



# YUVA BHARATI

Voice of Youth

Vol.40 No.8 Phalgun - Chaitra 5114 March 2013 ₹.15/-

Is it not tremendously blasphemous to believe against reason? What right have we not to use the greatest gift that God has given to us? I am sure God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, than a man who believes blindly instead of using the faculties He has given him.





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# Invocation



**Mrutyunjayaaya Rudraaya  
Neelakantaaya Shambhave  
Amriteshaaya Sarvaaya  
Mahadevaaya Te Namaha**

**Prayers to Lord Mahadeva who has conquered death, who is the destroyer of the universe, who has a blue neck and who gives happiness to all.**

## TO CALL A SPADE...



The recent hanging of a terrorist, involved in the parliament attack case, raised a lot of hue and cry in the "Secular" media. Their contention is that death penalty is a crime by the state, and one crime cannot be a punishment for another crime. There is a big lobby which calls for the abolishment of death penalty. And this sordid episode comes barely a fortnight after the calls for death penalty for the rapists by the very same media. In these secular pundit's dictionary, rape is a more heinous crime than the terrorist acts which claims innocent lives in dozens. The convoluted logic may tire us if we think that these masqueraders are actually votaries of truth. But there is more to it than what we get by a mere gloss over the events. These charlatans know that they will be strangled if they raise their voice against the menace called Islamic Fundamentalism. This religious fanaticism which is raising its hood, with a covert ambition of a pan Islamic brotherhood a.k.a nation, has a sly way of feigning innocence when they are less in number and exposing their fangs once they grow in numbers. All these years our media and 'secular' politicians were tricked by this act of feigning and now when it is showing its true colors they are terrified to call it a spade. We see that people are mobilized on the streets in thousands to protest against corruption. There will be thousands to hold candles for the mirage called "peace" between us and our neighboring country. But when it comes to terrorism seldom do we see any strong and sane voices being raised against it. Religious fanaticism which surpasses all other crimes in terms of toll was never given a look into by our media or our activists. This cowardliness or dhimmitude is what the fanatics are striving for. The biggest obstacle to the dream of actualizing universal brotherhood is this cowardliness. The antidote to this malady is manliness which will come by following the grand vision called universal brotherhood, championed by Swami Vivekananda. He elaborates about the mind which is caught by this catch 22 situation thus:

".....We have all been hearing from childhood of such things as love, peace, charity, equality, and universal brotherhood; but they have become to us mere words without meaning, words which we repeat like parrots, and it has become quite natural for us to do so. We cannot help it. Great souls, who first felt these great ideas in their hearts, manufactured these words ; and at that time many understood their meaning. Later on, ignorant people have taken up those words to play with them and made

religion a mere play upon words, and not a thing to be carried into practice. It becomes "my father's religion", "our nation's religion", "our country's religion", and so forth....."

(Complete Works – P.376)

...Each religion brings out its own doctrines and insists upon them as being the only true ones. And not only does it do that, but it thinks that he who does not believe in them must go to some horrible place. Some will even draw the sword to compel others to believe as they do. This is not through wickedness, but through a particular disease of the human brain called fanaticism. They are very sincere, these fanatics, the most sincere of human beings; but they are quite as irresponsible as other lunatics in the world. This disease of fanaticism is one of the most dangerous of all diseases. All the wickedness of human nature is roused by it. Anger is stirred up, nerves are strung high, and human beings become like tigers...."

(Complete Works – P.377)

To wriggle humanity out of this tangle he further says :

".....We can make it run smoothly, we can lessen the friction, we can grease the wheels, as it were. How? By recognising the natural necessity of variation. Just as we have recognised unity by our very nature, so truth may be expressed in a hundred thousand ways, and that each of these ways is true as far as it goes. We must learn that the same thing can be viewed from a hundred different standpoints, and yet be the same thing Through high philosophy or low, through the most exalted mythology or the grossest, through the most refined ritualism or arrant fetishism, every sect, every soul, every nation, every religion, consciously or unconsciously, is struggling upward, towards God; every vision of truth that man has, is a vision of Him and of none else. This is the only recognition of universality that we can get. ...."

This simple yet grand vision is becoming more and more relevant in our Society where we are sinking to new lows every day. The choosy activists and the dormant masses are to be made aware of this humanitarian principle.

V.V.Balasubramanian  
YB-ET

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS~2

(Words in Italics are by the compiler)

Compiled by  
Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

*Question 2: How to differentiate between instinct and inspiration? Many a times some persons claim that they have received inspiration from God either to cure or guide the people in matters of religion. How do we decide whether really a person is inspired – has heard God's voice or not?*

**Answer:**

There is such a thing as instinct in us, which we have in common with the animals, a reflex mechanical movement or response of the body and mind. There is again a higher form of guidance, which we call reason, when the intellect obtains facts and then generalizes them. There is a still higher form of knowledge which we call inspiration, which does not reason, but knows thing by flashes, by intuition. That is the highest form of knowledge. But how shall we know it from instinct? That is the great difficulty.

Everyone comes to you, nowadays, and says he is inspired, and puts forth superhuman claims. How are we to distinguish between inspiration and deception? In the first place, inspiration must not contradict reason. The old man does not contradict the child; he is the



development of the child. What we call inspiration is the development of reason. The way to intuition is through reason. Instinctive movements of our body do not oppose reason. As you cross a street, how instinctively you move your body to save yourself from the cars. Does your mind tell you it was foolish to save your body that way? It does not. Similarly, no genuine inspiration ever contradicts reason. Where it does it is no inspiration. Secondly, inspiration must be for the good of one and all, and not

for name or fame, or personal gain. It should always be for the good of the world, and perfectly unselfish. When these tests are fulfilled, you are quite safe to take it as inspiration. (IV 58)

*Ultimately the eternal truth can be known only by going beyond senses. That is what all saints and sages have focused upon. By reason alone we cannot realize God. Physics is bounded on both sides by metaphysics. So it is with reason -- it starts from non - reason and ends with non - reason. If we push inquiry far enough in the world of perception, we must reach a plane beyond perception. Reason is really stored up and classified perception, preserved by memory.*

We can never imagine or reason beyond our sense - perceptions. Nothing beyond reason can be an object of sense - knowledge. We feel the limited character of reason, yet it does bring us to a plane where we get a glimpse of something beyond. The question then arises: Has man an instrument that transcends reason? It is very probable that in man there is a power to reach beyond reason; in fact the saints in all ages assert the existence of this power in themselves. ...Only for the infinitesimal portion of the universe, which comes into sense - perception, are we able to find a reason; never can we give the reason for any fundamental principle. Giving a reason for a thing is simply to classify it and put it in a pigeon - hole of the mind. When we meet a new fact, we at once strive to put it in some existing category and the attempt to do this is to reason. When we succeed in placing the fact, it gives a certain amount of satisfaction, but we can never go beyond the physical plane in this classification. That man can transcend the limits of the senses is the emphatic testimony of all past ages. The Upanishads told 5,000 years ago that the realisation of God could never be had through the senses. So far, modern agnosticism agrees, but the Vedas go further than the negative side and assert in the plainest terms that man can and does transcend this sense - bound, frozen universe. He can, as it were, find a hole in the ice, through which he can pass and reach the whole ocean of life. Only by so transcending the world of

sense, can he reach his true Self and realise what he really is.

But it is impossible in the very nature of things to translate spiritual ideas and perceptions into the language of reason; and these saints, each and all, have declared their inability to make known their spiritual experiences. Language can, of course, supply no words for them, so that it can only be asserted that these are actual experiences and can be had by all. Only in that way can they become known, but they can never be described. (Volume 8 20, 21)

*Taking advantage of this, some persons claim that they have experienced the truth or heard the voice of god etc and they form secret societies. All these secret societies and humbugs make men and women impure, weak, and narrow; and the weak have no will, and can never work. Therefore have nothing to do with them. All this false love of mystery should be knocked on the head the first time it comes into your mind. No one who is the least bit impure will ever become religious. Do not try to cover festering sores with masses of roses. Do you think you can cheat God? None can. Give me a straightforward man or woman; but Lord save me from ghosts, flying angels, and devils. Be common, everyday, nice people. (IV 58)*

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Compiled by  
Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

## Recognize the danger from fraud and fools

**T**here are moments in the lives of great preachers and prophets when they, as it were, rise from the conscious and go above it. And when they come back to the plane of consciousness, they come radiant with light; they have brought news from the beyond, and they are the inspired seers of the world.

But there is a great danger. Any man may say he is inspired; many times they say that. Where is the test?

During sleep we are unconscious; a fool goes to sleep; he sleeps soundly for three hours; and when he comes back from that state, he is the same fool if not worse. Jesus of Nazareth goes into his transfiguration, and when he comes out, he has become Jesus the Christ. That is all the difference. One is instinct, and the other is inspiration. The one is a child, and the other is the old experienced man. This inspiration is possible for everyone of us. It is the source of all religions, and will ever be the source of all higher knowledge. Yet there are great dangers in the way. Sometimes fraudulent people try to impose themselves upon mankind. In these days it is becoming all too prevalent.

A friend of mine had a very fine picture. Another gentleman who was rather religiously inclined, and a rich man, had his eyes upon this



picture; but my friend would not sell it. This other gentleman one day comes and says to my friend, "I have an inspiration and I have a message from God."

"What is your message?" my friend asked.

"The message is that you must deliver that picture to me."

My friend was up to his mark; he immediately added, "Exactly so; how beautiful! I had exactly the same inspiration that I should have to deliver to you

the picture. Have you brought your cheque?"

"Cheque? What cheque?" asked the gentleman?

"Then", said my friend, "I don't think your inspiration was right. My inspiration was that I must give the picture to the man who brought a cheque for \$100,000. You must bring the cheque first."

The other man found he was caught, and gave up the inspiration theory.

These are the dangers. A man came to me in Boston and said he had visions in which he had been talked to in the Hindu language.

I said, "If I can see what he says I will believe it." But he wrote down a lot of nonsense. I tried my best to understand it, but I could not. I told him that so far as my knowledge went, such



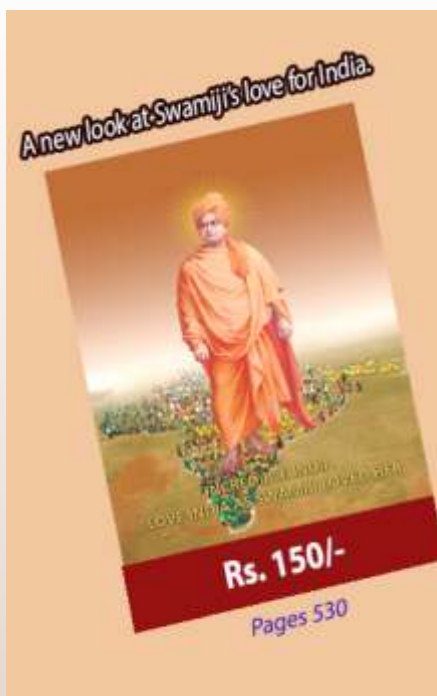
language never was and never will be in India. They had not become 'civilised' enough to have such a language as that. He thought of course that I was a rogue and skeptic, and went away; and I would not be surprised next to hear that he was in a lunatic asylum.

These are the two dangers always in this world -- the danger from frauds, and the danger from fools. But that need not deter us, for all great things in this world are fraught with danger. At the same time we must take a little precaution.

Sometimes I find persons perfectly wanting in logical analysis of anything. A man comes and says, "I have a message from such and such a god", and asks, "Can you deny it? Is it not possible that there will be such and such a god, and that he will give such a message?" And 90 per cent of fools will swallow it. They think that that is reason enough. But one thing you ought to know, that it is possible for anything to happen -- quite possible that the earth may come into contact with the Dog star in the next

year and go to pieces. But if I advance this proposition, you have the right to stand up and ask me to prove it to you. What the lawyers call the onus probandi is on the man who made the proposition. It is not your duty to prove that I got my inspiration from a certain god, but mine, because I produced the proposition to you. If I cannot prove it, I should better hold my tongue. Avoid both these dangers, and you can get anywhere you please.

*There is also one more tendency in many of us to say that I heard an inner voice or got the directions from god in dream etc Many of us get many messages in our lives, or think we get them, and as long as the message is regarding our own selves, go on doing what you please; but when it is in regard to our contact with and behaviour to others, think a hundred times before you act upon it; and then you will be safe. (Vol IV pages 213-215)*



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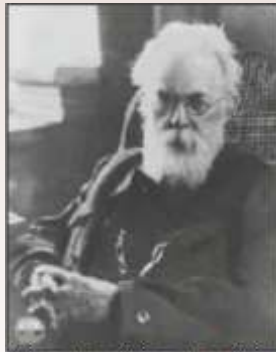
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# VERNADSKY, NOOSPHERE AND VIVEKANANDA



Aravindan Neelakandan

Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky Russo-Ukrainian geologist was more than a geologist. He was one of the earliest systems-thinkers and a pioneering inter-disciplinary scientist. His book 'The Biosphere' was published in Russian



Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky

in 1926 and in French in 1929. With 150 pages and unassuming cover, the book's importance was not understood fully outside a small minority of inter-disciplinary scientists dealing with eco-systems. Soviet system always eyed suspiciously at any new developments in sciences. In the case of Vernadsky, he rejected to recognize Marxist dialectics as the sole valid approach to truth.<sup>1</sup> That would explain why his work was not translated into English until 1986 by an American publishing firm Synergetic. Till then only those works which the great ecologist Hutchinson managed to translate into English with the help of Vernadsky's son George Vernadsky alone remained as his works available in English

Since then the importance of biosphere the relevance and value of which has been getting more and more rediscovered. Natural philosophers Nicholas Polunin & Jacques Grinevald point out the increasing importance

of Vernadsky's thoughts in ecological sciences:

There can be no question of the vital and vast significance of the concept of Biosphere in our modern world, even as its actuality provides almost all the components of the life support of man and nature. Yet, looking back historically, it seems extraordinary indeed that nobody appears to have had, or anyway developed and published, these ideas until they were so clearly enunciated by Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky less than seventy years ago. And now The Biosphere is emerging as a vital overall reality that we need to maintain intact and cherish perhaps even more ardently than any particular part or factor of our planet's terrestrial or aquatic surface.<sup>2</sup>

In 'The Biosphere', Vernadsky identifies the basic oneness of life in space and time, while at the same time he recognizes the importance and dynamic evolution and extinction of various forms through which life manifests itself as a planetary phenomenon. He says:

Life remains unalterable in its essential traits throughout all geological times, and changes only in form. All the vital films

(plankton, bottom, and soil) and all the vital concentrations (littoral, sargassic, and fresh water) have always existed. Their mutual relationships, and the quantities of matter connected with them, have changed from time to time; but these modifications could not have been large, because the energy input from the sun has been constant, or nearly so, throughout geological time, and because the distribution of this energy in the vital films and concentrations can only have been determined by living matter - the fundamental part, and the only variable part, of the thermodynamic field of the biosphere.<sup>3</sup>

Discovering such a unity (unalterable life) manifesting through diversity of forms ('changes only in form') has been considered the hallmark of a truly realized person in Indic spiritual traditions. For example Bhagavad Gita says that the one who experiences the rooted nature of multiplicity of forms in the Oneness and the Oneness expanding into the varied forms, that person achieves the ultimate Truth.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting that since Darwin, biological sciences have been able to unveil this underlying unity manifesting itself through variety of forms, through the process of evolution. Vernadsky himself turned to Hindu tradition in his quest for a spirituality that is synchronized with this new vision. In 1920 he wrote in his diary:

It seems to me as regarding the problems of the soul and deity the religious and philosophical thoughts of the Hindus give us much more than our own ideas

which are so closely associated with Judaeo-Christianity.<sup>5</sup>

Again he was stunned by the 'creation' hymn ('Nasatheya Sukta') in the tenth Mandala of Rig Veda. He wrote to his friend in ecstatic words:

I send you the stunning hymn of 'Rig Veda' in the metric translation by Deissen. It seems that the latter rather faithful to the content of the original. This is a work by an unknown poet who lived at least many hundred years before Christ and long before Buddha, Socrates and all Greek philosophers and science. But how contemporary it is and what profound thoughts it generates. I see it as a leap into eternity because it raises great doubts as to any creator and the root of existence is transported into what is outside this world, what is born and disappears and what cannot be seized or explained, that is the longing of the heart and feeling of love.<sup>6</sup>

### **Noosphere**

Importance of Vernadsky is not only in revealing our evolutionary past in a stunningly new framework and making the current ecological cycles to be understood from both evolutionary and planetary perspectives. He also provided important insights into the future evolution of earth. The planetary evolution according to Vernadsky transformed the geosphere to bio-geo-sphere or biosphere and the biosphere to what he called the 'noosphere'. He arrived at this idea in 1938 in his work 'Scientific Thought as a Planetary Phenomenon':

Being embraced by the living

matter, the biosphere seems to increase its geological force to an infinite degree; it seems to also become transformed by the scientific thought of Homo sapiens and to pass to its new state—noosphere.<sup>7</sup>

Noosphere is the next phase of planetary evolution where the mind becomes an important bio-geo force: consciousness shaping the evolutionary future. He elaborated the idea further:

Mankind taken as a whole is becoming a mighty geological force. There arises the problem of the reconstruction of the biosphere in the interests of freely thinking humanity as a single totality. This new state of the biosphere which we approach without our noticing it, is the noosphere.<sup>8</sup>

The term noosphere was originally coined by Teilhard de Chardin the Jesuit anthropologist. However it was Vernadsky integrated the emergence of noosphere with the evolutionary history of the planet.

After Vernadsky many important thinkers on evolution have restated how emergence of self-conscious humanity has made the crucial transition in evolution from biosphere to noosphere. In 1960, in the centennial year of the publication of 'Origin of Species', Sir Julian Huxley coined the term 'psycho-social evolution' to characterize the nature of evolution after the advent of humans:

Biological  
evolution



Sir Julian Huxley

is only one sector or phase of this total process. There is also the inorganic sector and the psychosocial or human sector. The phases succeed each other in time, the later being based on and evolving out of the earlier. The inorganic phase is pre-biological, the human is post-biological.<sup>9</sup>

Huxley also strongly felt the need for a psychosocial science for guiding this post-biological evolution:

The primary job of psychosocial science will be to describe and analyze the course and mechanism of psychosocial evolution in scientific terms. It will also include a science of human possibilities. What are the possibilities of man and his nature, individually and collectively? How is their realization helped or hindered by different types of psychosocial environment? How can we estimate human fulfilment; in what ways and to what extent can it be promoted by changes in psychosocial organization? In particular, such a science will involve a radical re-thinking of man's systems of education, their aims, content, and technique.<sup>10</sup>

Swami Ranganathananda of Sri Ramakrishna Mission has elaborated upon these ideas of Huxley:

What is  
meant by  
'psychosocial'  
evolution?  
From the  
living cell up



Swami Ranganathananda

to Homo sapiens, biological evolution was motivated by organic satisfactions, numerical increase and organic survival. But, with the appearance of humanity, these became, modern biology maintains, secondary. The primary motivation becomes fulfilment. Evolution itself becomes, at this stage, conscious and deliberate and goal-oriented, unlike the instinctive processes at the prehuman stage.<sup>11</sup>

Decades later in early 1980s, Jonas Salk the prime innovator of Polio vaccine, felt that with the advent of human mind a new phase has set in the planetary evolution. He called it the metabiological evolution:



Jonas Salk

The beginning of life marked the beginning of biological evolution, sometimes referred to

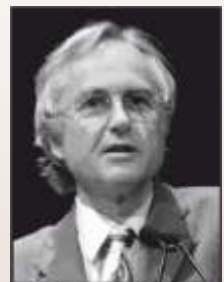
as Darwinian evolution. Increasingly complex organisms evolved until human forms appeared - and with them, the development of the human mind. With the advent of man came the capacity to create new forms that would not otherwise exist. ... The mind is like a volcanic eruption, and the force behind it exists in that extra layer of the cerebral cortex. The human mind has altered the rate of evolution in a

staggering way. ... I refer to the evolution of human consciousness and creativity as metabiological evolution. I'm not trying to coin new words just for the sake of doing so. Rather, I'm trying to unify, to tie it all together. I could call the three phases chemical evolution, biological evolution and cultural evolution. But then the connection between them may not be clear. When I refer to prebiological, biological and metabiological evolution, then the unifying connection is implicit. The three phases are part of what I call universal evolution - in which we see revealed the evolution of evolution itself.<sup>12</sup>

What Huxley calls as psycho-social evolution and Salk calls as meta-biological evolution are different names for the same process that has taken over the planetary evolution, after the advent of mind. This is the emergence of Vernadskian noosphere. The time has come for the system-biologists to exchange notes with the social scientists.

### Noosphere's memetic evolution

Studying the way noosphere evolves necessitates noosphere that we develop new tools and frameworks. A promising conceptual tool in this regard is memetics.



Dawkins

Though not yet conclusively established as a science, it does provide a radically refreshing view of approaching noospherical evolution. British Zoologist and author Richard Dawkins, who coined this term originally, calls the basic unit

of cultural transmission or imitation as 'meme'. Memes are self-replicating units. According to Dawkins from tunes to ideas to clothes fashion to pottery to engineering - all these learned, transmitted behavior patterns are memes. Dawkins also points out the curious relation between memes and genes:

Memes and genes may often reinforce each other, but they sometimes come into opposition. For example, the habit of celibacy is presumably not inherited genetically. A gene for celibacy is doomed to failure in the gene pool, except under very special circumstances such as we find in the social insects. But still, a meme for celibacy can be successful in the meme pool. For example, suppose the success of a meme depends critically on how much time people spend in actively transmitting it to other people.<sup>13</sup>

Psychologist Henry Plotkin gives a definition of meme that builds upon Dawkin's definition:

A meme is the unit of cultural heredity analogous to the gene. It is the internal representation of knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

Memetic systems made of interconnected yet distinct memes are far larger than individual ideas, music tunes, individual beliefs and fancies. Religions, philosophical systems, political ideologies are all examples of memetic systems with a lot of inter-connected memes. A religion for example as a memetic system can include specific memes like beliefs, philosophical points, hymns, specific tunes of music etc. Just as how the dynamic ever changing environment of the biosphere exerts varied selection pressures on genes in biosphere, the same way memes are also

subjected to selection pressures in a sustained way in noosphere. Certain memes flourish when certain major changes happen in the noosphere.

Earlier in 1962 Thomas Samuel Kuhn a historian and philosopher of science had published a book 'The Structure of Scientific Revolutions' in which he had introduced the term 'paradigm shift'. A paradigm shift means a change in the basic assumptions, or paradigms, within the ruling theory of science. With science becoming more and more the dominant and the most common universal thinking process of the humanity, the fundamental change in the scientific worldview can be seen as a major shift in the noosphere – almost similar to a Cambrian explosion of forms coupled with perhaps a massive extinction or a less dramatic phasing out. An interesting question is how much does this change in noosphere affect our own biosphere and the place and future of humanity in biosphere?

In his 1982 book '*The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture*', physicist-turned deep ecologist and author Fritjof Capra, influenced by Kuhn, shows how the 'paradigm shift' that had its starting in 'New Physics' has brought change in various disciplines. He seeks to establish the dominance of a mechanistic view of life in biological sciences as aligned to Newtonian 'world-machine' model and correlates the increasing importance systems view of biology continues to gain with the emergence of new physics.<sup>15</sup> This paradigm shift can be



Fritjof Capra

seen as a major shift in the composition of noosphere, a change in the selection pressures of noosphere. If we take the Cartesian or Newtonian physics as a memetic system, then the dominance of that memetic system in noosphere allows the co-dominance and co-evolution of similar memetic systems in other domains of Noosphere. With the experiments like the double-slit experiments, EPR paradox leading to Bell experiment, concept of Bohm's 'implicate order' another memetic system rose which when percolated through popular science books and philosophers of science facilitated the rise of other memes. Thus the new physics selected through crucial experiments, in turn facilitated the successful spread of memes like 'inter-connectivity', 'holism' etc. With this change in the noosphere, the memes like 'the web of life', 'all things are connected like the blood that unites us all' etc. (the words attributed to Chief Seattle) start having a deeper existential basis associated to them rather than being looked upon merely as poetic and romantic hyperbole. One can say the survival values of these memes change. One should also note the emergence of Gaia worldview championed by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis and its popular acceptance as an allied phenomenon. The inter-connectivity which the New Physics revealed, popularized in countless popular science magazines (over-exploited also by cheap new-age writers) effected this shift in the public psyche. Peter Hay of Tasmania University, author and environmentalist points out the impact of new physics on general ecological thinking:



David Bohm

The environment movement has

its favourites among the theorists of the new physics, and one such is David Bohm. Bohm's notion of an 'implicate order' in which 'the totality of existence is enfolded within each region of space (and time)' so that 'wholeness permeates all' also stretches the underlying structure of the larger whole against the flux of chaotic self-organization is played. Though the implication of these developments have taken long to penetrate the popular consciousness - and still longer to exert any major impact on the theory, practice and technological application of science in its other branches - the potential consequences are hard to understate. Their cumulative effect is to undermine reductionist science, for it can no longer be credibly held that knowledge resides in an understanding of the constituent parts of biophysical systems. The apparent support the new physics lends to green ways of seeing has been made explicit by a number of observers (for example Birch and Cobb 1981; Capra 1983; 1992; Devall and Sessions 1985: 88-89). In essence, this lies in the reinforcement it provides for the non-reductionist paradigm also found within ecology, including the latter's stress upon the unforeseen system-wide consequences of technological interventions in biological system.

<sup>16</sup>

Memetic-symbiosis can also be discerned. An abject superstition covering itself with

quantum mechanics jargon can be seen as memetic parasitism. Ecological thinking getting a fresh impetus from the idea of interconnectivity conceptualized some quantum physicists can be seen as memetic commensalism. More importantly what memes get selected also has consequences for biosphere.

Those memes which change the way human consciousness understands its relation with nature around and within have serious consequences for both the planet and vitally more so for human species. Those memetic systems which eliminate other memes, destroy memetic diversity ruthlessly, which restrict the emergence of new memes can endanger the entire humanity. A successful human society should ensure memetic diversity and not elimination of memes favoring monocultures of the mind. Carl Sagan is emphasizing the need for the conserving of memetic diversity when he concludes in his book 'Dragons of Eden' thus:



Carl Sagan

the future belongs to those societies that, while not ignoring the reptilian and mammalian parts of our being, enable the characteristically human components of our nature to flourish, to those societies that encourage diversity rather than conformity, to those societies willing to invest resources in a

variety of social, political, economic, and cultural experiments, and prepared to sacrifice short-term advantage for long-term benefit; to those societies that treat new ideas as delicate, fragile and immensely valuable pathways to the future<sup>17</sup>

Today digital connectivity has opened up yet another dimension for noosphere. This has accelerated the digital evolution of noosphere, which is moving towards a faster integration of humanity. But the digitalized globalization has also unwittingly released forces for expansionist monocultures of the exclusivist kind. In such a situation, a healthy noosphere demands that it has the maximum memetic diversity. Buddhist scholar Prof. Lokesh Chandra calls this memetic diversity, theodiversity. He observes:



Lokesh Chandra

Bio-diversity is the supreme law of nature. There are over a hundred thousand species of flora and fauna in India alone, more than a lakh of forms of plant and animal life in our country. Likewise, the spiritual life has to divine the several meanings, the



fuzzy wisdom of nature, the light of the Many, and to image the sacrament that enshrines the Multiple, the Changing, the Silent. Let us not wound the years with "The Only True One". The One has to become the Many .... Theo-diversity is an inescapable corollary to the astounding discoveries in science and their universal applications in technology. Theo-diversity alone will ensure the ascension of humanity to light and nobility that makes Joy not an attribute of the spirit, but its essential nature (sac-cid-ananda).<sup>18</sup>

The various dimensions of noospheric evolution both connected to yet qualitatively different from the previous phases of evolution has not yet totally dawned on humanity. We need radically different frameworks and approaches than the usual sociological, economic, political, psychological models we have. Memetics though controversial is definitely one such tools but we need to evolve even more frameworks – both reductionist as well as holistic which should work in a complementary manner.

### Swami Vivekananda

It is interesting to note that in the writings and lectures of Swami Vivekananda, there is a basic framework which anticipates these developments in systems approach to the evolution of universe, life and intelligence. He saw in evolution an underlying unity of all life rejecting spontaneous creation with an external factor



like God and he also inferred that with the advent of human mind and unity of humanity, a new phase in evolution has commenced. In his Lahore lecture on Vedanta he dismissed a creator-God or Intelligence outside the nature:

What is the fight between science and religion everywhere? Religions are encumbered with such a mass of explanations which come from outside — one angel is in charge of the sun, another of the moon, and so on ad infinitum. Every change is caused by a spirit, the one common point of agreement being that they are all outside the thing. Science means that the cause of a thing is sought out by the nature of the thing itself. As step by step science is progressing, it has taken the explanation of natural phenomena out of the hands of spirits and angels. ...This universe has not been created by any extra-cosmic God, nor is it the work of any outside genius. It is self-creating, self-dissolving, self-



Stephen Hawking

manifesting, One Infinite Existence, the Brahman. Tattvamasi Shvetaketo — "That thou art! O Shvetaketu!"<sup>19</sup>

There is an uncanny echo of the above words of Vivekananda (uttered in 1897 at Lahore) in

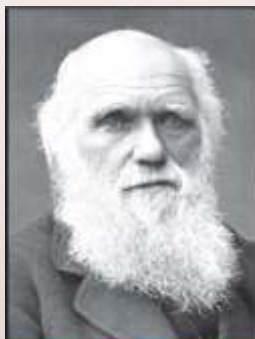
the writings of Stephen Hawking in his 1988, best seller 'A Brief History of Time', where he says:

So long as the universe had a beginning, we could suppose it had a creator. But if the universe is really completely self-contained, having no boundary or edge, it would have neither beginning nor end; it would simply be. What place, then for a creator?<sup>20</sup>

In the case of organic evolution of life in our planet, Vivekananda holds the same Advaitic approach to the process. Through evolution Swami Vivekananda arrives at the basic unity of all life, just like Darwin before him and Vernadsky after him:

Take, for instance, the life of a little plant. We find two things that make the plant a unity by itself — its growth and development, its decay and death. These make one unity the plant life. So, taking that plant life as only one link in the chain of life, we may take the whole series as one life, beginning in the protoplasm and ending in the most perfect man. Man is one link, and the various beasts, the lower animals, and plants are other links. Now go back to the source, the finest particles from which they started, and take the whole series as but one life, and you will find that every evolution here is the evolution of something which existed previously.<sup>21</sup>

Though Vivekananda



Darwin

spoke about the 'chain' and 'link', he underscored the fact that they were all 'one life' with variation only in manifestation. Naturally as shall be seen later, he would arrive at the tree metaphor when talking about evolution. The oneness of life which Swami Vivekananda stresses is one important notion that every evolutionary scientist has arrived in his or her own personal scientific odyssey. Darwin himself after discovering natural selection expressed in his notes a feeling not much different from the spirit of the Upanishad seers:

There is one living spirit, prevalent over this world, (subject to certain contingencies of organic matter chiefly heat), which assumes a multitude of forms according to subordinate laws. — There is one thinking sensible principle (intimately allied to one kind of organic matter—have & which thinking principle seems to be given a assumed according to a more extended relations of the individuals, whereby choice with memory or reason? is necessary—which is modified into endless forms bearing a close relation in degree & kind to the endless forms of the living beings.<sup>22</sup>

Noted British evolutionist JBS Haldane could not miss the way the science of evolution has instilled a sense of belonging and reverence to all life in

Western psyche which was as he noticed



JBS Haldane

characteristically Hindu. He wrote:

My wife has stated categorically that Darwin converted Europe to Hinduism. This is, I think, an exaggeration, but is nearer to the truth than it sounds. Hinduism is not a religion as this is term is understood by the adherents of proselytizing religious beliefs. It is an attitude to the universe compatible with a variety of religious and philosophical beliefs.... Darwin, then, from the Hindu angle, had some at least of the attributes of a saint.<sup>23</sup>

But what makes Vivekananda more relevant to the study of noosphere is the way he shuns the pseudo-science of social Darwinism. This is a remarkable stand because at that time the most of the Western world was under the sway of Herbert Spencer – applying the 'survival of the fittest' to human societies, justifying enslaving of non-western societies, colonial exploitation, racism and elimination of mentally challenged individuals in the name of the science of eugenics. In a conversation with a disciple Vivekananda offers an astonishingly different take on the issue of human evolution:

In the animal kingdom we really see such laws as struggle for existence, survival of the fittest, etc., evidently at work. Therefore, Darwin's theory seems true to a certain extent. But in the human kingdom, where there is the manifestation of rationality, we find just the reverse of those laws. For instance, in those whom we consider really great men or ideal characters, we scarcely observe any external struggle. In the animal kingdom instinct prevails; but the more a man advances, the more he manifests rationality. For this reason, progress

in the rational human kingdom cannot be achieved, like that in the animal kingdom, by the destruction of others!... Hence the struggle theory is not equally applicable to both kingdoms. Man's struggle is in the mental sphere. A man is greater in proportion as he can control his mind. When the mind's activities are perfectly at rest, the Atman manifests Itself. The struggle which we observe in the animal kingdom for the preservation of the gross body has its use in the human plane of existence for gaining mastery over the mind or for attaining the state of balance. Like a living tree and its reflection in the water of a tank, we find opposite kinds of struggle in the animal and human kingdoms.<sup>24</sup>

Implicit in this conversation of Vivekananda is the idea of psychosocial or metabiological evolution as a qualitatively different phase of evolution that has happened so far. Here it should be noted that Swami Vivekananda rejects the mind-matter duality. He sees mind as a dynamic continuum with the environment:

Both matter and mind are really nothing but forces; and if you analyse them far enough, you will find that at root they are one. The very fact that the external force can somehow evoke the internal force shows that somewhere they join each other -- they must be continuous and, therefore, basically the same force. When you get to the root of things, they become simple and general. Since the same force appears in one form as matter and in another form as mind, there is no reason to think

matter and mind are different. Mind is changed into matter, matter is changed into mind. Thought force becomes nerve force, muscular force; muscular and nerve force become thought force. Nature is all this force, whether expressed as matter or mind.

<sup>25</sup>

Mind, as a phenomenon not distinct from nature but connected through matter and energy with the nature in an inseparable manner resonates with the idea of Vernadskian idea of human mind as a mighty geological force in noosphere. In fact Vernadsky seeing mind as an important factor in planetary geobio evolution gets a premonition in Vivekananda's thought, though in a much larger canvas. Swami Vivekananda again and again stresses the importance of preserving the various approaches and visions of truth. To him variety is a condition of life:

Death is the result of inaction. Be active; and wherever there is activity, there must be difference. Difference is the sauce of life; it is the beauty, it is the art of everything. Difference makes all beautiful here. It is variety that is the source of life, the sign of life. Why should we be afraid of it?<sup>26</sup>

He further states:

To learn this central secret that the truth may be one and yet many at the same time, that we may have different visions of the same truth from different standpoints, is exactly what must be done. Then, instead of antagonism to anyone, we shall have infinite sympathy with all. .... Just as nature is unity in variety--an infinite variation in the phenomenal--as in and through all these variations of the phenomenal runs the Infinite, the

Unchangeable, the Absolute Unity, so it is with every man; .... This idea, above all other ideas, I find to be the crying necessity of the day.<sup>27</sup>

Yet all these memetic diversity should also be subjected to a selection pressure. Swami Vivekananda was talking about the theodiversity essentially, the different religious systems. Here he wanted the methodology of science to become universal selection force for all memetic systems including religious systems. He states:

Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other concrete science justifies itself? Are the same methods of investigation which we apply to sciences and knowledge outside, to be applied to the science of Religion? In my opinion, this must be so, and I am also of opinion that the sooner it is done the better. If a religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better. I am thoroughly convinced that its destruction would be the best thing that could happen.<sup>28</sup>

This is Vernadsky's scientific thought becoming a real global phenomenon. Swami Vivekananda also foresees such an enlightened acceptance of memetic diversity which should ultimately lead to the realization of Oneness at the universal level. In his lecture 'Unity in Diversity', delivered at London on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1896, he said:

I do not say your view is wrong, you are welcome to it. Great good and blessing come out of it, but do not, therefore, condemn my view. Mine also is practical in its own way. Let us

all work out our own plans.... I have seen some scientists who were equally practical, both as scientists and as spiritual men, and it is my great hope that in course of time the whole of humanity will be efficient in the same manner. When a kettle of water is coming to the boil, if you watch the phenomena, you find first one bubble rising, and then another and so on, until at last they all join, and a tremendous commotion takes place. This world is very similar. Each individual is like a bubble, and the nations, resemble many bubbles. Gradually these nations are joining, and I am sure the day will come when separation will vanish and that Oneness to which we are all going will become manifest. A time must come when every man will be as intensely practical in the scientific world as in the spiritual, and then that Oneness, the harmony of Oneness, will pervade the whole world.<sup>29</sup>

Vernadsky would have said yes to this vision of oneness of all humanity – it would have been his ideal Noosphere. After all, academician Aksenov informed in the magazine 'Science in USSR' that Vernadsky in his last days was deeply attracted by the works of Swami Vivekananda.<sup>30</sup> And this year sees the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of both Swami Vivekananda and Vernadsky.

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This universe  
has not been created by  
any extra-cosmic God,  
nor is it the work of any outside genius.  
It is self-creating, self-dissolving,  
self-manifesting, One Infinite Existence,  
the Brahman.

Tattvamasi — "That thou art!"

-Swami Vivekananda  
1897

So long as the universe  
had a beginning,  
we could suppose  
it had a creator.  
But if the universe is  
really completely self-contained,  
having no boundary or edge,  
it would have  
neither beginning nor end;  
it would simply be.

What place, then for a creator?



**-Stephen Hawking  
1988**

## YIELD NOT TO UNMARRILINESS

Prof. P. T. Shanta



We have made our life on earth very comfortable yet our hospitals are overcrowded, pharmaceuticals & clinical labs thrive on the diseases like insomnia and hypertension of our youth. On a deeper analysis, one finds that the illness is not due to physical but mental stress. When the mind is exhausted, tired, afflicted by sorrow, it gets reflected in the quality of work. There is a constant complaint that hard work, sincere efforts do not get the deserved reward; lack of enthusiasm, dullness and lethargy prevail. There is no driving force. Mental exhaustion saps away all the energy at the physical level too and renders man inefficient, incompetent to face the challenges. After facing one failure, he has no courage to face any more challenges. He wants to avoid problems, postpone and, resorts to different methods of running away from seemingly unmanageable situations. There is an escapist tendency.

Arjuna confronted the same situation. The opening chapter of *Bhagavad Gita* paints for us a confusing atmosphere of tension. Apart from the rattling sound of impatient armies standing face to

face, we are also given a peep into the tension created in the subjective minds of the people by the tragic outer situation. The challenge is not only outside man, but it also springs from within his own bosom. In fact, the inner chaos gets itself projected to express as the outer disturbances around. Many of our strikes erupt from the inner tensions felt, restrained and suppressed for a long period of time in the past. The inner shattering of the psychological personality in man is projected so vividly in the characterisation of Arjuna that the Pandava Prince represents the 'confused man of the world – the disillusioned youth of all time'.

The commander in chief of the Pandava forces, Arjuna who had proved his prowess many a times earlier, comes to the war front and reviews the array of the enemy lines. He knows that his duty is to lead and to champion the righteous cause of the Pandavas – but he feels benumbed by his own emotional involvement with the personalities who run the Kaurava Government. He saw fathers, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles,



brothers ,sons, grandsons and friends too. Seeing so many relatives, friends and acquaintances, poised for war against each other, he probably for the first time realised the tragedies of a total fratricidal war. His composure breaks down. A feeling of compassion overwhelmed him.

*Drushvema msvajana mkrishna  
yuyutsumsamupasthitam*

*Seedanti mama gaatraanimukham ca parisushyati  
Vepadhushca sareere me romaharshasca  
jayate | (1.28-29)*

Seeing these my kinsmen, o krishna, arrayed, eager to fight, my limbs fail me; my mouth is parched; my body quivers and my hair stands on end

He further said that his bow was slipping from his hands. His mind became unsteady and lost its stability. He was not able to stand; he saw bad omens. These , according to modern psychologists are symptoms of anxiety state neurosis, Sri Krishna, the great psychiatrist , allows Arjuna to bring out all his pentup ,warped emotions. His entire life was spent in preparation for his achievement as a warrior. Though a proficient man, due to mental agitations, the great warrior in Arjuna becomes temporarily inefficient.

In order to face such challenges, a lot of courage is required, the courage comes only when the mind is strong & poised for only then it can rediscover its own efficiency, ability & beauty of performance-all of which ensure excellence and success in life. With the teaching of Bhagwad Gita, this mental vitality returned to Arjuna. Once his mind became calm & serene, Arjuna was able to rediscover his own potency and efficiency. Krishna did not alter the situation; no new force was added .the Lord merely spoke to Arjuna lifting him out of his mental confusion. When mentally upset, Arjuna became pessimistic and wanted to run away in panic. Once he became calm,

though the situation remained the same, he found a new courage and confidence -the problem was no longer a problem; it was only a game, and victory came to him!

The modern man is suffering from Arjunas disease. He has all the potentiality in him but a benumbed by worldly problems around, staggering under the crushing load of his own selfcreated miseries, man loses his ability to think correctly. This was the condition of Arjuna and the treatment given to him constitutes the 18 chapters of Bhagwad Gita. In order to remove the delusion which has overtaken Arjuna, Bhagavan draws his attention to the omnipotent power that is within him ,`naitattvayyupapadyate" It doesn't benefit you! you are Atman imperishable, beyond all evil. Having forgotten your true nature, you have, thinking yourself a sinner, as one afflicted with bodily evils and mental grief, you have made yourself so-

*"klaibyam maa sma gamaha Paartha"* Yield not to unmanliness, o son of Pratha. There is in the world neither sin nor misery, neither disease nor grief; if there is anything in the world called sin, it is this FEAR; know that anything that brings out the latent power in you is Punya, virtue, that which makes your body and mind weak is Sin. shakeoff this weakness this faint heartedness! you are a hero,a Vira;this is unbecoming of you ''  
*klaibyam maa sma gamaha, Partha  
naitattvayyupapadyate*

*Kshudram hrudayadaurbalyam tyakvottishtta  
parantapa*

"Hence Arjuna!do not succumb to weakness arising from compassion.you are a valorous person, shedoff this faintheartedness and get ready to fight " "this is the message that has to be proclaimed to the world today. All the disease, sorrow, grief and sin will vanish from off the face of the earth.

All these ideas of weakness will be nowhere! Now it is everywhere-this current of the vibration of fear Reverse the current; bring in the opposite vibration, see the magic transformation! You are omnipotent -go, go to the mouth of the cannon, fear not. Turn inward, where the Paramathman resides. There is no sin in you, there is no misery in you; you are the reservoir of omnipotent power. Arise, awake, and manifest the Divinity within! klaibyam.....in this one shloka lies Embedded the whole message of the Gita". One gets all the merits of reading the entire gita by reading this one shloka\*.

``setting a goal in life, a great ideal to inspire us,channelising all our energy & attention to that, a new enthusiasm comes to us.when there is enthusiasm,then sincerity,consistency of purpose automatically follows if we work with our head, heart, and hands fully integrated,the very work gains a stamp of efficiencyand beauty, our reward is indescribable fulfillment and joy"swami chinmayananda.

\* Swami Vivekananda tells about Bhagawad Gita

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# SANNYASA – PARIVRAJAKA

N. Krishnamoorti

**Sowmya:** Guruji. What is the significance of Sannyasa Dharma in our spiritual culture?

**Guruji:** Our rishis have divided human life

into four stages Brahmacharya, Grihastashrama, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa. We also have the ideals or Purusharthas of life which lend meaning to human effort. Pleasure (Kama) Artha (the material means of pleasures) Dharma (the way of life by which one earns his artha and enjoys his Kama without hurting his own permanent and fundamental interests and those of others) and Moksha - spiritual

liberation or realising the full potentialities of human life). Sannyasa is the stage of life in which the ultimate goal is realised.

**Sowmya:** But everyone may not be qualified or desire to take to Sannyasa.

**Guruji:** The Sannyasa ashrama or Turiya ashrama is not compulsory for everyone. Only those who fulfill the stringent requirements of

Sannyasa can take to it. The Vedas themselves permit a person to die as a Grihastha. There are rituals for the funeral rites of a Grihastha.

According to Kanchi Mahaswami this shows that the Vedas permit a man to die as a Grahastha and Sannyasa is not compulsory for all.

**Sowmya:** Who will support a Sannyasi? Who will feed him, shelter him or clothe him?

**Guruji:** A Brahmachari depends on his Guru for his food etc. A Grihastha depends upon his work and effort alone for his upkeep. It is a sin for a Grihastha to beg. It his duty to Give - Dana. A Vaanaprasthi depends upon the Society and

Nature for his food. But a Sannyasi depends upon God alone for his bodily maintenance. It is called Akasha Vrithi. A Sannyasi lives like a plant or a tree in the forest, which depends upon rains alone for its survival.

**Sowmya:** Is it compulsory for one to go through all the earlier ashramas before taking to Sannyasa life?



Swami Vivekananda as a Parivrajaka

**Guruji:** not necessarily. The Veda says:  
Brahmacharyan Samaapya Grihi Bhavet  
Grihibhutwa Vaneebhawet  
Vaneebhutwa Pravrajat  
Yadiva Idaratha Brahmacharyaadeva  
Pravrajat Grihaadva Vanaadva  
Atha Punar avratee vaa vratee vaa  
Snatakovaa asnatako vaa  
Utsannagnir vaa Anagnigovaa

Yadahareva virajet Tadahareva pravrajat  
Become a house holder after completing a student's life. After that become a forest dweller. Then become a wandering monk (a Sannyasi).

If one so desires he can become a Sannyasi straight away from student's life, house holder's life or a forest dweller's life. Whether he is a vow - holder, graduate or an agnihotri or otherwise, on the day he develops perfect Vairagya, then itself he can become a wandering monk (Sannyasi) Says the Jaabalpanishad.

**Sowmya:** Amazing. Are there examples of such monks?

**Guruji:** Yes. Samartha Ramadas Swami became a Virakta on the threshold of his marriage hall and renounced the worldly life. Sundara Swami a great exponent of Suta Samhita became a Sannyasi half-way through a lecture. He took to Sannyasa with a dip in the river, TAAMRAPARNI and renounced the world and simply continued his lecture.

**Sowmya:** Is there any difference in this practice between various Sampradayas?

**Guruji:** Yes. In Sankara and Madhwacharya tradition it is mostly from Brahmacharya to Sannyasa, though there are instances of other

Ashramis renouncing the world. But in Ramanuja Sampradya one has to go through all the stages before taking to the Fourth Ashrama.

**Sowmya:** I have heard that Shankara conceived the Dasanami Sampradaya.

**Guruji:** It is more likely that Sankara grouped into ten categories, the seventy factions of Sannyasis he found in his time. The ten names of the Dasanami Sampradayas are 1) Sarasvati 2) Bharati 3) Puri 4) Teertha 5) Asrama 6) Giri 7) Parvata 8) Saagara 9) Vana and 10) Aranya. Each has to study one of the Vedas and its Mahavakya and preach Vedanta to the people in a particular region of Bharat.

**Sowmya:** Guruji! Let me ask a fundamental question now? Why should a man renounce the world. Why should a man seek God at all?

**Guruji:** It is a good question. Sooner or later every scientist, every rational man, every educated man will ask this question. In fact Vedanta anticipates this question and answers it. By repeated experiments and intuition, Vedic Rishis, Sri Krishna, Bhagwan Buddha and others have found out desires are the cause of all human unhappiness, turmoil and stagnation and stale routine. They have found out that every time a human being is happy, peaceful and creative he is in a desireless state. Therefore according to all these great Maha purushas Renunciation of all desires is the highest state of human bliss.

**Sowmya:** Still I feel that giving up the desires is not a natural state of the mind!

**Guruji:** The rishis and avataras have understood living beings better than any ordinary people, better than any scientist. Every living being, whether it is a simple ant or

a bug or an insect, or a most learned philosopher or an artiste, they are all motivated by a constant search for happiness, comfort, peace, and self-expression. Our rishis have found out that the highest moral state is also the highest state of happiness. In this manner the rishi's have not set any goal for living beings. They have only taught everyone a way of reaching happiness quickly, systematically and efficiently. Even without the rishis upadesha all living beings will be searching for happiness etc. but they will be doing so haphazardly, irregularly, inefficiently, reaching the goal after an unnecessarily long duration. The rishis through yoga and Vedanta, have taught us to learn systematically, what we would otherwise be searching by trial and error, instinctively, taking a very long time to achieve the goal.

**Sowmya:** You mean searching for happiness, peace and creativity are instinctive to every living being!

**Guruji:** Yes. The rishis have only speeded up the inevitable.

**Sowmya:** I do not understand the connection between desires and unhappiness. Normally I feel that when my desires are fulfilled, I am happy.

**Guruji:** That is incomplete happiness. If it is real fulfillment that desire should not rise again. Every time your desire is (temporarily) satisfied, it leaves a deeply rooted tendency (Vasana) that is a sense of inadequacy. It is called pasha ( पाश ) It also leaves a desire for more hope for more ( आशा ) Aaashaa. The Mind keeps on shuttling between past experiences and future hopes. This agitation of the mind is true unhappiness-it starts with temporary and false sense of happiness. You analyse your

unhappiness. Every time you are unhappy, it is always a result of an unfulfilled desire. Therefore rishis and the Veda repeatedly declare that the happiness arises from desirelessness. (Shrotriyasya Kamatahatasya)

**Sowmya:** Then why should a Sannyasi be a wandering monk?

**Guruji:** A wandering monk is called a PARIVRAJAKA. He is not attached to one place. The Gita calls for ANIKETA: STHIRA MATI: Stable mind and houseless wandering. A glorious example of this Parivrajaka was Swami Vivekananda, who between 1886 and 1893 wandered in the states of Bihar, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra and what is now Bangladesh.

**Sowmya:** What did Swamiji do during this period of wandering?

**Guruji:** He visited pilgrim centers and worshipped there. He took bath in the holy waters. Like Shankara of yore, he met the best brains each town, each religious sect each language, each profession and discussed God and Truth with them. Like a sponge he adsorbed knowledge from everyone he met, every place he visited. This habit continued even when Swamiji visited America, England, Switzerland and France. He met the ordinary people of India, observed their life, saw their misery, noted their spirituality thriving amidst poverty and deprivation. He brushed shoulders with Kings, Ministers, Diwans, and goaded them to serve the poor, to give education to the poor. He met many Sannyasis and plotted his future project for Sannyasin serving the masses – Serve Man Serve God. Above all, Swami Vivekananda saw that the

common people of India are naturally spiritual and religious. To see God in Everything and Everyone (Isa Upanishad) To call one God by many names (Rik Veda) to recognize man as essentially spiritual (Sama Veda) - these great truths are practised in some form or other by the common people of India. Swami Vivekananda saw how deeply rooted these ideas are in the minds of our people giving Hindu culture popularity and permanence and continuity. Says Sister Nivedita: - There were three influences in Swami Vivekananda's life. First his education in English and Sanskrit literature second, the great personality of his Guru, and the third, his personal knowledge of India and Indian people."

**Sowmya:** And what happened to him at Kanyakumari?

**Guruji:** Sitting on the last piece of Indian Rock at Kanyakumari he hit upon a plan to combine these three influences into one ACTION PLAN. The Kanyakumari rock with the blessings of Mother Bharat converted the wandering monk into a sure – footed activist, who would fulfill his destined role of teaching The East and the West.

**Sowmya:** Who were the people whom Swami Vivekananda met during the wandering place?

**Guruji:** He met Raj Narayan Bose, Bhaskarananda, Pramada Das Mitra, Pavahari Baba, Muslim scholars in Koran, Pandit Panduranga, the rulers of Khetri, Alwar, Limbdi, Mysore, Travancore and Ramnad, the Diwans of Khetri, Alwar, Junagad, Mysore, Cochi and Travancore. The royal courtiers in all these states, and Hyderabad, Loka Manya Balagangadara Tilak, Chattambi Swami, Dr. Palpu who later became the disciple of Sri Narayana Guru. He also met technicians, musicians, scholars, professors, wrestlers, cobblers, in fact, men of all walks. All these meetings raised great hopes of India's future, in his mind. He visualized an India rising from the lowliest and lost, rising from the scholar and the ignorant rising from the Lordly and the rich. But in all he saw INDIA RISING. And Swamiji predicted that more Sannyasins, holier than those of the past would walk the paths of this immortal Nation.



Any work that is done with any the least selfish motive, instead of making us free, forges one more chain for our feet.

## TO THE AWAKENING BHARAT – II

Satish Shamrao Chowkulkar

All the gathered youth were now eagerly listening to Shiva Swarupananda.

“All these things are being allowed to happen because we are not awake – awake to the situation and awake to our capacities.”

“Are we sleeping?” asked an alert student.

“Yes! But of course not physically! We are rather blind to the situation. We do not see the things as they are. Leaders in the society have been blinded by their personal interests. In order to serve it they are making series of compromises. We have to understand the situation in which we are today. Then, we should have clear cut goal before us on which we should be prepared to focus all our energies. Thereafter we should plan our actions stage by stage and set proper priorities”.

“Well! You have already briefed us about the present situation at national and social level. “You said we should have clear cut goal before us for focusing our energies. You have also said facing the situation and solving the problem should be on the agenda of modern Indian Youth. What we should do to plan and execute to achieve this work” asked one youth.

Shiva Swarupananda nodded and continued “Let us listen to the person who have understood Bharat and her problems in the past and think about plan he then gave. Incidentally we are proceeding to celebrate his 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary.

“Who? Swami Vivekananda?” asked a youth.

“Yes! exactly!” exclaimed Shiva Swarupananda and continued with a delighted face.

“He had understood Bharat by going across its length & breadth, studied its past and present

during his wandering days – 1889 June to December 1892 and visualized future of Bharat and exclaimed it to be more glorious than its past. He then went to west to know it also. Then after coming back asserted that India has to give to the whole world its message of spirituality. But world understand the language of strength. So we should make our Bharat strong so that world will listen to its message of peace and harmony”. “But as you have narrated, we are having hoards of problems of ourselves. Do you think we are fit to take the load of educating the world?” asked one girl. Shiva Swarupananda smiled and said “The solution is two pronged, when we are awakened to situation we will solve all our problems and thereafter the world will come to learn from us. World is facing the problems faced by us on higher magnitude. By awakening ourselves we will be eligible to enlighten the world. In fact this is unique privilege given to us. Thinkers all over the world have expressed this need time and again. So our goal to make Bharat Mata beacon light for enlightening the world”.

“What should be our plan of action” asked an eagerly listening student.

First of all we have to insulate ourselves against the negative thought currents. Short sighted personal goals should be kept on back burner. We must pursue modern academic achievement but at the same time message of the sages through Upanishad, Yoga Shastra and Bhagavad Gita should be studied to ensure that selfishness, narrow mindedness and commercial attitudes are warded off. On the other hand our priority should be selfless service, team work and patriotic farvour. This should become our very nature. Then every skill and capacity we acquire will get a social and service orientation. We should be able to allot some time from our daily, weekly, monthly time frame for selfless work. Youth of India should take the responsibility on

their shoulder. That is what Swami Vivekananda used to insist on."

"We should develop clear insight-foresight and far sight so that none can misuse us, our energies should not be allowed to be misused to enslave us. We should be guided by teachings of Vivekananda, specially meant for youth". "We should then spread his teachings by our action among our peers and also other members of society namely intellectuals who steer the thinking of society, women who have been responsible for nurturing core cultural unit i.e. family. This dimension is essential to nurture value education which our academic education system has failed to deliver. This will ensure that our nation is not reduced to just a consumer entity. If we are deeply rooted in our cultural values none can uproot and degenerate us."

"Some of us should understand the problems of rural masses and strengthen their will. Villages only are taking care of food security. Giving time to take care of their needs will be great service our society can make. No section of the society should be allowed to be alienated, culturally or geographically. The nation has to

be united with spiritual and emotional bond of one-ness. So that none can exploit our bretherns to grind their own axes. In fact this one-ness has been the central note of our National symphony. We have to strengthen it. Our spiritual heritage and patriotism are mutually nourishing. They are our strength. This strength only has been keeping us alive and active inspite of centuries of aggressions and exploitation. Swami Vivekananda in his small span of life has spoken about this repeatedly. All his guidances have been documented and are available to us. We can give a fitting tribute to him in his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary." Shiva Swarupanda stopped for a while. "But..." Some one tried to come in. Shiva Swarupananda signaled him and beckoned me and stretched his hand towards me. I knew what he wanted.

I gave him a bunch of pamphlets of Swami Vivekananda 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary Celebration and booklets titled "Swami Vivekananda his life and Message" and "Wake Up Bharat! Enlighten the word". Shiva Swarupananda signaled me to come closer and continue the dialogue with the youth.



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## FEEL FREE; BE FREE

-Dr. K. Subrahmanyam

**F**reedom is our birth right. Therefore, Swami Vivekananda exhorts all to be free always. Freedom and divinity are one and the same. God is never bound. God is ever free. Anyone who feels free is divine. 'Each soul is potentially divine'. All are children of God . Therefore, all are expected to inherit divine trait, freedom.

Soul or atman is one . Sun is one. But the reflections of the sun are many in the reflecting bodies. Nature is the reflecting body. This body is made of five elements. They are earth, water, fire, air and space. Cosmic body is the macrocosm of these five elements. Individual body, made up of these five elements is the microcosm. The sun, when reflected in a mirror, is but one image. But, the same mirror, when broken into two, has two reflections of the same sun. If there are infinite pieces of mirror, there will be infinite reflections of the sun. The bright sun becomes dull, if reflected in a dull body. The same bright sun will be brilliant, if reflected in a bright body. Sometimes, the colourless sun of dazzling brightness will appear to have the colourfull reflections. Similarly, in a plain sheet of glass, sun's image will be plain. In a convex or concave mirror, sun will have modifications in his images. In a corrugated sheet, the modification of the image will be rather crooked. In short, the sun of no modifications and no colours appears to have the changes in the image depending upon the nature of the reflecting body. When the reflecting bodies are absent, there will be no images. There will be only one sun always. Similarly, the atman or

soul is one. It is permanent and bright. It is universal and eternal. It is birthless and deathless. This soul appears to be many in the reflecting structures of the nature's bodies. Every individual is a body of the nature. This natural body made up of the five elements is like a reflecting glass. As the sun is bright, the soul is bright without any colours and forms; but the human structure and the diverse species have several forms, names, and colours. Soul reflected in them, therefore, appears to be of some form, name and colour.

When we know the truth that the soul is being reflected in us, we feel free to have the individual soul identified with the cosmic soul. The colours of the individual souls are chiefly three, black ,red and white. Black is the *thamasik* nature of slothfulness. Because it is dark the reflection of the soul is dull. In the *rajasik* red nature of dynamism, the reflected image of the soul will be bright and active. In the *sathvik* nature of white transparency, the reflected image of the soul will be serene, divine and almost like the d cosmic soul.

Swami Vivekananda asks us all to shed the dull inertia or laziness so that we can find the hidden divinity better and bright. In the month of December 1892, Swami Vivekananda stood like a majestic lion on the lone rock at the southern most tip of India amidst the three seas, shouting at everyone to wake up and be dynamic: " Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached". When the individuals begin to be dynamic, they shine better reflecting the cosmic soul with *rajasik*

dynamism. He himself like a whirl wind, worked hard very actively bringing forth dynamic divinity everywhere. Finally at the parliament of religions, the cosmic soul, with dynamic vibration, projected itself the universal brotherhood, thereby, asserting the cosmic '*vasudhaika kutumbakam*'. The cosmic mother triggered off the cosmic work embracing all others in dynamic brotherhood.

Swami Vivekananda passed through the stage of attachment to the family initially. Later he became a patriotic monk with abundant humanism, thereby, shedding all attachment to the kith and kin. Even the enlightened attachment to the motherland and mankind is to be transcended. When he was at Kashmir, he happened to visit the temple of Goddess Ksheer Bhavani. He found the temple there in ruins. Foreigners damaged the temple in many places. The sight of the temple in such condition moved Swami Vivekananda's heart. He wept profusely and said to the divine mother, " Ma, had I been present when the damage was done to the temple, I would have protected you". Immediately he heard the divine voice of mother Ksheer Bhavani telling him, "Naren, who protects whom? Do you protect me? Or Do I protect you?". It was a great revelation of truth to the swamiji. From *rajasik* dynamism, he moved on since then, to a

state of serene and *sathvik* spectatorship. He was no more agitated. Nor did he find himself to be in the shackles of iron or gold. He is now free from all attachments. He has now begun to feel free always though engaged in many an activity. A few years rolled by, and on 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1902, the freedom-feeling person was completely freed from the body provided by the nature with its five elements.

When a person goes beyond the gunas or traits, " *Thamas, Rajas and Sathva*", one feels free and that is *jeevanmukthi*. Such person who feels free totally becomes free when the body drops on its own. That state of total freedom is *videhamukthi*. The goal of life is to feel free always and finally to be free from every bondage.

Sri Rama in the Ramayana is symbolic of the cosmic soul - *Paramatma*. Sitadevi is the individual soul - *Jivatma*. She is in the Lanka of *Tamas* (Kumbhakarna), *Rajas* (Ravana) and *Sathva* (Vibhishana). Kumbhakarna and Ravana were killed. Vibhishana released her and took her to Rama. She attained *jeevanmukthi* thereby- (feeling free). Soon, she entered into the fire and purified herself to attain *videhamukthi* as well. Sita and Rama are **one** with each other.

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# VIVEKANANDA ON COSMOLOGY - A MULTIPLE UNIVERSE PERSPECTIVE

Compiled by  
Dr.K.M.Rao Ph.D.,

There are two worlds, the microcosm and the macrocosm- the internal and the external. We get truth from both of these by means of experience. The truth gathered from internal experience is psychology, metaphysics and religion; from external experience, the physical sciences. Now a perfect truth should be in harmony with experiences in both these worlds. The microcosm must bear testimony to the macrocosm, and the macrocosm to the microcosm; physical truth must have its counterpart in the internal world, and the internal world must have its verification outside. Yet, as a rule, we find that many of these truths are in conflict. The modern European nations are very strong in their research of external physical knowledge. On the other hand... the orientals... are very strong in their researches of the internal... Real truth in any field of knowledge will not contradict itself; the truths internal are in harmony with truths external.

We all know the theories of the cosmos according to the modern astronomers and physicists... and how woefully they undermine the theology of Europe, how these scientific discoveries that are made act as a



bomb thrown at its stronghold; and we know how theologians have in all times attempted to put down these researches.

I want here to go over the psychological ideas of the orientals about cosmology and all that pertains to it, and you will find how wonderfully they are in accordance with the latest discoveries of modern science; and where there is disharmony, you will find that it is modern science which lacks and not they. We all use the

word nature. The old sankhya philosophers called it by two different names, prakriti, which is very much the same as the word nature, and the more scientific name, Avyakta, undifferentiated, from which everything proceeds, such as atoms, molecules, and forces, mind, thought intelligence. It is startling to find that the philosophers and metaphysicians of India stated ages ago that mind is material. What are our present materialists trying to do, but to show that mind is as much a product of nature as the body? And so is thought, and, we shall find by and by intelligence also: all issue from that nature which is called 'Avyakta' the

not the brains to understand them themselves. A silly man reads three letters of Sanskrit and translates a whole book. They translate the elements as air, fire and so on; if they would go to the commentators, they would find they do not mean air or anything of the sort.

The Akasha acted upon by the repeated blows of prana, produces vayu or vibrations. This vayu vibrates, and the vibrations growing more and more rapid result in friction giving rise to heat, tejas. Then this heat ends in liquefaction, and then it condensed into gross matter; and it goes back in exactly the reverse way. The solid will be liquefied and will then be converted into a mass of heat, and that will slowly get back into motion; that motion will stop, and this Aalpa will be destroyed. Then again it will come back and again dissolve into ether. Prana cannot work alone without the help of akasha. All that we know in the form of motion, vibration or thought is a modification of the prana, and everything that we know in the shape of matter, either as form or as resistance, is a modification of the Akasha. The prana can not live alone or act without a medium; when it is pure prana, it has the Akasha itself live in, and when it changes into forces of nature, say gravitation, or centrifugal force, it must have matter. You have never seen force without matter or matter without force; what we call force and matter are simply the gross manifestations of these same things, which, when superfine, are called prana and Akasha prana you call in English life, the vital force; but you must not restrict it to the life of man at the same time you must not identify it with spirit, Atman. So this goes on. Creation cannot have either a beginning or an end; it is an eternal on-going.

... All gross things are the results of fine ones. Everything that is gross is composed of fine things which they call the Tanmatras, the fine particles. I smell a flower. To smell, something must come in contact with my nose; the flower

is there, but I do not see it move towards me. That which comes from the flower and in contact with my nose is called the Tanmatra, fine molecules of that flower. So with heat, light and everything. These Tanmatras can again be subdivided into atoms. It is sufficient for our purpose to know that everything gross is composed of things that are very, very fine we first get the gross elements which we feel externally, and then come the fine elements with which the nose, eyes and ears come in contact. The eyes are only a secondary instrument, not the organ of vision. The organ of vision is the nerve-centre in the brain. Likewise the nose is an instrument, and there is an organ behind it. The senses are simply the external instruments. It may be said that these different organs, Indriyas, as they are called Sanskrit, are the real seats of perception.

It is necessary for the mind to be joined to an organ to perceive. There is a different organ for each different instrument. What are the organs made of? We see that the instruments- eyes, nose and ears- are made of gross materials. The organs are also made of matter. Just as the body is composed of gross materials, and manufactures prana into different gross forces, so the organs are composed of the fine elements, Akasha, Vayu, Tajas etc., and manufactures prana into finer forces of perception. The organs, the prana functions, the mind and the Buddhi combined, are called the finer body of man- the linga or sukshma sharira. The linga sharira has a real form because everything material must have a form.

The mind is called the manas, the chitta in vritti or vibrating, the unsettled state. If you throw a stone in a lake, first there will be vibration and then resistance. For moment the water will vibrate and then it will react on the stone. So when any impression comes on the chitta, it first vibrates a little. That is called the manas. The mind carries the impression

undifferentiated. The sankhyas define it as the 'equilibrium' of three forces, one of which is called sattva, another Rajas and the third tamas. Tamas, the lower force, is that of attraction: a little higher is rajas, that of repulsion: and the highest is the balance of these two sattva: so that when these two forces, attraction and repulsion are held in perfect control by the sattva there is no creation, on movement in the world. As soon as this equilibrium is lost, the balance is disturbed and one of these forces gets stronger than the other, motion sets in and creation begins. This state of things goes on cyclically, periodically. That is to say, there is a period of disturbance of the balance, when force begin to combine and recombine, and things project outwards. At the same time, everything has a tendency to go back to the primal state of equilibrium, and the time comes when the total annihilation of all manifestation is reached. Again, after a period, the whole thing is disturbed, projected outwards, and again it slowly goes down-like waves. Some of these philosophers hold that the whole universe Quiets down for a period. Others hold that this Quieting down applies only to systems; that is to say, that while our system here, this solar system, will Quiet down and go back into the undifferentiated state, millions of other systems will go the other way and will project outwards. I should rather favour the second opinion, that this Quieting down is not simultaneous all over the multiple universes, and that in different galaxies and nebulae different things go on endlessly. But the principle remains the same, that all we see—that is, nature herself—is progressing in successive rises and falls. The one stage, falling down, going back to balance, the perfect equilibrium is called pralaya, the end of a cycle. the projection and the pralaya of universes have been compared by theistical writers in India to the out breathing and inbreathing of God; God, as it were, breathes out the universe, and it comes into him again.

When it Quiets down, what becomes of the universe? It exists, only in finer forms, in the form of cause, as it is called in the sankhya philosophy. Philosophy. It does not get rid of causation, time and space; they are there, only it comes to very fine and minute forms. Supposing that this whole universe begins to shrink, till every one of us becomes just a little molecule, we should not feel the change at all, because everything relating to us would be shrinking at the same time. The whole thing goes down and again projects out, the cause brings out the effect and so it goes on.

What we call matter in modern times was called by the ancient psychologists as Bhutas—the external elements. There is one element which, according to them, is eternal; every other element is produced out of this one. It is called Akasha. It is some what similar to the idea of ether of the moderns, though not exactly similar. Along with this element, there is the primal energy called prana. Prana and akasha combine and recombine and form the elements out of them. Then at end of the kalpa everything subsides, and goes back to Akasha and prana. There is in the Rig-Veda, the oldest human writing in existence a beautiful passage describing creation, and it is most poetical—"when there was neither aught nor naught, when darkness was rolling over darkness, what existed?" and the answer is given, "it then existed without vibration". This prana existed then, but there was no motion into; Anidavatam means "existed without vibration". Vibration had stopped. Then when the kalpa begins, after an immense interval, the Anidavatam (unvibrating atom) commences to vibrate, and blow after blow is given by prana to Akasha. The atoms become condensed and as they are condensed different elements are formed. We generally find these things are very curiously translated; people do not go the philosophers or the commentators for their translation, and have

farther in, and presents it to the determinative faculty, Buddhi, which reacts. Behind Buddhi is Ahamkara, egoism, the self-consciousness which says "I am". Behind Ahamkara is Mahat, intelligence, the highest form of nature's existence. Each one is the effect of the succeeding one. Behind intelligence is the self of man, purusha, the atman, the pure, perfect, who alone is the seer, and for whom is all this change.

Why does nature do all this? Nature is undergoing all these changes for the development of the soul; all this creation is for


the benefit of the soul, so that it may be free. This immense book which we call the universe is stretched out before man so that he may read; and he discovers eventually that he is an omniscient and omnipotent being

A whole of the universe is built upon the same plan as a part of it; so just as I have a mind, there is a cosmic mind. As in the individual, so in the universal. There is the universal gross body; behind that a universal fine body; behind that, a universal mind; behind that a universal egoism or consciousness; and behind that a universal intelligence. And all this is in nature, the manifestation of nature, not outside it.

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## RELEVANCE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TODAY

P.Kanaga Sabapathi

**A**s we are celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the great monk, the question arises: What is the relevance of Swami Vivekananda today? India has travelled a long way since the nineteenth century. What we see today is totally different from what was there during those times. India has changed politically, economically and socially over these years. There have been changes at the religious and spiritual levels. Lots of changes have been happening across the world.



in future. The way that India has been marching over the years, when the rich countries are beset with difficulties, is forcing them to look at India. Reputed academic institutions have started turning towards India to learn from her functioning models. India's stock as a nation has been rising globally, in spite of problems at the domestic level. So in the changed circumstances, what is the need for the teachings of Swami Vivekananda?

A new global order is emerging now. The richer west that Swamiji witnessed 120 years back is fast losing its lustre during the recent periods. Both the western economic ideologies stand discredited. Their social theories, management approaches and even their life styles are being seriously questioned. They are no longer the providers of ideas and approaches to the rest of the world.

India is fast emerging as a dominant force in the global economy. International predictions repeatedly point out India reaching higher positions in the international economic arena

Swamiji's times (1863-1902) were very difficult for the country. Under the British rule, India was in her worst phase in economic history. Famines had become frequent. Criminal assaults on the functioning systems and economic drains soon after commencement of Crown administration had already made India poor. The economy was in a very bad shape and the native systems were under destruction. Majority of the people were living without hope. It was during those difficult times that Swamiji foresaw a great future for India.

Swamiji was not an ordinary monk. He was a

true seer and one of the most inspiring personalities of our times. He was different in many ways. The mission of his life was not his personal salvation; but the betterment of the lives of all. Serving others, and the less privileged in particular, was more important to him. He did not confine himself to religion and spirituality, though the core of his message revolved around them. He discussed passionately about the need for economic development, improvement of the lives of the weaker sections, industrialization, social equality, women education and youth power. In all these matters he was ahead of his times. He was a patriotic monk for whom the nation was more important than anything else. He wanted India to regain her lost glory and emerge as the *Jagat Guru*.

India today has tremendous opportunities before her. As a nation, we have enormous strengths. We have strong fundamentals. India is blessed with plenty of resources. Not many countries in the world could boast of vast lands, huge rivers, varieties of flora and fauna and plenty of sunlight. We have the demographic dividend, with one sixth of the humanity as our population. Besides, we have the largest number of youth in the world today. Our people are one of the most hardworking, enterprising, simple living, family oriented and peace loving citizens in the world.

Close knit families are our critical assets. They are the reason for bringing up responsible citizens, maintaining peace in the society, saving enormous amounts of money for the nation and creating new ventures. Relationship based and integrated societies are the products of our system. We have huge social capital that helps us to maintain harmony and support economic growth. Indian families and communities possess the

capacity to function on their own, without depending on the state. The story of independent India reveals that much of her progress has been mostly on her own, many times in spite of the government.

Indian culture is unique. It is inclusive and nurtures diversity. It treats every being, every object, as divine. Its world view is comprehensive. The age old culture of our nation remains as the bedrock of our lives and continues to guide our destiny, without many of us being aware of it. In an age filled with confusions and conflicts around the world, the time tested Indian culture remains the beacon light.

But unfortunately there are forces that hinder the nation's march towards realizing her full potential. Much of the educated sections are unaware of the real situation. The education system introduced by the British continues to influence our thinking, even after more than sixty five years of independence. There is very little understanding about our history and the contemporary functioning. As a result we continue to ignore our strengths, and look elsewhere for solutions to every one of our problems. We fail to understand that we have had a glorious past that could provide us a few useful tips. India remained a global power economically, culturally and intellectually continuously for several centuries. On the one side she was very prosperous and highly productive, yet on the other side she was deeply spiritual. No other nation has such a record in the history of mankind.

We also fail to observe the contemporary functioning systems. The economic progress, social cohesiveness and family atmosphere that we see here are something special to us. Much of the world is finding it difficult to keep their families intact and societies harmonious.



The native systems are helping our nation to move forward, even when the intellectual and ruling classes continue to fail us. But we refuse to see the realities that exist in front of us. It is precisely this attitude that is hindering the progress of our nation.

So what we need is a true understanding of our nation. We need to understand her from true perspectives. Educated sections of our country are the most crucial group of people, as it is they who represent India and interpret her functioning to others. The performing sections, which constitute the majority in the country, remain silent as they do not have a voice in the public discourse. Hence the educated sections have a critical role to play.

The present time is very important. While the west is losing its way, India is emerging big on her own. And it is here that we need to learn from Swami Vivekananda, his life, his messages and his teachings. They are more relevant now, than at any other time in contemporary history. We need to know about our backgrounds, our fundamentals and our weaknesses. There is no better person for this than Swami Vivekananda. He inspired the freedom movement more than anyone else. Mahatma Gandhi, Subash Chandra Bose, Rabindranath Tagore and several thousands of people were influenced by him. Their love for our motherland increased manifold after studying him. He was largely responsible for creating the patriotic fervor that motivated many people to fight for the country.

Swamiji was a multi-faceted personality. He singlehandedly demonstrated to the world the need for recognizing the diverse religious beliefs for the progress of mankind and changed the whole course of the dialogue towards India at the international level. He was a great leader and an organization builder.

The institutions founded by him are the standing testimonies. His priority was to improve the living conditions of the ordinary masses, the underprivileged and the weaker sections of the society.

He was an icon for the people around the country and a true representative of the great Indian tradition. He continues to remain so, particularly to the youth, even after 120 years. More than anyone else in the contemporary history of India, every Indian identifies himself/herself with Swamiji and his teachings. This is irrespective of age, position and background. His is the most respected public face in India today. He inspires each one through his words, deeds and personality. There have been thousands of service organizations/ institutions promoted in different corners of the country during the past one hundred years, inspired by him. Many of them are promoted by the ordinary people and they are all silently engaged in different service activities, and many millions have benefited out of them.

Swamiji continues to remain the master motivator for the largest number of people in our country. It is especially in this connection, that we need to study him deeply during his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary. We have to discuss his ideas, thoughts and mission. His life, speeches and writings teach us many valuable lessons. Each of us must make the maximum contribution to make India the most powerful nation on earth. We have to dedicate ourselves for this, as there are negative forces operating everywhere. We need to put all our energies together for this purpose. And Swami Vivekananda is the best role model for all of us in this noble mission.