force of bhakti blending it with the knowledge of Self. For the first time the West heard of the idea of, Para Bhakti, or “loving unselfishly for love's sake.”

Knowledge and action were combined by him through the science of action or Karma Yoga in which the sense of agency I, the dualities of likes and dislikes, pleasure and pain etc., and anxiety for the fruit of action are eliminated through surrender to Almighty or a high ideal, thereby transforming action itself into knowledge. Karma Yoga was for him as much a path as any other leading towards the freedom or spiritual emancipation. The gateway to self-purification

through work, transforming it into Yanja, opened up for the first time by Sri Krishna in Bhagavat Gita, became in Swamiji's hands a tool for character building, man making and nation building. He showed how each and every action, however simple it might appear to be, could be yoked to the mighty cosmic wheel through Yanja, or selfless dedicated actions.

He struck at the very roots of doctrinism and dogmatism and called upon the religious minded to struggle towards realization of Truth by “being and becoming”. The goal of religion was “to become perfect, to become divine, to reach God and see God, and this reaching God, seeing God, and becoming perfect as the Father in the Heaven is perfect”. Such a perfectly religious man, Hinduism points out “enjoys infinite and perfect bliss having obtained the only thing in which man ought to have pleasure, namely God and enjoys the bliss with the God.

Another soul stirring ideal that Swamiji emphasized was that of freedom which rings through all Swamiji's lectures bringing true religion or self – realization down to the understanding of common man. The whole of Vivekananda literature can be viewed as an attempt of a realized soul to acquaint his fellow human beings of the Ultimate Reality of Truth and its manifestation as Dharma and freedom in human life. Unlike some of his predecessors in religion he did not exclude anybody from the purview of spiritual transformation. According to him “Each soul is potentially divine, the goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature external and internal, do this either by work or worship, psychic control or philosophy – by one, or more or all of these – and be free. This is whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples of forms are but secondary

details.”

He revealed to the West that religion and spirituality were more scientific than the science they know of and practise in their day to day life. He underscored the teachings of the science of yoga and emphatically declared “*that religion is not only based on the experience of ancient seers, but that no man can be religious until he has the same perceptions himself.*” Yoga, is the science which teaches us to get these perceptions. The Science of Raja Yoga proposes to put before humanity a practical and scientifically worked out method of arriving at this truth. Raja Yoga has special superfine methods of investigation into the realms of knowledge which lie beyond the experiences of our five indriyas, a mode of enquiry totally uninvestigated by the West but perfected over the centuries by Eastern yogis, who were realized souls.

Swamiji taught the West a new way of looking at knowledge..... “Knowledge itself is the highest reward of Knowledge” as it leads us to realization of the Ultimate truth. It has another utility too in that it can take away all our miseries which have their roots in ignorance of Reality. All misery comes from fear, from unsatisfied desire. Man will find that he never dies, his Self is eternal. And then he will have no fear of death.” Such words and expressions, the West was listening for the first time and that too backed by full authenticity of realization.

He called upon the Western women to become aware of the strength of purity of character and thereby sanctify their homes, transforming them into temples of love, understanding, sympathy, sacrifice and service. Rooted in such strong family principles, he wanted women to work to strengthen and enlighten the society and bring about generations of enlightened

beings, who alone can tackle real problems of the world.

He taught the West to come out of the ritualistic ceremonial religion to a religion centered on one's self realization of the One Infinite Truth. All his teachings were based on the time tested eternal Truth of the Vedas and Upanishads, made doubly convincing by the magnificent life experiments of his great Master Sri Ramakrishna.

To sum up, Swamiji released religions from the imprisonment in the cages of dogmas, faith and other – worldly preoccupations into the infinitude of the freedom of spiritual awareness.

To mention a few special guidelines that Swamiji has left with the West are: 1. The indestructible power and eternal validity of the Ultimate Truth, Satya. 2. The sustaining capacity of dharma. 3. Cosmic implications of each and every act of man. 4. The immaculate power of tapas and brahmacharya. 5. The significance of a Guru in spiritual life. 6. The peace that is enshrined in the ideal of ahimsa. 7. The need to recognize the whole universe as one's family.

Last but not the least, Swamiji directed the minds of his contemporary scientists from the limited visions of the world observed through the senses into the ever expanding realm of timeless, cosmological infinity. This has paid great dividends in the form of the expanding frontiers of quantum science which is revealing at every step the magnitude of every form of life including that of man. In essence Swamiji taught the west to see the microcosm in the macrocosm and *vice versa*.

EMPOWERING WOMEN – THE INDIAN WAY

N. KRISHNAMOORTI

Sumati: Mother, what is India's ideal of empowering women? Is a woman a competitor to a man? Has she to accept the male as the ideal, as the standard and to empower herself in the same way as a man is empowered? Or has a woman some special powers not granted to men and a woman's empowerment lies in realising her total potentialities?

Mother: Child. There are two ways in which Stree Shakti is understood in the Hindu Tradition. In one way, the Female is recognized as the ADYA SHAKTI the primal energy. She is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. Even Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma are Her creations. She is the feminine equivalent of Parabrahman. This tradition is called Shakti Advaita or Lalita Advaita.

In the other path, Shakti is the complimentary half of Shiva, she completes, fulfils and forms the foil for Shiva. She is the active component whereas Shiva is passive. When Shiva expresses Himself, He manifests His powers only through Shakti. In the passive presence of Shiva, Shakti does the entire work of creating, maintaining, and in due course withdrawing or destroying the universe. In the Vaishnava tradition also Mahalakshmi does all the work in the presence of Vishnu.

Sumati: Are there other ways of looking at the pair of active and passive forces?

Mother: Yes. In physics we have centrifugal and centripetal forces. The centrifugal forces is

active, aggressive, expressive, highly dynamic. The centripetal force is silent, passive, static and indrawn. In Indian philosophy we call them - Pravritti and Nivritti forces. In China they call them Yang and Yin. The two great opposite but complimentary forces work in the cosmos. Yin is the female, cold, dark, passive power, Yang represents masculinity, light and warmth. The interplay of these two forces make up the material principle governing the universe. These two are not opposed to one another. They are not equals. They cannot replace each other, substitute each other. Each has a specific, well defined role, a vital role.

Sumati: How does psychology approach the issue?

Mother: Earlier the two forces were called Aggressive and passive forces. In psychology nowadays they are called self-assertive and participatory roles or halves.

Sumati: Of course these names do not describe defined halves. Rather they show poles like the north and south poles of a magnet.

Mother: Yes. There are various gradations. In Ardha Nareeswara the two halves are equal in appearance and strength. In Kamakshi the Male is hidden in the Female, completely merged in it. In Dakshnamoorti the female is hidden in the male. In all the three, the complementary halves are together.

Sumati: But in the real world today, the aggressive tendency is more visible, more

respected, more welcome. The passive, the soft, the female is called the 'OTHER', meaning the masculine is the mainstream.

Mother: This is the Western concept. In all Abrahamic religions and the material and social sciences inspired by them, the aggressive tendencies are respected more than the passive tendencies. In two thousand years, such thought has created a mind - set that praises the Male, empowers the Male and the Aggressive, dynamic forces of Nature are taken to represent the whole of Nature. The softer side, is neglected. The result is - colonialism, wars, aggression and neglect of the spiritual, loving, yielding half of the human system. Values such as love, sacrifice, devotion are neglected and ignored and are allowed to die and disappear from the social scene. As Human beings find No love in their heart, they fail to find lovable objects in the world outside. The dynamic balance between the aggressive forces and the passive forces provide the entire basis for human civilization - Love tempered by Discretion, Energy balanced by Caution. Bhakti strengthened by Wisdom, Prema sweetened by Self-lessness and Daya sanctified by the Recognition of the Divinity in the person in front of you. Now the over - aggressive tendencies have totally upset the fine - tuned balance, creating highly skewed societies with the Masculine – values parading as Total Human values.

Sumati: Has this imbalance, this act of learning towards one side, properly studied?

Mother: Luckily yes. But only recently in the West. Though these studies have not gained the attention they deserve. Jules Cashford and Anne Baring have studied and have written an extensively researched book. **“The Myth of the Mother Goddess” – “the evolution of an Image.”** Writing a foreword to the book, Sir

Laurance Van Der Post says “The feminine half of the human spirit has been (neglected) by the Masculine dominated societies and (the role of the feminine) has been inadequately acknowledged and evolved in our (ie Western) cultures and civilizations. We see the result of this neglect which is with us still, in the decay of the feeling and the caring values of life and in the pursuit of the masculine rationalism which seems to be the dominant element in the establishments of today.”

Again he adds “The loss of this feminine eventfulness has led to the most urgent and dangerous problem of our time – the exploitation and also rejection of our Mother Earth, our mother not only deprived of the great store of life it had prepared for us, but increasingly being denied the chance to do more.”

Sumati: But in Indian culture equating the feminine with wealth (Lakshmi) power (Parvati) learning (Sarasvati) is axiomatic. It is inherent in our blood. We don't have to research it, learn it.

Mother: But a thousand years of rule by cultures and religions that do not accept that the Divine could be Feminine, left a scar on our culture. The social space of women has been lost and with that much that, is feminine.

Sumati: There was no attempt to restore the balance?

Mother: Yes there was. Sri Ramakrishna came on the scene. He worshipped the Feminine as his Ishta, accepted a woman, Bhairavi Brahmani as his Guru and worshipped his consort Sarada Devi in the place of the Goddess. He accepted women-disciples and taught them Vedanta.

Sumati: There would have been much resistance to this kind of home – brewed Revolution.

Mother: Resistance and opposition came from the nearest and the dearest, those whom Sri Ramakrishna revered and loved; The first was Totapuri, Ramakrishna's advaita acharya, a giant of a personality – the head of an Ashrama in Punjab with 750 monks. He was a pure advaitin and rejected initially any God (or Goddess) with form. The Divine Mother made Totapuri accept Her, in the same manner as Tirunavukkarasar (Vageesha) was brought round to the Vedic Religion. A severely painful stomach illness forced Totapuri to accept Kali. The second was Keshub Chandra Sen, acknowledged as the second Buddha, raised in the tradition of Brahma Samaj. And the third was the incomparable Narendra Nath Dutta later known as Swami Vivekananda. This child of Jnana Yoga perhaps thought Mother worship is a sort of concession to sentimentality, a concession to the weak and dull intellect. Shri Ramakrishna brought Keshub and Naren to accept Mother Kali. He actually rejoiced at Naren accepting Kali. Mother Goddess regained Her due place among the intelligentsia – devotees. A little later in early 20th Century Western classical science itself took a U turn. For four hundred years or so the Age of Reason ruled the scientific world. Mathematics, logic, physics, Quantification and measurability ruled science. Music, fine arts, poetry, were considered inferior – sissy – meant for half –literate women! Then science started seeing its own inadequacies. It produced intellectual giants and moral pigmies. Two world wars, in which science and technology played important roles as tools of destruction, tried to bring mankind to its senses. Sociology, Music, family and community values, Feminine values, slowly started gaining importance though these values have much space still to be gained.

Sumati: What about Western Feminist Movements?

Mother: That also went on the traditional path of idolizing Aggressive forces, before sense dawned. I shall give you an example.

A cub – reporter Mary Anne Dolan wanted to work her way up in the magazine **The Los Angeles Herald Examiner** and bring feminine values to Journalism. She worked hard and rose to the top of her profession as the chief-editor of the **Examiner** magazine. But, once at the top, she realised that her victory was not the victory for women else-where. She herself has imbibed those values, masculine values, to fight which she started her campaign in the first place. When she reported her sad story to an assembly of women, actresses and many professional women rose to say that their experiences too were exactly the same. As power comes, many women – thank God not all –behave like men, ape them imbibing NON FEMININE values. Feminine values struggle to survive clinging on to a few powerful yet sensible women.

Sumati: What a sad drama, sad tale?

Mother: Humanity wants women to bring their healing touch, the consoling counsel, the persuasive word to all human kind. Instead, if women start aping men in the name of equality, the soft skills which the world so sadly need will never be practised. Now even in Engineering, Management and industry, soft – skills, feminine values such as SNEHA, PREMA, DAYA, **Bhakti** are being taught, of course in a modern language. True empowerment of women will come when our women practise the Feminine virtues, to the fullest. Otherwise we are in for another era of violence, imbalance, mal-distribution of the goodies of life, even the basic necessities of life.

Science is nothing but the finding of unity. As soon as science would reach perfect unity, it would stop from further progress, because it would reach the goal.... Thus is it through multiplicity and duality, that the ultimate unity is reached. Religion can go no farther. This is the goal of all science.

Swami Vivekananda

Science tends more and more to reveal to us the unity that underlies the diversity of nature. We must have diversity in our practical lives; ... But our intellectual lives demand unity, demand simplicity amid all this complexity. Our religious lives demand the same.

John Burroughs



UNDERSTAND INDIA'S CULTURAL STRENGTHS

P Kanagasabapathi

As Indians, one of our greatest strength is our culture. Many of the educated people tend to either ignore it as irrelevant in the modern context or dismiss it as a burden of the past. Hence much of the thought process of our elite and the establishment continues to be dominated by the alien mindset.

Visionaries such as Swami Vivekananda emphasized the role of culture in the Indian lives. Several intellectuals from across the world have been insisting on the relevance of Indian culture, not just for the future of our nation, but for the entire world. The well-known British Orientalist Sir John Woodroffe noted about a century earlier: "The question of the value of Indian culture is not merely an academic one. It has present bearing on the future of India and the world."

In spite of the good counsels, we have failed to understand the significance of culture in our lives. In this connection, the modern education plays a critical role to create contempt for the traditional strengths of India. But the contemporary developments at the global level have made the experts from the western world to recognize and understand the role of culture in different national contexts.

For every human being, the families and the societies around him/her are the two basic institutions of life. They play the most crucial roles in shaping the lives of people. In the case

of both the institutions, culture has a larger influence than the other factors.



Sir John Woodroffe

The purpose of human birth is to lead a useful life. Peace of mind at the family and social levels is required for everyone to lead productive lives. Peace is largely the product of culture. Families and societies strive to develop themselves materially and otherwise. They take the required steps consciously and work hard to achieve their aims.

The role of culture in the human lives is important. It plays a major role in shaping their thoughts, behavior, world views, approaches and functioning. It has a huge impact on the families, societies and the nation as well.

After subjugating the local systems in different parts of the world, the thoughts and practices of the Europeans came to dominate the rest of the world during the earlier centuries. The writings of their sociologists and economists began to define the social and economic studies of the rest of the world as well. As a result the local cultures of different nations

remained out of purview and viewed as a hindrance.

The subsequent developments clearly proved that the western systems and approaches have serious limitations. Different countries in the world have unique systems of their own. One of the major reasons for such uniqueness is the cultural dimensions of different societies. The impact of cultural factors from the individual to the national levels is very significant. The way one thinks and behaves at the individual level impacts not just the family but also the society and the nation.

Recently a British diplomat highlighted the difference between the Indians and the westerners, in the context of education of children. It reveals the role of culture in shaping the approaches and lifestyles of people living in different countries. To quote his speech: "I would not sacrifice buying a car to educate my child but an Indian would do so. Such is the parental care and affection in building the future of the child. Family is everything here. While Indians earn and save money for their family, westerners hardly do so."

These words show as to how Indians regard their family and children above everything else in this world. This is in stark contrast to their western counterparts. The foreign official is further reported to have noted that "parental affection is the key element of education in India and this is the only country where fathers

dedicate their entire life for their children." (The New Indian Express)

A very wrong notion seems to prevail that cultural influences revolve around the household and religious matters only. In reality however, they play a bigger role in various aspects concerning all the activities of human life. But their importance in the functioning of societies, business, management and economy are being realized only slowly.

Studies reveal their deep influence even in fields such as modern business and corporate organizations. Pioneering studies undertaken by the Dutch researcher Geert Hofstede and his team for over more than four decades in different countries reveal that culture at the national and regional levels play a major role in influencing the behavior and approach of employees in organizations.

The following table shows as to how two major human attributes namely individualism and long term orientation vary among the

I n d i a n s ,
A m e r i c a n s
a n d t h e
B r i t i s h .
The scores used by Hofstede and team are presented to



Geert Hofstede

explain the significance of culture on these attributes in these countries.

Organizational Culture in India, US and UK -Scores

	Individualism	Long term orientation
India	48	61
US	91	29
UK	89	25



John Pierre Lehmann

Individualism indicates the degree of interdependence among the members in the society. The scores show that the people of the United States are highly individualistic. Individualistic

tendencies are very high in countries such as the US and the UK, while it is less India due to the family base and society orientation.

India scores high in long term orientation as Indians have a futuristic view of life. But the western countries such as the US and the UK are short term oriented. The studies reveal as to how the attitudes of citizens get reflected in the functioning of the organizations.

Hence the role of culture is much higher than what we generally assume. It enables shaping the behavior and approaches of people at different levels of life. The functioning and progress of organizations, societies and the economies are influenced by factors related to culture.

The superior culture of India enabled her to progress and perform well since the ancient times. It is said that whenever India was culturally strong, the society was functioning better and the economy showed a higher performance. Studies prove that India's recent performance at the economic and social levels have been due to her inherent cultural strengths.

Hence we have to realize the importance of culture in India and her functioning systems. After studying the history of different civilizations across the world, the noted American philosopher Will Durant underlined the basic nature of the Indian approach in the following words: "India will

teach us the tolerance and gentleness of mature mind, understanding spirit and a unifying, pacifying love for all human beings." The higher qualities of India and her cultural backgrounds have always made experts from different parts of world to look to our nation for guidance. In the current context of globalization there has been a renewed expectation for the emergence of India and her role at the global level. While welcoming the rise of India, the management expert Jean-Pierre Lehmann notes: "Perhaps the most encouraging development in this early 21st century is the emergence of India as an increasingly global force, economically, politically and culturally."

Such expectations from scholars belonging to diverse fields over different time periods are due to the superior nature of Indian culture. It is not just a guiding philosophy for the higher spiritual aspects of life; it has a huge impact on the functioning of families, societies, economies and other aspects connected to the lives of people.

Rebuilding India requires a proper understanding of the time-tested culture of our country and its impact on various aspects of life. One cannot expect the desired results when plans are made without realizing the underlying strengths of this ancient nation.

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END OF APARTHEID: AN IGNORED KARMAYOGI

Aravindan Neelakandan

Tell South Africa and the one Indian connection that comes prominently to our minds is Mahatma Gandhi. Every Indian takes a great pride in what Gandhiji accomplished in South Africa and what he initiated in South Africa. To this day we Indians take a great and justified pride in saying that Nelson Mandela's victorious war against the apartheid regime and the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa owe it to Mahatma Gandhi. That is the accepted history as handed down by the establishment. However in the layered annals of history we find another sequence of events and heartburns fuelled as they were by the kind of Indian nationalism associated with and advocated by Veer Savarkar and his colleagues which was instrumental in creating the atmosphere that eventually ended apartheid.

Smuts-Gandhi: Beyond the Romanticism

General Jan Christian Smuts was the adversary Gandhi faced when he was in South Africa. Their meeting has been immortalized in the reels by Sir Richard Attenborough, in his 1982 epic movie '*Gandhi*' (General Smuts played by Athol Fugard and Gandhi by Ben Kingsley). The real turn of events turn out to be a bit more complicated and naturally a 187 minutes film could not be expected to do justice to a much complicated history. But an

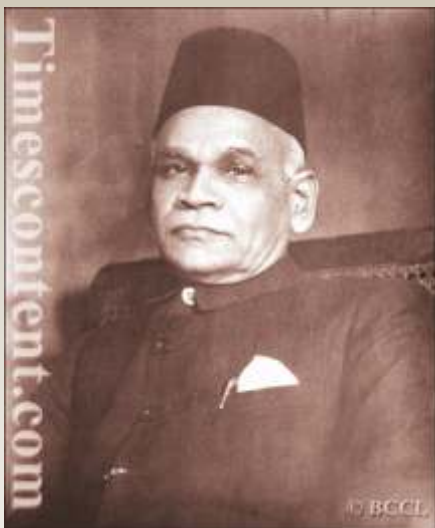
obviously transformed and positively impressed General Smuts belongs more to the realm of imagination than actual history.

It was on January 30 1908, exactly forty years before his death, that Mahatma met Smuts for the first time. The meet was arranged through the efforts of one Albert Cartwright who was a journalist sympathetic to Indian cause. Gandhi was then still in jail. General Smuts the European strategist, assured Gandhi the Hindu *Satyagrahi* that the South African government would 'repeal the Asiatic Act as soon as most Indians underwent voluntary registration'. After consulting with his co-workers in jail



Gandhi signed the agreement. To those who were critical of his signing the agreement, the Mahatma stated that 'an implicit trust in human nature' as the essence of the creed of the *Satyagrahi*. [1]

However General Smuts promptly went back on his words leading Gandhi to start the Satyagraha of burning the certificates in public for which he was arrested second time and then subsequently Gandhi went back to London on



his release in 1909. Gandhi returned back to South Africa again and conducted his Satyagraha with varied intensities and successes. The main objective namely removal of racial discrimination against Indians was largely an unaccomplished task. By 1910 South Africa had been given Dominion Status which effectively made South Africa unbound by British government. Smuts was now the Minister of the Interior. Gandhi started his negotiations and at last ready to concede an educational qualification in the Immigration Bill for the new Union, which would as effectively exclude many Indians practically. The last Satyagraha was when a legal judgment in South Africa invalidated all marriages except the Christian marriage which technically reduced the legally wed Hindu and other non-Christian wives of Indian origin to the level of concubines and exempted their children from legal rights to the property of their fathers. This naturally created an outrage which ultimately led to a massive Satyagraha of 50,000 workers of Indian origin. As a result of extensive outrage against the South African government both in India and Britain, the state was forced to set up a commission to look into

the grievance of Indians. Thus in 1914 when Mahatma returned from South Africa, the repeal of the Transvaal Act was more symbolic than practical, winning Indians hardly any of the refused rights or setting right the discrimination. And General Smuts had refused to abolish the Natal poll tax. [2]

The Sandals: Mahatma's Victory

But all these did not stop the Mahatma in presenting his adversary with a pair of hand-made sandals as a symbol of Mahatma's grandeur of simplicity. By 1938 General Smuts had become an important politician in South Africa who would in a year South Africa's fourth Prime Minister. Mahatma was spearheading the Indian freedom movement eclipsing all other personalities in freedom struggle. The sandals would become a great symbol of divine triumph of Gandhi in his biographies. In the celebrated anthology on Gandhi edited by Louis Fischer, we find:

Smuts wore the sandals every summer at his farm and then returned the sandals to Gandhi on Gandhi's seventieth birthday. Smuts remarked, 'I have worn these sandals for many a summer ... even though I may feel that I am not worthy to stand in the shoes of so great a man.' [3]

However W. K. Hancock the biographer of General Smuts contradicts this:

Those sandals! Gandhi's biographers like to tell how Smuts returned them to the Mahatma on the occasion of his seventieth birthday; but all he sent was a photograph of them; they were still 'a precious relic' in his

possession on that day. [4]

Whatever may be the facts with regard to the return of the Sandals, what cannot be denied, is the fact that General Smuts expressed a great respect for Mahatma on his 70th birth day and acknowledged the greatness of Mahatma. For the followers of the Mahatma that definitely was the victory of *Ahimsa*. And that was in 1939.

Gen. Smuts brings 'the Pegging Act'

After Mahatma's return to India following his monumental moral and spiritual victory over Smuts in July 1914, Indians in South Africa saw newer and newer laws take away their livelihood freedoms one by one. Thus since 1919 the Asiatic private companies were not entitled to hold fixed properties. '*The Mines and Works Act*' debarred Indians from becoming skilled workers. In 1932 the Asiatic Land Tenure Act also debarred any Asiatics (read Indians) even holding shares in minority in any company. In 1939 even as General Smuts was sending his moving message to Mahatma, an interim act called *Asiatic Land and Tilling Act* was introduced which restricted Indians economically well within the areas which were 'pegged' as their community area. The year was 1943 and the Second World War was two years from getting over. Gen. Smuts, the friend



of Mahatma, was the Prime Minister of South Africa. The interim act of 1939 was renamed the Pegging Act and was extended to both Transvaal and Natal. [5] The result of this act was that 24000 Indians were confined to 200 acres in Transvaal and Natal while 7000 whites were given 5000 acres at their disposal. [6]

The reaction of Indian National Congress (INC) to this act was inspired by the 'implicit trust' Mahatma had in reaching out to the 'human nature' of Gen. Smuts. Ahmed M. Kathrada a veteran of the South African liberation struggle records the response of to this act of Smuts and the counter-response of the apartheid regime to the appeal of INC:

In line with their established response, the leaders of the Indian National Congress sent a deputation to convey to Smuts their dissatisfaction with the law, and to plead with him to repeal it. They did manage to secure an undertaking that the law would be repealed, but the quid pro quo was the humiliating and spineless suggestion by the Indian politicians that in place of the

Pegging Act, the government should set up an Occupation Council Board to regulate Indian residence in white areas. The board would consist of two Indians and three white members, which meant, in effect, that it could do exactly what the

Pegging Act was designed to do, except that Indians would themselves be complicit.[7]

Such a soft approach by Congress should not be considered anyway as a sign of weakness. Mahatma had declared that Smuts as 'the warmest friend' he had at that time.[8] So the Congress leadership should have perceived that in the heart of his heart General Smuts was a friend of Indians though political compulsions made him work against the Indian interests in South Africa.

A doctor comes to the rescue

With such a magnanimous gesture of a noble protest from the Congress, the future of Indians in South Africa seemed sealed and was headed towards a sure economic doom. However there was an ex-Congress man who was then in the Viceroy's executive committee member- a doctor by profession and a fierce Indian nationalist by disposition. He was Dr. Narayan Bhaskar Kharve. As a Congress leader he was the premier of the Central Provinces and had gone far radical in implementing the empowering schemes for the downtrodden castes. When he made a Dalit one of his cabinet ministers, the then Congress high command criticized the move. Dr. N.B.Khare refused to yield ground and had to pay with his dismissal by the Congress high priests. Bitterly he parted way with the Congress. [9] He was shabbily treated, humiliated and sent out. Decades later after the power equations got safely enthroned none other than Rajaji, then a faithful lieutenant of Mahatma, conceded to Dr.Khare that he was 'treated badly by a powerful organization which did not suffer from any lack of arrogance'.[10]

Despite his differences with the Congress, his commitment to the welfare of Indians

everywhere was beyond any criticism. As a member of the Viceroy's executive committee Dr. Khare was also in charge of the department of Indian Overseas. But Viceroy had overriding powers. Adding to this already disadvantaged conditions Dr.Khare learnt that the one law that called for retaliatory measures for safeguarding the welfare of the people of Indian origins abroad legal and technical difficulties in actually getting implemented. So Dr.Khare quickly made amendments to the law and within the same July month of Smut's law damning Indians, on July 26th 1943 he succeeded in placing on the Statute book the *Indian Reciprocity Act Amendment Bill*. [11] Then he started demanding that it be implemented against South Africa. That in itself was a great accomplishment but now the real challenge was to make the British viceroy implement this against South Africa. He also cautioned the British that war cannot be made an excuse for South Africa to humiliate its citizens of Indian origin. He thundered in the Council:

Same means must be found for maintaining the dignity and prestige of Indians and the Government of India, even in wartime. . . . Had India been independent, she would have considered this a *casus belli* *against South Africa.[12]

'... to declare war against South Africa – here and now'

However, all his plans were made 'topsy-turvy' with the arrival of the new viceroy – Wavell – in October 1943. The very same month Dr. Khare met him and raised the issue of South Africa. Dr.Khare discovered that the British Viceroy like Mahatma Gandhi

considered Smuts 'a good friend and a thorough gentleman' and hence 'would not allow enforcing the decisions against South Africa' and 'would not allow anyone to do anything against Smuts'. [13] Khare in his own words was totally dejected and yet he was not a man to give into the feelings of his adversary when the interests of the fellow countrymen were getting sabotaged. Repeated harsh words and expressions of Dr. Khare in every executive council forced Wavell to act. British historians naturally want to minimize the role of Khare and project Wavell's action as if it was flowing from his own concern for Indians acknowledge. Even they are forced to acknowledge that it were the 'sharp words from Dr.Khare' which made Wavell telegraph his 'very good friend' that 'unless he can give satisfactory answer now' Khare would press for drastic action against South Africa. [14] On April 15, 1944 Indian high commissioner in South Africa was made to give a note to Smuts threatening counter measure. Three days later Pretoria regime came out with an agreement with the Pretoria Agreement drafted by Natal Indian Congress. Even this was racially biased against the Indians. It essentially meant that Indians would agree to residential restrictions but pegging act would be withdrawn after an ordinance had been passed by Natal legislature. Even for this the Whites were not satisfied and Smuts quickly announced that his government would extend the pegging act for all time to the whole of Natal. [15] Indians were shocked by this abject betrayal of Smuts. At a meeting of the Central Legislative Assembly Khare minced no words and declared "I wish India was in a position to declare war against South Africa, here and now." Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar, the Member for Industry and Civil Supplies, announced that if a force was raised to attack South Africa, he would enlist. [16]



Dr. Khare telegraphed the British government about the mounting displeasure of India. This led Viceroy Wavell to personally caution Smuts about the increased Indian pressure might force the British government take action against South Africa. At last in 1944 Dr. Khare's efforts yielded a first major victory when a not yet independent India implemented the reciprocity Act against South Africa an independent state. This was essentially symbolic. But Dr. Khare was not a man to be satisfied with such symbolic gestures. Meanwhile the war had come to an end and by June 1945 the League of Nations was being reconstituted and established as United Nations. Dr. Khare now came up with a radical new plan that completely transformed the terrain of fight for the justice in South Africa.

'An Irresponsible Act' and a Tamil Connection

Dr. Khare decided to submit a memorandum to United Nations against South Africa and announced this to the media – the Associate Press of America in Delhi. This created a shock and uproar in many circles –from the Viceroy to the bureaucratic establishment. Dr. Khare describes the response of the establishment to his announcement of going to the UN:

The Associate Press of India took very pointed notice of my interview with the Associated Press of America

in Delhi and of my speeches made in Nagpur. On account of this the bureaucratic atmosphere of the Government of India in Delhi became hostile to me and I was accused of making irresponsible speeches and giving irresponsible interviews without making any reference to the Government of India. One of my colleagues said to my face that an I.C.S. would never have behaved irresponsibly like that... Viceroy also charged me with irresponsibility ... and there was great bitterness between me and the Viceroy ... Lord Wavell the Viceroy did not at all like my attempt to lodge a complaint against South Africa before the U.N.O. He tried his level best to dissuade me from this attempt.[17]

But Dr.Khare stood his ground. He forced Viceroy to consider going to UNO by bringing an adjournment motion in the legislative assembly. Viceroy who considered the proposal 'irresponsible' had asked the secretary of India's external affairs department, Hugh Weightman to see if there was any substance to Dr.Khare's announcement. Weightman who thought India going to UNO as an "ill-considered action" which would have "grave repercussions" had asked his undersecretary to see if there was anything to it. To the shock of both Wavell and Weightman, the undersecretary came back with the finding

that India 'would have every right to raise the question' at the General Assembly (and not at the Security Council) of the UNO. [16]

Things were becoming somewhat favorable to Indian cause. Winston Churchill a racist imperialist with intense hatred for India had been defeated for domestic reasons in the UK general elections of 1945. By January 1946 Dr.Khare's cabinet colleague Sir Ramasamy Mudaliar had been appointed as the head of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. He had informed in the legislative council that Khare's efforts would be put into action as soon as South Africa makes the bill a permanent law. By April 1946 Dr.Khare had succeeded in making Indian government withdraw the high commissioner to South Africa. Still there were pressures from the British bureaucratic circles trying to dissuade Dr.Khare from raising the issue in UNO. Arrogant and oblivious to such protests General Smuts went ahead and made the Asiatic Land Tenure and Representation Act a permanent law on June 1946. Meanwhile there were efforts on to install a caretaker government by September which would be a Congress government under Jawaharlal Nehru. Dr.Khare had to hurry and make sure that the issue would be submitted to the UNO so that the Congress government with Nehru-Gandhi high command would not be able to reverse or dilute it. Through the services of his secretary R.N.Banerjee a lengthy memorandum was prepared that studied the various aspects of the racial discriminations created by South African regime and drew parallel to 'the Nazi principles and practice of race superiority'. [18] The draft of the memorandum running 18 pages was sent by air telegram to Ramaswamy Mudaliar who on 22nd June 1946 submitted it to Mr. Trygve Lie,

the Secretary-General of United Nations. Satisfied that he had done a solid work for the South African Indians Dr. Khare quit his office in September 1946.

The Final Triumph of Mahatma

Soon a caretaker government came into effect with Nehru presiding over with the blessings of Mahatma. He immediately appointed his own sister Vijayalakshmi Pandit as the head of the delegation to the United Nations Organization. As Vijayalakshmi Pandit basked under the media limelight projecting her brother's government as the champion for the rights of the South African people, the perseverance with which Khare fought to arrive at that point was relegated as footnotes in the long march of history. Vikayalakshmi Pandit revealed to General Smuts that Mahatma Gandhi with his characteristic spiritual magnanimity had summoned and told her "that I should shake your hand and ask your blessing for my cause". [19]

General Smuts had reason to smile – for his place in memory would be assured along with Mahatma. The world community does need great souls like Mahatma Gandhi for inspiration and guidance along with the lofty principles of Ahimsa and Satyagraha. But the deprived and exploited communities like the South African Indians need persistent practical selfless self-effacing fighters like Narayan Bhaskar Khare fight with all their might and sweat for them against the injustice to these otherwise orphaned people. It is the duty of those who love India and dharma to remember such Karmayogis as Dr. Khare who actually paved the way for international community to bring sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa and helped in the emancipation of a vast section of humanity and yet systematically relegated to a few footnotes in

history or worse their memory cunningly erased.

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LIKE THE GENTLE DEW

Exploring the Literary movement inspired by Ramakrishna-Vivekananda

Compiled and edited by Swami Atmashraddhananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004. Price Rs. 70/-

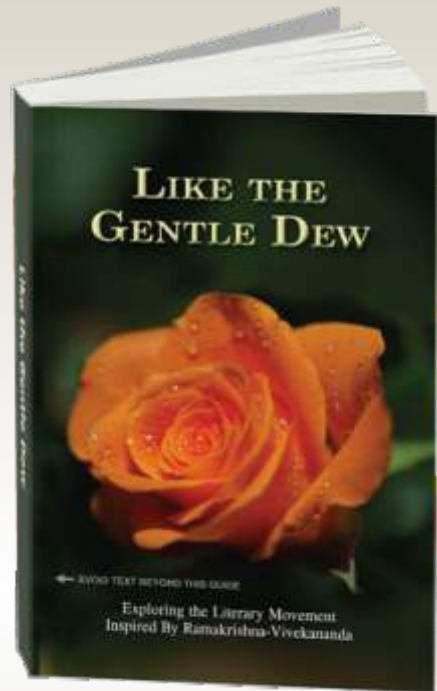
Any new spiritual, social or political movement creates its own literary and artistic atmosphere. Right from basic propagandistic literature to the most creative expressions, the entire of range of writings will appear as a result of that movement.

The Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda phenomenon has spawned its own series of writings, documents, biographies, anecdotes and spiritual literature. Apart from the in-house production, the impact of this great spiritual movement on all aspects our National life has been an engaging topic for research.

The very personalities of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda call for a variety of approaches, some purely folksy, some highly classical. There have been folksongs, villupattu, ballads, pictorial books and other works targetting the lay people. At the same time PhD theses, seminars, learned studies on the lives and work of the Divine TRIO and their impact have been attempted.

Each language in Bharat has responded in its own way to the stirring speeches of Swami Vivekananda, the incomparable parables of Sri Ramakrishna and the homely sayings the Mother.

In the early periods, much of the writings have



been documenting the lives and sayings of the TRIO. In Tamil, Marathi and Bengali, Swami Vivekananda's writings / speeches were translated as he went on delivering them. But when the effect of the lives, works, writings and speeches of the Holy TRIO penetrated deep into the soil of the land and the society began responding to their call, the anecdotal and descriptive writings and the commentaris became the basis for much shaper and broader analytical studies.

Translating the fiery words of Swami Vivekananda from English into their regional languages, some of the great authors, many of them poets, had their inner selves awakened. Sumitranandan Pant, Suryakant Tripathi

Nirala, Dinkar among the Hindi litterateurs, Apteji, Sane Guruji, Warekar, the Marathi literary giants, Alasinga Perumal, Mahakavi Bharati, Subramania Siva in Tamil, were all nurtured by the Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda tradition. Girish Chandra Ghosh whose Bengali Dramas were witnessed by Sri Ramakrishna Deva Himself, was described as a second Shakespeare. Ramananda Chattopadhyaya of Prabasi magazine, Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Tara ShankarBabu, BibhutiBhushan all had the Sri Ramakrishna – Swami Vivekananda stamp imprinted on their works. Guru Dev Tagore wrote a moving tribute to Sri Ramakrishna. His letter to Co-Nobel Winner Romain Rolland on Swami Vivekananda as true spokesman of Total Indian Culture is very well known.

Karnataka produced a bumper crop of Jnanpith Award winners and Sahitya Academi awardees. The Doyen, Dr.G.V. Gundappa, K.V. Puttappa, Rama Chandra Bendre, Dr. ShivaramKarant, all were soaked in Ramakrishna – Swami Vivekananda culture

and tradition and the thoughts and words of the Masters shine through their writings.

While many householders absorbed the Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda magic and reexpressed it in their creative literature, there were also monks like Swami Vipulananda who were Sannyasins in the first place and extended their scholarship to many subjects related to the outside world. There have been scholars-influenced by Sri Ramakrishna / Swami Vivekananda, working in the fields of Mathematics, Physics, Culture, Musicology etc. This book discusses most of them.

This book is a neatly edited collection of articles published in 'Vedanta Kesari' – the Ramakrishna Math English monthly.

When the Gift that is Swami Vivekananda, is fully opened and properly understood by humanity, more and more fields of his influence will come to light. This book is an excellent beginning and an appetizer for all that will follow.

This book is a must for all devotees of Sri Ramakrishna / Swami Vivekananda tradition.

SHIBIR CALENDER - 2014

NAME OF THE SHIBIR	DATES	AGE Years	CAMP DONATION
Spiritual Retreat (Eng)	08 - 14 Feb	18 to 50	Rs. 1500/-
Spiritual Retreat (Hindi)	08 - 14 Feb	18 to 50	Rs. 1500/-
Yoga ShikshaShibir (Eng)	05 - 19 May	18 to 50	Rs. 2000/-
Yoga ShikshaShibir (Hindi)	05 - 19 May	18 to 50	Rs. 2000/-
Spiritual Retreat (Eng)	08 - 14 Aug	18 to 50	Rs. 1500/-
Spiritual Retreat (Hindi)	08 - 14 Aug	18 to 50	Rs. 1500/-
Yoga ShikshaShibir (Eng)	01- 15 Dec	18 to 50	Rs. 2000/-
Yoga ShikshaShibir (Hindi)	01- 15 Dec	18 to 50	Rs. 2000/-

Further details: E-mail: camps@vkendra.org / www.vkendra.org
 Vivekananda Kendra, Vivekanandapuram, Kanyakumari - 629 702
 Fax: 04652-247177 / Phone: 04652-247012



NATION SALUTES THE
 LEGENDARY SAINT
 A TRIBUTE TO SWAMI
 VIVEKANANDA ON 120TH
 ANNIVERSARY OF HIS
 HISTORIC SPEECH AT WORLD
 PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS AT
 CHICAGO ON SEPTEMBER 11,
 1893

Lakhs of youth, both men and women, on September 11 morning across India did a Bharat Jago Doud (a run for awakening India) to commemorate 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda and 120th anniversary of his historic Chicago speech. On September 11, 1893, Swami Vivekananda had addressed the

W o r l d
 Parliament of
 Religions in
 C h i c a g o .
 Hence, on this
 d a y , t o
 remember and
 t o s a l u t e
 Vivekananda's
 ideals, a run
 was organised
 b y S w a m i
 Vivekananda
 150th Birth



Anniversary Celebration Committee all over the country. There are reports of organising the run across the country. However, in some regions it will be organized at different dates.

Karnataka

In Bangalore, the run began from three simultaneous points including Swami Vivekananda Circle near Ramakrishna

Ashram of Basavanagudi and finally converged at historic National High School Grounds. Noted scholar Dr Chidananda Murthy, Dr Vijayalakshmi Balekundri, RSS Akhil Bharatiya Bouddhik Pramukh Shri Bhagaiah, senior RSS Pracharak Shri N Krishnappa, RSS Prant Karyavah Shri N Tippeswamy and many other prominent

people were present on the occasion. Nearly 5000 youth joined the run.

It was an amazing response from college youth in Shivamogga where about 1600 of the

total 2000. youth who joined the marathon were college students. RSS Kshetra Sampark Pramukh Dr Kalladka Prabhakara Bhat addressed the gathering. Similarly, about 2000 people participated in Hasan. Shri Hariharapura Shridhar addressed the gathering after the marathon. Medical students' of the city also participated in good

number. In coastal city **Mangalore**, over 20,000 youth participated in the run, which was inaugurated by Shri Jita Kamananda Swamiji, president of Ramakrishna Mutt, Mangalore. RSS Sah Sarkaryavah Shri Dattatreya Hosabale addressed the gathering at Nehru Maidan. In **Gulbarga** the run was joined by nearly 1700 citizens. The participation of college students was high in Gulbarga also. In sugarcane city **Mandya** over 600 youth participated. Similarly, **Dharwad** received massive response from youth.

Tamil Nadu

In Chennai, the event was inaugurated by TV serial and film fame Kutti Padmini. Swami Gautamananda, president of Sri Ramakrishna Mutt Chennai, blessed the event. Mayor Saidai Duraiswamy, Chennai Corporation, presided over the event. VHP state leader Shri RBVS Manian highlighted the importance of Swamiji's speech at Chicago. Around 5,000 youths took part in the Run. Famous Tamil celebrity actor Rajnikanth had expressed best wishes for success of the event. The run was organised at all district headquarters of Tamil Nadu. In Krishnagiri, around 2500 people participated. In Erode, around 2800 people participated. In **Pondicherry** also around 3750 persons joined the run

Kerala

At Kasaragod, the extreme northern district in Kerala the run was joined by about 100 youth. Top RSS leaders including Kshetra Sewa Pramukh Shri Gopal Chettiyar participated in the marathon, which was inaugurated by noted social leader Shri CV Poduval.

Andhra Pradesh

In Hyderabad, the run began from two routes-

from Nizam College, Babu Jagjivan Ram statue to People's Plaza and the second run began from Swami Vivekananda's Statue at Tankbund and culminated at People's Plaza. College students and other youth above the age of 15 years participated in the run. There are reports of organising the similar event in other parts of the state also.

Gujarat

In Ahmedabad, the marathon was organised on September 8. The run was held at Law Garden. Around 5,000 school and college students participated in the event that was flagged off by Mayor Meenakshi Patel.

Uttarakhand

In Dehradun, the run began from Pared Grounds at 7 am and passing through Darshanlal Chowk, Clock Tower, Globe Chowk culminated at Pared Grounds itself. Apart from school and college students the run was also joined by representatives of various social and religious organisations. The interesting part of the event was that thousands of people joined the event inspite of heavy rains. Some people of the city also showered flowers on the participants. RSS Sah Kshetra Pracharak Pramukh Shri Jagdish Prant Pracharak Dr Harish, Prant Karyavah Shri Lakshmiprasad Jaiswal and many other prominent people were present on the occasion.

Madhya Pradesh

In Bhopal, the sprint legend PT Usha joined the marathon with a large number of youth. Over 20,000-strong gathering of youth joined her at Tatia Tope Stadium. The run, comprising of 16 groups of participants, was flagged off by PT Usha, and leading players like Madan Lal,

Ashok Dhyanchand also joined it. The enthusiasm of the people was so high that TT Stadium was full to its capacity.

Maharashtra

In Nagpur, thousands of Nagpurians joined the Run, which was actively helped by Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj Nagpur University (RTMNU) Rashtriya Sewa Yojna and Physical Education Department of RTMNU. About 25000 students and all age group citizens participated in the race. Prominent among them were Shri Lakshmanrao Pardhikar, national working president of Kreedha Bharati, Pramukh Sanchalika of Rashtra Sevika Samiti Shantakka Tai and Karyavahika A Sitha, Shri Sudhakar Deshmukh, BJP MLA, Shri Devendra Fadnavis, BJP State president, Dr Vilas Sapkal, Vice Chancellor of Nagpur University, Mayor of Nagpur Shri Anil Sole, veteran Sangh ideologue Shri MG Vaidya and Nagpur Mahanagar Sanghachalak Dr Dilip Gupta and many others. The Run began from Yeshwant Stadium and culminated at the stadium itself.

West Bengal

In Siliguri the run was organised on September 2. The run began from Radhajatn Park and passing through many prominent areas of the city culminated at the same Park. Representatives from more than 50 organisations and 37 jawans from BSF also joined the run.

Vice President Hamid Ansari unveils Vivekananda Statue

VICE President of India Mohd Hamid Ansari unveiled the life size bronze statue of Swami Vivekananda on September 11 in front of Kavadiayar Palace, the house of Travancore royal

family.

Swami Atmapriyananda, Vice Chancellor of Vivekananda University of Sri Ramakrishna Mission, Kolkata, Travancore King and chief patron of the Statue Installation Committee Uthradam Thirunal Marthanda Verma, State Governor Shri Nikhil Kumar, Chief Minister Shri Oommen Chandy, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Shri Arun Jaitley, Union Minister Shri Shashi Tharoor, Cultural Minister Shri KC Joseph, Health & Dewaswom Minister Shri VS Shivakumar, Shri K. Muraleedharan MLA, Shri P Parameshwaran, director of Bharatheeya Vichara Kendram and president of Vivekananda Kendram, Kanyakumari, Swami Amrithageethananda, Swami Thuryananda, Committee Joint Convener Dr KN Madhusoodhanan Pillai and P. Ashok Kumar spoke on the occasion.

The Vice President lit the traditional lamp in front of the statue to mark the unveiling. Swami Atmapriyananda performed the *aarti*. In his speech the Vice President said development and social harmony should go hand in hand. Swamiji was an Indian, Hindu and Vedanthin. He wanted radical changes on all social fronts of the country. His philosophies were precise. He was for revolutionary changes. Development and social harmony are complementary and contributory to each other. One cannot exist without another. Swamiji could not accept spirituality without any mechanism to feed the poor. Swamiji's philosophies are necessary for today's social development.

The statue was made in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu. It was made by sculptor Krishnamoorthy. It resembles the statue installed in the Vivekananda Rock Memorial in Kanyakumari.



Nagpur

Kishori Vikas shibirs at Nagpur Swami Vivekananda considered women to be the incarnation of power. He pointed out that unless Indian women secure a respectable place In this country, the nation can never move forward. The important features of his scheme of female education are "Make women strong, fear-less, and conscious of their chastity and dignity". To take Swamiji's life giving message and to inculcate these values in the teen age girls, Vivekananda Kendra arranged Kishori Vikas Shibirs. As a part of Sardhashati – 150th birth anniversary of Swamiji, the shibirs were organized in different schools. The girls of 8th, 9th & 10th standards attended the shibirs. Their participation as well as enthusiasm was appreciated by the school authorities.



Shibirs were conducted at Kalode high school, Khamla, Utkarsha Vidya Mandir, Khapri, Neeri Modern School, Lakshmi Nagar & Mokhare high school, Trimurti nagar, Nagpur on 16th, 17th, 22nd & 24th Aug 2013 respectively. 381 girls from these schools attended the shibirs. Similar shibirs are planned in, Yashoda high school and few other schools.



OBITUARY

Smt S. Kuppammal alias Shanta, senior Life worker of Vivekananda Kendra from 11.01.1988, fondly called by one and all as Thoothukudi Shantakka attained immortality on 28th September 2013 at Thoothukudi, due to a massive heart attack. Born on 21-05-1947 she served in Dept. of Posts and Telegraphs from 01-08-1966 till Dec. 1987. From 1988 onwards she was working in Vivekananda Kendra Rural Development Programme. As a Secretary of VKRDP, under her tireless work, VK RDP made a mark in the southern districts of Tamilnadu. A Karma yogi, inspired by Swamiji, she was ever active and used to get involved in the work, totally identified with the job on hand. A powerful speaker in Tamil on Swamiji and Sharada Ma, her values of dedication and commitment has drawn many youth to Kendra, especially Rural women. Shantakka's inspiration made many young women to stand on their own legs. Few days back, she concluded a three month Yoga instructors' course, with a mass suryanamaskar programme. Being the Nagar Sanghatak, she had wide contacts and her Lokasamgraha was astounding. Without bothering much for high sugar, she kept on working till last breath. Her passing away is an irreparable loss to Kendra.