

# Bhavan Australia

*Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides – Rigveda 1-89-i*

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## Yoga for Harmony & Peace

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Life ... Literature ... Culture

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# Words of Eternal Wisdom



Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.

*-Mahatma Gandhi*

It is very important to generate a good attitude, a good heart, as much as possible. From this, happiness in both the short term and the long term for both yourself and others will come.

*-His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

The moment I have realized God sitting in the temple of every human body, the moment I stand in reverence before every human being and see God in him - that moment I am free from bondage, everything that binds vanishes, and I am free.

*-Swami Vivekananda*

To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one's family, to bring peace to

all, one must first discipline and control one's own mind. If a man can control his mind he can find the way to Enlightenment, and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him.

*-Buddha*

It is vital to have a resilient spirit so that without complaints or feelings of disaffection, one is able to always look on the bright side of a situation and find in it a source of hope and happiness. Such wisdom makes it possible to lead a thoroughly fulfilled life.

*-Dr Daisaku Ikeda*

Anybody can become angry - that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.

*-Aristotle*

# Yoga



Maharishi Patanjali is traditionally considered to be the founder of the Yoga system. The word Yoga means 'union', union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul and is used in this sense in the Vedanta. Bhagavad Gita defines Yoga as the "state than which there is nothing higher or worth realizing. That state free from all pain and misery is Yoga". According to Patanjali, Yoga does not mean union but spiritual effort to attain perfection through the control of the body, senses and mind.

Yoga is intimately allied to Sankhya. Yoga means spiritual action and Sankhya means knowledge. Sankhya is theory; Yoga is practice. Sankhya and Yoga may be treated as the theoretical and practical sides of the same system. Yoga shows the practical path by following which one may

attain Viveka-jnana. It accepts the three pramanas — perception, inference and testimony of Sankhya. It believes in God as the highest self, distinct from other selves. Hence it is sometimes referred to as 'Seshwara Sankhya'.

The Yoga-sutra is divided into four parts. The first is called Samadhi-pada which deals with the nature and aims of concentration. The second, Sadhana-pada, explains the means to realize this end. The third, Vibhuti-pada, deals with the super human powers which can be acquired through Yoga. The fourth, Kaivalya-pada, describes the nature of liberation and the reality of the transcendental self.

Patanjali Yoga is also called Raja Yoga. Yoga is defined by it as cessation of the modifications of Chitta. This cessation is through meditation or concentration. Chitta means the three internal organs of Sankhya-Buddhi or intellect, Ahankara or ego, and manas or mind. Chitta is the same as anthahkarana. It is mahat or buddhi which includes Ahankara and manas. Chitta is the first evolute of

Prakriti and has the predominance of Satva. It has the power to reflect purusha and therefore appears conscious.

When it gets related to any object, it assumes the 'form' of that object. This form is called Vritti or modification. The light of consciousness which comes from the Purusha which illuminates this 'form' is called Jnana. Purusha is essentially pure consciousness and is free from the limitations of Prakriti. Chitta, therefore, is the physical medium for the manifestation of the spirit'

*-Surendralal G. Mehta*

*President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Worldwide*

*Picture Credit: www.fredsullivan.com*

# Yoga: Its Origin, History and Development

Yoga is also commonly understood as a therapy or exercise system for health and fitness. While physical and mental health is a natural consequence of yoga, the goal of yoga is more far-reaching. “Yoga is about harmonizing oneself with the universe. It is the technology of aligning individual geometry with the cosmic, to achieve the highest level of perception and harmony.” Yoga is reaching equanimity of mind towards every aspect of life as Lord Krishna explains in Bhagwad Gita “samtavam yoga uchyate”.

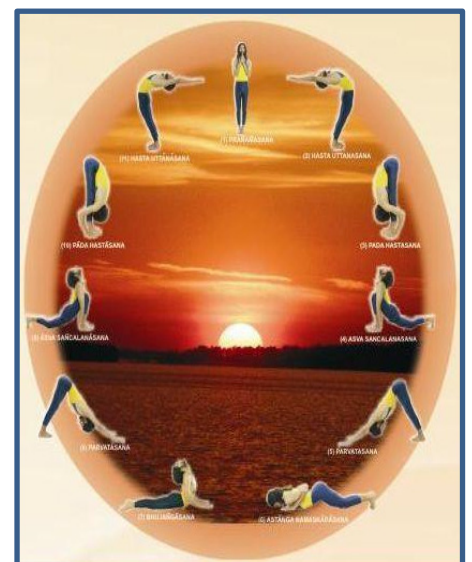


Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. The word ‘Yoga’ is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘Yuj’, meaning ‘to join’ or ‘to yoke’ or ‘to unite’. As per Yogic scriptures the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness, indicating a perfect harmony between the mind and body, Man & Nature. This concept of Yoga is parallels with the modern scientists’ concept that everything in the universe is just a manifestation of the same quantum firmament.

The practice of Yoga is believed to have started with the very dawn of civilization. The science of yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religions or belief systems were born. In the yogic lore, Shiva is seen as the first yogi or Adiyogi, and the first Guru or Adi Guru. Several Thousand years ago, on the banks of the lake Kantisarovar in the Himalayas, Adiyogi poured his profound knowledge into the legendary Saptarishis or “seven sages”. The sages carried this powerful yogic science to different parts of the world, including Asia, the Middle East, Northern Africa and South America. Interestingly, modern scholars have noted and marvelled at the close parallels found between ancient cultures across the globe. However, it was in India that the yogic system found its fullest expression. Agastya, the Saptarishis who travelled across the Indian subcontinent, crafted this culture around a core yogic way of life.

The Number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Saraswati valley civilization with Yogic motives and figures performing Yoga Sadhana suggest the presence of Yoga in ancient India. The phallic symbols, seals of idols of mother Goddess are suggestive of Tantra Yoga. Presence of Yoga is available in folk traditions, Indus valley civilization, Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain traditions, Darshanas, epics of Mahabharat and Ramayana, theistic traditions of Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Tantric traditions.

Though Yoga was being practiced in the pre-Vedic period, the great Sage Maharshi Patanjali systematized and codified the then existing practices of Yoga, its meaning and its related knowledge through his Yoga Sutras. After Patanjali, many Sages and Yoga Masters contributed greatly for the preservation and development of the field through their well-documented practices and



literature.

Historical evidences of the existence of Yoga were seen in the pre-Vedic period (2700 B.C.), and thereafter till Patanjali's period. The main sources, from which we get the information about Yoga practices and the related literature during this period, are available in Vedas (4), Upanishads(108), Smritis, teachings of Buddhism, Jainism, Panini, Epics (2), Puranas (18) etc.

Now in the contemporary times, everybody has conviction about yoga practices towards the preservation, maintenance and promotion of health. Yoga has spread all over the world by the teachings of great personalities like Swami Shivananda, Shri T. Krishnamacharya, Swami Kuvalayananda, Shri Yogendara, Swami Rama, Sri Aurobindo, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Acharya Rajanish, Pattabhijois, BKS. Iyengar, Swami Satyananda Sarasvati and the like.

For many, the practice of yoga is restricted to Hatha Yoga and Asanas (postures). However, among the Yoga Sutras, just three sutras are dedicated to asanas. Fundamentally, hatha yoga is a preparatory process so that the body can sustain higher levels of energy. The process begins with the body, then the breath, the mind, and the inner self. Yoga does not adhere to any particular religion, belief system or community; it has always been approached as a technology for inner wellbeing. Anyone who practices yoga with involvement can reap its benefits, irrespective of one's faith, ethnicity or culture.

### **The Fundamentals of Yoga Sadhana**

Yoga works on the level of one's body, mind, emotion and energy. This has given rise to four broad classifications of Yoga: karma yoga, where we utilize the body; bhakti yoga, where we utilize the emotions; gyana yoga, where we utilize the mind and intellect; and kriya yoga, where we utilize the energy.

Each system of Yoga we practice would fall within the gamut of one or more of these categories. Every individual is a unique combination of these four factors. "All the ancient commentaries on Yoga have stressed that it is essential to work under the direction of a Guru." The reason being that only a Guru can mix the appropriate combination of the four fundamental paths, as is necessary for each seeker. Yoga Education: Traditionally, Yoga Education was imparted by knowledgeable, experienced, and wise persons in the families (comparable with the education imparted in convents in the west) and then by the Seers (Rishis/Munis/Acharyas) in Ashramas (compared with monasteries). Yoga Education, on the other hand, aims at taking care of the individual, the 'Being'. It is presumed that a good, balanced, integrated, truthful, clean, transparent person will be more useful to oneself, family, society, nation, nature and humanity at large. Yoga education is 'Being oriented'. Details of working with 'being oriented' aspect have been outlined in various living traditions and texts and the method contributing to this important field is known as 'Yoga'.

Present days, Yoga Education is being imparted by many eminent Yoga Institutions, Yoga Colleges, Yoga Universities, Yoga Departments in the Universities, Naturopathy colleges and Private trusts & societies. Many Yoga Clinics, Yoga Therapy and Training Centers, Preventive Health Care Units of Yoga, Yoga Research Centers etc. have been established in Hospitals, Dispensaries, Medical Institutions and Therapeutical setups. Different social customs and rituals in India, the land of Yoga, reflect a love for ecological balance, tolerance towards other systems of thought and a compassionate outlook towards all creations. Yoga Sadhana of all hues and colours is considered panacea for a meaningful life and living. Its orientation to a comprehensive health, both individual and social, makes it a worthy practice for the people of all religions, races and nationalities.

*Inspiration: www.mea.gov.in, Ministry of External Affairs, Article by Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, the Director of Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga*

Gambhir Watts OAM



President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia



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# International Day of Yoga

21 June



Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit and means to join or to unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness. Today it is practiced in various forms around the world and continues to grow in popularity. Recognizing its universal appeal, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131. The International Day of Yoga aims to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

## Background

The United Nations declared the first international yoga day on June 21 2015. In 2017 this annual event continues on Sunday June 18th as we celebrate the second International Day of Yoga to raise worldwide awareness of the many benefits of yoga. Yoga is an ancient, holistic approach to health and wellbeing that promotes harmony between individuals, their community, their natural environment and the wider world.

The draft resolution establishing the International Day of Yoga was proposed by India

and endorsed by a record 175 member states. The proposal was first introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address during the opening of the 69th session of the General Assembly, in which he said: "Yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action ... a holistic approach [that] is valuable to our health and our well-being. Yoga is not just about exercise; it is a way to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature."

The resolution notes "the importance of individuals and populations making healthier choices and following lifestyle patterns that foster good health." In this regard, the World Health Organization has also urged its member states to help their citizens reduce physical inactivity, which is among the top ten leading causes of death worldwide, and a key risk factor for non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes.

But yoga is more than a physical activity. In the words of one of its most famous practitioners,

the late B. K. S. Iyengar, “Yoga cultivates the ways of maintaining a balanced attitude in day-to-day life and endows skill in the performance of one’s actions.”

### **Yoga for Health**

The theme for the 2017 celebration, organized by

the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, is ‘Yoga for Health.’ The theme highlights the fact that yoga can contribute in a holistic way to achieving an equilibrium between mind and body. The organizers believe that this approach to health and wellbeing can make a direct and



useful contribution to humankind’s quest to achieve sustainable development and move towards lifestyles that are in harmony with nature. The asanas of yoga can increase your flexibility, strengthen and tone muscles, balance hormones, cleanse and flush the internal systems of your body, calm your mind and reduce stress.

### **Ancient Yogis**

But yoga is not solely about exercise. Ancient yogis understood yoga as a complete lifestyle and world view that can help you to discover who you are as well as your relationship to the world and nature and as such can provide valuable insights into addressing environmental challenges and promoting peace in the individual,

peace in communities and peace in the world. The sages of India understood that the outer can change by changing the inner, that the nature of our consciousness therefore affects the nature of our environment.

Whether you are a seasoned yoga practitioner or are brand new to the practice, come along to

Yoga Day Festival to experience the many gifts of yoga with friends, family and community.

### **International Day of Yoga Events**

#### **Yoga Session with Yoga Masters**

Tuesday, 20 June 2017, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the United Nations North Lawn

The event will feature Swami Sivadasananda of Sivananda Yoga Retreat House, Austria; Swami Chidanand Saraswati and Sadhvi Bhagwati Saraswati of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, India.

#### **Conversation with Yoga Masters on Yoga for Health**

Wednesday, 21 June 2017, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., ECOSOC chamber, United Nations

#### **Solstice in Times Square: Mind Over Madness Yoga**

Wednesday, 21 June 2017

Each year, thousands of yogis from around the world travel to Times Square to celebrate the Summer Solstice with free yoga classes in the heart of New York City.

### **Australia**

With a view to spread awareness regarding the benefits of practicing Yoga to one and all, the 3rd International Day of Yoga will be celebrated by the Consulate General of India, Sydney in association with various organisations in the following dates and venues in New South Wales and South Australia. A 45 minutes Yoga masterclass, based on Yoga protocol prepared by Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India specially for the event will be conducted during the events.

#### **Indian Cultural Centre, CGI Sydney**

17th June 2017

#### **Meeting Hall, Adelaide**

21st June 2017

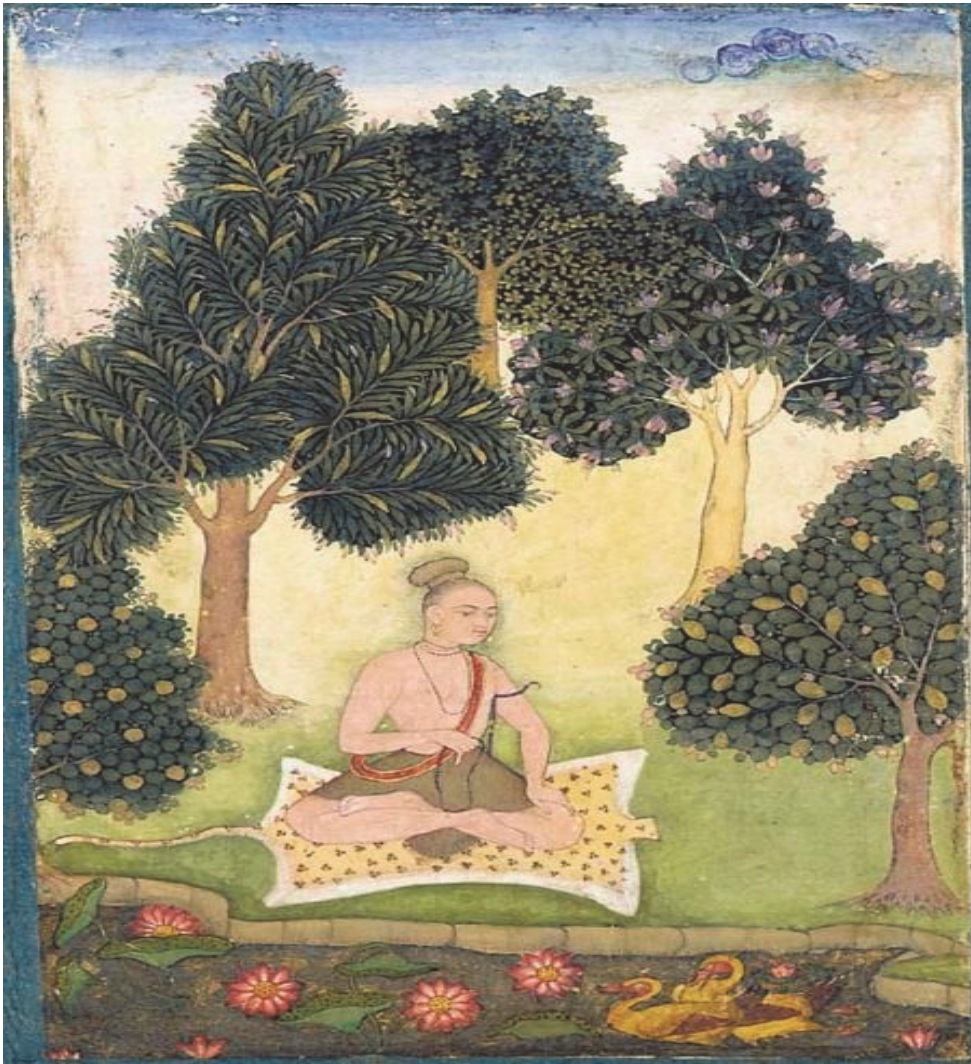
#### **Wollongong Town Hall, Wollongong**

25th June 2017

Source: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org), [www.asmy.org.au](http://www.asmy.org.au), [www.cgisydney.org](http://www.cgisydney.org)



# A Brief History of Yoga: From Ancient Hindu Scriptures to the Modern, Westernized Practice



hundreds of different meanings and practices throughout the years. What you and I might assume is “yoga” is probably not even closely related to what yoga was thousands of years ago.

“Nearly all of our popular assumptions about yoga theory date from the past 150 years, and very few modern-day practices date from before the 12th century,” David Gordon White, a professor of religious studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, writes in his paper, *Yoga, Brief History of an Idea*. “This is not the first time that people have ‘reinvented’ yoga in their own image.”

We can try to delineate the history of yoga — at least a brief one. But a practice so rich in religious, spiritual, and physical meaning would

Yoga: the trendy practice that your hippie, hipster, or fitness friends rave about. Garbed in yoga pants and carrying colorful mats bought off Amazon, the modern-day “yogi” attends one-hour classes that focus on physical stretching, movement, and detoxing from their busy modern lives. We hear a lot about the benefits of yoga, from its ability to decrease stress, chronic pain, as well as the risk for chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

What we don’t hear about as often, however, is the history of yoga. Most people are aware of its Indian spiritual and religious roots, but those tend to get washed out by the manufactured, commodified versions of yoga we see today. Perhaps that’s because research on yoga’s origins is hard to find, and its history is a complicated, lengthy narrative. In fact, yoga is incredibly complex — even the word “yoga” has taken on

take years or even a lifetime to fully understand, grasp, and manifest.

## **Ancient [3300-1500 BCE]**

Historians aren’t entirely sure when the notion or practice of yoga first appeared, and it’s often left to debate. The term “yoga,” however, is found in ancient India’s earliest known scripts — the Vedas. They date from the Vedic period, which began in 1500 BCE. Composed in Vedic Sanskrit, the Vedas are the oldest writings of Hinduism and Sanskrit literature.

White notes in his paper that the term “yoga” in the Vedas actually refers to a yoke, as in the yoke over animals — and at times a chariot in the midst of battle. Interestingly, in some of these very early writings, yoga was used to describe a warrior dying and transcending into heaven,



meditation and a religious practice than it was exercise as we know today. But around the 5th century, it became more of an established core idea among Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains. First and foremost, these ancient versions of yoga were mostly spiritual practices, revolving around several core values.

The first value involved analyzing one's own perception and cognitive state, understanding the root of suffering and using meditation to solve it. The mind was to "transcend" bodily pain or suffering in order to reach a higher level of being. The second aimed to uplift or broaden

being carried by his chariot to reach the gods and higher powers of being.

During the Vedic period, Vedic priests who were ascetic — severely self-disciplined and avoidant of any forms of indulgence — conducted sacrifices, or yajna, in poses that some researchers believe are precursors to the yoga poses, or asanas, we experience now.

### **3rd century, BCE**

In the 3rd century BCE, references to the term "yoga" became more common in Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist writings. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the notion of yoga as a spiritual or meditative practice as we know now was referred to as Yogachara (Yogācāra). Yogachara involved eight steps of meditation that was known as "calmness" or "insight."

### **5th century, AD**

For a while, yoga was a loose notion, its meaning difficult to pin down. It was more of a notion of

consciousness, and the third involved using yoga as a path to transcendence. The fourth was using yoga to enter other bodies and act supernaturally — perhaps the strangest and most mystical one.

This is also where the difference between "yogi practice" and "yoga practice" is differentiated. Yoga practice, as described by White, "essentially denotes a program of mind-training and meditation issuing in the realization of enlightenment, liberation, or isolation from the world of suffering existence," at least in ancient terms. Yogi practice, meanwhile, lies more in the supernatural — i.e., when yogis are able to enter other bodies to expand their consciousness.

### **Medieval [500-1500 AD]**

During the medieval era, different schools of yoga emerged. Bhakti yoga is a spiritual pathway within Hinduism that appeared during this time,

a type of yoga that focused on living through love and devotion toward God.

Tantra was also a genre that arrived around the 5th century, exhibited in medieval Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu traditions. White notes that the Tantras, the medieval scriptures that discussed a new yoga ideology, outlined new goals for those practicing yoga: “No longer is the practitioner’s ultimate goal liberation from suffering existence, but rather self-deification: one becomes the deity that has been one’s object of meditation.”

Interestingly, Westerners today have often associated “tantra” with a sexual form of yoga, but it turns out they weren’t too far off. Some Tantric beliefs involved yogis having sexual relations with low-caste women whom they believed were yoginis, or women who embodied Tantric goddesses. Having sex with them could lead these yogis to a transcendent level of consciousness. Today, gurus who go about doing such things in their yoga or bikram classes aren’t exactly known for their moral or spiritual prowess.

Hatha yoga appeared in Buddhist texts around the 8th century, and it emerged from tantra. It’s known as the common “psychophysical yoga,” a combination of bodily postures, breathing, and meditation — possibly the closest to what we today associate with yoga. The postures in hatha yoga are called asanas. We know some of them now in their English terms — such as cat pose, camel pose, child’s pose, and warrior I pose.

### **Modern [1890s]**

So when did yoga become the regiment of health freaks? For thousands of years, the term “yoga” encompassed many things, most of them religious and/or spiritual. But in the mid-19th century, yoga came to the attention of Westerners, who at the time seemed intrigued by Indian culture. We can perhaps attribute yoga’s popularity in the West to Swami Vivekananda, a Hindu monk who toured Europe and the U.S. in the 1890s to spread knowledge about Hinduism among intellectuals.

Vivekananda was responsible for bringing the Yoga Sutras more into the light, as well. These were writings of Patanjali, comprised sometime around 400 AD to describe what he believed were the main yoga traditions of his time. The

Yoga Sutras focused mainly on removing all excess thought from the mind and focusing on a singular thing; but they were later incorporated more heavily than any other ancient yoga writings in modern, “corporate” yoga.

### **20th century**

Hatha yoga as a practice (what we’re most familiar with now) didn’t become a commonplace exercise in the U.S. until the 1930s and 40s, and finally reached a peak in the 60s, when Hindu spirituality became far more popular among young Americans. Numerous Indian teachers of yoga taught classes in the U.S., and in the 1980s it became even more popular due to the first health benefits being reported. This was the first time that yoga was seen as a practice with purely physical benefits, something that can improve your heart health and fitness, rather than bring you to a place of transcendence.

### **21st century**

The popularity of yoga in the U.S. has increased throughout the decades, rising from 4 million in 2001 to 20 million in 2011. Since then, plenty of scientific studies have found that yoga comes with a flurry of health benefits: It reduces high blood pressure, depression, chronic pain, and anxiety. It also improves cardiac function, muscle strength, and circulation.

Today, at least in the Western world, yoga is seen as another exercise class to take at the gym, something that will make your muscles sore for days afterward or at least de-stress you. But perhaps knowing at least a little bit about yoga’s ancient spiritual origins — something that has outlasted thousands of years — will help you glean something even more from it.

### **December 2014**

The United Nations General Assembly marked June 21 International Yoga Day, an annual celebration to incorporate yoga and meditation more into humanity all over the world. As the Dalai Lama notes: “If every 8-year-old in the world is taught meditation, we will eliminate violence from the world within one generation.”

*-Lecia Bushak*

*Source: [www.medicaldaily.com](http://www.medicaldaily.com)*

# Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3: Karma-yoga

Everyone must engage in some sort of activity in this material world. But actions can either bind one to this world or liberate one from it. By acting for the pleasure of the Supreme, without selfish motives, one can be liberated from karma

Chapter 3, Verse 1

Arjuna said: O Janardana, O Kesava, why do You urge me to engage in this ghastly warfare, if You think that intelligence is better than fruitive work?

Chapter 3, Verse 2

My intelligence is bewildered by Your equivocal instructions. Therefore, please tell me decisively what is most beneficial for me.

Chapter 3, Verse 3

The Blessed Lord said: O sinless Arjuna, I have already explained that there are two classes of men who realize the Self. Some are inclined to understand Him by empirical, philosophical speculation, and others are inclined to know Him by devotional work.

Chapter 3, Verse 4

Not by merely abstaining from work can one achieve freedom from reaction, nor by renunciation alone can one attain perfection.

Chapter 3, Verse 5

All men are forced to act helplessly according to the impulses born of the modes of material nature; therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment.

Chapter 3, Verse 6

One who restrains the senses and organs of action, but whose mind dwells on sense objects, certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender.

Chapter 3, Verse 7

On the other hand, he who controls the senses by the mind and engages his active organs in works of devotion, without attachment, is by far superior.

Chapter 3, Verse 8

Perform your prescribed duty, for action is better than inaction. A man cannot even maintain his physical body without work.

Chapter 3, Verse 9

Work done as a sacrifice for Visnu has to be performed, otherwise work binds one to this material world. Therefore, O son of Kunti, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain unattached and free from bondage.

Chapter 3, Verse 10

In the beginning of creation, the Lord of all creatures sent forth generations of men and demigods, along with sacrifices for Visnu, and blessed them by saying, Be thou happy by this yajna [sacrifice] because its performance will bestow upon you all desirable things.

Chapter 3, Verse 11

The demigods, being pleased by sacrifices, will also please you; thus nourishing one another, there will reign general prosperity for all.

Chapter 3, Verse 12

In charge of the various necessities of life, the demigods, being satisfied by the performance of yajna [sacrifice], supply all necessities to man. But he who enjoys these gifts, without offering them to the demigods in return, is certainly a thief.

Chapter 3, Verse 13

The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food which is offered first for sacrifice. Others, who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin.

Chapter 3, Verse 14

All living bodies subsist on food grains, which are produced from rain. Rains are produced by performance of yajna [sacrifice], and yajna is born of prescribed duties.

Chapter 3, Verse 15

Regulated activities are prescribed in the Vedas, and the Vedas are directly manifested from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently

the all-pervading Transcendence is eternally situated in acts of sacrifice.

Chapter 3, Verse 16

My dear Arjuna, a man who does not follow this prescribed Vedic system of sacrifice certainly leads a life of sin, for a person delighting only in the senses lives in vain.

Chapter 3, Verse 17

One who is, however, taking pleasure in the self, who is illumined in the self, who rejoices in and is satisfied with the self only, fully satiated—for him there is no duty.

Chapter 3, Verse 18

A self-realized man has no purpose to fulfill in the discharge of his prescribed duties, nor has he any reason not to perform such work. Nor has he any need to depend on any other living being.

Chapter 3, Verse 19

Therefore, without being attached to the fruits of activities, one should act as a matter of duty; for by working without attachment, one attains the Supreme.

Chapter 3, Verse 20

Even kings like Janaka and others attained the perfectional stage by performance of prescribed duties. Therefore, just for the sake of educating the people in general, you should perform your work.

Chapter 3, Verse 21

Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

Chapter 3, Verse 22

O son of Prtha, there is no work prescribed for Me within all the three planetary systems. Nor am I in want of anything, nor have I need to obtain anything—and yet I am engaged in work.

Chapter 3, Verse 23

For, if I did not engage in work, O Partha, certainly all men would follow My path.

Chapter 3, Verse 24

If I should cease to work, then all these worlds would be put to ruination. I would also be the

cause of creating unwanted population, and I would thereby destroy the peace of all sentient beings.

Chapter 3, Verse 25

As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, similarly the learned may also act, but without attachment, for the sake of leading people on the right path.

Chapter 3, Verse 26

Let not the wise disrupt the minds of the ignorant who are attached to fruitive action. They should not be encouraged to refrain from work, but to engage in work in the spirit of devotion.

Chapter 3, Verse 27

The bewildered spirit soul, under the influence of the three modes of material nature, thinks himself to be the doer of activities, which are in actuality carried out by nature.

Chapter 3, Verse 28

One who is in knowledge of the Absolute Truth, O mighty-armed, does not engage himself in the senses and sense gratification, knowing well the differences between work in devotion and work for fruitive results.

Chapter 3, Verse 29

Bewildered by the modes of material nature, the ignorant fully engage themselves in material activities and become attached. But the wise should not unsettle them, although these duties are inferior due to the performers' lack of knowledge.

Chapter 3, Verse 30

Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with mind intent on Me, and without desire for gain and free from egoism and lethargy, fight.

Chapter 3, Verse 31

One who executes his duties according to My injunctions and who follows this teaching faithfully, without envy, becomes free from the bondage of fruitive actions.

Chapter 3, Verse 32

But those who, out of envy, disregard these teachings and do not practice them regularly,

are to be considered bereft of all knowledge, befooled, and doomed to ignorance and bondage.

Chapter 3, Verse 33

Even a man of knowledge acts according to his own nature, for everyone follows his nature. What can repression accomplish?

Chapter 3, Verse 34

Attraction and repulsion for sense objects are felt by embodied beings, but one should not fall under the control of senses and sense objects because they are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.

Chapter 3, Verse 35

It is far better to discharge one's prescribed duties, even though they may be faulty, than another's duties. Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path is dangerous.

Chapter 3, Verse 36

Arjuna said: O descendant of Vrsni, by what is one impelled to sinful acts, even unwillingly, as if engaged by force?

Chapter 3, Verse 37

The Blessed Lord said: It is lust only, Arjuna, which is born of contact with the material modes of passion and later transformed into wrath, and which is the all-devouring, sinful enemy of this world.

Chapter 3, Verse 38

As fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror is covered by dust, or as the embryo is covered by the womb, similarly, the living entity is covered by different degrees of this lust.

Chapter 3, Verse 39

Thus, a man's pure consciousness is covered by his eternal enemy in the form of lust, which is never satisfied and which burns like fire.

Chapter 3, Verse 40

The senses, the mind and the intelligence are the sitting places of this lust, which veils the real knowledge of the living entity and bewilders him.

Chapter 3, Verse 41

Therefore, O Arjuna, best of the Bharatas, in the very beginning curb this great symbol of sin [lust] by regulating the senses, and slay this destroyer of knowledge and self-realization.

Chapter 3, Verse 42

The working senses are superior to dull matter;



mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence.

Chapter 3, Verse 43

Thus knowing oneself to be transcendental to material senses, mind and intelligence, one should control the lower self by the higher self and thus—by spiritual strength—conquer this insatiable enemy known as lust.

*Bhagawad Gita As It Is by Srila A C Bhaktivedanta Prabhada, Founder International Society for Krishna Consciousness*

## Kishoritai

Kishoritai was not merely a colossus among great musicians of our times. She was a prakhar Tapaswini, whose life was one unending sadhana to touch the param tatva through the medium of music. While doing so, her conscious and incredibly intense efforts were also to carry her shrotaas —listeners —with

Anwar Hussain, not to talk of outstanding instrumentalists like All Akbar, Nikhil Banerjee, Vilayat Khan, Asad Ali, Pannalal Ghosh and others. As a true musician (and not those who take to music only as a career to earn money and fame) moves on, his creativity and ability keep rising.



her and help them touch the divine. What generosity of heart! "I have never cared about what critics say. But I do care about my audience getting transformed into a reverie. For that, I have to sit alone and practise. Loneliness is an artiste's virtue," said Kishoritai. Believe me, there are tens of thousands of music lovers who have experienced this transformation.

My journey as a listener of Shastriya Sangeet began in my childhood, just before Kishoritai started singing in public. It was an age of giants. Faiyaz Khan, Amir Khan, Vilayat Hussain Khan, Kesarbai Kerkar, Mogubai Kurdikar, Mallikarjun Mansoor, Gangubai Hangal, Hirabai Barodekar, Roshanara Begum, Bade Ghulam Ali, the senior Dagar brothers, D. V. Paluskar, Kumar Gandharva, Bhimsen Joshi....There were lesser known giants like Anjanibai, Azambai, Nissar Hussain, Balakrishnabuva and

Likewise, a listener too increases his capacity to derive joy from music as he moves along. A time comes, when he ceases to be a mere shrota and becomes a rasika. I grew up listening to several of these giants to whom I am beholden for training my ears and mind to enjoy music. But I remained an ordinary listener who relished music. But it was Kishoritai, and Kishoritai alone, who raised me to the level of a rasika. Only after Kishoritai left us, did I realize that all these giants had contributed to training my ears to be able to receive and get lost in Kishoritai's divine music.

Perhaps this is a fantastic statement made in a highly emotionally surcharged state of mind as I am not yet reconciled to her sudden departure. But it is an absolute truth that if today I am able to label myself as a rasika, it is only due to Kishoritai. It was a miracle in my life because I

remain an unabashed ignoramus in the grammar and nuances of a raga. I did not want to dilute my joy by getting lost in the technicalities, mathematics and the shashtra of our Shastriya Sangeet and its gharanas.

The emotional content — bhava — is the only thing that matters to me. To me, a rasika is one to whom God grants the gift of the art of holding the hands of an artiste when he is performing and getting himself merged into the ocean of bliss.

Name of raga or tala, or distinguishing between alaap, antra, sargam, bol-taan, gamak nothing exists. Listener becomes one with the bhava of the singer and the raga and gets drowned. When that happens, you experience the touch of the Divine. And who can describe the ecstasy of that Adhyatmic Anubhooti? Only your wet eyes and two-four tears trickling down your cheeks. Audiences around you disappear. The hall, the stage even the artiste disappear. You are alone, drowned in the waves of paramanand engulfing you. Can even a Kabir or Tukaram or Baba Farid or Narasimh Mehta or a Rumi depict it in words, even though they had experienced it at a much higher level. Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna used to say that in a big fair, if the child holds the hand of his father, it may slip and the child may get lost. But if the father holds the child's hand,

it will not slip away.

The same way, if God in his mercy holds your hand you will not get lost in the sansaara, while remaining in it. To come to think of it, I believe, in my journey as a music lover, I held the hand of great maestros but my hands slipped somewhere on the way. But Kishoritai herself held my hand all the way granting me the privilege of sharing a tiny part of the param anand of her own Adhyatmic Anubhooti. The creative performing arts play a very vital role in the evolution of human society. They water our hearts and bring out healthy emotions.

Their fruits are love, compassion, brotherhood and the feelings of the oneness of all creations, which means the conviction that the Divine resides in every living human being and in every lifeless object and they in their turn live in the Divine. Unfortunately we are living in times when, as Shanta Gokhale writes in the Mumbai Mirror, we are told, "Don't do this, and don't do that 'in the name of (Bharatiya) Culture', in which 'music and dance' are seen as objects of contempt." What a pity! They forget the Veena of Saraswati and the flute of Krishna, not to talk of the tandava of Nataraja, Lord Shiva. Those who care more for the size, shape and colour of a fruit rather than the taste of it have criticized Kishoritai for not sticking to the





style and the mould of her Jaipur-Atrauli gharana.

But Kishoritai asserted that mankind had various castes, creeds, races and religions, but true Manav- Dharma was Manavta. Likewise, gharanas were many, but what was of real significance was Swara- bhasha. It was universal and could not be imprisoned in a gharana. Kishoritai's mother, Mogubai, having been trained under Alladiyakhan Saheb himself, was a maestro of the gharana. But understanding the mijaj of her daughter, she gave Kishori the freedom to learn from gurus of other gharanas like Agra, Gwalior and Bhendi Bazar.

She even engaged a tutor in Sugam Sangeet. Kishoritai, who worshipped Mogubai, had said that Maayi taught her discipline, rules, various pure forms of swara, co-ordination between taal and swara, etc. She said, "Some people say I do not sing like Maayi. But Maayi brought me halfway through the journey and then left me alone saying, 'Now you decide how to go forward. Find your own route'. That's exactly what I did, am doing and will continue to do. You have to walk and run on your own. The guru gives you strength to do that. If you don't, then you remain ORDINARY. Guru shows you the way. That's true.

But the shishya can search for different ways, isn't it?" Kishoritai searched for different paths, found many and scaled the highest peaks of excellence in all of them. Can one do it in a single lifetime? Impossible. But she did it because she was a Tapasvini, the fire of whose yagna burned high and bright ceaselessly. The burning desire to reach the core and the nucleus of a raga and understand and absorb its bhava, its mood, led Kishoritai to go on asking questions to ragas, their swaras and to herself. She said, "Unless you surrender to a raga, it will



not respond. If you keep on talking to a raga, then only will you be able to understand its original nature. Only then you would succeed in carrying your experience to rasikas." (Please note again that her ultimate mission was to share her divine experience with the audience.)

She explained that to experience the chaitanya swarup of a raga was the real inner anubhuti. But to get it, an artiste had to learn to forget his own self. It was a difficult task but without it you could not make the world happy. Kishoritai was a tigress. She was frank and fearless and would not hesitate to lash out at any one howsoever big and mighty if he dished out nonsense. Seeing how Mogubai had to travel third class and how she was ill-treated, young Kishori decided that if she would become a musician, she would

never allow anyone to exploit her. She once advised Shruti Sadolikar, "Get yourself educated. Otherwise the world would eat you up." She lived life on her own terms.

She learnt, practised, performed and taught in her own unique ways. She would not tolerate indiscipline of a member of an audience or of a sponsor-organisation. She would never allow anyone to disturb her concentration before the start of her concert. She was supremely unconcerned about the limelight and public relations exercises. No wonder, Girija Devi calls her 'The Queen of Hindustani Music'. Pretensions or hypocrisy did not dare to come anywhere near her. She had total co-ordination between her thoughts, words and deeds.

Ignorant persons dubbed her proud and arrogant and she did cross the line at times but it was because she would never ever compromise with the basics. She would not indulge in goody-goody meaningless talk. She had no time for it. She wrote: 'Being a housewife, I had to spare time for running efficiently my sansaar. Barring that, I was determined not to waste even a single moment. I even avoided travelling beyond what was necessary'. That is why she kept away from anything that 'dishonoured the sanctity of classical music'. You would not see her in the so-

called 'musical' T.V. shows. "Reality? Whose reality are we talking about? Little children are made to believe that vocal acrobatics is what music is about," she said to Yogesh Pawar in an interview adding, "These so-called mahagurus and judges are doing themselves and music a great disservice.... I get particularly upset when they call these competitions mahayudh and the likes.

Music is meant to create peace and not war I prefer majestic isolation to squandering a way of life and sadhana for money." You would not see her even in Mile Soor Mera tumhara or Desh Raga. I have learnt from Kishoritai how to set my priorities in life and stick to them. There are moments in our lives which suddenly astonish you, stun you and then put you on cloud nine. Many years back, I had written a letter to Kishoritai. I have now forgotten its contents but I remember making a mention of Mogubai. Till that time I had not met her personally. Weeks later, my telephone rang early in the morning (the mobile had not arrived yet). "Mee Kishori Amonkar," the voice said. How could I not recognize her voice? Oh my God! Kishoritai ringing me up!!

After recovering from that indescribable shock, I responded. She invited me and my wife to a private programme on her Maayi. Till today, I continue to relish that moment. Afterwards there were a few godsent occasions when I called on her at her residence, requesting her to perform for Bhavan or urging her to accept the Bhavan's Honorary Membership at the hands of Rashtrapati Shri Pranab Mukherjee during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations (75th Anniversary) of Bhavan. "Didi, please honour Bhavan by becoming its Honorary Member!" I urged her with doubt and foreboding, as I knew she did not care for awards and honours.

To my surprise she said, "Why not? Do I not know the good work Bhavan does for our culture? When I was young, during my travels, I would search for Bhavan's publications at railway bookstalls." She added a few more compliments to Bhavan. I gathered courage and requested her, "Didi may we publish your views in our opinion booklet?" She readily agreed. I hurriedly wrote down and read out to her. She approved. I

was overjoyed. When Bhavan published the English translation of Juthika Roy's autobiography, I requested Dhruba Ghosh to invite Kishoritai to release it at a function in which Juthika Roy would remain present.

She readily agreed. When I phoned to thank her, she said, "When I was young, I used to enjoy Juthika's bhajans." When Bhavan published the English translation of Govindrao Tembe's book, I thought requesting Didi to release it would be exploiting her kindness. In my interactions with her, I experienced only kindness, affection and consideration. She was grace incarnate. Every time I met her, I was struck with the simplicity of her lifestyle. Once I called on her early in the morning. She was performing puja in her special room. She came out with the puja thali in her hands. There was light emanating from behind her.

I felt as if Devi Maa herself was approaching me to bless me. That early morning when the heart-breaking news came, I was stunned into silence. Only a few weeks before, my wife and I had attended her concert at Nehru Centre. I suddenly realized that Kishoritai died as she had lived on her own terms. Silently she merged into the Divine without any suffering or pain or without troubling her dear ones. As I entered Ravindra Natya Mandir, there were grief-stricken faces all around. A battery of cameras were focused on Kishoritai's body.

Three girls in a remote corner of Pu.La. hall were silently weeping. A mahanubhav was giving interview to a TV reporter. Other big ones were awaiting their turn to hog the limelight. As I knelt before Didi's body, I went blank. Recovered, said a prayer, had my last glance and slowly went out. As I was returning home, a thought occurred. If I were in my early twenties and condemned to a lifetime of solitary confinement on an uninhabited Island and allowed to carry with me books on one subject and recordings of one musician, I would carry all the books on Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna and all the recordings of Kishoritai. Then what would have happened? Perhaps I would have lived a happier and more fruitful life.

- Homi Dastur, Bhavan's Executive Secretary

Source: Bhavan's Journal, 31 May 2017.

# Are we in the Dark Age of Money?



*“This is the latest whiz kid among cardiac stents. Nowhere else in the world you will have a stent like this. I have done 56 so far. No complications at all, affordable too.”*

This is how a cardiologist starts his live streaming video at the National interventional Council (NIC) conference in a five star hotel in Delhi where the conference organisers received several crores of rupees for the extravaganza. Paper advertisements and TV serials are old hat now medical advertisement and publicity look like kindergarten stuff. Now live streaming of views of a flamboyant cardiologist in a so called medical conference where normally science of medicine has to be debated, is the in-thing. Even the Chinese device maker whose stent is not passed by the ‘great’ FDA has been a part of the sponsors who may have paid crores. How much will this brand ambassador, the flamboyant cardiologist, get? Where is medical ethics? Where is our great MCI, the watch dog which is supposed to keep a watchful eye on medical ethics? What ethics does the MCI follow for itself in regulating medical education? What have we come to and what about the safety of

our rich patients who go to the hospitals? Today, a case can be made out for angioplasty, in any one, of any age who goes to the hospital, as coronary artery blocks (not coronary artery disease) can be demonstrated in anyone, including children. In this scenario, who is safe?

Pharma companies ‘plotted to destroy cancer drugs to drive up the price’. After purchasing five different cancer drugs from GlaxoSmith Kline, Aspen Pharmacare tried to sell them in Europe for up to 40 times their previous price was the headline in the Sunday Times (April 15th 2017). Busulfan is an old remedy in treating leukaemia. It used to sell for 5.20 pounds a couple of years ago and now sells at 65.20 in England. This is an old drug and nothing new or exciting about it! While bargaining for the rise in price of cancer drugs in Spain the company wanted to raise the price by 4000 times! When the government did not agree they threatened to stop cancer drug supply in that country. In fact, it would have been a great boon for the Spaniards to live without the dangers of these anti-cancer drugs.

The cover story of the Outlook magazine of April 17th 2017 is worse. We have been fighting a losing battle against vaccinations for decades. Outlook's headline was: 'When a Baby is a Business: Scared middle class buys unwanted vaccines, nearly fifteen of them, as big pharma - mostly foreign-help doctors to rake in the moolah of 30-300%!

The more dangerous trend is that IAP, Indian Academy of Paediatricians, an apex body to look after the child specialists in the country has now been found to be a partner in this venal business! On January 20, 2017 Dr. Vipin



Vashista, a former convener of IAP, was unceremoniously eased out of IAP for blowing the whistle on the big money nexus in the IAP! The Health Ministry, I am told, is in the know of things, but prefers to do nothing! Maybe the Ministry is afraid of the big wigs in the vaccine business! Are we ready to bring forth a full generation of Indians with a crippled immune system caused by so many useless and dangerous vaccines when they are born? Parents are lost in the cacophony of vaccine threats and advertisements and the hapless victims do not have a voice in the true sense of the word. Another good soul fighting for the voiceless infants is Dr. Jacob Puliyal in Delhi. He is a good friend and a fellow traveller in the anti-useless-vaccine fight.

We are already in the dark ages of money which James Kennedy, a journalist, calls Monetary Fascism. Milton Friedman and the Chicago School of Economics claimed to have refined and developed modern, scientific tools of 'free market capitalism', capable of unlocking ever greater rewards from Adam Smith's simple, primitive concept of free markets. "In truth, it was nothing more than a cloak of deception -

providing cover for the unscrupulous behaviour of investment bankers, corporate raiders, speculators, off-shore corporations, debt mongers and bubble pushers (typically one and the same). The enhanced rewards came from the pilfering of capital investments and technology from generations past, the liquidation of

employees and off-shoring of production, the pilfering of pension accounts and the termination or spin-out of R&D departments and option packages to executives and directors that focused on short term stock price targets," says Kennedy and gives the example of AT &T: Bell Labs, once part of AT&T and father of all modern telecommunication and electronics technology being 'morphed into

Lucent Technology'. Lucent quickly

'looted the legacy portfolio of Bell Laboratories' to enrich themselves and shareholders, leaving a worthless shell that was eventually merged with Alcatel.

So far so good but these do not deal with human life and health. But when monetary fascism comes to medical business, life becomes difficult for humans and the very human race is threatened with slow annihilation for the sake of making money for the few!

-Prof. B.M. Hegde

Dr. B.M. Hegde, MD, FRCP, FRCPE, FRCPG, FACC, FAMS. Padma Bhushan awardee 2010. Editor-in-chief, *The Journal of the Science of Healing Outcomes*; Chairman, State Health Society's Expert Committee, Govt. of Bihar, Patna. Former Prof. Cardiology, The Middlesex Hospital Medical School, University of London; Affiliate Prof. of Human Health, Northern Colorado University; Retd. Vice Chancellor, Manipal University, Chairman, Bhavan's Mangalore Kendra.



Source: Bhavan's Journal, December 15, 2016, Picture Credit [sbyireview.files.wordpress.com](http://sbyireview.files.wordpress.com)

# Indian Colonies and Culture in South-East Asia



To know and understand India one has to travel far in time and space, to forget for a while her present condition with all its misery, narrowness and horror, and to have glimpses of what she was and what she did. 'To know my country', wrote Rabindranath Tagore, 'one has to travel to that age, when she realized her soul and thus transcended her physical boundaries, when she revealed her being in a radiant magnanimity which illumined the eastern horizon, making her recognized as their own by those in alien shores who were awakened into a surprise of life; and not now when she has withdrawn herself into a narrow barrier of obscurity, into a miserly pride of exclusiveness, into a poverty of mind that dumbly revolves around itself in an unmeaning repetition of a past that has lost its light and has no message for the pilgrims of the future'.

One has not only to go back in time but to travel, in mind if not in body, to various countries of Asia, where India spread out in many ways, leaving immortal testimony of her spirit, her power, and her love of beauty. How few of us know of these great achievements of our past, how few realize that if India was great

in thought and philosophy, she was equally great in action. The history that men and women from India made far from their homeland has still to be written. Most westerners still imagine that ancient history is largely concerned with the Mediterranean countries, and medieval and modern history is dominated by the quarrelsome little continent of Europe. And still they make plans for the future as if Europe only counted and the rest could be fitted in anywhere.

Sir Charles Eliot has written that 'Scant justice is done to India's position in the world by those European histories which recount the exploits of her invaders and leave the impression that her own people were a feeble dreamy folk, sundered from the rest of mankind by their seas and mountain frontiers. Such a picture takes no account of the intellectual conquests of the Hindus. Even their political conquests were not contemptible, and are remarkable for the distance, if not the extent, of the territories occupied....But such military or commercial invasions are insignificant compared with the spread of Indian thought'.\*

Eliot was probably unaware, when he wrote, of many recent discoveries in south-east Asia, which have revolutionized the conception of India's and Asia's past. The knowledge of those discoveries would have strengthened his argument and shown that Indian activities abroad, even apart from the spread of her thought, were very far from being insignificant. I remember when I first read, about fifteen years ago, some kind of a detailed account of the history of South-East Asia, how amazed I was and how excited I became. New panoramas opened out before me, new perspectives of history, new conceptions of India's past, and I had to adjust all my thinking and previous notions to them. Champa, Cambodia and Angkor, Srivijaya and Majapahit suddenly rose out of the void, took living shape, vibrant with that instinctive feeling which makes the past touch the present.

Of Sailendra, the mighty man of war and conquest and other achievements, Dr. H. G. Quaritch Wales has written: 'This great conqueror, whose achievements can only be compared with those of the greatest soldiers known to western history, and whose fame in his time sounded from Persia to China, in a decade or two built up a vast maritime empire which

endured for five centuries, and made possible the marvellous flowering of Indian art and culture in Java and Cambodia. Yet, in our encyclopedias and histories... one will search in vain for a reference to this far-flung empire or to its noble founder. The very fact of such an empire ever having existed is scarcely known, except by a handful of Oriental scholars'.\* The military exploits of these early Indian colonists are important as throwing light on certain aspects of the Indian character and genius which have hitherto not been appreciated. But far more important is the rich civilization they built up in their colonies and settlements and which endured for over a thousand years.

During the past quarter of a century a great deal of light has been thrown on the history of this widespread area in south-east Asia, which is sometimes referred to as Greater India. There are many gaps still, many contradictions, and scholars continue to put forward their rival theories, but the general outline is clear enough, and sometimes there is an abundance of detail. There is no lack of material, for there are references in Indian books, and accounts of Arab travellers and, most important of all, Chinese historical accounts. There are also many old inscriptions, copper-plates, etc., and in Java and





Bali there is a rich literature based on Indian

sources, and often paraphrasing Indian epics and myths. Greek and Latin sources have also supplied some information. But, above all, there are the magnificent ruins of ancient monuments, especially at Angkor and Borobudur.\*\*

From the first century of the Christian era onwards wave after wave of Indian colonists spread east and south-east reaching Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Siam, Cambodia and Indo- China. Some of them managed to reach Formosa, the Philippine Islands and Celebes. Even as far as Madagascar the current language is Indonesian with a mixture of Sanskrit words. It must have taken them several hundred years to spread out in this way, and possibly all of these places were not reached directly from India but from some intermediate settlement.

There appear to have been four principal waves of colonization from the first century A.D. to about 900 A.D., and in between there must have been a stream of people going eastwards. But the most remarkable feature of these ventures was that they were evidently organized by the state.



Widely scattered colonies were started almost simultaneously and almost always the settlements were situated on strategic points and on important trade routes. The names that were given to these settlements were old Indian names. Thus Cambodia, as it is known now, was called Kamboja, which was a well-known town in ancient India, in Gandhara or the Kabul valley. This itself indicates roughly the period of this colonization, for at that time Gandhara (Afghanistan) must have been an important part of Aryan India.

What led to these extraordinary expeditions across perilous seas and what was the tremendous urge behind them? They could not have been thought of or organized unless they had been preceded for many generations or centuries by individuals or small groups intent on trade. In the most ancient Sanskrit books there are vague references to these countries of the east. It is not always easy to identify the names given in them but sometimes there is no difficulty. Java is clearly from 'Yava dvipa' or the Island of Millet. Even to-day Java means barley or millet in India. The other names given in the old books are also usually associated with minerals, metals, or some industrial or agricultural product. This nomenclature itself makes one think of trade. Dr. R. C. Majumdar has pointed out that if literature can be

regarded as a fair reflex of the popular mind, trade and commerce must have been a supreme passion in India in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era'. All this indicates an expanding economy and a constant search for distant markets.

This trade gradually increased in the third and second centuries B.C. and then these adventurous traders and merchants may have been followed by missionaries, for this was just the period after Ashoka. The old stories in Sanskrit contain many accounts of perilous sea voyages and of shipwrecks.

Both Greek and Arab accounts show that there was regular maritime intercourse between India and the Far East at least as early as the first century A.D. The Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Islands lay on the direct trade route between China and India, Persia, Arabia, and the Mediterranean. Apart from their geographical importance these countries contained valuable minerals, metals, spices and timber. Malaya was then, as now, famous for its tin mines. Probably the earliest voyages were along the east coast of India--Kalinga (Orissa, Bengal, Burma and then down the Malay Peninsula. Later the direct sea routes from east and south India were developed. It was along this sea route that many Chinese pilgrims came to India. Fa Hsien in the fifth century passed Java and complains that





there were many heretics then, meaning people following the Brahminical faith and not Buddhism.

It is clear that shipbuilding was a well-developed and flourishing industry in ancient India. We have some details and particulars of the ships built in those days. Many Indian ports are mentioned. South Indian (Andhra) coins of the second and third centuries A.C. bear the device of a two-masted ship. The Ajanta Frescoes depict the conquest of Ceylon and ships carrying elephants are shown.

The huge states and empires that developed from the original Indian settlements were essentially naval powers interested in trade and, therefore, in the control of the sea-routes. They came into conflict with each other on the seas, and at least once one of them challenged the Chela State of South India. But the Cholas were also strong on the seas and they sent a naval expedition which subdued for a while the Sailendra Empire.

There is an interesting Tamil inscription of 1088 A.D. which refers to a 'Corporation of the Fifteen Hundred'. This was apparently a union of traders who were described in it as 'brave men, born to wander over many countries ever since the beginning of the Krita age, penetrating the regions of the six continents by land and water routes, and dealing in various articles such as horses, elephants, precious stones, perfumes, and drugs, either wholesale or in retail'.

This was the background of the early colonizing ventures of the Indian people. Trade and adventure and the urge for expansion drew them to these eastern lands which were comprehensively described in old Sanskrit books as the Svarnabhumi, the Land of Gold or as Svarnadvipa, the Island of Gold. The very name had a lure about it. The early colonists settled down, more followed and thus a peaceful penetration went on. There was a fusion of the Indians with the races they found there, and also the evolution of a mixed culture. It was only then, probably, that the political element came from India, some Kshatriya princes, cadets of the noble families, in search of adventure and dominion. It is suggested, from a similarity of names, that many of these people who came were from the wide-spread Malva tribe in India -

hence the Malay race which has played such an important part in the whole of Indonesia. A part of central India is still known as Malwa. The early colonists are supposed to have gone from Kalinga on the east coast (Orissa) but it was the Hindu Pallava Kingdom of the south that made an organized effort at colonization. The Sailendra dynasty, which became so famous in south-east Asia, is believed to have come from Orissa. At that time Orissa was a stronghold of Buddhism but the ruling dynasty was Brahminical.

All these Indian colonies were situated between two great countries and two great civilizations - India and China. Some of them, on the Asiatic mainland, actually touched the frontiers of the Chinese Empire, the others were on the direct trade route between China and India. Thus they were influenced by both these countries and a mixed Indo-Chinese civilization grew up but such was the nature of these two cultures that there was no conflict between the two and mixed patterns of different shapes and varying contents emerged. The countries of the mainland - Burma, Siam, Indo-China - were more influenced by China, the islands and the Malay Peninsula had more of the impress of India.

As a rule the methods of government and the general philosophy of life came from China, religion and art from India. The mainland countries depended for their trade largely on China and there were frequent exchanges of ambassadors. But even in Cambodia and in the mighty remains of Angkor the only artistic influence that has been so far detected came from India. But Indian art was flexible and adaptable and in each country it flowered afresh and in many new ways, always retaining that basic impress which it derived from India. Sir John Marshall has referred to 'the amazingly vital and flexible character of Indian art' and he points out how both Indian and Greek art had the common capacity to 'adapt themselves to suit the needs of every country, race, and religion with which they came into contact.'

Indian art derives its basic character from certain ideals associated with the religious and philosophic outlook of India. As religion went from India to all these eastern lands, so also

went this basic conception of art. Probably the early colonies were definitely Brahminical and Buddhism spread later. The two existed side by side as friends and mixed forms of popular worship grew up. This Buddhism was chiefly of

dependencies became independent and even presumed to attack the central power and this has led to some confusion in our understanding of those periods.

The greatest of these states was the Sailendra



Empire, or the empire of Sri Vijaya, which became the dominant power both on sea and land in the whole of Malaysia by the eighth century. This was till recently supposed to have its origin and capital in Sumatra but later researches indicate that it began in the Malay Peninsula. At the height of its power it included Malaya, Ceylon, Sumatra, part of Java, Borneo, Celebes, the Philippines, and part of Formosa, and probably exercised suzerainty over Cambodia and Champa (Annam). It was a Buddhist Empire.

But long before the Sailendra dynasty had

the Mahayana type, easily adaptable, and both Brahminism and Buddhism, under the influence of local habits and traditions, had probably moved away from the purity of their original doctrines. In later years there were mighty conflicts between a Buddhist state and a Brahminical state but these were essentially political and economic wars for control of trade and sea-routes.

The history of these Indian colonies covers a period of about thirteen hundred years or more, from the early beginnings in the first or second century A.C. to the end of the fifteenth century. The early centuries are vague and not much is known except that many small states existed. Gradually they consolidate themselves and by the fifth century great cities take shape. By the eighth century seafaring empires have arisen, partly centralized but also exercising a vague suzerainty over many lands. Sometimes these

established and consolidated this empire, powerful states had grown up in Malaya, Cambodia, and Java. In the northern part of the Malay Peninsula, near the borders of Siam, extensive ruins, says R. J. Wilkinson, 'point to the past existence of powerful states and a high standard of wealth and luxury'. In Champa (Annam) there was the city of Pandurangam in the third century and in the fifth century Kamboja became a great city. A great ruler, Jayavarman, united the smaller states in the ninth century and built up the Cambodian Empire with its capital at Angkor.

Cambodia was probably under the suzerainty of the Sailendras from time to time, but this must have been nominal, and it reasserted its independence in the ninth century. This Cambodian state lasted for nearly four hundred years under a succession of great rulers and great builders, Jayavarman, Yashovarman,

Indravarman, Suryavarman. The capital became famous in Asia and was known as Angkor the Magnificent, a city of a million inhabitants, larger and more splendid than the Rome of the Caesars.

Near the city stood the vast temple of Angkor Vat. The empire of Cambodia flourished till the end of the thirteenth century, and the account of a Chinese envoy who visited it in 1297 describes the wealth and splendour of its capital. But suddenly it collapsed, so suddenly that some buildings were left unfinished. There were external attacks and internal troubles, but the major disaster seems to have been the silting up of the Mekong river, which converted the approaches to the city into marshlands and led to its abandonment.

Java also broke away from the Sailendra Empire in the ninth century, but even so the Sailendras continued as the leading power in Indonesia till the eleventh century, when they came into conflict with the Chela power of South India. The Cholas were victorious and held sway over large parts of Indonesia for over fifty years. On the withdrawal of the Cholas the Sailendras recovered and continued as an independent state for nearly three hundred years more. But it was no longer the dominant power in the eastern seas and in the thirteenth century began the disruption of its empire. Java grew at its expense as also did the Thais (Siam). In the second half of the fourteenth century Java completely conquered the Sailendra Empire of Srivijaya.

This Javan state which now rose into prominence had a long history behind it. It was a Brahminical state which had continued its attachment to the older faith in spite of the spread of Buddhism. It had resisted the political and economic sway of the Sailendra Empire of Srivijaya even when more than half of Java itself was occupied by the latter. It consisted of a community of seafaring folk intent on trade and passionately fond of building great structures in stone. Originally it was called the Kingdom of Singhasari, but in 1292 a new city, Majapahit, was founded and from this grew the empire of Majapahit which succeeded Srivijaya as the dominant power in south-east Asia. Majapahit

insulted some Chinese envoys sent by Kublai Khan and was punished for this by a Chinese expedition. Probably the Javanese learnt from the Chinese the use of gunpowder and this helped them finally to defeat the Sailendras.

Majapahit was a highly centralized, expanding empire. Its system of taxation is said to have been very well organized and special attention was paid to trade and its colonies. There was a commerce department of government, a colonial department, and departments for public health, war, the interior, etc. There was also a supreme court of justice consisting of a number of judges. It is astonishing how well this imperialist state was organized. Its chief business was trade from India to China. One of its well-known rulers was the Queen Suhita.

The war between Majapahit and Srivijaya was a very cruel one and though it ended in the complete victory of the former, it sowed the seeds of fresh conflict. From the ruins of the Sailendra power, allied to other elements, notably Arabs and Moslem converts, rose the Malaya power in Sumatra and Malacca. The command of the eastern seas, which had so long been held by South India or the Indian colonies, now passed to the Arabs. Malacca rose into prominence as a great centre of trade and seat of political power, and Islam spread over the Malay Peninsula and the islands. It was this new power that finally put an end to Majapahit towards the end of the fifteenth century. But within a few years, in 1511, the Portuguese, under Albuquerque, came and took possession of Malacca. Europe had reached the Far East through her newly developing sea power.

*Courtesy: The Discovery of India, The Signet Press, Kolkata.*

\* *Eliot: Hinduism and Buddhism, Vol.1, p.xii.*

\* *In 'Towards Angkor', Harrap, 1937.*

\*\* *Reference might be made to Dr. R. C. Majumdar's 'Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East' (Calcutta, 1927) and his 'Svarnavdipa' (Calcutta, 1937). Also to the publications of the Greater India Society (Calcutta).*

*-Jawahartal Nehru*

*-Source: Bhavan's Journal, 31 May, 2017*

# Jaya Somanath

## *The Hammir of Garjan*

The party travelled all day long at a fast speed. later in the evening they arrived at a point whence they could see a large camp. This was no ordinary camp. It was like a huge city, the like of which Sajjan had not seen before.

Allover the place could be seen groups of people

such a long distance with such a large army, and camping, of all places, in such a barren, waterless desert.

For a moment Sajjan lost courage and confidence, but as soon as he thought of Lord Somanath's command, his doubts were resolved.



sitting around fires to warm themselves. Thousands of torches were being carried from one place to another, and in their light could be seen the camp stretching as far as the eye could see. Innumerable were the men, elephants, camels, horses and other animals in the army. Ten thousand flags of different sizes and shapes fluttered in the wind and the camp was dotted with rows of thousands of tents. There was a terrific cacophony of men and animals, bugles and drums-so loud as to be heard from a long distance.

All this petrified Sajjan. He had never imagined that there could be an army of such a size. Nor did he ever conceive in his wildest dreams the possibility of the Hammir of Garjan travelling

If God had decided to destroy the invader, nothing would protect him. If such a great king as Ravana, of ten heads and twenty arms, was destroyed, who was the Hammir in comparison I And it might be that God had decided that the Hammir should be destroyed by an insignificant Rajput like himself.

The leader of the group was evidently an officer of high rank. The sentries made way for him at his command. As soon as the men in the camp saw him coming, they bent low and saluted him, touching their forehead with their right hand.

Sajjan's eyes met an unfamiliar sight of soldiers from different countries and strange military equipments. There was no lack of food and drink; everyone was enjoying himself.

Sajjan had an uncomfortable feeling. Have the brave warriors of Rajasthan been vanquished? What had happened at Ghoghagadh? Where was Ghogha Bapa? His inability to find answers to these questions worried him to a point where he almost felt choked.

The officer ordered him to get down from his camel. Sajjan immediately obeyed, but lest he

Behind this human wall, men armed with bows and arrows, were stationed at regular intervals. Only one way was open by which anyone from outside could enter this human fortress. Everyone bowed low and saluted the officer as he took Sajjan by it.

At the entrance to the tent, a sentry went in to announce their arrival. The Command came



might be separated from his Padamdi, he said: ((No camel can equal this one, and without her assistance, I will not be able to guide you.” “You will be given your camel later,” the guide conveyed the leader’s orders to him.

“Come with me,” said the officer to Sajjan.

He followed the officer, and two members of the group walked behind him. He was watched closely by all three, and had he shown the slightest inclination to run away or be aggressive, he was quite certain that he would find his head chopped off immediately.

Soon they came to a large white tent made of animal skin. It was surrounded by a wall of soldiers, standing with their swords unsheathed.

from inside the tent that they should be allowed to enter it. Two fierce-looking negroes of gigantic stature lifted a flap of the tent.

As they entered, Sajjan literally rubbed his eyes in surprise at the sight of the pomp he witnessed. Thirty torch-bearers stood, rigid like statues, holding aloft their torches. Close by the entrance, stood two huge negroes, each holding a scimitar in his hand. A perfumed oil lamp in the centre added to the brightness of the interior.

At the other end of the tent was spread out a large carpet made up of tiger and deer skins, on which a powerful-looking man was seated, reclining against a large cushion and stroking his

long, red beard. Beneath his bushy eyebrows were two large eyes, dark and fierce.

With his strong left hand, he toyed with the hilt of a large naked sword.

He had on a bizarre dress of leather. On his head he wore a queerly-shaped turban which was studded with emeralds. To his right sat a middle-aged Muslim, behind whose ear was a pen and from whose waist hung an ink-holder. By his side was seated a short but powerful-looking warrior, flanked by a young soldier. These two looked like Rajputs.

To the left of the large man reclining against the cushion was a Muslim warrior, whose uniform suggested that he was a high-ranking military officer.

As soon as the red-bearded man saw them come, he sat up erect and in a loud and terrifying voice, asked the officer to come near. The officer immediately moved forward, bowing in all humility. Sajjan found that the leader's name was Salar Masud.

Sajjan was now sure that the red-haired man was no other than the fearful Hammir Mohammad of Garjan, who had destroyed the cities of Kanauj, Kalingat, Nagarkot and Mathura, who had sold for three and a half dinars every Brahmin of Mathura in the bazaars of Garjan and who had taken the vow to cross the desert and destroy the abode of God, Lord Somanath.

Sajjan's blood boiled with anger, and had there been the slightest chance, he would have killed the man then and there, and thus carried out Gang Sarvagna's behest.

Sajjan's guess about the identity of the man seated in the middle was correct. It was the Sultan of Ghaznee, Yaminudaula Mohamood Nizamuddin Kasim Mohamood.

In the short space of fourteen years, he had become famous throughout Asia and was regarded as the bravest of the brave.

Though starting life as a poor and unknown man, he had acquired immense wealth and power. Securing mastery over Khurasan, within no time he had seized the rulership of Ghaznee from his brother. He had achieved success because of his firm determination and unflinching bravery. Whomsoever he fought, he

conquered and whatever he wished for, he succeeded in obtaining.

Following in the footsteps of his father, he started to plunder the untold riches of India. Lahore surrendered, Multan fell quickly. The Hindu kings when vanquished began to seek his favours and Kanauj, Delhi and Sapaldaksha were defeated. Nagarkot, the city of wealth, was seized by him.

He aspired to be the torch-bearer of Islam and to achieve immortality by destroying idols. He razed the temples of Mathura of age-old glory. The plundered crowns of deities he gave to the women of his zenana.

There was no limit to his ambition. He had a generous heart and the imagination of a poet. By some glorious action, he wanted to be remembered for eternity. What Khalif Omar, the greatest among the Khalifs of Islam had done, he wanted to do.

He inherited the love of art and culture from his Iranian mother. He was fond of poetry. He wanted Ghaznee to be the first city in the world. He had a great flair for winning the hearts of other people. A brave warrior himself, he could appreciate bravery in others. There was place in his heart for people of all faiths-provided they did not oppose him. He could not tolerate idol-worship, yet he admired bravery even in idol-worshippers. Even when he triumphed over the Rajputs, he was spellbound by their amazing heroism.

He had organized a magnificent army. In his army there were warriors from different lands, from the Caucasus to the valley of the Ganga.

He had marched hundreds of miles to destroy the idol whose temple was situated at the other end of the desert and to acquire its immense riches.

The Rajput rulers ruling over small kingdoms could not match his brilliance in tactics and strategy. They were undoubtedly brave, determined and heroic, but in their short-sighted pride, they showed themselves incapable of judging their opponents' strength. They were skilful at fight, but incapable of co-operating with each other in order to fight a common foe. Each was prepared to fight to defend his little kingdom and if necessary die, but they never

could realise that by uniting for the sake of their land and their faith, their ability to resist could be greatly increased.

Salar Masud sat down at the feet of Hammir and submitted his report in their strange language. When he finished, the conversation became general, but every now and again the Hammir's roaring voice could be heard above the conversation.

After some time, the officer who was taking notes and the Rajput sitting next to him, approached Sajjan. The very sight of the Rajput angered Sajjan almost uncontrollably and his hands itched to grip his throat. If he could have found some way of carrying out Lord Shankar's orders, he would have gladly done so, even at the cost of his life, by killing this traitor to his land and faith.

Sevandrai, the Rajput, came to Sajjan with a broad smile on his face. Behind him, walking slowly, came the officer with the pen.

"Where do you come from?" asked Sevandrai to Sajian.

"I come from Bhamaria," replied Sajjan.

"Where is it?"

"It is between Sapaldaksha and Ghoghagadh."

Sevandrai and AI-Utahi-for that was the name of the other man-held a brief consultation in a language which Sajjan could not follow. From his seat, the Sultan asked a question, which was answered by AI-Utahi.

"Where do you live?" asked Sevandrai.

"I belong to Anhilwad Patan." "When did you leave this place?"

"Fifteen days ago."

"What!" exclaimed Sevandrai in surprise. "By which route did you travel?"

"I know all the routes in the desert."

"Which fortresses did you pass on the way?"

If I had travelled along the route of these fortresses, it would have taken me over two months. I travelled straight from Anhilwad."

Are there resting places on the way?"

Without them, could I have come alone and alive?"

"Where are we now?"

"You are very far away from the highway. I cannot understand why you strayed from it."

"How far is the highway?"

It would take this army eight to ten days to get to it, and, on the way, it would have to face the rulers of Mewad, Jhallor, Gujarat and Malva."

"How do you know?"

"I know everything. Over a lakh of Rajputs have gathered there, ready to block your way."

"Will you show us the road by which you came?"

"Yes, provided you give me back my camel."

"Where is it?"

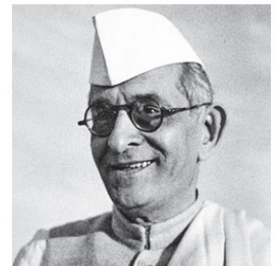
"That man took it away," said Sajjan, pointing to Masud.

Sevandrai and AI-Utahi went over to the Sultan and the three of them talked in whispers.

On the second day, Salar Masud kept Sajjan confined to his tent. At the crack of dawn on the third day, Sultan Mohamood lifted camp. He had decided not to go for the main highway where the Rajput armies were believed to be waiting for him. He abandoned his plan to march eastwards in search of the straight road through the desert in favour of marching westwards guided by Sajjan on his trusty Padamdi.

Ghoga Chauhan's son, considering himself fortunate that he was enabled to carry out the commands of Lord Somanath, led the way, singing softly to himself and urging Padamdi forward.

He had decided to take the invader's army straight into the jaws of the death-dealing sand-storm.



-Kulapati Dr Kanhaiyalal Maneklal Munshi,  
Founder Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

-Source: Bhavan's Journal, 31 May, 2017

# The First Satyagraha

It was at the Lucknow session that Raj Kumar Shukla, a peasant from Champaran (Bihar), met Gandhiji and acquainted him with the woes of the peasants there, caused by the tyranny and rapacity of the white indigo planters. Shukla requested Gandhiji to go to Champaran and see things for himself. He was so persistent in his request that Gandhiji at last acceded to his proposal. He, however, told him that he could not go there immediately, but when he would go to Calcutta to attend a conference in the beginning of April, and if he (Shukla) met him there, he could accompany him to Champaran. Shukla dogged his footsteps and met him at Calcutta.

They both travelled to Patna. In the train Gandhiji put searching question to him about the kind of land tenure that prevailed there and its legal implications. Shukla was unable to explain this to the satisfaction of Gandhiji. He asked Shukla if he knew of anyone who could explain the legal position as between the peasants and the planters. Shukla told him that he knew only one man in Patna who could do this. It was Rajendra Babu. From the station they drove to Rajendra Babu's house. Unfortunately, Rajendra Babu was not there; he had gone to Puri. His clerk would not allow the two strangers inside the house. They had no other choice but to squat in the verandah. The servants would not allow him to draw water at the same time with them lest their water be polluted. Shukla took him to a laterine inside the house. But the servants directed him to one outside. Such was the rigidity of the caste system in Bihar. Sitting there, Gandhiji remembered Mazhar-ul-Haq who had been his fellow student at the bar in London and who, he knew, was practising in Patna. He had met him in Bombay in 1915 and had extended an invitation to him to visit Patna. He sent a letter through Shukla to Mazhar-ul-Haq informing him of the plight in which he found himself. As soon as Mazhar-ul-Haq got the letter he hurried to Rajendra Babu's place and took Gandhiji and Shukla to his palatial house. He however, could give him a clear idea of the legal position as it existed between the planters and the kisans. He only knew that the kisans were subjected to great tyranny and

hardship. Gandhi was impatient to reach Champaran as soon as possible and finish his business and go back to Ahmedabad. Mazhar-ul-Haq informed him that the planters had their headquarters at Muzaffarpur and asked Gandhiji if he knew anybody there. Gandhiji said that he knew Professor Kripalani working in the local college and straightway sent a telegram informing me that he would be arriving by a train that reached Muzaffarpur at midnight. I saw the telegram when I returned from my club at 9 p.m. How was this distinguished guest to be received and where was I to put him up? I was the warden of a hostel attached to the college and was living in a couple of small rooms. When the students heard about my going to the station to receive Gandhiji, and when I told them who he was, they wanted to accompany me and give the distinguished guest a fitting reception in the Indian style by performing an Arati. They ransacked neighbouring compounds for flowers and collected the arati ingredients except the coconut. It could not be had at that time from the bazaar. There was a coconut tree in the compound. It was not very high. I was a good climber and went up the tree and took down some coconuts. This completed the requirements of the arati. The students accompanied me to the station. On arrival of the train, we searched for Gandhiji. He was nowhere to be found. I was the only person who knew him. The trains in North Bihar are always overcrowded. Gandhiji, it seemed, had left his compartment as soon as the train steamed in and was lost in the crowd. I must have missed him as he was travelling third class. I asked the guard if Mr. Gandhi was on the train. He said he knew nothing about it. As I had missed Gandhiji, so had he missed me. When he did not find me, he asked Shukla to enquire of the young men why they were there. He was told that they had come to receive Mr. Gandhi. He pointed out his companion. The students informed me. I met Gandhiji. He was carrying a bundle containing his papers, while his spare bedding was with Shukla. The students duly performed the arati. I saw that the ceremony seemed to embarrass Gandhiji, perhaps because arati is performed before the gods. But in India he had to get used



to it. The Hindus make little distinction between the gods and their great men.

A zamindar friend was travelling by the same train. I had asked him to leave his private carriage for me to take Gandhiji to my place. As we approached the carriage, we found that the students had unhorsed the carriage. In those days, honoured leaders' carriages were pulled by their admirers. I don't think they ever protested. Gandhiji, however, did so and said that he would not enter the carriage if they pulled it. If they persisted, he would have to offer Satyagraha. I told the students not to persist. The carriage was a closed one. Those inside could not see the front. We went in and Gandhiji related to me his experience in Patna at the house of Rajendra Babu. As we proceeded, I did not hear the sound of the hoofs of horses. I understood the students had not carried out Gandhiji's instructions. We arrived at the hostel. When Gandhiji got out of the carriage, he said he had been deceived. If he had known that the students were pulling the carriage, he would have got down and walked.

I had made arrangements with my colleague Prof. Malkani to put up Gandhiji in his house. He was living in the same compound. In a two-storeyed house he occupied the upper storey.

His family was not there. The ground floor was occupied by another colleague of mine. In the morning as soon as he heard that Gandhiji was accommodated in the upper storey, he was so frightened that he immediately left the house. Malkani was nervous, as he was not willing to jeopardize his job. Afterwards when the satyagraha movement began, he resigned his post and participated in it. I told him not to bother, as I would tell the Principal that Gandhiji was my guest.

When the college opened, I went to the Principal and informed him that Gandhiji was my guest. He asked, "You mean to say that notorious man Gandhiji of South Africa is your guest?" I said, "Yes", and added, "Why do you call him notorious? He has rendered service to the Empire for which he had been awarded the Kaiser-I-Hind medal." The Principal shook his head and said that I should make other arrangements for him. I said it was not customary in India to put one's guest in a hotel. Moreover, there was no hotel in the town where

I could put him up. If I went to his place, I would be his guest. Having said this, I left him to think over the enormity of my behaviour. Gandhiji in his autobiography has referred to me as the Principal of the College. I was only a professor. In those days it was unusual for an Indian to be a Principal of a College. He also says that I was staying with Malkani. That was not so. I was living, as I have said, in the college hostel.

Gandhiji asked me if I knew anything about the Planter-Kisan problem. I said all I knew was the tenants were very cruelly treated by the white planters. Beyond that I knew nothing. In those days such was our nationalism that we did not know what was really happening in the villages. We, the educated, lived more or less an isolated life. Our world was confined to the cities and to our fraternity of the educated. Our contact with the masses was confined to our servants and yet we talked of the poverty of the masses and were anxious to free the country from foreign yoke!

I told Gandhiji that I would send for some lawyer friends, who might be able to inform him about the land tenure in Champaran and the relations between the tenants and the planters. As soon as Gandhiji was ready, he met a couple of my lawyer friends whom I had invited to meet him. He closely cross-examined them. He then met the Secretary of the Planters Association and asked for his co-operation in the work he had undertaken. The Secretary told Gandhiji that he was an 'outsider' and his presence in Champaran would lead to trouble. Gandhiji's reply was that he, as an Indian, did not think that he was an outsider. In any case, he would not leave before he had seen for himself the plight of the kisans. Gandhiji then met by appointment the Commissioner of the Tirhut division. Champaran is a district under the Commissionership of Tirhut. Gandhiji found the Commissioner none too polite. He tried to bully Gandhiji and said that he must leave Muzaffarpur at once. His presence would form trouble. Gandhiji told him that he was going to do nothing of the sort and he would proceed to Champaran.

The lawyer friends who I had called came again the next day and asked him to shift the house of one of them because, as they said, it would be more convenient if he was near them in the

town. I have an idea that this arrangement was suggested by the European principal. The college was less than a kilometre from the centre of the town. Gandhiji shifted to a lawyer's house. He was in Muzaffarpur for three days. During his stay with me, the Sanskrit pandit of the college came to see him. In the course of conversation Gandhiji shocked the learned pandit by telling him that to take cow's milk was as good as taking beef. Afterwards I asked the pandit whether it was not a fact that the Vedic Aryans did take beef and that there was evidence of it in the Upanishads. The pandit gave no reply but only smiled. I record this because I have heard that there is a controversy going on now whether the Vedic Aryans took beef. Gandhiji, after completing his work in Muzaffarpur, asked the lawyers if some of them would accompany him to Champaran. Not knowing the local dialect, he would need them as interpretators and also for recording the statements of the tenants. Their reply was that if they were not required to break the law and go to jail, they would willingly accompany him to Champaran. Gandhiji smiled and said: "I do not expect there will be any occasion for offering satyagraha. In any event, if an occasion arose, I will not call upon you to break the laws."

As soon as Gandhiji arrived at Motihari, the district headquarters, he wanted to go into the interior to see the condition of the villages. On the way he was served with a notice to quit Champaran within 24 hours. He acknowledged the notice and sent a letter to the District Magistrate that he had no intention to leave Champaran without fulfilling the purpose for which he had come. He was thereupon summoned to appear before the District Magistrate the next day. When the trial began, the public prosecutor came armed with legal authority to prove that Gandhiji had broken the law. He thought he would have to argue the case against learned lawyers. However, he and the court were not only disappointed but also taken by surprise when Gandhiji pleaded guilty to the charge. In his statement he said that he had come to Champaran "with motives of rendering humanitarian and national service I could not render any help without studying the problem As a law-abiding citizen my first instinct would be to obey the order served upon me. But I could

not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I have come. I feel that I could just now serve them only by remaining in their midst I venture to make this statement not in any way in extenuation of the penalty awarded to me, but to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me not for want of respect for lawful authority but in obedience to the highest law of our being, the voice of my conscience."

The Magistrate was in a fix. Gandhiji had upset the usual calculations of the authorities. The news of the order served on him and his refusal to comply with it, his appearance in the court and his unusual statement spread not only in Champaran but throughout the country. Peasants from the surrounding areas began to pour into the town in their thousands; they were no more afraid of the planters or the police. They wanted to know the outcome of the trial and to pay homage to this unique person, who would court imprisonment willingly and deliberately, so that their grievances might be redressed and their lot improved.

The Government in Simla had been kept informed by the local authorities of what was happening. Gandhiji also wired full details of the happening to the Viceroy, Malaviyaji and friends in Patna. World War I had not yet ended and the higher authorities did not want any serious political situation to develop anywhere in the country.

When they saw the popular reaction to the arrest and trial of Gandhiji, they apprehended that the unrest might spread. Judgement was postponed, and afterwards the proceedings were dropped. Gandhiji was free to carry out his enquiry.

It would not be out of place here to describe the public enthusiasm that was created by the way Gandhiji had defied the law, made his statement and the subsequent dropping of the proceedings against him. Here for the first time there was a man who had defied the might of the British Empire and was willing to court imprisonments, and suffer the hardships of jail life. Such a thing had never happened before in India. Whenever a national leader or a worker was charged with any political offence and arrested, he engaged lawyers to defend himself. We know of the trials

of Lokmanya Tilak and how he defended himself. The result was as would have been, had he not defended himself.

With Gandhiji's defiance of the law, the people of Champaran felt as if their age-long chains had been broken and they were free men. Writing about this, Gandhiji in his autobiography says: "Unprecedented scenes were witnessed on that day in Motihari

They (kisans) received me as though we had been age-long friends. It is not exaggeration, but the literal truth, to say that in this meeting with the peasants, was face to face with God, Ahimsa and Truth. When I came to examine my title to this realization, I find nothing but my love for the people. And this in turn is nothing but an expression of my unshakable faith in Ahimsa. That day in Champaran was an unforgettable event in my life and a red-letter day for the peasants and for me. According to the law, I was to be on my trial, but truly speaking Government was to be on its trial. The Commissioner only succeeded in trapping Government in the net which he had spread for me."

Gandhiji's arrest and subsequent release and the permission given to him to proceed with his enquiry gave unexpected publicity to the cause of the peasants. The planters were annoyed. They carried on a propaganda through the Anglo-Indian Press against Brajkishore Babu and other lawyers who had come to help Gandhiji in the enquiry. The situation was delicate. What had happened was an object-lesson in civil disobedience. It had, therefore, attracted a great deal of publicity.

Gandhiji did not want his work to be given a political colour through the over-enthusiastic support of the Congress or the Press. He wrote to the leading Indian papers asking them not to send their representatives to Champaran. He would himself send them brief reports of the happenings from time to time, not always for publication but for their information. For this reason he would not avail himself of Ma laviyaji's offer to go there and help him. He believed that a humanitarian cause would be damaged if it received a political colouring. He also believed that 'disinterested service in any sphere (of national life) would help the country politically'.

This shows under what discipline Gandhiji kept himself while talking about delicate problems. As he did not like publicity, he also refrained from replying to the criticism of the planters and the Anglo-Indian Press. Only once did he reply to the planters' criticism about the mode of his dress. He wrote: The dress that I wear in Champaran is the dress that I have always worn in India. Mr. Irwin's letter suggested that I appear before the ryots and a dress I have temporarily and specially adopted in Champaran to produce an effect. The fact is that wear the national dress because it is the most natural and the most becoming for a Indian. I believe that our copying of the European dress is a sign of our degradation, humiliation and our weakness and that we are committing a national sin in discarding a dress which is best suited to the Indian climate and which, for its simplicity, art and cheapness, is not to be beaten on the whole of the earth. Had it not been for a false pride and equally false notions of prestige, Englishmen here would have long ago adopted the Indian costume. I may mention incidentally that I do not go to Champaran barefooted. I did avoid shoes for sacred reasons. But I find that it is more natural and healthier to avoid them whenever possible. This indicates Gandhiji's ideas about Indian dress.

To continue our narrative it is necessary to mention here the grievances from which the peasants of Champaran suffered. To understand this, one must know the land tenure there. Like Bengal and as part of it, Bihar was under the zamindari system of land tenure. The zamindar was the practical owner of the land. He paid fixed revenue to the Government, settled in the days of Cornwallis. Most of the land in Champaran belonged to the Raja of Bettiah. Some adventurous Englishmen induced the Raja to lease out his land to them for long terms of years at a low rent. They wanted to plant indigo, a very paying crop for which there was a good market in Europe. The planters let out the land to the tenants on a fixed rental with the provision that each of them would cultivate indigo 3/20th of the land given to him. The cultivation of this crop required hard labour. It also exhausted the soil and the indigo crop was sold at a nominal price to the planter. In addition, the tenant was obliged to work

periodically on the land that was not let out by the planter. The tenants had also to pay customary dues called abwabs on various occasions. When a peasant died, his successor had to pay a sort of death duty. If the planter purchased a horse or an elephant, each kisan

very great influence with members of Parliament some of whom had personal interest in the indigo trade. However, the indigo trade had since declined owing to the invention of its synthetic variety by Germany. Yet the tin kathia, 3/20th cultivation system, was kept alive by the



had to contribute towards its cost. If he went to the hills in summer, the tenants had to contribute to his expenses. All sorts of extractions were made on one plea or another. When working on the planters' land, the kisan received three piece as wages per day. For a cart with two bullocks and a driver he received four annas per day. The planter's men would attack and loot villages whenever they were angry with the peasants. They would break into the houses, illtreat their women folk and even destroy their standing crops. No Indian, whatever his status, could ride a horse or hold an umbrella in the presence of a planter. Even highly educated Indians would have to cool their heels in the compounds. No India would be allowed in the drawing room of a planter. The official world could give no relief. The higher officers were all British. In addition to their sympathy with their countrymen, they knew that the planters had

planters, the kisan being obliged to saw sugarcane or any other crop fancied by the planters. Brajkishore Babu and Rajendra Babu joined later the batch of lawyers accompanying Gandhiji. Though the former had been present at the time of the final appearance of Gandhiji before the court, some local lawyers also lent a helping hand, the chief among them Gorakh Babu who played host to Gandhiji before the establishment shifted to a rented house. They began recording the evidence about the various hardships from which the kisans suffered and the tyranny and cruelty of the planters and their men. The kisans poured in from all the Champaran villages. They were eager to register their grievances. They thought that if they made statements about the tale of their woes they would somehow get relief. The lawyers were kept busy recording statements during the whole day. Before recording evidence, everyone

was told that he must state the truth and not exaggerate his sufferings.

I joined Gandhiji after some fifteen days, as soon as the summer vacation of the college began. But this time the vacation was to be indefinite. The

authorities had already been thinking of dispensing with my services. I wrote to Gandhiji asking him if my services were needed in Champaran. He sent the following reply:

Motiahari April 17, 1917

My Dear Friend,

I read your affection in your eyes, in your expression, in your postures. May I be found worthy of all this deep love! Yes, I know you want to help. You shall have your choice. Either go to Ahmedabad and work there for the experimental school or come and work here even at the risk of imprisonment. All this if I am imprisoned. If you want me choose for you seeing that you are here, your natural place is not to quit the place until the ryots have their freedom to breathe like men. For me now Champaran is my domicile. Every day's inquiry confirms me in my opinion that the position in many respects is worse than in Fiji.

Yours sincerely, M. K. GANDHI

On receipt of his reply, I reached Motihari. I could not possibly take down the statement of the kisans who knew only their local dialect, but I made myself useful in other ways.

It would be interesting to record something of the life we lived there. Every lawyer had brought his personal attendant with him. That was the custom in Bihar. The middle-class Babu would not go anywhere without a servant. It was customary for the Bihari friends to take their evening nashta at about 8 p.m. They had their dinner at about 11 p.m. Soon Gandhiji induced them to dispense with their servants and cooks

and have a common mess. They had to finish dinner by about 8 p.m. Gandhiji had called from the Ashram at Ahmedabad Kasturba and Maliadev bhai. When Kasturbha came, she was put in charge of the common kitchen and some

of us helped her.

There was very little work for me to do except to look after the establishment and somehow to save Gandhiji from thousands of kisans who, when they had no statements to be recorded, came for his darsan. In the beginning I had also to cook my own and Gandhiji's meals.

Even when I was at Muzaffarpur, I generally cooked my

own food. To simplify the work of cooking I had a cooker. This I had brought with me. Gandhiji had again changed his diet. At that time he was living on boiled rice and vegetables, together with whatever fruit was available in the local market. He took no salt and used no other condiments. I had no aversion to unsiced boiled food. Only I added salt to it. In those days Gandhiji's meals cost about a couple of annas per day. Rice and vegetables were cheap in Champaran. The local fruit also cost little. He had not commenced taking milk as yet. I

found that the Indian fruit has little taste for Gandhiji who had got used to the South African varieties.

Soon the Government appointed a a Committee of Enquiry. Gandhiji was appointed a member. The other member lawyers led the evidence before the Committee. They sometimes told Gandhi that his cross-examination of the planter witness was not as effective as it could be. The evidence was such that through proper cross-examination the planters would be obliged to admit the enormity of their conduct. Gandhiji's reply was that he could do so, but he did not want to put them in an awkward position. He wanted their goodwill. The Chairman of the Enquiry Committee was the Chief Commissioner



of Central India, which was a separate province then. The Chairman wrote out the report. It was shown to Gandhiji. He said that he could not sign such a report. The Chairman thereupon asked him to make his suggestions to the authorities. Gandhiji's suggestions were incorporated in the report. Gandhiji had not indulged in any vehement condemnation of the planters or made exaggerated demand for the kisan. The report was a sober document based on undisputed facts. It was followed by requisite legislation. The kisans of Champaran did not get any radical concessions but there was some improvement in their lot. However, in about less than a year the planters had wound up their business and gone back to their homes. It has been my experience, living and working with Gandhiji, that what he achieved by his satyagraha appeared at the time to be small but the rest subsequently accomplished through the combination of various circumstances. These generally favoured greater justice between man and man and group and group. It is also true that if the first small step had not been taken by Gandhiji, the other forces that brought about the final result might have remained dormant for a long time.

The success in Champaran was an object-lesson to the whole country in the potency of satyagraha. The most helpless and timid sections of the Indian population had been roused as though by a miracle to cast off their fear and had become conscious of their self-respect as human beings. We have seen how Gandhiji when he was working for the removal of injustice, also worked for reform in the social life of the people through self-help and mutual co-operation. It was at Champaran that Gandhiji came to be known as the 'Mahatma, the Great Soul.

While the Committee was doing its work, Gandhiji sent some of us, who were not required to arrange and lead evidence, to go and work in the villages. He was primarily concerned with the education of the villagers and their hygiene. In most villages in Champaran there were no primary schools even. In the village work we were joined by some volunteers from different parts of India. Among them was Dr. Dev, a senior member of the Servants of India Society. He was a social worker. There were Pundalik, who was working with Gangadhar Rao Deshpande at

Belgaum, and Narharibhi from Gujarat. Kasturbha and many others who were not needed for the work of the Committee also joined us in the villages and helped in the education of the children. It was difficult to get adults to learn even the three R's. We tried to inculcate among the village people ideas of public cleanliness. This work could not last long. We were all from outside Bihar and could not stay there indefinitely. Local volunteers were not forthcoming in those days to take up the work we had begun.

When we had started living an ashram life and all the lawyers had sent away their personal servants, the entire work of the establishment was done by us. If any message was to be sent to the officials, we were the carriers. One evening Gandhiji had to send a letter to the District Magistrate. It was entrusted to Anugraha Babu, who afterwards became the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar. I accompanied him. The letter could not be personally delivered to the District Magistrate. It had to be left with the servants. They were sitting in a group. As we handed over the letter to one of them, he asked us if we knew English. We very modestly said, "Only a little." Another peon told his companion, "Why do you ask this question? All of them are ell — bella (LL.B's.)."

Soon after my arrival, Gandhiji was called by the Superintendent of Police who, of course, was an Englishman. He told Gandhiji that the Government had put faith in his non-violence but they were not sure about his companions. Gandhiji said that they were all lawyers concerned with their profession and they had come merely to record evidence of the kisans. They had nothing to do with politics. The Superintendent of Police said, "What about Prof. Kripalani?" Gandhiji's reply was, "He is a gentleman. He knows the conditions on which I am working here and he will play the game." The superintendent's reply to this was that he was warning Gandhiji.

(Gandhiji, His life and thought. Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India. 1991.)

- Acharya J. B. Kripalani

Source: Bhavan's Journal, 30 April 2017

# The Eleven Vows of Mahatma Gandhi—Their Observance and Relevance



Mahatma Gandhi visits the Kodambakkam Harijan Industrial School in March 1937.

The chant beginning:—"Ahimsa Satya Asteya --." The two verses beginning with these words enumerate the eleven vows that Gandhiji considered almost mandatory for the inmates of his Ashram, in Sabarmati as well as in Sevagram.

## The eleven vows are:

- (1) *Satya-Truth*, (2) *Ahimsa-Nonviolence*, (3) *Brahmacharya-Celibacy* (4) *Asteya-Non-stealing*, (5) *Aparigraha or Asangraha-Non-possession* (6) *Sharira-Shrama; Physicallabour or Bread Labour*.
- (7) *Asvada-Control of Palate*, (8) *Abhaya-Fearlessness*, (9) *Sarva-Dharma-Samanatva-Equal respect for all Religions*, (10) *Swadeshi-Duty towards Neighbour and* (11) *Asprishyatanivarana - Removal of Untouchability*.

Of these eleven, the first five are found in most of the religions of the world and are called 'Pancha Mahavratas' - the Five great Vows. The remaining six are somewhat new ideas that have been given the importance of vows to fulfill the need of the time.

The image of Gandhiji in the minds of his contemporary Indians was that of a political leader - of one who brought Swarajya. Essentially, however, Gandhi was a Sadhaka, one who was in search of God. His ultimate goal was Moksha or the realization of God. Since he believed that service of man was the best way to realize God, he lived and died in the service of India, which in a microcosm, was the service of Mankind. That was his pilgrimage towards realization. In this context, the eleven were very important to him.

They were a part of 'Tapa' Austerity and Self-denial for Purification. Tapa is considered necessary in all religions for elevating oneself spiritually, for control over desires, as a check upon an unruly mind and for paving the way to sacrifice for others - all these leading to Moksha. But Gandhiji was a 'Sadhaka' with a difference; his 'Sadhana' did not end with himself. He wanted to include society in his spiritual efforts and so he gave a new dimension to the Five

Great Vows and extended them into the remaining six.

## **Mahatma Gandhi's vows and their observance:**

### **1. Satya - Truth**

Truth is the most important vow, being the very basis of all the others. The word 'Satya' is from 'Sat', which means 'Being'. On 'Sat' depends true knowledge, known in Sanskrit as 'Chit' and Bliss that is 'Ananda'. The three together form the word 'Sachhidananda' which is one of the epithets of the Supreme Being. According to Gandhiji, Truth is God. Satya, therefore, was the pivot of the life of an Ashramite. Observance of Truth was expected not only in speech but also in thought and in action.

One may wonder what one should do if what appears to be truth to one person does not appear to be truth to another. Gandhiji suggests that after due deliberation and humble consideration of the opinion of the other person, if one still feels his own truth to be truth for himself, he should follow it according to his own light. In order to be convinced about one's ability to understand truth, one should use as the measuring rod those who have suffered for Truth and should himself be ready to suffer similarly.

### **2. Ahimsa - Non-Violence**

Truth and Non-Violence are like the two sides of a coin - one cannot exist without the other. Using another imagery, Ahimsa is the path along which one reaches truth. Violence leads to more violence and hampers the clear vision which is essential for the pursuit of Truth.

At a personal level; Ahimsa consists in not only forbearing from physical violence; in order to achieve non-violence it is necessary to remove from the mind all hatred, all jealousy and all desire to harm even those who harm us. The next step would be to extend our love to all living beings, including living beings like snakes, tigers, etc.

At a social level, the goal of Ahimsa is to create a society where there would be no need to act in an anti-social manner and hence no need for any punishment. This can happen only when the economic differences between the classes get

considerably narrowed down and when the erring members of society are considered as their own brothers by the righteous.

### **3. Brahmacharya- Celibacy or Chastity**

Brahmacharya normally connotes a rigid control over sexual urge. An unmarried man who shuns sex is called a Brahmachari.

According to Gandhiji, however, this is a very narrow meaning of the word. 'Brahmacharya' really means 'Moving towards, Brahma' that is, towards truth. For such a person, a control over all senses is necessary. So also, it is necessary to keep himself away from attachment to social connections. In achieving this end, control of sex is perhaps most helpful, because sex is one of the strongest temptations to cause one to stray from the narrow path of truth. Again marital relations are the cause of the strongest social bond, that of the family. Hence the importance attached to the control of sex, which became synonymous with Brahmacharya. Control of sex, can also help the Sadhaka to gain control over his other senses.

Gandhiji believed that a celibate life was most congenial for the pilgrim to truth. However, married couples could also tread that path by subtracting sex from their marital life. Such a step would free them from undue attachment for each other and free them for service of mankind.

It is obvious that Brahmacharya, like truth and Non-violence, should be adhered to not only at the physical level, but also at the level of thought. To harbour a passion in the mind, while practicing physical control of the senses is not really Brahmacharya.

On one point, however, Gandhiji differed radically from the orthodox believers in Brahmacharya - he did not believe that a Brahmachari should shun the company of women. He wanted the Brahmachari of his Ashram to live a life of service to society; so it was inevitable that he would come into contact with women social workers. In Gandhiji's opinion a Brahmachari should keep his public contact with women workers and learn to look upon them as sisters and mothers. If someone could adhere to Brahmacharya only when there



were no women around, according to Gandhiji, he was not a real Brahmachari.

While laying all this stress on Brahmacharya, Gandhiji was not unmindful of the difficulty experienced by the Ashramites in its day to day observance.. We are told by persons near to Gandhiji that he was completely aware that a number of the Ashramites were only partially successful in their attempts at Brahmacharya. Since Gandhiji himself never claimed complete success, he was satisfied that the Ashramites sincerely tried their best.

#### **4. Asteya - Non Stealing**

In an ordinary sense, very few people actually steal anything from others, partly because of the social stigma attached to stealing.

Gandhiji, however, gave a far wider connotation to stealing. According to him those members of the family who help them-selves to better facilities depriving the other members, are thieves. Even those who enjoy luxuries not available to the lower strata of society are also thieves.

So, a person who wishes to apply Asteya in his life ought to lead such a simple life that he takes for himself from society only his minimum requirements.

In the Ashram, one aspect of Asteya, namely avoiding waste, was strictly observed. Nothing was to be wasted—food, water, clothes or even paper. As a matter of fact, Gandhiji would reply to a letter in the blank half; he used to open addressed envelopes on all sides, gum them up inside out and use them again; the idea was something more than mere frugality - he wanted to use as little of the people's money as possible for his own purpose and thus be as little indebted to society as possible. It was on this principle that he did not allow Kasturba the personal use of the gifts she received in South Africa for his public service.

#### **5. Aparigraha - Non-Possession**

Aparigraha is almost a corollary of Asteya. In order to follow the dictum of non-thieving one must have as few pos-sessions as possible.

For Gandhiji, Non-possession was also a proof of one's faith in God. He used to quote instances of devotees who did not believe in keeping back a

little food even for the next meal. Aparigraha also helped one in slowly giving up the attachment towards worldly possessions, an essential condition of a seeker of truth, which every Ashramite was expected to be.

And yet Gandhiji realized that giving up possessions was no easy matter. So, for non - Ashramite she propounded the ideal of trusteeship. Possessions, particularly in the form of business assets or land, could not be given up without complications. So he suggested that businessmen and landlords should consider themselves not owners but trustees of their property. A trustee is expected to use the income of the trust solely to the advantage of the beneficiaries. In the case of wealthy people the beneficiaries are all the employees and underlings connected with the wealth. So, all income from the business or the land should be shared-with the employees or tillers of the land. The owner turned trustee should avail himself of the bare minimum, thus narrowing the economic gap between himself and his dependants. The concept of trusteeship can be called a, slightly diluted social extension of both Asteya and Aparigraha.

These, then, are the interpretations of Panch Maha Vratas. Let us now turn to the other six vows, which project the social application of these five.

#### **6. Sharirashtrama - Physical Labour or Bread Labour**

Gandhiji got the idea of Bread labour from Tolstoy. The idea is that everyone must put in some physical labour to earn his daily bread. An intellectual or an artist or a person with any other ability should utilize that ability for the service of society, while bread should be earned through physical labour alone.

Economic differences in society can be mitigated in this way. Even those professions essential to society—those of a teacher, a doctor, a pleader—the wages of the professional should not be more than those of a physical labourer.

Gandhiji modified this idea into the concept of shrama-yagna. He suggested that even those who earned their livelihood through other professions should devote at least one hour every day to some kind of physical labour

performed in the spirit of oneness with the poor. At the time when Gandhiji presented this concept to India, cheap foreign cloth was being dumped in the country by the British rulers to the detriment of our indigenous industry. So, Gandhiji revived the art of spinning and decided that spinning the Charkha should be the symbol of Shrama-yagna. The Ashramites were expected to spin for an hour every day without fail. This exercise was called Sutrayagna.

Over and above this, he made it a rule that all domestic chores should be performed by the Ashramites themselves, including a reformed method of scavenging - the last out of respect for the 'Bhangi', whom he later called 'Harijan', the lowest of the low in the Hindu caste system.

### 7. Asvada - Control of Palate

Palate being one of the senses, its control is obviously a part of Sadhana of the pilgrim to Truth.

Gandhiji gave it a special place as a separate vow because he believed that control of the palate was inevitable for Brahmacharya that observance of Brahmacharya became easier if taste was conquered.

Besides, conquest of taste was helpful in the conquest of other senses too.

The most important condition of Asvadawas the conviction that food is meant only to sustain the body for service of others. So, to indulge the taste by a variety of culinary delicacies was against the spirit of Asvada.

This vow was adhered to rather rigidly in the Ashram. The food in the common kitchen was as simple as possible, without any condiments, some times even without salt. Individual families who cooked at home did not always develop Asvada to the extent desirable. All the same most of these families had their own rules regarding simple diet more or less in keeping with the concept of Asvada.



### 8. Abhaya - Fearlessness

Psychologists tell us that fear is a natural reflex in all living beings on par with hunger, sleep and the sexual urge. How then can one vow, "I shall not experience fear" ?

And yet fearlessness is the backbone of most other virtues. Gandhiji appreciated the importance of fearlessness partly because he used to be a timid child, full of all kinds of fears. Later on he consciously trained himself into fearlessness.

The Gita places Abhaya at the head of divine attributes. Many poet-devotees sing the praises of fearlessness in spiritual life.

Fears are innumerable. All of us are afraid of disease, injury, death; of loss of wealth, loss of prestige, loss of loved ones; of displeasing our dear ones, of displeasing the boss, of displeasing society and so on. Some people can get rid of some of these fears, others struggle to conquer other fears. In order to realise truth, it is necessary to remove all fear, which is hardly possible. A Sadhaka should, therefore, endeavour to rid himself or herself of as many

kinds of fears as possible.

The fear of God, which in other words means the fear of wrong doing, is one fear which no one should give up. This fear keeps us on guard against further growth of unwholesome traits of the mind and perhaps helps us

in going beyond ordinary fears.

### 9. Sarva-Dharma-Samanatva- Equal Respect for all Religions

This is a very important vow in a multi-religious country like India. One has a natural respect for one's own religion, and rightly so. But that respect need not lead one into disrespect for other religions. All religions help their adherents

to proceed towards an ideal life. All religions have had devotees who realised God in their own way. And yet no religion is perfect. Quest of truth being the moving spirit behind all religions, they are always subject to a process of evolution and re-interpretation. So one should never consider one's own religion to be the only perfect religion. On this ground, Gandhiji was against conversion unless it was desired by some one through conviction. All should study first one's own religion and then as many others as possible and appreciate the good points of all of them.

In the daily prayers of the Ashram, there were chantings from the Koran, the Buddhist prayer, the Bible and so on. In South Africa a bhajan was being sung which said "Dear to me is the name of Rama." A Parsi friend once suggested, "Why don't we sing 'Dear to me is the name of Hormuzd?'" The congregation took up the idea. That was the spirit generated by Gandhiji's ideal of Sarva-Dharma-Samabhava.

#### **10. Swadeshi - Duty Towards the Neighbour**

As early as 1909 Gandhiji had found that India was filled with items of every day use imported from England. This was one of the main causes of the impoverishment of the country. Then again, it was necessary to induce Indians to be proud of their country.

In order to achieve this, Gandhiji after returning to India in 1915, researched on Khadi, reestablished the forgotten Charkha and unfolded his theory of Swadeshi, for the rejuvenation of Indian economy and Indian self-respect...

But then, Gandhiji was never satisfied with only the economic or political aspect of ideas. He gave Swadeshi a deeper significance based on an ancient ideal which says that one's first duty was not one's neighbours. Fulfilled in the spirit of love, that duty was not to at variance with one's duty to men further away either.

It was in this light that Gandhiji said that the Swadeshi movement was not harmful to the British mill hand, as it saved him from exploitation of his Indian brethren. This spirit of love made the labourer in Manchester his friend when Gandhiji went there even though Gandhiji

was instrumental in bringing about unemployment of the British textile labourer.

#### **11. Asprishyata - Navaran- Removal of Untouchability**

This vow meant that Ashramites would mix as freely with so called untouchables as with all other people.

This was, perhaps the vow most difficult to be practiced. Among the Ashramites themselves all were not free from the age-old Hindu belief that a person born in certain castes pollutes others by his touch.

For Gandhiji ever since his twelfth year the ideal that any human being was inferior to another was not palatable. He always resisted the very basis of untouchability. He called it a cancer of Hindu Society. He had already started practicing the removal of untouchability while in South Africa.

Then, soon after he returned to India he accepted an untouchable family in the Ashram. Several of the inmates, including Kasturba were quite upset at this step; the financial aid that the Ashram was receiving all but stopped. Gandhiji, however did not flinch from his decision. The resentment soon died down and sympathetic friends solved the financial problem as well.

Later on Gandhiji gave the name 'Harijan' to the untouchables and gave a great deal of his time to their amelioration. So these were how the eleven vows were observed in Gandhiji's Ashram. They were quite well known in his lifetime. Even non-Ashramites studied them and tried to follow some of them to some extent.

People ask us: "Are Gandhiji's vows relevant today?" My husband once asked a counter question: 'Is a lamp relevant in darkness?'

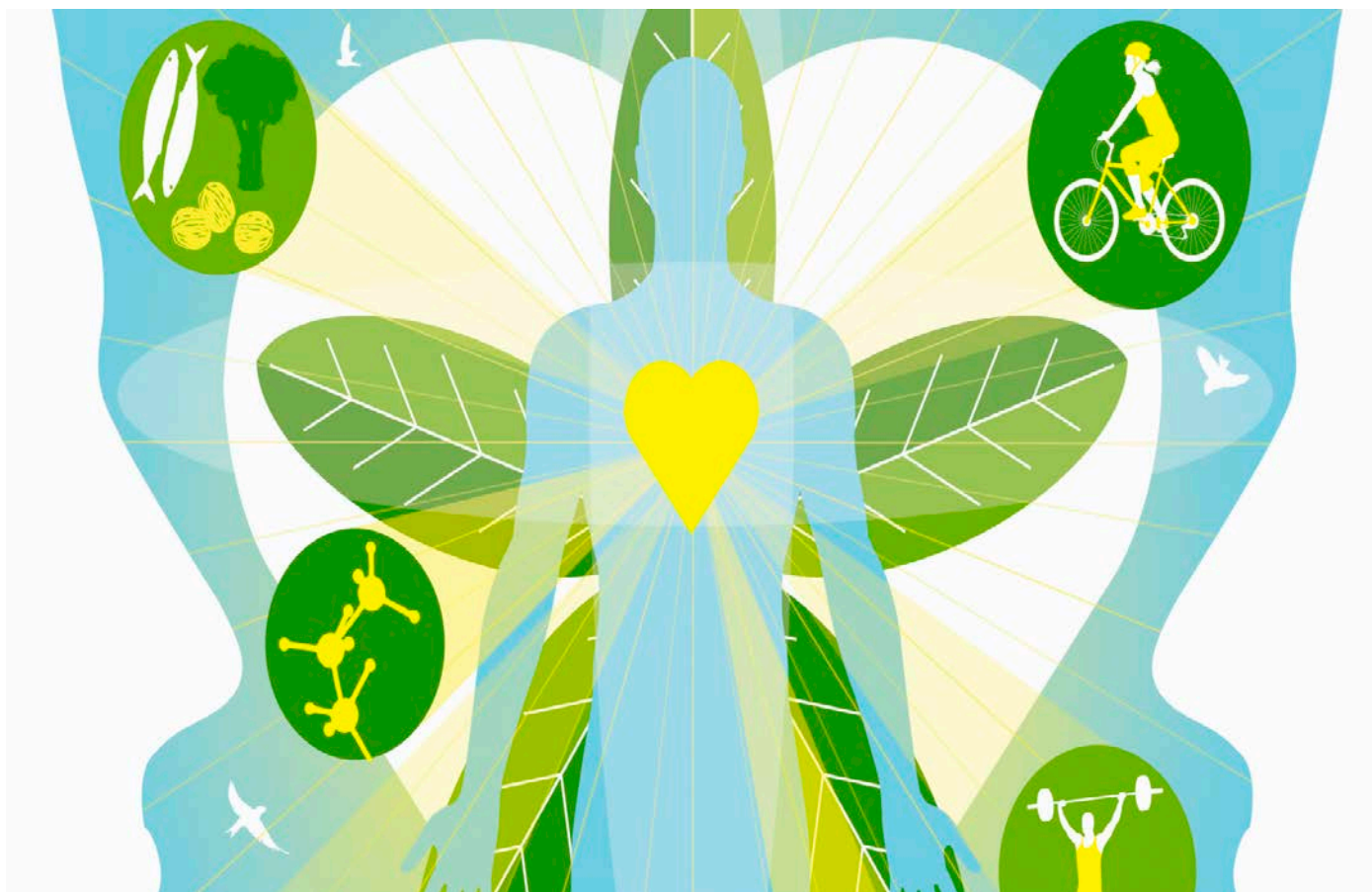
The eleven vows cover such a vast canvas of life that one cannot say enough about their relevance today and tomorrow.

In ending this resume we hope that these spiritual lamps would shed enough light on the paths of the people of India, nay on the paths of the people of the world to enable them to make this poor troubled Earth a better place to live in.

*Source: [www.gandhi-manibhavan.org](http://www.gandhi-manibhavan.org)*

*Picture Credit: <http://static2.todanoticia.com>*

# Nature - the Best Medicine



Man has so much to learn from Nature that a new field of study known as Biomimetics or Biomimicry has arisen to understand nature systems, processes and elements and take creative inspiration from them to find solution to man's problems. The first suspension bridge across the Niagara came after looking at the suspension web of a spider.

The new science, which has been largely enabled by nanotechnology - the manipulation and construction of materials at atomic and molecular levels. Nature is a great teacher if we will spare time to observe and learn. Albert Einstein said "look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better". Stephen Covey in his book, the 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' mentions the law of the harvest as an example to show right time for each activity, planning, sowing etc to get desired results.

The processes of Nature are harmonious and rhythmic. The trees that grow all around express spontaneously this harmony. The birds with their varied melodious chirpings are in perfect

tune with their surroundings and live in each other's company in playful mood without bitterness. The trees and birds behave according to their instincts. There is no reasoning or thoughtful decision.

But man acts less by instinct but more by thinking and rationalizing. Instinct never errs. It is a gift of nature which can never make a mistake. By thought and reasoning, man can interfere with the nature's processes, violate them and commit mistakes. When we distance from nature's harmony, it causes disharmony and disease.

One simple example is chewing tobacco, smoking a cigarette, or drinking alcohol. At the first instance the man's natural instincts / senses reject them but when he indulges and makes a habit, he gets addicted and gets into serious health problems namely liver cirrhosis, oral and lung cancer. This is man's own making.

Childhood obesity and adult obesity have become endemic in developed countries due to consumerism aggressively pursued by processed food industry with chemicals acting as slow



poisons. Stress a man made health problem, is increasing due to competitive, fast moving and ambitious life style. Allergy and Asthma, gifts from junk foods and polluted environment, are increasing in the recent years. Obesity, stress, wrong food habits, lack of exercise, sedentary life style are playing a major role in causing type 2 diabetes, hypertension and cardiac problems.

A drive has been launched to lower the death toll due to chronic diseases with emphasis on prevention by regulating diet, healthy food habits, yoga and other exercises under 'help your body' initiative with the help of doctors, NGOs and pharma companies. Mohan Gupta an advocate of natural healing says that by maintaining a natural life style, one can beat the most chronic and severe ailments.

This involves intake of only natural and organic foods, right amount at the right time. It also involves a daily discipline for the mind and the body. Yoga way of life - means the way of life based on the vision of Oneness. It is a complete science for living a simple life in harmony with Nature and whole creation.

The human race is simply a part of Nature, one amongst millions of creatures. There is only

Nature left when you have exhausted all the Gurus and isms, all those meditations, breathing and other techniques. Hindu way of life nurtures Nature. We worship the sun, wind, land, trees, plants and water which is the very base of human survival.

We take for granted, the natural beauty of flower garden or fruit trees. Varieties of shapes and colors. Just be aware and observe the flowering of buds, the maturing and ripening of fruits, eating and playing of birds. Nature, they say heals. It is a stress buster too. Nature is macro and also micro.

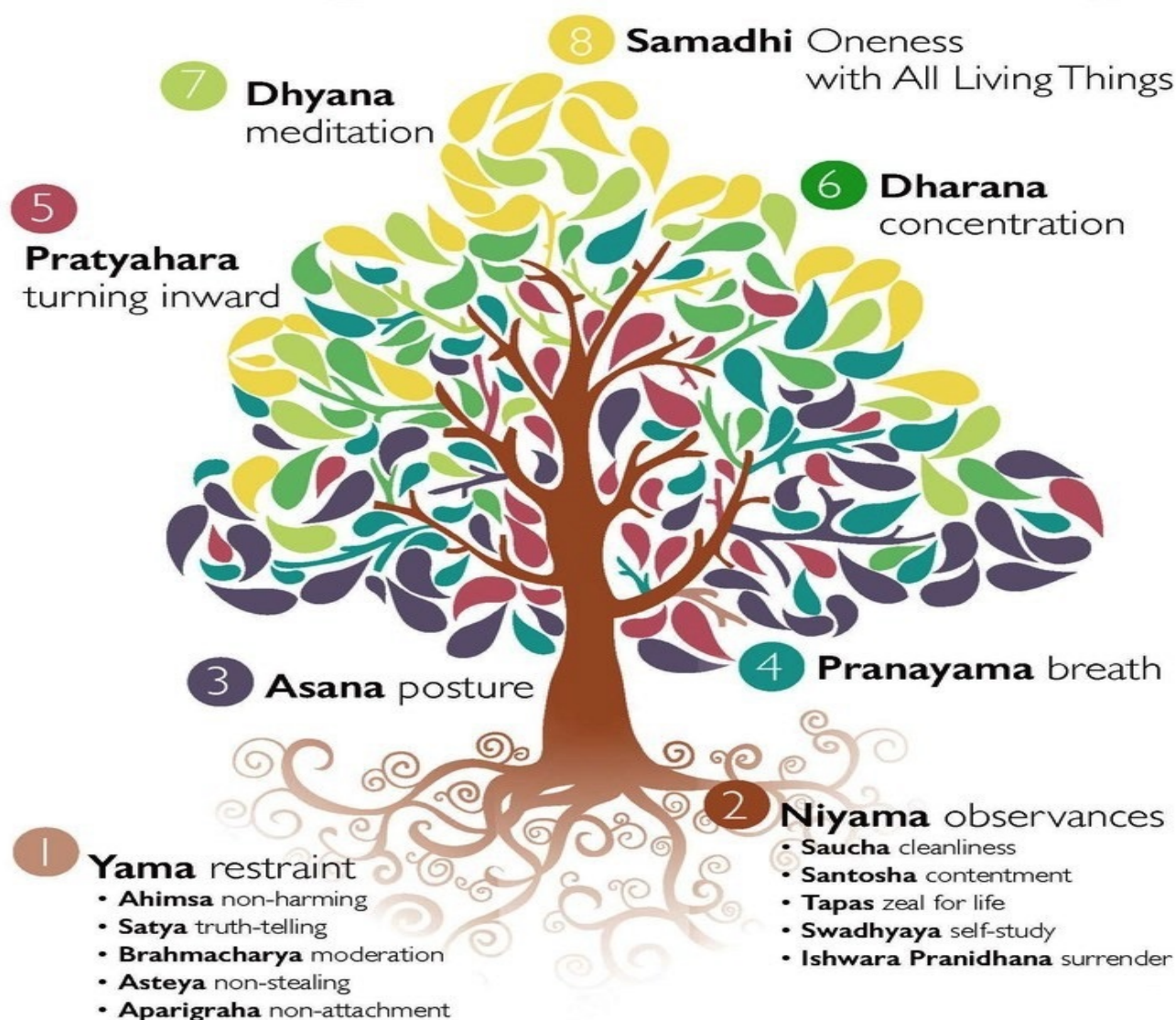
It is gross and also subtle. It is simple and also complex. That is the beauty of Nature. Sparing sometime for watching and appreciation of Nature's beauty in variety of flowers (shapes & fragrance), fruits (sight & taste) and birds (sounds and movement) produce subtle joy and relaxation and strengthen the innate immunity.

-Prof. B.C. Harinath,  
Source: SEVAMED, JB Tropical  
Disease Research Centre, MG  
Institute of Medical Sciences,  
Sevagram, India



# What is Yoga?

## The Eight-Limbs of Yoga



When a yogi or yogini looks outside, towards the world and cosmos, or inside, within their own mind and inner world, they find answers filling every inch of space and time. People, most of them, non-yogis or yoginis, have a different perception; they find only questions and mystery all around, and no answers. This is the difference between Yoga and those who do not practice Yoga.

Swami Vivekananda explains it from a different angle but if the explanation is perfect: “Why can’t we know this secret of the universe?” And the answer given was very significant: “Because we talk in vain, and because we are satisfied with the things of the senses, and because we are

running after desires; therefore, we, as it were, cover the Reality with a mist.”

Here the word Maya is not used at all, but we get the idea that the cause of our ignorance is a kind of mist that has come between us and the Truth.’ How do we get rid of the mist? Yoga is one of the best means to find the answers to all the searching questions that teem in our minds.

### Concentration Brings Knowledge

The English word ‘yoke’ and its meaning is the correct meaning of the word ‘yoga’, to join. But there is another meaning to the word ‘yoga’ and that is: concentration, samadhai. Patanjali and many Yoga treatises use ‘Yoga’ in the sense of concentration. Swami Vivekananda says: “This is

the one call, the one knock, which opens the gates of nature, and lets out floods of light. This, the power of concentration, is the only key to the treasure-house of knowledge.

The system of Raja-Yoga deals almost exclusively with this. In the present state of our body we are so much distracted, and the mind is frittering away its energies upon a hundred sorts of things. As soon as I try to calm my thoughts and concentrate my mind upon any one object of knowledge, thousands of undesired impulses rush into the brain, thousands of thoughts rush into the mind and disturb it.

How to check it and bring the mind under control is the whole subject of study in Raja-Yoga.' who begins to control and suppress the chitta-vrittis, the activities in the chitta or mind-stuff, succeeds in ending attachment to gross or subtle material objects, will experience samadhi, state of deep concentration. This is the road to the ecstatic experience of the ultimate Reality.

### Yoga Traditions Rooted in the Vedas

The history of Yoga is clear. It arose from the early Vedic yajnas, sacrifices, that were internalized, as is found in the Upanishads. There are opponents to this idea; they put forward ancient Buddhism and Jainism, are the origin of the Yoga practices. These religions were shramanic, mainly practised by renunciates, who besides being parivrajya, itinerant or mendicants, also sat down and

practised meditation, as that being the core of their religion.

However, in the earliest Upanishads we find a mantra: 'One should reflect on the saman (mantras) with which one should eulogize; on the rik on which the saman rests; on the rishi who saw the rik verse; and one should reflect on the Deity which one would eulogize.' (Chandogya Upanishad 1.3.8-9). Then we have the pancha-agni-vidya, meditation of the five fires.

The whole sentient and insentient universe is thought of as a group of factors in a cosmic sacrifice involving five fires according to their subtle nature and they are all knit together. In conclusion, we find also in the Chandogya Upanishad (III.16-17) the declaration: 'Man himself is a sacrifice' and shows in detail how

this can be so. Thus the roots of modern meditation methods can be traced to the Vedic or Upanishadic upasanas, meditations.

When we come to the recent Upanishadic literature as in the Shevtashvatra and Katha, the references to Yoga are clear and coherent. For instance in the Katha Upanishad (2.3.11) we have: 'They consider that keeping of the senses steady as yoga.

One becomes vigilant at that time for yoga is subject to growth and

decay.' In the last mantra of the same Upanishad we have the word 'yoga viddhim', the process of yoga, that was acquired by Nachiketa from his teacher 'Death'. Then also we have the concepts



of nadis, currents in the body, and pranas, life forces, and centres of consciousness clearly delineated in the Vedic literature.

### **Vedic Upasanas**

The rishis of the Upanishads gave the various upasanas, which were not separate from life, but through which life was progressively spiritualised. As these upasanas gradually became more and more prevalent and diverse, and as the basis of spiritual life, it took two forms: objective direction—as in the form of bhakti, devotion, and karma, duty; subjective withdrawal—as is done in Yoga.

Then the great Acharyas starting from Gaudapadacharya, Shankaracharya and so on, who formed and formulated the Advaita Darshana, combined the two processes and reaped the highest fruit in the form of aparoksha-anubhuti, immediate realization. Apart from the Advaita Vedanta traditions, both the objective and subjective streams of upasanas became in time the mighty bhakti and yoga movements that changed India's cultural and social structures and brought India to the pinnacle of its glory.

As various types of yogis practised the Yoga disciplines for centuries they modified the basic structure according to their separate Schools, personalities, and cultural differences, and thus we find a variety of Yoga methods today. Yoga practices also streamed forth from India, especially through Buddhism and its bhikshus, towards the East and far East and changed their culture and religions.

We also find tell-tale remnants of Yoga practices in the far West Asia. The whole of Asia was thus impacted through Yoga. Alexandria with its great library was the intellectual centre of the world for centuries and one find traces of merchants and also wise men from India intermingling in its cosmopolitan ambience. It is possible that they carried with them, or were acquainted with, the Yoga philosophy.

### **Yoga Leads to Super-consciousness**

In simple layman's terms: the mechanisms through which Nature functions internally as mind, senses, intellect etc., and externally as the forces of Nature is ours to conquer if we can deeply understand and use these mechanisms.

This is delineated in the Vibhuti Pada, Chapter on Supernatural powers, in the Yoga Sutras.

And this then makes sense when it is placed after the Sadhana Pada, Chapter on Practice. This is the science of the Super-consciousness, and, as mentioned in the opening lines, reveals all knowledge. A yogi or yogini not only has control over his or her body and mind and all the life forces within, but also obtains the powers over Nature. This is well understood in Yoga literature and in the other sacred, semi-sacred, cultural and folk tales of India. Thus the goal of Yoga is absolute freedom through Super-consciousness.

### **Illustration of Chitta-vrittis**

Some people have survived the experienced of being in a small boat, in the middle of an ocean, that was tossed about by high and rough waves during a storm. These survivors still shudder when they remember that experience. But this is exactly the same thing that everybody experiences during our waking state and less in the dream state.

The mind of almost all people is like an ocean in a storm that is tossing us and our good intentions up and down and almost drowning us. In contrast the mind of a yogi or yogini is like an ocean after a storm in which the boat sits placidly. Everything is silent and beautiful. This is called chitta-vritti nirodha, control of the chitta-vrittis. This is the highest stage a person can reach through abhyasa, practice, and vairagya, renunciation, which has got another name: samadhi.

This is the state of Yoga and the Bhagavad Gita likens it to a un-flickering flame of a lamp kept in a windless place. Vrittis is a movement of the mind-stuff, and Swami Vivekananda translates the word as 'whirlpool'. A whirlpool occurs with every movement in the chitta. This has to gradually lessen and lessen become more and more internalized till all movements in the chitta stop.

This is what Yoga is all about. When the water in a pond is muddy and rough we do not see the bottom of the pond. Let the water stay undisturbed for a time for the mud to settle and then the water becomes crystal clear and we can see the bottom of the pond. Likewise, we see the



Purusha or the soul when all the chitta-vrittis are stilled.

### **Different Methods and the Internal Instrument**

There are many upayas, methods of practice, which are given by the Yoga teachers and one has to take up that is suitable to one's tattwas, materials formed in a particular way. This will enable one to practice effectively. Many people rush in to control the mind and in a few days become disillusioned and turn away from Yoga saying it is impossible in this age.

As we can see from the illustration of a boat in the storm, one has to be very intelligent, diligent, and patient in the sadhana stage. A little explanation of chitta-vritti is necessary to understand before one practices because that is what is known as Yoga. One can take up any method but one has to modify it to suit one's practice, personality, and quality of the anthakarana, internal instrument.

The anthakarana comprises of chitta, manas, mind, buddhi, intellect, and ahamkara, egoism. The material of which it is formed, like everything in Nature, is the three gunas of Prakriti—sattwa, rajas, and tamas. This is the hardware; the software is the samskaras, mental impressions or memory.

These samskaras when mixed with desire form vasanas, which are not easily destroyed. The impressions come in two categories: jnanashaya, receptacle of knowledge impressions, and karmashaya, receptacle of karma impressions.

### **Internal Means to Knowledge and Power**

As one begins to practise in stages one can concentrate for longer and longer periods of time. When a yogi can direct the internal energies on one object and keep it fixed there it is called dharana. The next stage comes when an unbroken flow of knowledge arises from that knowledge it is called dhyana.

Then when giving up all external forms of the object, only the knowledge of the object internally flashes it is samadhi. These three stages are called Samyama. They are the internal means to knowledge. It may sound simple but it is not. If one can keep the internal energies focussed on one object for twelve matras,

seconds, it is one dharana; twelve such dharanas (twelve x twelve seconds =144 seconds) it becomes a dhyana; twelve such dhyanas (a little less than twenty-nine minutes) makes a samadhi. When this Samyama is perfected 'Comes the Light of Knowledge' (Yoga Sutras 3.5). As this lower samadhi is repeatedly practised in stages, it is constantly purified and then 'Knowledge in that is called ritambhara prajna, "filled with Truth".' (Yoga Sutras, 1.48).

This is a tremendous stage. Here the yogi or yogini sees knowledge everywhere, internally and externally. All powers of Prakriti come also to this person as he or she has meditated on the different stages of the evolution of matter in its gross and fine forms, by employing Samyana. This jnana, knowledge, comes also in stages; as our internal instrument become more and more purified, the knowledge comes in seven stages finally (Yoga Sutras 2.27) ending in perfection.

### **Conclusion**

It is here that the paths of Vedanta and Yoga converge. Here the yogi or yogini becomes free. In these final stages perfection, it did not matter if one traversed the path of Upanishadic meditations or the various paths or traditions of Yoga. Swami Vivekananda echoing the Upanishadic rishis, declares: 'The goal of mankind is knowledge; pleasure is not the goal.'

He further goes to also to say that the search for Truth in the external world is science; and the search Truth in the internal world is religion. Ultimately both science and religion converge for the distinction of internal and external is a mere fiction. Thus humankind progresses from lower truth to higher truth and never from error to truth. Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita (4.33) declares: 'Sarvam-karma-akhilam partha, jnane parisampyate; all karma culminates in knowledge.' Yoga is the best means to hasten the process. The yogi or yogini does not only attain knowledge but becomes knowledge, as the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says: 'In that state the man himself becomes the light'.

*-Swami Satyamayananda, a monk of the  
Ramakrishna Order at Ramakrishna Mission  
Ashrama, Kanpur, India*

*Source: [www.bicjbt-drc-mgims.in](http://www.bicjbt-drc-mgims.in)*

*Picture credit: [www.dallasyogafest.org](http://www.dallasyogafest.org)*

## Where is the Reality?

*'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has'.*

*-Margaret Mead*

If our globe is really warming, we, in the medical profession, will have to be worried as there might

be exponential growth of vascular disease epidemics when the globe really warms.

Those in the medical business, like the doctors in the 18th century London during the small pox epidemics, which used to kill almost 90% of the population, would be very happy as their business will be booming. Theoretically lots of other calamities

could occur including some of the Island nations getting submerged!

I was in London during the early 70s for some time. The fear then was of global cooling. The media was agog with predictions of global cooling and of an impending ice age! The trigger was a long winter then which got extended by a month and sleet covered the ground in Europe leading to absence of any plant growth. The Al Gores and Pachauris were not in the picture then. The spring vegetation did not come up. Thank God, public memory is very short. Suddenly in the last ten odd years there is a hue and cry about global warming and in the US powers that be have been granting huge research grants for so called research. Scientifically future predictions never come right

in this non-linear world as we use linear mathematics to calculate weather forecasts!

If you go back in time and look at the temperature charts this globe was much warmer than now several times but each time it cooled down with time. This could also be one such hike. There were troughs also predicting the ice age that got corrected. The question still remains if man can really warm or cool the globe? This globe is too big for us to have the power to drastically change its climate. But there are many more manmade disasters that could annihilate mankind on this planet about which we do not make much fuss about. One quick example comes to mind.

We have chemically poisoned all our rivers, thanks to the money making industries trying to discharge their deadly chemical effluents to our rivers making drinking water a problem for mankind. In fact, if there is a third World War it could be over water. Fossil fuel burning by the transport industry is reaching its pinnacle but again the vested interests do not let any research in that area.

To cap it all, the so called health scare industry which in effect is only a sickness care industry uses such deadly chemicals which are alien to the human biology to treat diseases; the latter are never cured by chemicals, anyway. Chemicals in cosmetics and agriculture have reached a breaking point in that a recent study of cord blood in new born babies was found to have nearly 278 deadly



chemicals from all these above mentioned sources! The worse calamity that is waiting to explode, much more dangerous than global warming, is the adverse drug reactions epidemic (ADR). Someone called them the weapons of mass destruction. Cancer chemotherapy is a trillion dollar business. The chemical drug business where

Industry loves it as this new syndrome is a money spinner in its own right through liver transplants! Drug related deaths are only statistics for the industry while they help the industry indirectly. The ADR syndrome needs further drugs to control them before death. That alone nets more than 70 billion dollars in a year for the drug industry—a



good bargain indeed! All these started, thanks to the greed of three top rich people then who formed a consortium to control medical education in the US in the last century where a high school headmaster, Abraham Flexner, was appointed to inspect the 240 odd medical schools in America at 1910 to find out who among them were scientific. This reminds me of what Winston Churchill from the opposition in the House of Commons commented when Lord Goschen became the first Lord of the Admiralty. “Lord Goschen, who knows not the motion of the Ocean, still becomes the First

they can hike the prices sky-high at will is another zillion dollar business! They are all reductionist chemicals and are loathed by the human system, so beautifully shown by Professor DC Wallace in his epoch making study (Genetics 2008; 179: 727) have a sordid tale to tell.

Lord of Admiralty!’ Similarly, Abraham Flexner who knows not the nuances of medical education becomes the arbiter of what is scientific and what is not in medical education Abraham Flexner when he submitted his report in 1910 telling that only those 47 medical colleges using chemical drugs produced by the consortium of that trio are scientific and the rest are quackery! All others eventually died a natural death as the then Government published the Flexner report daily in the front page of New York Times to let the world know about it, naturally paid for by the consortium. Global warming is another of those industrial agendas for their own survival and they are pushing it. No power on earth can stop them from their single minded devotion to scare the world into believing their propaganda while the real scares shown above are swept under the carpet.

ADR is supposed to kill millions all over the world. Three different audits in the USA showed them at different times as the tenth leading cause of death there. The next one showed it to be one of the top five but a recent survey showed them to be on the top of the list! While global warming makes daily headlines in the main line media I am yet to see the media highlighting ADR as a dangerous scenario! This has another fall out. While all reductionist chemicals are rejected by the human system they are sent to the liver for destruction in that chemical factory. If one were to carefully watch the liver function after any chemical medicine consumed one would see a flurry of activity there trying to destroy the drugs. A new epidemic has raised its ugly head lately, called the non-alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver killing people.

*“The fastest way to dumb down the population is to scare them.” -Anon*

- Dr. (Prof.) B.M. Hegde, *Picture Credit:*  
<http://images.itv.com>

# Heroes Come in All Shapes and Sizes

As you know, I often speak about ripples and waves. I steadfastly believe each of us has the power to create ripples of change in our lives and the lives of others. I have a number of

safety and wellbeing to help save, rescue and treat the wounded and dying. People like you and me, the first instincts of these everyday heroes are to serve others before themselves.



heroes that have and continue to inspire me. These heroes include those from history and living people who embrace the concept of the ripple effect and who, through their selflessness, courage and heart improve the lives of so many.

In recent weeks we have been touched and deeply saddened by yet more reports of senseless, tragic attacks around the world that have claimed the lives of innocent and often young victims. Hundreds of lives have been lost in bombings and violent attacks in Iraq, Cameroon, Afghanistan, Somalia, Nigeria, South Sudan and the United Kingdom.

These attacks are a painful reminder of the worst of humanity, but without exception, amidst the violence and tragic loss of life, we are always shown the best of humanity. There are so many stories of people who put aside their

Take for example, Chris Parker from the Manchester attack and Kirsty Boden from the most recent London Bridge attack. Chris Parker, a 33 year old homeless man, rushed to the aid of those caught up in the Manchester attack. He comforted an eight year old girl who was seriously injured in the suicide bombing and held a dying woman in his arms so she didn't pass away alone. When interviewed, a very humble Chris downplayed his acts of bravery, saying "I may be homeless but I have a heart ... anyone in my position would have done the same as me".

Kirsty Boden, a 28 year old Australian nurse working in London, who, at the time of the London Bridge and Borough Market attacks, despite being off duty, raced towards danger to help injured people. Kirsty paid the ultimate

sacrifice by losing her life whilst trying to treat and protect others.

These stories are a reminder that heroes come in all shapes and sizes. Chris and Kirsty were beautiful examples of young people who embraced the good and humanity in others, and who's first choice was to help rather than hide.

Another inspirational young man, whom I've had the privilege of meeting is Tasmanian boy Campbell Remess. Campbell (aka 'Bumble'), is, as the founder of Project 365, the youngest CEO in Australia. Standing a little over 4 feet tall, 13-year-old Campbell is a philanthropist with a huge heart.

I met Campbell at a Starlight Foundation school charity breakfast event where I was Master of Ceremonies. Campbell and his parents, Sonya and Nathan, spoke about a choice made by Campbell almost four years ago. Deciding that kindness, not hate, was the only way to change the world, Campbell has spread good will with extraordinary gestures.

On Christmas Eve 2013, Campbell, one of 9 children from an ordinary Australian family, decided to make toys and teddy bears for sick children in hospital. His parents explained they didn't have the resources to buy so many presents, but with their encouragement and support, he made the toys and teddy bears himself. Every day since then Campbell has been at his sewing machine making a teddy bear. Often a child, but sometimes an adult, the bears are given to someone desperately in need of a smile and loving gesture.

Campbell has auctioned and donated over 1200 hand-made teddy bears to people all over the world. These people may be suffering from serious and terminal illnesses, be victims of violence or parents grieving for lost children. At the Starlight Foundation charity breakfast,



Campbell spoke of bears made for Ariana Grande following the Manchester attacks and Candice Hedge, one of the Australian survivors of the London Bridge attacks.

Campbell hasn't stopped at teddies. Under his not-for-profit organization, he has raised funds and organised gala dinners for the Love Your Sister charity, raised money to send cancer victims on Kindness Cruises and supported countless other charities, including the Fred Hollows Foundation.

Campbell's story reminds us we all have the capacity to spread kindness and love and that a single act of kindness can change someone's life. If a child of nine chooses to pay kindness forward, then isn't there so much hope for humanity and our planet, especially if our future is in the hands of young people like Campbell?

*Rabia Siddique, an Australian criminal and human rights lawyer, retired British Army officer, author, professional speaker and hostage survivor is author of Rabia Siddique autobiography, Equal Justice.*



# 5 Mantras to Put Failure into Perspective

In a recent post, I had written about the fear of failure and how it has the power to overwhelm us. Indeed, it manipulates our thinking and

makes us feel small and belittled. We start seeing ourselves as not being enough.

And yet, if we were to analyse why we fail, we



determines our behaviour. We start believing that it is our limitations and inadequacies that lie at the heart of our failure when, in fact, failure is natural and everyone has experienced it.

I had suggested that this was entirely because we live our life according to the dictates and expectations of others—be it parents, siblings, family, teachers, team mates or employers. We start living their dream and often end up falling short.

This fear, however irrational it might appear, is very real and has visible external manifestations. For instance, procrastination is often a consequence of our belief that something is still lacking and that it falls short of externally imposed expectations. Consequently, many fear going to school or to work because we dread that our failings would become a matter of rebuke. We genuinely believe that we would become the butt-end of jokes and criticism. Fear

would be able to do something about it. Consider, for instance, how the five mantras below could impact our thinking and behaviour:

## 1. Live your dream

While the external space has expectations of us, we need to know what we expect from ourselves. If we fail to do this, we would become like human robots without a mind of our own. Our actions would be mechanical and devoid of soul.

## 2. Know your 'why'

In an earlier post, I had written about "the power of why" and how it lies at the root of passion and transformative thinking. Passion fills us with a deep sense of mindfulness. Yet, what we are familiar with is that many know what they want to do but don't quite know why they want to do it. This can often lead to failure and finally, to a sense of frustration. If, on the other hand, we are driven by "why", in the wonderful words of Maya Angelou, we would love what we do and do what we love.



To be driven by the power of why is passion. In a similar vein, to understand failure is dispassion. Zen Buddhists call this sense of equanimity the "is-that-so" awakening when success and failure, happiness and grief, black and white are not seen as contradictions but as part of a continuum. Understanding failure is the first step towards accepting it. Dispassion is when we learn to accept both failure and success without letting either overwhelm us. It helps us conquer the fear of failure.

### 5. Ethics and "why"

To embed "the why" outside ethics or the right thing to do can succeed but only temporarily. It can never provide long-lasting satisfaction. Passion, dispassion and compassion are the trinity leading to transformative thinking. Human thought and action succeed only when they transform lives for the better. It takes us from the mundane to the sublime. Finally, we begin to matter to ourselves. Neither failure nor

success holds us hostage. Only "the why" survives and we are the better for it.

Amit Dasgupta, a distinguished former Consul General of India, Sydney, author, educator and inaugural India Country Director of The University of New South Wales (UNSW)

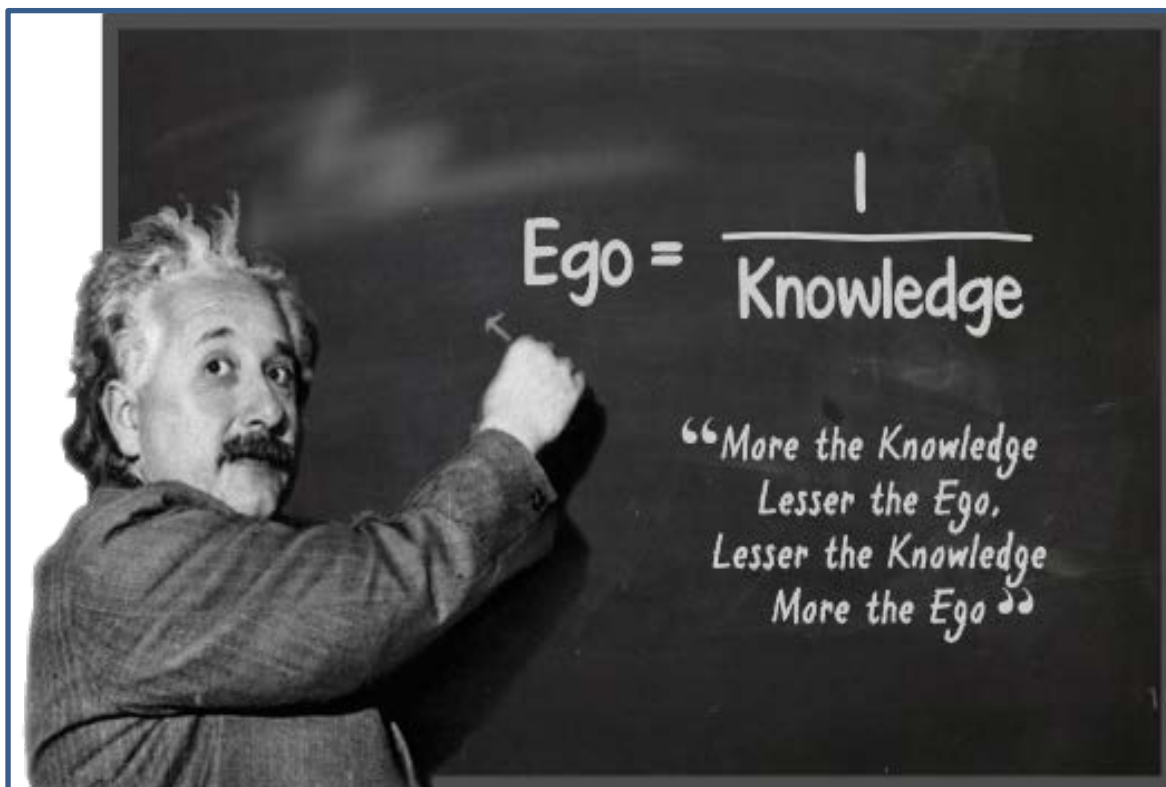
is the author of *Lessons from Ruslana: In Search of Transformative Thinking*; Harper Collins; 2015.

Source: [www.huffingtonpost.in](http://www.huffingtonpost.in)

### 3. Control your ego

A strong sense of ego drives human behaviour. We sincerely believe we can do no wrong. Unfortunately, in a fiercely competitive environment, people—even at the highest levels—

lose their jobs, not necessarily because they are not good enough but because someone managed to edge them out or that the professional skill



requirements changed. Ego prevents us, however, from accepting the situation and we resist our ouster because we feel belittled in the eyes of the external space.

### 4. Understand failure

## Guru Amar Das (A.D. 1479-1574) (A.D.

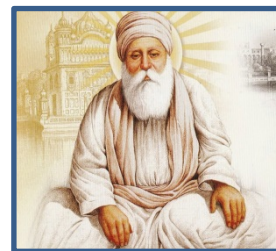
Guru Amar Das, the third Master, was born at Basarke in Amritsar district on May 5, 1479. His father, Tej Bhan, and his mother were orthodox Hindus. At the age of 23, Amar Das married Bibi Mansa Devi. He had two sons, Mohan and Mohri, and two daughters. Before meeting Guru Angad, Amar Das was a devout Hindu and a follower of the Vaishnav cult and used to go to the Ganges for a dip in the holy river every year. However, in spite of performing all these religious ceremonies, his mind remained far from settled. He felt something lacking in him. He had no solace and was yearning to find a spiritual Master who could lead him to salvation.

One fine morning, Amar Das heard someone singing the hymns of Guru Nanak. The singer of the hymns was Bibi Amro, daughter of Guru Angad. His inner feelings were aroused and he hastened to Bibi Amro to know the name of the composer of the hymns which had given him solace. She told him that the hymns were composed by Guru Nanak and her father, Guru Angad, had told her to recite them.

Amar Das then went to see Guru Angad and fell at his feet. This gave him complete tranquillity. Then he started living at Khadur Sahib where he found the atmosphere very calm and quiet. He daily listened to the hymns of the Guru and took food in Guru-ka-langar. He used to rise early in the morning and bring water from the river for the Guru's bath. He discharged his duty with great joy. Guru Amar Das was appointed 'Guru' by Guru Angad in March 1552. Guru Angad declared that there was no difference between him and Amar Das and that they both had become one.

Guru Amar Das established his headquarters at Goindwal and preached the Name of God to all those who visited him. He expected every visitor to partake of food in Guru-ka-langar before seeing him. Even Emperor Akbar who visited once sat in the langar and took his meals in the langar. No distinction was made, in the langar between Hindus or Muslims or between high or low castes. This practice struck a further blow to the caste system and forged the bond of love among the Guru's devotees.

A distinctive contribution of Guru Amar Das to the Sikh organisation was the establishment of 22 manjis (dioceses) in many parts of the country to preach Guru Nanak's message.



Many people came to the Guru to listen to his sermons. The church was strengthened further and it took a definite shape. Guru Amar Das introduced many innovations which tended to break the close affiliations of the Sikhs with the Hindus. He sanctified a well alongside the temple at Goindwal and fixed the first of the Hindu month of Vaisakh, as the day of the annual gathering of the Sikhs. HG also introduced new forms of ceremonials for births and deaths, in which the recitation of hymns of the Gurus replaced the chanting of Sanskrit slokas. He tried to do away with the practice of purdah, seclusion of women, advocated monogamy, encouraged inter-caste alliances and re-marriage of widows.

The Guru also forbade the practice of sati, burning of women on the pyre of their husbands. He said that real sati was one who, after the death of her husband, led a pure and chaste life and not the one who burnt herself on her husband's pyre. In fact, the true sati was one who dies in grief of her husband's death.

Thus, the pontificate of Guru Amar Das is indeed a turning point in the history of Sikh faith. Guru Nanak had condemned some of the social and religious beliefs. But Guru Amar Das' achievement was that he constructed a fence around the plant that germinated, lest it should be destroyed by the gale of all consuming Hindu social practices. The plant got an opportunity to grow and fructify. Guru Amar Das left his mortal soil on September 1, 1574.

Guru Amar Das did not consider any of his sons fit to become Guru and instead, chose his son-in-law, Ram Das to succeed him.

*Source: Handbook on Sikhism, Surinder Singh Johar, Vivek Publishing Company, Delhi, India, Picture credit: www.sikh-history.com*



# Vedas

The earliest poetry of humanity is preserved in Sanskrit. Even the earliest specimen of Sanskrit reveals a very advanced stage in the development of literature as a polished art. The first specimen of literature in Sanskrit is 'Vedas'. The vedic race are the first pastoral poets of a simple nomadic people attempting to appease the powers of Nature in order to avoid their wrath and, get favours from them. The imagination and description in this earliest specimen is really marvellous. The vedic seers clearly had a very lively imagination and in their hymns in Sanskrit addressed to the dawn and the sun they reached a poetic perfection both in imaginative felicity and beauty of form which was to be a perennial source of inspiration to the later poets. The vedas are four in number, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharvana Veda. Rig Veda comprises hymns in praise of Gods. Sama Veda comprises those hymns which are set to rhythmic music so that Gods may be pleased with that music and bless the singers. Yajur Veda deals with the various means and methods of spiritual and religious rites. Atharvana Veda contains 'Manthras' used for avoiding evils and dangers and destroying the enemies. After Vedas we have Vedangas and Upanishads. Vedangas are additional members or limbs' of the Vedas. They are 1) Shiksha (phonetics); 2) Kalpa (rituals); 3) Vyakarana (Grammar); 4) Niruktha (letymology); 5) Chandas (Prosody) and 6) Jyothisha (Astronomy).

Upanishads record the wisdom of the age developed by the people and among the people. They are the blossoms of the human mind at its peak of intelligence and wisdom and stand as a monument to prove how far and deep the human mind can go and analyse the truth of life.

Then come the great Epics, Ramayana and Mahabharatha.

Ramayana in Sanskrit language contains 24000 slokas (verses). The great Valmiki who is supposed to be the first to write the classic literature has given the story of Rama who is depicted as the person endowed with all virtues

that one can be expected to have. The story has attracted the attention of the whole world and even now we can see in many foreign countries, especially in the east, some version of Ramayana being studied and glorified and festivals based on the story being celebrated annually.

Mahabharata is the other epic containing about one lakh slokas attributed to the great sage Vyasa. It is said to be the fifth Veda, containing all the noble principles and ideas for the well being of human lives. It is a colossal work in Sanskrit, an encyclopaedia of tradition and legend and political and social institutions of ancient India.

Bhagavad Gita, the renowned, short lyric-didactic poem is contained in the Mahabharatha. This is supposed to be one of the greatest pieces of Sanskrit literature in the whole world and has been translated into a number of foreign languages. This has made the foreigners wonder at the greatness of the Indian mind and, it adds lustre to Hinduism.

We now come to the classical literature of prominence in the period of Kalidasa (5th century). Before Kalidasa there was one Aswaghosha who wrote 'Buddha Charita' but because of the radiance and glory of Kalidasa, all his predecessors were eclipsed. Kalidasa's literature is unique. He has given in his works the spirit and culture of India in all its glory. He has been profusely quoted by the great Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva and other religious authorities from time to time. His main works are three dramas 1) Malavikagnimitra, 2) Vikramorvasiya and 3) Sakuntala, two great Kavyas 1) Raghuvamsa, and 2) Kumarasambhava and, two lyrics 1) Meghaduta and 2) Ritusamhara. Kalidasa proves by his great work that he is the most radiant luminary in the firmament of Sanskrit literature. Especially his drama Sakuntala has been described as the wonderful master piece in the world of literature and the praise and honour given out by the great German poet Goethe is well-known.

Nowhere in the world has the culture and civilisation of a society been developed and

strengthened by poets, as in India. It is not an exaggeration to say that the life of Indian people has been guided, influenced and moulded by the great minds of the poets of India and Kalidasa's share in this aspect is a major one. And there is nothing in Indian thought or Indian mode of life recorded in Sanskrit literature that is incompatible with modern thought or modern ways of life.

After Kalidasa, Bharavi gave Kiratarajuniya, the combat of Arjuna and Shiva (as a hunter) and Magha gave 'Shishupalavada'.

### Important Dramas

There are two ancient languages in which the dramas were developed to a high degree of artistic perfection and they are Sanskrit and Greek.

Before Kalidasa, Bhasa was a great dramatist. He has written 'Swapna Vasavadafta'. The language is simple and elegant.

Kalidasa wrote three dramas as already mentioned.

Bhavabhuthi wrote 'Uttararama Charita' and 'Malathimadhava'.

### Prose

Bana, a contemporary of King Harsha has given an excellent Sanskrit prose work called

Kadambarf, one of the most complicated found in any literature.

Dandi has given 'Dasakumara Charitha'.

### Miscellaneous Literature

**Grammar:** (21) Pathanjali's Mahabhashya is a work of encyclopaedic value. This is the last word in Sanskrit Grammar.

Panini has codified the system of Grammar.

**Philosophy:** There are many branches like Sankya, Mimamsa, Nyaya and Vedanta.

On religion there are the Agamas.

**Laws:** There are 'Sutras' in Sanskrit, which are like laws of the modern age. There are Smritis of Manu, which are the laws of those days.

Astronomy was the Jyotisha in Sanskrit.

Ayurveda is a medical science and the Sanskrit texts on this were written by Charaka and Sushruta.



*-Dr. J. Thuljaram Rao, an Agricultural Scientist with Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore, was associated with The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan at Coimbatore as Honorary Vice Chairman for a period of 22 years till 2003.*

*Source: Cultural Heritage of India*

## Sage Speak

### The Mother on Music

To keep yourself occupied with music and writing is always good; for your nature finds there its inborn occupation and that helps to maintain the vital energy and keep the balance.

About sadhana I should like to ask you: why not do sadhana through your music? Surely meditation is not the only way of doing sadhana. Through your music bhakti and aspiration can grow and prepare the nature for realisation.

You sing your best only when you forget yourself and let it come out from within

without thinking of the need

of excellence or the impression it may make. The outer singer should indeed disappear into the past - it is only so that the inner singer can take her place. -Aurobindashram



## Agastya

Son of rishi Pulastya. A number of anecdotes about this great sage were related by Lornasha muni to the Pandavas during their visit to his ashram in the course of their banishment.

Once Agastya encountered his ancestors hanging upside down in a well. Upon inquiring he was told that their souls could be laid to rest only if he produced an illustrious son. For this he first decided to get married but could not find a suitable maiden. He therefore created one by selecting the best parts of various living creatures and caused her to be born as the

daughter of the king of Vidarbha who was praying for an offspring. She grew up to be a most beautiful maiden and was named Lopamudra. In due course Agastya married her and expressed a desire to produce, in her, an illustrious son for the good of his ancestors. She agreed to his conjugal rights provided he, dressed in rich royal robes, came to her in a jewel encrusted bed such as the one she was used to in her father's house. Agastya did not have such riches but agreed to obtain the needed wealth. Going from king to king, he finally obtained wealth from the demon Ilvala after consuming and digesting his brother Vatapi. Returning to Lopamudra and in accordance with her desire, he produced in her an illustrious son who became the poet Dadhasyu. He thus fulfilled his obligations towards his ancestors.

Agastya was known for his anger and ability to pronounce severe curses. Once when Indradyumna, a Dravidian king and devotee of the gods, did not accord him the usual courtesy through oversight, Indradyumna was turned



into a dim witted elephant by the power of his austerities. On another occasion at the request of the devas he stopped the growth of mount Vindhya and drank all the waters of an ocean under which the Kaleyas danavas were hiding. (3/104-105)


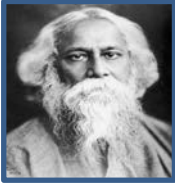
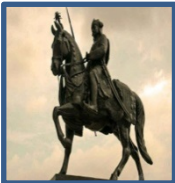



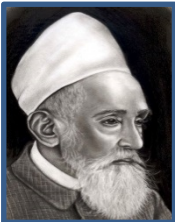
Such were the powers of this great sage that no one could escape his wrath. Once Manimana, a rakshasa leader

and friend of Kubera the treasurer of the gods, saw Agastya undergoing austerities along the banks of the Yamuna. Out of foolishness Manimana spat upon the sage from the skies where upon Agastya cursed that Kubera's entire army would one day be killed by a human and that his misery would end only when he met this extraordinary human. This curse of Agastya ended only when Bhima killed the rakshasa army of Kubera during the wanderings of the Pandavas in the forest.

Even in swarga. Agastya's powers were not diminished. Once when king Nahusha having temporarily become the king of the gods, showed disrespect and kicked this great sage on his head, Agastya pronounced a curse by which Nahusha fell to earth and remained there as a python until the time of his salvation at the hands of Yudhishtira in a later age.

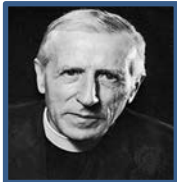
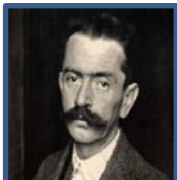


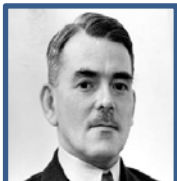


*-Subash Mazumdar, Who is Who in the Mahabharata, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai, India*

## Persons of the Month: India








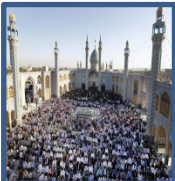
<p>Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (Veer Savarkar)</p> <p>(28 May 1883 – 26 February 1966)</p>		<p>Veer Savarkar was an Indian freedom fighter, revolutionary and politician. He was the proponent of liberty as the ultimate ideal. Savarkar was a poet, writer and play writer.</p>
<p>Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore</p> <p>(7-May-1861 – 7-Aug-1941)</p>		<p>Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore sobriquet Gurudev, was a Bengali polymath who reshaped his region's literature and music. Author of Gitanjali and its "profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse", he became the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913.</p>
<p>Pratap Singh, Maharana of Mewar</p> <p>(9-May-1540 – 29-Jan-1597)</p>		<p>Maharana Pratap was a Hindu Rajput ruler of Mewar, a region in north-western India in the present day state of Rajasthan. In popular Indian culture, Pratap is considered to exemplify the qualities like bravery and chivalry to which Rajputs aspire, especially in context of his opposition to the Mughal emperor Akbar.</p>
<p>Tyāgarāja</p> <p>(4-May-1767 – 6-Jan-1847)</p>		<p>Kakarla Tyagabrahmam colloquially known as Tyagayya and Tyāgarājar, was one of the greatest composers of Carnatic music or classical South Indian music. He is known as the 'pithamaha' (godfather) of carnatic music. He, along with his contemporaries Muthuswami Dikshitar and Shyama Shastry, forms the Trinity of Carnatic music.</p>
<p>Guru Har Gobind</p> <p>(19-Jun-1595 – 2-Mar-1644)</p>		<p>Guru Hargobind Sahib was the sixth of the Sikh gurus and became Guru on 25 May 1606 following in the footsteps of his father Guru Arjan Dev.</p>
<p>Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay</p> <p>(27-Jun-1838 – 8-Apr-1894)</p>		<p>Rishi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay was a Bengali writer, poet and journalist. He was the composer of India's national song Vande Mataram, originally a Bengali and Sanskrit stotra personifying India as a mother goddess and inspiring the activists during the Indian Freedom Movement.</p>
<p>Arastu Yar Jung</p> <p>(10-Jun-1858– 25-Mar-1940)</p>		<p>Nawab Arastu Yar Jung was a Hyderabad Surgeon. He became well known during late Nizam period of Hyderabad, during the early 20th century, for being chief physician and advisor to the Nizam of the time, Mahbub Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VI, and later becoming a prominent philanthropist in Old City of Hyderabad.</p>

Detailed profiles of these personalities are available in Bhavan's Journals.

## Persons of the Month: World

<p>Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1 May, 188 – 10 April 1955)</p>		<p>Pierre Teilhard de Chardin SJ was a French idealist philosopher and Jesuit priest who trained as a paleontologist and geologist and took part in the discovery of Peking Man. He conceived the vitalist idea of the Omega Point (a maximum level of complexity and consciousness towards which he believed the universe was evolving) and developed Vladimir Vernadsky's concept of noosphere.</p>
<p>Ivan Cankar (10 May, 1876– 11 December 1918)</p>		<p>Ivan Cankar was a Slovene writer, playwright, essayist, poet and political activist. Together with Oton Župančič, Dragotin Kette, and Josip Murn, he is considered as the beginner of modernism in Slovene literature. He is regarded as the greatest writer in the Slovene language.</p>
<p>John Bardeen (23 May, 1908 – 30 January 1991)</p>		<p>John Bardeen was an American physicist and electrical engineer, the only person to have won the Nobel Prize in Physics twice: first in 1956 with William Shockley and Walter Brattain for the invention of the transistor; and again in 1972 with Leon N Cooper and John Robert Schrieffer for a fundamental theory of conventional superconductivity known as the BCS theory.</p>
<p>Walt Whitman (31 May, 1819– 26 March 1892)</p>		<p>Walter "Walt" Whitman was an American poet, essayist, and journalist. A humanist, he was a part of the transition between transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works.</p>
<p>Frank Whittle (1 June, 1907 – 9 August 1996)</p>		<p>Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle OM KBE CB FRS FRAeS was an English Royal Air Force (RAF) engineer air officer. He is credited with single-handedly inventing the turbojet engine.</p>
<p>Che Guevara (14th June, 1928– 9 October 1967)</p>		<p>Ernesto "Che" Guevara was an Argentine Marxist revolutionary, physician, author, guerrilla leader, diplomat, and military theorist. A major figure of the Cuban Revolution, his stylized visage has become a ubiquitous countercultural symbol of rebellion and global insignia in popular culture.</p>
<p>Assia Djebar (30th June, 1936– 6 February 2015)</p>		<p>Assia Djebar was an Algerian novelist, translator and filmmaker. Most of her works deal with obstacles faced by women, and she is noted for her feminist stance. Djebar is considered to be one of North Africa's pre-eminent and most influential writers.</p>

## Festivals of the Month: India

<p>Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti (7 May 2017)</p>		<p>Rabindra Jayanti is an annually celebrated cultural festival, prevalent among Bengalis around the world, in the remembrance of Rabindranath Tagore's birthday anniversary. Cultural programmes &amp; events, such as : Kabipranam– the songs (Rabindra Sangeet), poetries, dances and dramas, written and composed by Tagore, are organised.</p>
<p>Narasimha Jayanti (9 May 2017)</p>		<p>Vaishakha Shukla Chaturdashi is celebrated as Narasimha Jayanti. Lord Narasimha was the 4th incarnation of Lord Vishnu. On Narasimha Jayanti day Lord Vishnu appeared in the form of Narasimha, a half lion and half man, to kill Demon Hiranyakashipu.</p>
<p>Buddha Purnima (10 May 2017)</p>		<p>Buddha Purnima during Vaishakha month is celebrated as birth anniversary of Gautama Buddha. Gautama Buddha whose birth name was Siddhartha Gautama was a spiritual teacher on whose teachings Buddhism was founded.</p>
<p>Shani Jayanti (25 May 2017)</p>		<p>Shani Jayanti is marked as birth anniversary of Lord Shani. Shani Jayanti is also known as Shani Amavasya. Lord Shani is son of Lord Suryadev and rules planet Saturn and weekday Saturday.</p>
<p>Ganga Dussehra (4 June 2017)</p>		<p>Ganga Dussehra is dedicated to Goddess Ganga and this day is commemorated as the day when Ganga was descended to the Earth to accomplish her mission to purge the cursed souls of Bhagiratha's ancestors. Before coming to the Earth, the Goddess Ganga was residing in Kamandal of Lord Brahma and along with her the Goddess Ganga brought the purity of heaven to the Earth.</p>
<p>Sant Kabirdas Jayanti (9 June 2017)</p>		<p>Kabir Jayanti is an annual event that is observed in the honour of Sant Kabir Das. Sant Kabir Das was a very renowned saint, poet and social reformer of India who lived during the 15th century</p>
<p>Jagannath Rathayatra (25 June 2017)</p>		<p>Ratha Yatra is a huge Hindu festival and it is organized each year at famous Jagannatha temple in Puri. Lord Jagannatha is worshipped primarily in city of Puri at famous Jagannatha temple. Ratha Yatra commemorates Lord Jagannatha's annual visit to Gundicha Mata temple.</p>
<p>Eid al-Fitr, Ramadan (26 June 2017)</p>		<p>Eid al-Fitr, Ramadan is an important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting.</p>

## Festivals of the Month: Australia

<p>Sydney Writers' Festival (22 - 28 May 2017)</p>		<p>Sydney Writers' Festival bring together writers from various forms and backgrounds, including the best contemporary novelists, screenwriters, musicians and writers and some of the world's leading public intellectuals, scientists and journalists.</p>
<p>Uluru Camel Cup (27 May 2017)</p>		<p>The Camel Cup is an annual camel racing festival held in Australia. The race usually takes place at Blatherskite Park in the town Alice Springs, Northern Territory.</p>
<p>Vivid Sydney (26 May - 17 June 2017)</p>		<p>Vivid Sydney is a unique annual event of lights, music and ideas. It is an annual outdoor lighting festival with immersive light installations and projections in Sydney along with performances from local and international musicians and an ideas exchange forum featuring public talks and debates from leading creative thinkers.</p>
<p>Sydney Film Festival (7 - 18 June 2017)</p>		<p>The Sydney Film Festival is an annual film festival held in Sydney, Australia, usually over 12 days in June. The competitive film festival draws international and local attention, with films being showcased in several venues across the city centre and includes features, documentaries, short films, retrospectives, films for families and animations.</p>
<p>Guringai Festival 2017 (26 May - 9 July 2017)</p>		<p>The Guringai Festival is an annual celebration of indigenous culture and heritage. The festival raises awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>
<p>Winter Magic Festival (24 June 2017)</p>		<p>Winter Magic Festival is a community festival celebrated around the Winter solstice in Katoomba in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, Australia since 1994. Artists, musicians, dancers, drummers, choirs and community take over one of Australia's most famous towns.</p>
<p>Barunga Festival (9 - 11 June 2017)</p>		<p>The Barunga Festival is an iconic event on the national festival calendar with a long and proud tradition of celebrating the best of remote Indigenous Australia.</p>
<p>Dark Mofo (8 - 21 June 2017)</p>		<p>Dark Mofo, Mona's winter festival, delves into centuries-old winter solstice rituals, exploring the links between ancient and contemporary mythology, humans and nature, religious and secular traditions, darkness and light, and birth, death and renewal.</p>

## Ardhanari

“Why? What is the trouble?” asked Govinda Rao.

“What is my caste and what is yours?” said Ardhanari.

“Oh! The question of caste! Nonsense!” Govinda Rao exclaimed and laughed. “What is a Brahmin? What is a non-Brahmin? We stopped thinking about such things long ago. If you like each other and finally decide to marry, we need not worry about caste.”

“I belong to the Coimbatore district. I am a Saiva Mudaliar.” That was what Ardhanari had told them. A Saiva Mudaliar is a vegetarian high caste non-Brahmin. Having said this on some occasion out of snobbish fear, he was unable to withdraw it afterwards. He was ashamed to own the truth about his caste. At Delhi a few knew, but in Bangalore nobody knew his antecedents.

“What is Pankaja’s wish?” asked Ardhanari.

“Pankaja seems to like you. Her replies to my questions show that she is willing.”

“Is it not proper that I should ask her and find out for myself?” said Ardhanari.

“Yes,” said Govinda Rao.

Thus the affair was put off. Ardhanari resolved that he would tell Pankaja the truth, whatever might happen. But later his resolution failed.

“Why should I go out of my way to tell her this? If I do, Govinda Rao and Pankaja will both hate me. They say that they do not mind caste distinctions. But yet if they come to know that I am a pariah, they will never give their consent. Besides, I shall be considered a liar,” Ardhanari thought within himself.

Next day he thought the matter over again and went to Govinda Rao’s house intending to disclose the truth. But in, on the way he debated within himself, “When we two love each other, what reason is there to consider this caste question? Why should we give any quarter to this injustice? Who created caste? is it not all a lie? Why should I make so much of it and speak to her about it? Why should I speak to

her about it and spoil the whole business? They have told me distinctly that they do not care about caste. Why then should I refer to it at all?” He made up his mind to suppress the truth.

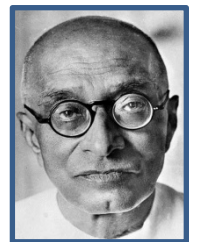
“Pankaja, do you really like me? Shall we get married .and live together?” he asked.

“But do you want to?” said Pankaja.

Ardhanari’s father Muniappan, his brother Ranga and mother Kuppayee all lived in the cheri or pariah quarters of the village Kokkalai, Both while at Delhi and at Bangalore, Ardhanari used to send them twenty rupees regularly every month. It was a princely allowance to them, and they lived on it very happily. They did not know what their son was earning, but twenty rupees a month seemed a great fortune to them. Unfortunately, Muniappan had the drink habit. When he began to get money regularly every month, his drinking became worse. Ranga did not like this, but could not prevent it. He was a teacher in a village school and was unmarried. When his mother pressed him to find a wife, he would say, “Not now, wait for some time more,” and put the matter off.

*-To be continued...*

*Chakravarti Rajagopalachari also called Rajaji or C.R., was an Indian politician, independence activist, lawyer, writer and statesman. He was the last Governor-General of India and was one of the first recipients of India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna. Rajaji was gifted with the rare talent of re-telling stories from the epics and the Puranas. He wrote a number of books of enduring value as the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Gita and the Upanishads. He was an accomplished writer and speaker in English and Tamil.*



Source: *Source: Stories for the Innocent by C. Rajagopalachari, Bhavan’s Book University, Mumbai, India*



## The How Can One see God

### Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna's Recipe

Master: "Devotees like Rakhal, Narendra and Bhavanath may be called nityasiddha. Their spiritual consciousness has been awake since their very birth. They assume human bodies only to impart spiritual illumination to others.

"There is another class of devotees, known as kripasiddha, that is to say, those on whom the grace of God descends all of a sudden and who at once attain His vision and knowledge. Such people may be likened to a room that has been dark a thousand years, which, when a lamp is brought into it, becomes light immediately, not little by little.

"Those who lead a householder's life should practise spiritual discipline; they should pray eagerly to God in solitude. (To Sri Choudhury) God cannot be realised through scholarship. Who, indeed, can understand the things of the spirit through reason? No, all should strive for devotion to the Lotus Feet of God.

"Infinite are the glories of God! How little can you fathom them! Can you ever find out the meaning of God's ways?

"Bhishma was none other than one of the eight Vasus, but even he shed tears on his bed of arrows. He said: 'How astonishing! God Himself is the companion of the Pandava brothers, and still there is no end to their troubles and sorrows! Who can understand the ways of God?'"

"A man thinks, 'I have practised a little prayer and austerity; so I have gained a victory over others'. But victory and defeat lie with God. I have seen a prostitute dying in the Ganges and retaining consciousness to the end."

Sri Choudhury: "How can one see God?"

Master: "Not with these eyes. God gives one divine eyes; and only then can one behold him. God gave Arjuna divine eyes so that he might see His Universal Form. "Your philosophy is mere speculation. It only reasons. God cannot be realized that way. "God cannot remain unmoved if you have raga-bhakti, that is, love of God with passionate attachment to Him. Do you know how fond God is of His devotees' love? It is like the cow's fondness for fodder mixed with oil-cake. The cow gobbles it down greedily.

"Raga-bhakti is pure love of God, a love that seeks God alone and not any worldly end. Prahlada had it. Suppose you go to a wealthy man every day, but you seek no favour of him; you simply love to see him. If he wants to show you favour, you say: 'No, sir. I don't need anything. I came just to see you'. Such is love of God for its own sake. You simply love God and don't want anything from Him in return."

Saying this, the Master sang: Though I am never loath to grant salvation, I hesitate indeed to grant pure love. Whoever wins pure love surpasses all; He is adored by men; He triumphs over the three worlds.... He continued: "The gist of the whole thing is that one must develop passionate yearning for God and practise discrimination and renunciation."

*From Bhavan's Journal May 21, 1967*

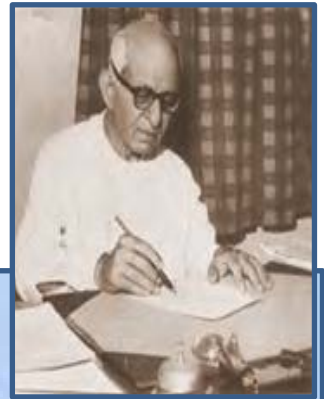
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## Flash Back

## Students Bring Sunshine

True service, apart from great national crisis where the student must render every assistance, is to bring sunshine in whatever sphere he moves in. It is as great a service as any man can render. An ailing sister in the house; a lonely mother who needs company; an unfortunate neighbour who needs aid; a passer-by who is in distress; a victim of crime as you go along the street; some unfortunate who is being sacrificed at the altar of a social, economic or communal evil; a riot where the innocent requires protection even at the cost of life; a city without sweepers which wants volunteers for scavenging; a great occasion to be organised which needs service; a village needing education for social welfare; a night class where the poor have to be taught; — these are spheres of service in which every student can bring not only help but sunshine.

**Dr K.M. Munshi**  
Founder, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan



## The Test of Bhavan's Right to Exist

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

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

It must be realized that the history of the world is a story of men who had faith in themselves and in their mission. When an age does not produce men of such faith, its culture is on its way to extinction. The real strength of the Bhavan, therefore, would lie not so much in the number of its buildings or institutions it conducts, nor in the volume of its assets and budgets, nor even in its growing publication, culture and educational activities. It would lie in the character, humility, selflessness and dedicated work of its devoted workers, honorary and stipendiary. They alone can release the regenerative influences, bringing into play the invisible pressure which alone can transform human nature.



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