



धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः

Yugabda 5117
Shaka Samvat 1937
Vikram Samvat 2072

Vol. XXXXV
No. 1
January - March 2016

HINDU VISHWA Vishwa Dharma Digest

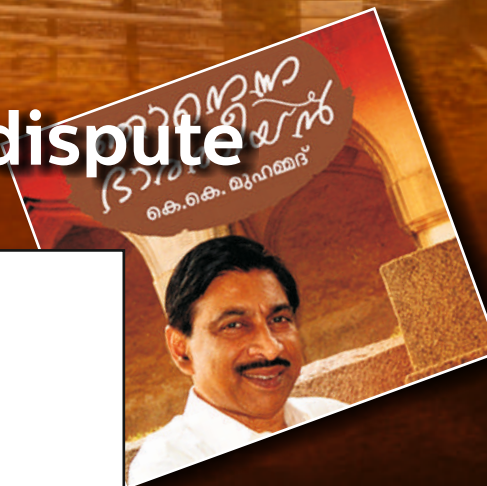
Also Read

- Hindu World View
- Is Hinduism Polytheistic?
- India Owes Its Tolerance to Hindu Dharma
- Hindu Women's Conference in Atlanta

Left historians prevented peaceful resolution of Ram Janmabhoomi dispute

U.S \$5.00

Startling revelation by a man who was on the ground zero when evidences were dug out & also close to a man who for decades tried to mislead judiciary, polity, media & public!



Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Houston, TX
PERMIT NO. 8376

Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America Inc.
P.O. Box 441505
Houston, TX 77244-1505

SANATAN DHARMA SCHOLARSHIP

Encouraging Deeper Understanding of Scientific Aspects of Hindu Dharma



OBJECTIVES

The Sanatan Dharma Scholarship aims to promote independent research, focusing on scientific and rational foundation, of the Sanatan (Hindu) Dharma concepts and Vedic philosophy.

This scholarship program hopes to encourage a deeper understanding of Hindu Dharma through recognition of academic excellence, increasing awareness of Hindu values and volunteerism.

The program offers multiple earning opportunities based on age and education level. Eligibility for the scholarship is extended to any currently enrolled student in the United States education system at the middle school, high school, and college/university level.

AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIPS

College Level - 3 \$1000 grants a year
High School Level - 2 \$500 grants a year
Middle School Level - 4 \$250 grants a year

CONTRIBUTE TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Founding sponsorship provided by Om Temple, MA
For sponsor information, email: scholarship@chynetwork.org
Call: Harsh Dave at 954-873-1651

The Coalition of Hindu Youth (CHY) is an umbrella organization among Hindu youth and Hindu youth organizations to foster unity and share resources. CHY, is a project of World Hindu Council of America (VHPA).

Non-profit, Tax ID 51-0156325

www.hinduscholarship.org



Coalition of Hindu Youth (CHY)
www.chynetwork.org



WORLD HINDU COUNCIL OF AMERICA (VHPA)

National Headquarter:
P. O. Box 441505,
Houston, TX 77244-1505

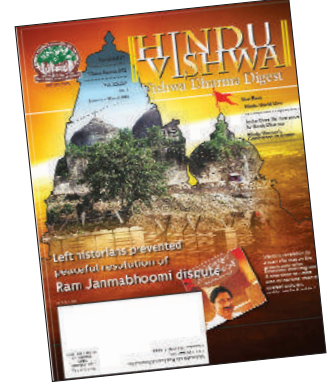
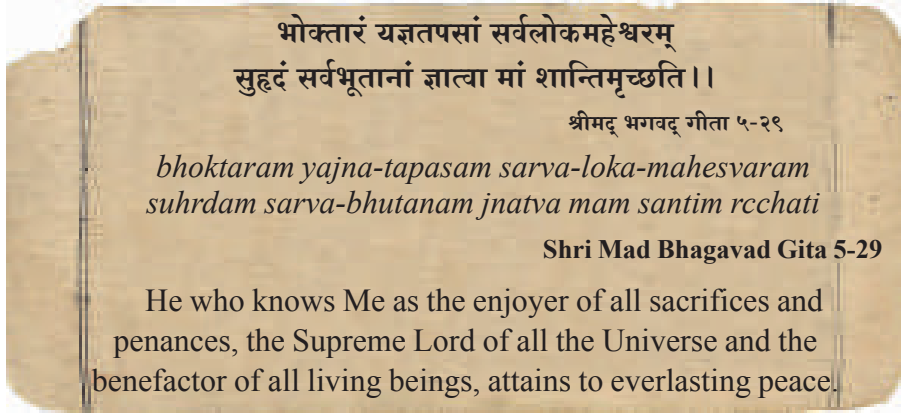
www.vhp-america.org

Tel.: (281)496-5676
office@vhp-america.org

Volume XXXXV

No. 1

January- March 2016



| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--|
| President | Dr. Abhaya Asthana | 508-875-0432 | abhayaji@gmail.com |
| General Secretary | Shree Sanjay Mehta | 412-251-9133 | mehtassm@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Shree Vasav Mehta | 770-365-6126 | vasavmehta@gmail.com |
| Vice Presidents | | | |
| Publications | Shree Shyam Tiwari | 770-962-2669 | srtiwari@hotmail.com |
| Seva | Dr. Umesh Shukla | 908-240-7720 | umeshshukla123@gmail.com |
| | Shree Girish Gandhi | 973-689-5479 | karnavati45@gmail.com |
| Finance | Shree Vimal Sodhani | 973-476-3901 | vimalsodhani@yahoo.com |
| Organizing Secretaries | | | |
| | Shree Sanjay Kaul | 781-893-4982 | sanjaykaul@hotmail.com |

Editorial Team

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Managing Editor: | Shyam Tiwari | srtiwari@hotmail.com |
| Editor: | Dr. Ashok Sinha | Kosha.Ahnis@gmail.com |
| Associate Editor: | Surendra Pandey | pandeysn@yahoo.com |
| Copy Editor: | Sabitha Venugopal | sabitha8081@gmail.com |
| Assistant Editor: | Rachna Gupta | rgupta242@yahoo.com |
| Advisors: | Dr. Abhay Asthana | abhayaji@gmail.com |
| | Dr. Shardananda | prayagraj1952@gmail.com |

About the HINDU VISHWA

World Hindu Council of America (VHPA) publishes the Hindu Vishwa issue quarterly except when combined with special publications. For subscription, please fill out the membership form on the last page. For Advertising inquiries please contact: Shyam Tiwari at 770.962.2669 or Email - srtiwari@hotmail.com

World Hindu Council of America (VHPA), founded in 1970 and incorporated in the state of New York in 1974, is an independent, nonprofit, tax-exempt and volunteer-based charitable organization serving the needs of Hindu community in USA. It aims to build a dynamic and vibrant Hindu society rooted in the eternal values of Dharma and inspired by the lofty ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, i.e. the entire creation is one family.

The views expressed in the articles presented in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization, officials, editorial staff or the donors.

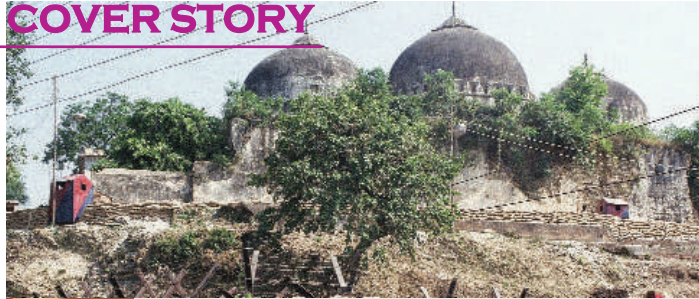
© Copyright 2016 World Hindu Council of America (VHPA). All rights reserved. No parts and contents of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of VHP of America, Inc.



Take a Look Inside ...

Left historians prevented peaceful resolution of Ram Janmabhoomi dispute P - 20

COVER STORY



Startling revelation by a man who was on the ground zero when evidences were dug out & also close to a man who for decades tried to mislead judiciary, polity, media & public!

The Guilt of the 'Eminent Historians'

P - 23

Hindu World View P - 4



Ancient Hindu Temple in Peshawar Being Secretly Demolished P - 6



Of Course Hindus Won't Be Thrown Into Hell P - 7

ASI starts excavation on 2,000-year-old Kushan-era pond in Vrindavan P - 10

Shraddhanjali to Swami Ghananand Saraswati ji Maharaj P - 11

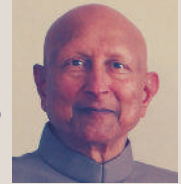
Why Followers of Sanatan Dharma Must Help the Yazidis P - 12



India Owes Its Tolerance to Hindu Dharma P - 14

Hindu samskriti is our identity: RSS chief P - 15

Homage to a Karmayogi P - 16



Is Hinduism Polytheistic? P - 17

The World's Biggest Holocaust: A Forgotten Story P - 25

BOOK REVIEW

Why The Battle for Sanskrit matters P - 27



Teachers' Training Held at HTCI P - 30

Empowerment Through Knowledge at HWC in Atlanta P - 32

Words of Wisdom P - 35



Dasavatarayanam P - 37

FROM THE EARTH TO THE HEAVEN

Editorial



After many years of drab draughts, the preceding few nights witnessed free rainfalls - first a fresh, flimsy drizzle; then some preparatory pattering on the roofs, followed by torrential downpours drenching the parched land, filling wells and ponds that soon swelled. In some parts of the countryside and some regions of the country, high-wind hurled hurricanes playing havoc. The clouds burst so severely that streams and rivers trespassed and stout dams and robust sea-embankments lay busted to inundate the entire landscape, submerging villages and grotesquely invading large metropolitan areas. A sweet sonorous medley of drops like a melodious raga played Tabla here; a Tandava of utter devastation bearing the harshest wrath of nature's unpredictable whims there.

Do the above words fairly closely depict the plight of a segment of USA, or of India? Parts of California on the Thanksgiving eve on November 2015? New Orleans at the arrival of Katrina? India's Kedarnath or Kashmir Valley in 2014? Or, the city of Chennai in 2015 during the last Monsoon flooding? The truth of the matter is, passages like the preceding paragraph could relate to any or many cases. What exactly is going on here, on this planet Earth of ours, hanging breathlessly as a "Pale Blue Dot" in the recesses of Space and Time?



Such vagaries of Nature testify and assert unprecedented climatic changes and environmental upheavals. The culprit may be what some recognize as climate change. the real culprit, of course, being man's indiscreet industrial outgrown disregarding proper balance in terms of harmony with Nature. Often the brunt of blame is rightly borne by the West for excessive CO2 emission and the resulting Green-House Effect. International organizations ponder on daily and annual basis on potential damages, on remedies for such apocalyptic trends.

As is the case in numerous instances, a simple remedy for this daunting threat to the future of mankind and of this planet obviously already exists - peaceful, harmonious coexistence for man with Nature! Co-operation and not cut-throat competition among nations, even among men of diverse creeds! There is absolutely no other go!

UNO (WMO-the World Meteorological Organization) concluded that 2015 has been the warmest year, with highest increase in the sea-water (1 degree Centigrade) in recorded history. More than 200 countries concluded their deliberations recently to put a cap on allowable rise in the global temperature: 1.6oC. India, under the new Prime Minister Narendra Modi, predictably played a proactive and vital role in bringing about this sensible agreement. Developing countries with larger share of CO2 emission have to shoulder their responsibility, too, in this regard.

This entire sequence of events very well establishes in the eyes of man what Hindu scriptures celebrated and elaborately delineated in no uncertain terms, thousands of years ago - respect and venerate the Nature as you would gods. After all, these gods are but simple personifications of forces of Nature as part of Brahman, the One Super-Consciousness, of which our own soul and consciousness is but a part. Such a view would not only preserve the sanctity of Nature instead of propagating relentless exploitation thereof, but also induce humanity to be rid of such internal menace as terrorism now on rampant rise in the world due to blind sectarian strife and violence. Say the Vedas: "Omnipresent Ishwar (God) resides at every point, and in everything, whatever exists in the Universe. Therefore we must relish, but with a sense of sacrifice; and not usurp someone else's rightful share."-- (Ishopnishad 1:1); and "Indra (the Rain-god), Mitra (the Sun-god), Varun (the Water-god), Agni (the Fire-god), and Yama (the god of Death) people worship. The Truth (the Supreme, Ultimate Reality, God) is One, but worshippers call Him by many different names." - (Rg-Veda 1:164.46)

Now the world must learn such ancient maxims in environmental protection and inter-religious harmony, as in many other fields. India must be in the vanguard as the Jagad Guru, yet once again. One would tend to think that so much misery in the world could have been averted only if India's respect for its own soul didn't wane and the world received India's true eternal light, for the benefit of generations to come.



Hindu World View



By Sushim Mukerji

In the 21st century Hindus have an opportunity to reinvent themselves. India has been free from foreign rules for over 65 years. Poverty is down and education is up. The economy is prospering. The time is ripe to reaffirm our heritage.

What is Hindu heritage? What is the Hindu world view? The primary Hindu scriptures, called the Shrutis, describe the Hindu world view. The Puranas, Smritis, Mahabharata, Ramayana and every other book dear to a Hindu mind belong to the category of secondary scriptures. In popular press when people refer to the injunctions of the Hindu *shastras* (scriptures) they generally mean the secondary scriptures. No doubt, the secondary scriptures are of great importance to the Hindus, but one has to remember that they are subordinate to the primary scriptures. The injunctions of the secondary scriptures are to be rejected when they contradict with the teachings of the primary scriptures.

So, what do the primary scriptures say? The *Upanishads*, *Gita* and *Brahma Sutra* are considered part of the primary scriptures. There are many *Upanishads*. Eleven of them are considered authoritative. *Kena Upanishad* states just as the spider web comes out of the spider, and hair from the body, so did everything in the world come from the Supreme. The very first *shloka* (verse) of *Isa Upanishad*, one of the most ancient of all *Upanishads*, starts with a statement that the entire universe is covered with divinity. Call It God, call It *Paramatma*, It is the cause of our origin and existence; It

is also the material of construction. The world is an endless manifestation of the Supreme; we revere everything. It is not just '*Matri Devo Bhava Pitri Devo Bhava*' (Let Mother be your God, Let Father be your God), it is not just '*Namastasai Namastasai Namastasai Namah*' (I bow down to Devi, I bow down to Devi), it is everything. *Pita*, *Mata*, *Acharya* (spiritual teacher), *Atithi* (unannounced guest at your door), *Devi* are just a few apt examples that help us orient ourselves. Others, no matter how awkward, no matter how apparently unqualified, deserve the same reverence. This is the reason that during any pujas we recite mantras in an all embracing spirit - *Aum Dharmaya Namaha* (I bow to righteousness), *Aum A-Dharmaya Namaha* (I bow to unrighteousness), *Aum Vairagyaya Namaha* (I bow to the spirit of renunciation), *Aum a-Vairagyaya Namaha* (I bow to the spirit of non- renunciation), and so on. *Katha Upanishad* states that the entire universe is beaming with intelligence (divine intelligence called *Chit*).

The rest of the Hindu world view is simply a deduction from this primary statement. There is no such thing, for example, as privilege of men over women, or upper caste over lower caste. The *Swetaswatar Upanishad* emphatically declared that man and woman, the youth and the old are just various faces of the divinity. The *Gita* has delineated human family in four groups (*Varnas*). This classification was done not to differentiate families and communities in a hierarchy, but to categorize individuals based on their individual inclination and past deeds. The offspring of a Brahmin could be a *Kshatriya* or a *Sudra*, according to this



definition. In the *Vana Parva* of Mahabharata the discussion on *Varna* (caste, as popularly referred) is explained in detail during the dialogue between Yudhisthir and the great serpent. The Hindu world view draws our attention to the understanding of unity. No matter how different we may appear from each other, no matter how different our capabilities are from one another, we are equal in the end. Everybody deserves veneration because we all have divine background.

Now that we know the big picture let us explore a couple of familiar topics. The first one is about the goal of life. From the rarified indefinable pure conscious, *Atma*, came the physical universe in a seemingly chaotic fashion where nothing remains the same for long. In this bewildering world (called *Samsara*), for reasons unknown, we forget our immaculate identity, get engaged in matters unbecoming of our true credentials, and display behavior inappropriate to our true nature. Why the world process confuses us from our true identity is a mystery, called *Maya*. In a state of perennial confusion we consider ourselves limited, underestimate our potential and resort to greed, passion, deceit, fear, anger for survival. The Hindu world view declares that the goal of life is to realize our true identity, not by just reading it in a book or instructed by a teacher, but by realizing it ourselves. Our true identity is the all-knowing deathless entity that always remains pristine, unaffected by our ever changing physical circumstances and surroundings. This true identity is called the Self (*Atma* in Sanskrit). Our body will die, but our self will always exist; the self simply gets reborn in another body. The Self is beyond any form and definition; otherwise it would be subjected to laws of nature and decay with time. Only three attributes are applied to it as a hint to what it is. They are *Sat* (existence absolute), *Chit* (knowledge/ conscience absolute) and *Ananda* (eternal bliss). When a person realizes his true identity he goes beyond fear and unhappiness; sees everyone as part of himself and himself as part of everyone. He becomes the Self, and is not reborn. This state is called *Moksha* or liberation. This is where the human journey toward perfection ends. The primary Hindu scriptures declared over and over again that going to heaven is not the goal of life. Neither heaven nor hell is permanent; they cannot be our ultimate destination.

The other topic is *karma*. Hindus believe in karma. How does the *karma* theory fit in the world view? The popular concept of karma is generally used in a negative connotation. Why is a person poor? Past *karma*, is a common answer. To be sure, the Hindu world view on *karma* is not this simplistic. The Hindu world view was

not created to cleverly maintain social order by telling the poor people to accept their lot. The theory of *karma* is related to cause and effect. Some of the illustrations of cause and effect are easy to understand. Students who study diligently generally do well in exams. People who spend more time practicing music would likely become good musicians.

The *karma* theory is applicable to a person's attitude and inclinations generated by the actions and attitudes over a series of past lives. The Gita says that just as the aroma of flower is carried from one place to another so are a person's attitudes and inclinations carried from one birth to the next. This is what karma theory expounds. Being born in the same family one person could be kind, another greedy, one could be a go-getter, the other could be listless. Such attitudes and inclinations could be related to *karma* in past births; otherwise such diversity of behavior of people raised under similar environment is not easy to explain. The *karma* theory is not related to monetary and social positions though it could be argued that certain behavior and inclinations could be loosely conducive to social position and wealth.

Behaviorally we are the products of our past *karma*, from this birth and from the previous ones. That does not mean we have to let our past *karma* dictate our future. The Hindu world view is emphatic about the efficacy of determined effort in this very birth. The Gita calls it *Abhayasa Yoga*. When the mind wants to waste away in indolence the Gita encourages the striver to stay motivated and strive for perfection. The Gita shows that the way to cut past *karma* as under is by persistent efforts, and not through magic or shortcuts. The Gita never talks about submitting to fate. The Gita, the premier scripture for the Hindus, preaches better future for individuals and for the society through uncompromisingly tenacious efforts. The Gita stresses yoga for efficient work and never talks about taking rest.

Taking a bath at the Ganga helps, but that by itself will not lead us to liberation. Performing pujas helps, but it alone will not lead us to liberation. Offering refuge to cows could help, but that will not lead us to liberation. Fasting helps, but that will not lead us to liberation. Reading scriptures helps, but that will not lead us to liberation. Showing respect to elders and teachers helps, but that will not lead us to liberation. Why so? Because *moksha* cannot be formulated in a cause and effect scheme. The best teacher (*Acharya*) can only point to it by hints. *Katha Upanishad* emphatically reminded us (with Lord Yama lamenting) that the indefinable cannot be grasped with definable means.

So, the journey continues, for both the saint and the



Inhabitants in the area said, the demolition was in the guise of repair work

Ancient Hindu Temple in Peshawar Being Secretly Demolished

An ancient Hindu temple in this northwestern Pakistani city is being demolished secretly in the name of repair with a commercial plaza set to come up on its land.

The ancient Hindu temple located in Karimpura in Peshawar's old city is being demolished in the name of repairs, several inhabitants of the area said. They said the process is going on without any hindrance.



"It is a pity that a criminal act of pulling down a heritage structure has been launched. The building is being knocked down clandestinely to erect a commercial plaza on the site," a resident said. "There is no action from any of the government departments which are supposed to protect such buildings," the resident said. Another resident said it was a double-criminal act. "On the one hand an ancient building is being demolished while on the other a commercial plaza is set to be constructed on its land in a purely residential area," he told The News.

Residents have questioned the silence of the relevant government departments over the entire episode. They deplored the inaction of government authorities in the wake of the

demolition of the heritage building.

There is no action by the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), *Auqaf* Department dealing with the non-Muslim properties and the Archaeology Department -- the departments tasked with protecting such properties.

"Either these departments are a partner in the crime or they are negligent," a resident said. Demanding an immediate halt to the demolition process, the residents asked ETPB Chairman Saddique-ul-Farooq to order a probe into the issue to bring to justice the government officials whose negligence or tacit approval had put in danger the ancient Hindu temple.

The Civil Society members, in a statement, said this is a painful story in all major cities of Pakistan where speculative land mafia in collusion with lower-tier government officials and police get away with destroying Pakistan's precious heritage. The government is reduced to being a silent spectator in this demolition, they said. ■

Source: <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-ancient-hindu-temple-in-peshawar-being-secretly-demolished-2181478>

Hindu World View

sinful. This is a breath taking image. When my vision captures the whole humanity travelling together, rich and poor, powerful and the meek, famous and the ordinary, scholar and the illiterate, benevolent and the cruel, on the same endless path I develop feelings of fellowship and compassion. Then one criticizes less, preaches less, hates less and loves more. The *Katha Upanishad* points out that such a frame of mind is a tough act. The *Mundaka Upanishad* says that such pursuit requires a strong mind and a strong body. The Gita assures us that it is within our capacity

This is our world view. ■

Note: For the sake of easier flow of language the author chose to use masculine expressions to mean both genders.

About the Author

Sushim Mukerji,

an Ex GC member of VHPA, was the coordinator of Support -a- Child program from 1984 to 1997. He joined VHP of Bharat in 1998, and trained Hindu priests for foreign countries as the residential director at Meerut, Uttar Pradesh during 1998-1999. He is an engineer and lives in Newark, Delaware.



Of Course Hindus Won't Be Thrown Into Hell

Some time ago, a news item caught my attention: Dalit Christians had filed a complaint with the United Nations against the Vatican because of caste based discrimination of the Catholic Church in India. The complaint was filed with the UN Information Centre at New Delhi.

It made me feel that a suggestion I had made in an earlier article was maybe not so outlandish and actually worthwhile. I had suggested that Hindus, Buddhists and others could file a complaint with the UN against Christianity and Islam, because Christianity considers non-Christians as heathen and Islam non-Muslims as infidels, and both these religions claim that heathen and infidels are unworthy of the grace of the Supreme Power and will be thrown into hellfire where they will suffer excruciating pain for all eternity. "Idol-worshippers" - Hindus are labeled as such - are the worst of the lot in the eyes of those religions.

In the Bible, Mathew (13: 49/50) states:

"This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The Quran gives a more detailed description of the torture that awaits infidels:

"But as for those who disbelieve, garments of fire will be cut out for them, boiling fluid will be poured down their heads. Whereby that which is in their bellies, and their skins too, will be melted; And for them are hooked rods of iron. Whenever, in their anguish, they would go forth from thence they are driven back therein and (it is

By Maria Wirth

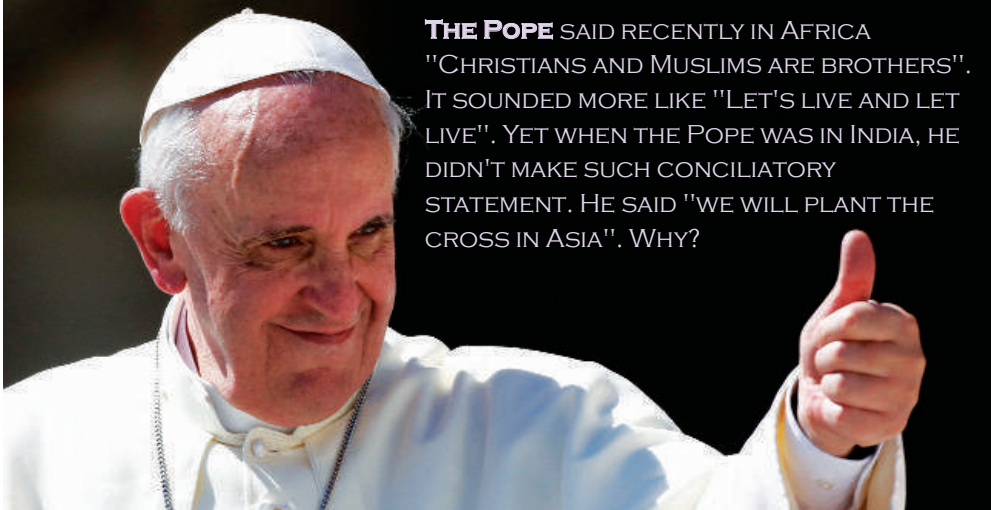
said unto them): Taste the doom of burning"
(Quran 22:19-22)

Hindus generally have no malice towards other faiths and don't expect others to have malice towards their own faith. They readily pay respect to Bible and Christianity or to Quran and Islam without knowing what they contain. Usually they don't even notice that their respect is not reciprocated.

However, there are also those who know the content, but prefer to ignore unacceptable passages. One reason may be that they of course don't take them seriously and can't imagine that anybody takes them seriously. Unfortunately, they underestimate the power of indoctrination, especially in childhood. It is not only the ISIS types who believe (and act on it). I know from own experience that children believe what they are told and many don't question this belief even as adults.

Another reason may be they don't want to draw attention to those divisive, discriminating passages in books considered holy by the majority of the world's population. They fear they could remind 'believers' of their duty to fight the "unbelievers" or rather the "wrong believers" as Hindus are great believers in the Supreme

THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION NEEDS TO SINK IN: EVERY SECOND CHILD IN THE WORLD IS TAUGHT THAT HINDUS (AND OTHERS) ARE NOT EQUAL IN THE EYES OF THE SUPREME GOD, AND THE CHILD IS LIKELY TO BELIEVE IT.



THE POPE SAID RECENTLY IN AFRICA "CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS ARE BROTHERS". IT SOUNDED MORE LIKE "LET'S LIVE AND LET LIVE". YET WHEN THE POPE WAS IN INDIA, HE DIDN'T MAKE SUCH CONCILIATORY STATEMENT. HE SAID "WE WILL PLANT THE CROSS IN ASIA". WHY?

convert or wipe out those who 'insult the Supreme Power and don't accept the only truth'. This claim of "hell for unbelievers" is about power and influence and has nothing to do with eternal truth or morality.

If a small, crazy sect would claim that all others will burn in hell, one would understand if nobody takes note of such nonsense. But it is not a small sect that makes this claim. This claim is

and certainly not unbelievers.

However, this attitude won't work today, as the content of Quran, Bible and other scriptures is readily available on the net. It is easy to access any verse of the Bible or Quran. ISIS spread their views on the internet. The radicalization among Muslim youth often happens via the net. A cleric in a German mosque who had banned radicalized youth and declared ISIS as un-Islamic was described as an "old, confused man", by a German Turk, who 'knew' that ISIS is following the Quran. How did he know? "I and my friends have read the Quran", he declared. His friends are fighting for ISIS.

I didn't make the suggestion to complain to the UN because I expect much action from the UN. I made the suggestion mainly, because in this way the issue would hopefully come into mainstream discourse. People, including Christians and Muslims, need to realize how absurd and divisive this claim of "eternal hell for unbelievers" is.

The gravity of the situation needs to sink in: every second child in the world is taught that Hindus (and others) are not equal in the eyes of the Supreme God, and the child is likely to believe it. In fact, the child is taught that the Supreme hates those others so much that they will burn for all eternity in hellfire if they don't mend their ways and join the believers on the right path. Sri Krishna, Sri Rama, Sita, the Rishis, Swami Vivekananda, Baba Ramdev, Sri Sri Ravishankar, Mata Amritanandamayi, Narendra Modi, Aishwarya Rai, Sachin Tendulkar... just name them, each and every Hindu who ever lived - none will find mercy with the Highest. They all are thrown into the 'blazing furnace'.

People need to become aware that prophesying eternal hell was a strategy to frighten the own followers into submission and to justify using force to either

contained in the doctrines of the two most powerful religious institutions on earth with almost four billion followers. Mercifully, many Christians especially in Europe don't believe it anymore, but it is part of the Christian dogma.

Is one allowed to call this claim nonsense - in the age of quantum physics where it is known that ultimately all is connected and nothing is separate?

Strangely, Hindus keep quiet. They may hope it goes away. It won't go away without those who are demeaned in this unacceptable manner putting their foot down. Why should those who benefit from this claim give it up as long as nobody objects?

The Church had once to give in to protests: it lost the power to punish heretics and even had to allow Christians to leave the Church. Ever since, the Church lost many of its flock and the west came out of the Dark Age, but the damage was done nevertheless: arrogance and a feeling of superiority was already ingrained in the people and nature had been divested of its sacredness and still is treated as a slave to be exploited.

The dogmatic religions uprooted people from their pagan societies and made them slowly but surely arrogant, self-righteous and convinced that they are meant to rule the world in the name of their god. Would colonialism in its brutal form have been possible without the mindset that Christians are superior to the native heathen? Would Muslim invasions have been so cruel without the mindset that Allah wants them to smite the necks of infidels till all worship is only for Allah?

Today's most pressing problem, Islamic terrorism, has its roots in the claim that infidels are rejected by Allah. ISIS, Boko Haram and others consider it their sacred duty to rid the earth of such scum.

Christianity stopped killing heathen but still does great harm in so called 'unreached areas' for example in



India, where it deceives, threatens and lures people away from their tolerant, inclusive tradition into an arrogant, divisive mindset.

Some followers of Islam still kill. They are called Islamists instead of Muslims. But as long as the Quran contains verses that seem to be exhortations to kill infidels, and no official correction is made that these verses refer only to history, there is insincerity in the claim that they are not Muslims. On one hand we condemn those youth in the strongest terms and on the other, we revere the scripture which they claim to follow.

When Donald Trump declares that he won't allow Muslims into the USA if he becomes President, he may cater to a populist sentiment among Americans but this is no solution. A better strategy would be to make Muslims disown certain passages in the Quran. At the same time, Christians must be made to disown certain passages in the Bible. Blind belief that the Supreme has revealed the truth only to Jesus or only to Mohammed must be allowed to be questioned without putting one's life in danger.

The Pope said recently in Africa "Christians and Muslims are brothers". It sounded more like "Let's live and let live". Yet when the Pope was in India, he didn't make such conciliatory statement. He said "we will plant the cross in Asia". Why? Did he think the "mild" Hindus won't object to their own demise? Or did he behave like a bully to put Hindus on the defensive?

If Christianity really had the better truth, it would be okay. But this is not the case. The supremacy that the Church claims has no basis except in blind belief. In the same way, the supremacy Islam claims has also no basis except in blind belief. Both faiths can't challenge each other. A debate between Christianity and Islam would go like this:

Christianity: "We alone have the full truth"

Islam: "We alone have the full truth."

Christianity: "God has revealed the full truth through his son Jesus"

Islam: "Allah has revealed the final truth through Prophet Mohammed."

Christianity: "All have to worship God, the father, via his son."

Islam: "All have to worship Allah."

However, in one point both agree: "Heathen and infidels need to disappear from the earth."

In contrast, 'Hinduism seeks to propagate the collective wisdom and inspiration of centuries and has room for all forms of beliefs' (according to the Supreme Court). It

offers a profound philosophy. It can bring to the table the wisdom of the ancient Rishis that has never been disproven. This wisdom points to the absolute truth, which dogmatic religions are ignorant of: Truth is not a belief based on thoughts. It is what we all truly are - thought free, blissful awareness.

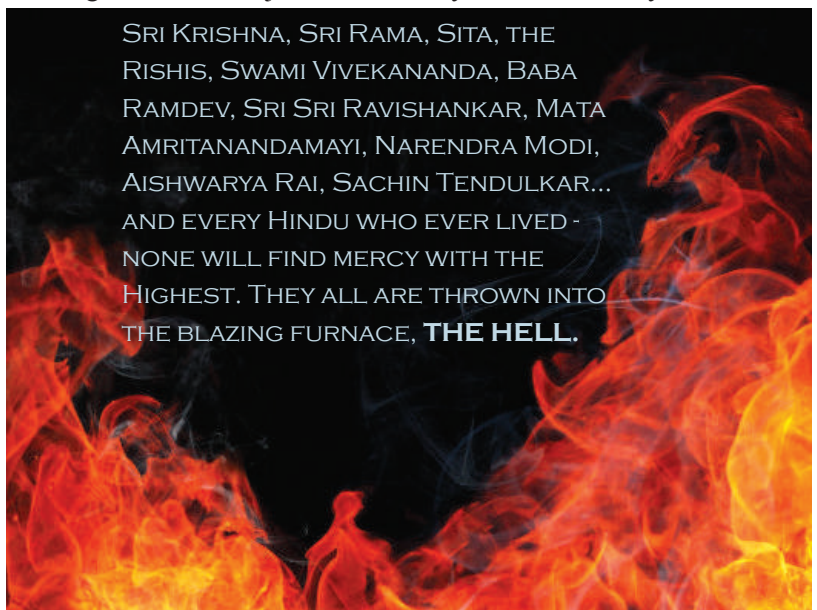
One would expect that humanity in the 21st century has outgrown blasphemy laws. This is not the case. Not only is there no pressure on countries that have blasphemy laws to abandon them, but - unbelievable, but true - there are attempts by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to bring the whole world under a blasphemy law.

Several nations, like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, have petitioned the UN to make defamation of Islam a crime. And even President Obama and Hillary Clinton supported a resolution (Istanbul Process 16/18) to curb 'Islamophobia'. Efforts to go further and ban criticism of Islam are surely still on.

Nations that have a majority Hindu, Buddhist or Atheist population like India, China, Japan, Thailand, etc. could join and not only throw a monkey wrench into

ISLAMIC TERRORISM, HAS ITS ROOTS IN THE CLAIM THAT INFIDELS ARE REJECTED BY ALLAH. ISIS, BOKO HARAM AND OTHERS CONSIDER IT THEIR SACRED DUTY TO RID THE EARTH OF SUCH SCUM. CHRISTIANITY STOPPED KILLING HEATHEN BUT STILL DOES GREAT HARM IN SO CALLED 'UNREACHED AREAS' FOR EXAMPLE IN INDIA, WHERE IT DECEIVES, THREATENS AND LURES PEOPLE AWAY FROM THEIR TOLERANT, INCLUSIVE TRADITION INTO AN ARROGANT, DIVISIVE MINDSET.

SRI KRISHNA, SRI RAMA, SITA, THE RISHIS, SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, BABA RAMDEV, SRI SRI RAVISHANKAR, MATA AMRITANANDAMAYI, NARENDRA MODI, AISHWARYA RAI, SACHIN TENDULKAR... AND EVERY HINDU WHO EVER LIVED - NONE WILL FIND MERCY WITH THE HIGHEST. THEY ALL ARE THROWN INTO THE BLAZING FURNACE, **THE HELL.**





these efforts but actively weaken their case by demanding a stop to unacceptable claims. Though "idol-worshipping Hindus" are seen as most despicable, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Atheists also don't pass muster in the eyes of Christianity and Islam.

It is high time Hindus woke up. Filing a petition with the UN might make even Christians and Muslims aware that these claims are truly unacceptable and that Hindus are not the scum of this earth and have a right to exist.

UNICEF also should be petitioned that brainwashing of children into hatred for others is made a crime. The video of a child in ISIS land cutting the throat of his teddy bear as practice is horrendous. A lot of noise needs to be made about those petitions. Christianity and Islam must not get away with discrediting Hindu Dharma. Let there be a public discourse on which worldview is closer to the truth, and which religion has a better philosophical basis.

Actually it is so obvious even at a first glance: the choice is between brotherhood of all without any preconditions and fighting each other till all become

About the Author

Maria Wirth
is a German and came to India for a holiday after finishing her psychology studies at Hamburg University. She visited the ArdhaKumbhaMela in Haridwar in April 1980 where she met Sri Anandamayi Ma and Devaraha Baba, two renowned saints. With their blessing she continued to live in India and dived into India's spiritual tradition, sharing her insights with German readers through articles and books. For long, she was convinced that every Indian knows and treasures his great heritage. However, when in recent years, she noticed that there seemed to be a concerted effort to prevent Indians (and the world) from knowing how valuable this ancient Indian heritage is, she started to point out the unique value of Indian tradition. She may be contacted via email mariawirth12@gmail.com



uniform 'believers'.

Let's choose brotherhood of all. And please also include animals... ■

Source: <https://mariawirthblog.wordpress.com/2015/12/22/of-course-hindus-wont-be-thrown-into-hell/>

ASI starts excavation on 2,000-year-old Kushan-era pond in Vrindavan

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has begun excavation work at the 2,000-year-old Kushan-era pond, which was discovered by an NGO a few years back, in Vrindavan. The water body known as Ram Taal is located in Vrindavan's Sunrakh village.

ASI superintending archaeologist Bhuvan Vikrama told TOI, "Two archaeologists have been stationed at the site. In the first phase, the excavation will continue for two weeks. We will decide from there on the next course of action." Earlier, ASI had written a letter to the NGO, Braj Foundation which has been carrying out restoration work at the site, as well as to its head office to extend expertise to the organization in not only restoring this Kushan-era relic, but also conduct further investigations to locate other such historical sites in the area. Vikrama added that the NGO accepted our proposal subsequently. The official said there was a high probability of making new discoveries at this site.

"The pond could not have existed in solitary, there must be a temple or monastery in its vicinity. But, this

can only be proved through further investigations. Although the site is currently not under ASI, given its historical importance, we are ready to make efforts to conserve it," Vikrama added.

Vineet Narain, chairman of Braj Foundation, had earlier informed TOI: "Through scriptures we knew that there was a water tank in the area. The excavation process started in December 2011, with financial assistance from Kamal Morarka, head of Gannon Dunkerley Group. After finding the walls of the tank, we thought we would not do any modern construction at the place, but restore it to its original look. We welcome the assistance of ASI in restoring it." He added that surprisingly an iron sheet was used at the base of the tank. "The reason behind this could be to prevent seepage, as Yamuna flows very close to the site. There was no iron ore in the area during that period, so it is quite possible that iron was bought from traders passing through the area and the sheet was created through molding." The wall is 1.27m thick and its dimensions of the site are 51.6m by 34.35m. ■



Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agra/asi-starts-excavation-work-on-2000-year-old-kushan-era-pond-in-vrindavan-village/articleshow/51111545.cms>

Shraddhanjali to Swami Ghananand Saraswati ji Maharaj

By Swami Vigyananand

Venerable Swami Ghananand Saraswati ji Maharaj attained *Mahasamadhi* on 18th January, 2016! Ven.

Swami ji (b. 1937) was a prominent Swami of the indigenous Hindu community in Ghana, and was the first Hindu monk of African ancestry. He was initiated in 1975 as a Swami by *Brahmaleen* Ven. Swami Krishnananda Saraswati ji Maharaj - a disciple of *Brahmaleen* Swami Sivananda Saraswati ji and General Secretary of Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, India (1958-2001) - and headed the Hindu Monastery of Africa in Accra, Ghana. Ven. Swami Ghananand ji was one of the Hon'ble Central Trustees of Vishva Hindu Parishad, Bharat

for a long time. I had the privilege and opportunity of knowing and working with Ven. Swamiji at the Hindu Resurgence Conference held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia where three Hindu monks, viz., Ven. Swami Ghananand ji Maharaj representing Hindus of African origin, the California-born Ven. Swami Satguru Bodhinatha Veylan swami (Hindu *sannyasin* monk, religious leader, the head of Kauai's Hindu Monastery in Hawaii and publisher of Hinduism Today magazine) representing Hindus of American and European origin and Swami Vigyananand (me) representing Hindus of Indian/Asian origin participated as key speakers to underline and highlight the broad-spectrum of the Hindu Cultural Commonwealth at the global level who all constitute over 1/6th of the 7 billion global population. Ven. Swami Ghananand ji was a great teacher, scholar and institution and organization builder, and endeared himself to thousands of followers through his wisdom, compassion, constructive and social service activities, especially in Ghana and other countries of Africa.

We have to bow before the inscrutable designs of the Almighty! Ghana and the Hindu world will mourn the

loss of a towering spirituo-social leader. He will be truly missed by his followers, admirers and nevertheless by Vishva Hindu Parishad Parivar.

"Na Hi Kalyaana Kruta Kaschit, Durgatim Tat Gachchhati"! ("There is never any loss to an altruist in the divine scheme who engages in auspicious and spiritual activities." - Gita: 6/40). While it hurts all near & dear loving hearts left behind, I hope Hindu Monastery of Africa can take comfort in the fact that Ven. Swami ji is with his *Ishta* now. He lives on not only in the memories of all who cherished him, but with his *Ishta* as well.

We hope the Hindu Monastery of Africa will seek inspiration from Ven. Swami ji's tangible and intangible legacy and continue the good work he was doing which was closest to his heart, it will be the

best tribute to Ven. Swami ji. We pray to the Almighty to give all members of the Hindu Monastery of Africa and all others who worked with him, the strength and courage to bear this loss!

Om Purnamadah

Purnamidam

Purnaata Purnamudachyate,

Purnasya Purnamaadaay

Purnamevaavashishyate

Om Shaantih, Shaantih, Shaantih!

ॐ पूर्णमदः । पूर्णमिदं । पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमदाय । पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

OM Completeness is That, Completeness is This! From Completeness, Completeness comes forth. Completeness from Completeness taken away, Completeness alone remains! May the living beings be at Peace with themselves! May there be Peace and discipline (Dharma) in the World! May the Universe Shower Peace on All!





Why Followers of Sanatan Dharma Must Help the Yazidis

By Subhash Kak

Perhaps no people have endured horrors like the Yazidis. They were denounced as infidels by al-Qaeda in Iraq who sanctioned their indiscriminate killing. In 2007, a series of coordinated bombs killed nearly 800 of them.

The Islamic State began a campaign of destroying Yazidi cities and villages in 2014, and it has murdered nearly 3,000 of them, abducted 6,500, and sold 4,500 Yazidi women and girls into sexual slavery. Many of the abducted girls have committed suicide. In these years, Baba Shaykh, the Yazidis' spiritual leader, has cancelled the official yearly religious ceremony at the main temple in Lalish out of fear of attacks.

The Yazidis (or Yezidis) are a Kurdish speaking people who live principally in northern Iraq. Reviled as devil worshipers for centuries by their Muslim and Christian neighbors, they have endured over 70 genocides in which over 20 million Yazidis are estimated to have died, and most have been compelled to abandon their culture.

The Yazidis number approximately 800,000, including about 150,000 who have taken refuge in Europe. They describe themselves as believing in one true God, and they revere *Taus Melek*, the Peacock Angel who is an embodied form (Avatar) of the infinite God. Six other angels assist *Taus Melek* and they are associated with the seven days of creation with Sunday as the day of *Taus Melek*. The peacock imagery adorns Yazidi shrines and houses of worship, and other places. The attacks on them are a consequence of the Christian and the Muslim belief that the Peacock Angel is Satan or *Iblis*.

The Yazidi religion is a mystical, oral tradition consisting of hymns (*qawls*) that are sung by *qawwals*. Parts of the tradition have now been

transcribed as two holy books called the Kitab al-Jilwa (Book of Revelation) and the Mishefa Res (Black Book).

Yazidis claim to have originated in India, and the veneration of the peacock may be a memory of this origin. In India, the peacock is the vehicle of Murugan (also known as Skanda or Kartikeya), son of Shiva. Krishna also wears a peacock feather in his hair or in the crown. Of the seven colors produced from the primal rainbow, *Tausi Melek* is associated with the color blue, which is also the color of Krishna.

Yazidis pray in the direction of the sun, excepting for the noon prayer which is in the direction of Lalish. They believe in reincarnation and they take it that the angels (with the exception of *Taus Melek*) have been incarnated on earth as holy people or saints. Just like the Hindus, they use the metaphor of a change of garment to describe the process of rebirth.

Like other Indo-European cultures, the Yazidi society is tripartite, with the three classes of shaykh (priests), pir (elders), and murid (commoners) and they marry only



Photo credit- SAFIN HAMED/AFP/Getty Images



Photo Credit: SAFIN HAMED/AFP/Getty Images

within their group. Their society does not allow conversion. The shaykhs are divided into faqirs, qawwals, and kochaks. The secular leader is a hereditary Mir or prince, whereas Baba Shaykh heads the religious hierarchy.

The Yazidis call themselves Daseni (Dawasen, pl.) which is derived from Devayasni (Sanskrit, deva-yajni), or deva-worshiper. The word Yazidi is most likely derived from Sanskrit yajata (worthy of worship) which in Old Persian (and Kashmiri) is yazata. The word deva in Old Persian is spelt daeva. Across India, Iran and West Asia in the ancient world, the worshipers of Veda were simply Devayajñi (or Devayasni), of which the terms Sanatana Dharma or Vedic Dharma are synonyms. The name by which the Zoroastrians call their own religion is Mazdayasna (Sanskrit, medha-yajña), or the religion of Ahura Mazda (Sanskrit Asura Medha, Lord of Wisdom). Zarathushtra presented his religion as rival to the religion of the devas, that is Devayasna.

The most plausible spread of Devayasna from India took place about 1900 BCE, soon after which Vedic gods begin to be mentioned in Mesopotamia and Syria. Zarathushtra came from Bactria in northeast Iran, near Afghanistan and his new religion split the deva-worshipping communities in the West from the ones in India. The 4,000 year estimate of the Yazidis on when they returned from India is consistent with this figure.

After the rise of Zoroastrianism, Devayasna survived for a pretty long time in West Asia. The evidence of the survival comes from the deva- or daiva-inscription of Iranian Emperor Xerxes (ruled 486-465 BC) in which the revolt by the deva worshipers in West Iran is directly mentioned. Xerxes announces: "And among these countries there was a place where previously daiva were

worshiped. Afterwards, by the grace of Ahuramazda, I destroyed that sanctuary of daiva, and I proclaimed: The daiva shall not be worshipped!" This, nearly 2,500 years ago, is an early record of the persecution suffered by the Devayasni, the ancestors of the Yazidis.

The Yazidi calendar goes back to 4750 BCE. It appears that this is connected to India's Old *Saptarsi* Calendar of 6676 BCE that is mentioned by the Greek historian Arrian in his account of Alexander's campaign. (More on the *Saptarsi* Calendar is in my book *The Astronomical Code of the rgveda*.)

The Yazidis have a rich spiritual tradition and their modern culture goes

back to the 12th century leader Shaykh Adi (died in 1162), a descendent of Marwan I, the fourth Umayyad Caliph, whose tomb is in Lalish in Northern Iraq which has now become the focal point of the principal Yazidi pilgrimage.

During the New Year celebration, bronze lamps crowned with peacocks, called sanjaks, which are similar to the bronze peacock arati-lamps, are taken from the residence of the Mir in a processional by the qawwals through the Yazidi villages. It is believed that the sanjaks came from India, and originally there were seven, one for each of the Seven Sacred Angels, but five were taken away by the Turks, and now only two remain.

The Yazidis are a symbol of mankind's indomitable will. As one of the most persecuted people in world history, they deserve praise and support for their courage and bravery. The least the *Sanatana Dharmis* can do is to open their hearts, provide refuge and support, admission to schools and colleges, and connect up with the Yazidi diaspora in Europe and America. ■

References

1. B. Acikyildiz, *The Yezidis*. I.B. Tauris, 2010.
2. S. Kak, *Vedic elements in the ancient Iranian religion of Zarathushtra*. *Adyar Library Bulletin*, vol. 67, pp. 47-63, 2003.
3. *The Achaemenid Royal Daiva Inscription of Xerxes*.

About the Author



Subhash Kak

is Regents professor of electrical and computer engineering at Oklahoma State University and a Vedic scholar. He has authored many books and published numerous papers in various academic journals.



**It has more peace today than Pakistan and Bangladesh
that have rejected their Hindu past**

India Owes Its Tolerance to Hindu Dharma



India has been primarily Hindu in terms of culture and religion for many centuries, extending to thousands of years. Hinduism has endured remarkably through long periods of foreign invasion and hostile rule, though other ancient religions have long since perished.

We find this vast spiritual and cultural tradition comprehensively explained as early as the Mahabharata, and synthesized philosophically in the Bhagavad Gita more than 2,000 years ago. The Mahabharata describes the geography of the entire subcontinent of India relative to the worship of Krishna, Rama, Vishnu, Shiva and Durga, explaining the main deity forms and yogic teachings of later Hinduism, as well as delineating the rule of kings. Other important *dharmic* traditions, notably Buddhism and Jainism, share a common culture, values and practices with the Hindu.

Christianity arrived in India at an early period but was a minor influence until the colonial period. Islam began inroads in the eighth century and became a strong force after the thirteenth century. Yet these religions, in spite of great efforts, could not replace Hinduism as the dominant cultural tradition.

Composite culture and cultural continuity

Culture has an identity and continuity that evolves over time. In this regard, we can speak of an Indian culture and identity that is predominantly Hindu, just as we can speak of a European culture and identity that is predominantly Judeo-Christian, or a Middle Eastern culture that is predominantly Islamic.

There is certainly much beautiful art, profound philosophy, transformative yoga practices and deep experiential spirituality in Hindu and related *dharmic* traditions. This ancient *dharmic* culture spread to East Asia, Indochina and Indonesia, but also to Central Asia and influenced West Asia and Europe.

Yet Hindu dharma has not been frozen in time and continues to assimilate not only other religions, but also science, democracy and other modern trends, without losing its identity as promoting the spiritual quest above

outer forms or dogmas.

It is crucial that India recognizes its past, which has a strong Hindu component, in order to understand its cultural heritage. There may be aspects of older traditions that are not politically or scientifically correct in terms of current standards or may need reform, just as is the case with older cultures of the world. But there is much of tremendous value that should not be forgotten.

The fear of Hindu majoritarianism

There is a fear in India that highlighting its Hindu past may alienate non-Hindus or make Hindus intolerant today. There is a fear of Hindu majoritarianism in India, just as there is a fear of Christian majoritarianism in the West, or Islamic majoritarianism in the Middle East.

Yet Hinduism has never had a single book, church, or religious law, nor any single savior or religious leader. It recognizes that the Divine dwells in the hearts of all beings as the very power of consciousness. Its views of religion and culture are pluralistic and synthetic, not exclusivist or monolithic. Hinduism has not been an aggressive religion, but one often under siege owing to its emphasis on inner spiritual practice over seeking power in the external world.

The British tried to eradicate pride in India's past through denigrating Hindu teachings starting with the Vedas. Though they preserved certain Sanskrit texts, their interpretations were condescending and inaccurate. Marxist and Freudian scholars have continued with demeaning interpretations of Hinduism and miss its sublime art and spirituality.

The great gurus of modern India since Vivekananda have kept the teachings alive and expanding in spite of such concerted efforts that have even targeted them personally.

India's characteristic culture and yogic spirituality that the world honors owes a great deal to its Hindu

By Dr. David Frawley

(Pandit Vamadeva Shastri)

Hindu samskriti is our identity: RSS chief

BENGALURU: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat here said "Hindu samskriti (culture)" is India's identity and that is why it is known as "Hindu Rashtra" even as he stressed on organizing those who accept Indian values and cultural system of unity in diversity.

"Hindu samskriti or Bharatiya Samskriti, we have this as our identity. Bharat is not just a name of some part or piece of land. The land keeps increasing or decreasing based on how it is being treated. The nature of the society is its 'samskriti'.

"This is the 'samskriti' which binds us all together, thus is our identity and that is the reason it is known as Hindu Rashtra. Not many know and not many believe but it is universally accepted. We all are Hindus as we have accepted the very nature of the 'samskriti'," Bhagwat was quoted saying at an event here in an RSS statement. "We should organize those Hindus who accept the values and Indian cultural system of unity in diversity, so that they work towards the country's progress... Groom them with 'samskars' so that we see an organized society," he said.

"Other countries say uniformity is must for unity. We do not believe or even follow it. Uniformity is not compulsory for unity. One must be able to find unity in

diversities. "India has always been one nation despite diversities. It is also mentioned in Atharva Veda. This culture of unity and diversity binds India."

Addressing the valedictory ceremony of four-day *Akhil Bharatiya Shrung Ghosh Shbir 'SWARANJALI-2016'* held here, he said: "We all are Hindus as we have accepted the very nature of this culture (of unity in diversity)." "This culture does not do a differentiation in ways of praying to

God or even in the name of the religion, caste sub caste, language." Bhagwat said, "The reason for India to be repeatedly invaded by foreigners even before the British arrived was that we were not standing up to our values and the culture of unity in diversity," he added.

"To inculcate these noble Indian values among people, RSS founder

KB Hedgewar started RSS to bring together the entire Hindu community."

Former ISRO Chairman K Radhakrishnan said science and technology should address complex and larger issues of relevance with a focus in purpose. "It is significant to ensure convergence and linkages between all players of value chain so that the benefits reach the ultimate end user in the society. Effective management with emerging technologies, worldwide, will require new directions and innovative solutions," Radhakrishnan added. ■

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Hindu-samskriti-is-our-identity-RSS-chief/articleshow/50524031.cms>

background. India has more peace and tolerance today than Pakistan and Bangladesh that have rejected their Hindu past and where the percentage of Hindus in the country has been radically reduced. Muslims have greater religious freedom in India than in Pakistan, with Islamic groups like Shias and Ahmadiyyas that are often attacked in Pakistan able to operate freely in India.

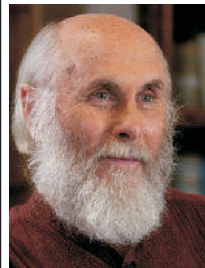
Mahatma Gandhi referred to himself as a "proud Hindu". Yet such a term will rarely be found repeated in media and academic circles in the country today.

Hindu dharma has supported the timeless spirit of India and should be respected for its role. Hinduism remains one of the greatest cultural, religious and spiritual traditions in the world. An India without Hindu dharma would not be India. ■

About the Author

Dr. David Frawley (Pandit Vamadeva Shastri)

D. Litt., author of several books, is a western born teacher or guru in the Vedic tradition. In India, Vamadeva is recognized as a Vedacharya (Vedic teacher), and includes in his scope of studies Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedanta and Vedic astrology, as well as the ancient Vedic teachings going back to the oldest Rigveda. Vamadeva is a recipient of the prestigious Padma Bhushan award, one of the highest civilian awards granted by the government of India, "for distinguished service of a higher order to the nation," honoring his work and writings as a Vedic teacher, which he received in March 2015.



Source: <https://vedanet.com/2016/01/05/india-owes-its-tolerance-to-hindu-dharma/>

Homage to a Karmayogi

By Abhaya Asthana

It is with a heavy heart that we share the news of the *dehant* of a very dear friend and a dedicated, selfless, cheerful, beloved member of the VHPA family, Arun Agrawal Ji. He passed away the night of Tuesday Nov 3. He was going through treatment for cancer but suffered due to pneumonia. When he learned of his cancer diagnosis, he called it a "speed bump in the road of life." He faced all his myriad medical problems cheerfully and with great determination. His enthusiasm and zest for life was infectious, he would lift the spirits of the most depressed person.

Arun Ji was a free spirit. He pursued things he was passionate about, and what he thought were meaningful. Classical music was his passion. He founded *Raagmaala* to attract and promote budding classical Hindustani artistes. Every year he would organize a concert in keeping with the tradition of introducing Indian classical music not only to the second generation Indian Americans but also to the wider American audience. He worked with a very simple principle: Music "transcends all the barriers of language."

Arun Ji was always smiling. Always cheerful. His presence would always lighten up any meeting. He was one of the kindest, gentlest, and compassionate person we knew. Ever ready to drive down from Rhode Island all the way to Northern MA to help out! Once he became a friend, he was a friend for life. Apart from music his other passion was "giving." Community service was his way of giving back. A person with pure heart he was a strong supporter of VHPA, and specially the Ekal Vidyalaya Movement. He supported 30 Ekal Schools all at one event I remember. He would serve joyously and tirelessly at all VHPA events: camp, youth conference, Hindu Heritage Day, *Akhand Ramayan Path*, Ekal. His enthusiasm and cheerfulness was an inspiration for others. We will miss Arun Ji severely.

May *Ishwara* grant *Sadgati* to his *Atman* in its onward journey and give forbearance to his family.

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shantih!



Abhaya Asthana

is President, VHP of America

एक संगीत रसिया को श्रद्धांजली

डॉ. मधुसूदन

आपने किसी मर्मज्ञ संगीत रसिया को संगीत सुनते हुए देखा है? जब अरुण संगीत सुनता तो आँखें मूँदकर, सुखासन में बैठ जाता, धीरे धीरे आलाप के साथ, राग के भावमें उतर जाता, तल्लीन हो जाता। फिर बाहर क्या घट रहा है इसकी उसे सुध ना रहती। ऐसी ध्यान की गहराई में संगीत का आनंद लेने की आदत थी उसे। रागमाला के संगीत कार्यक्रमों में

कलाकार अरुण के कारण अपना मानधन घटा देते थे। जो सम्मान अरुण आदर-सत्कार, वैयक्तिक देखभाल और आतिथ्य से देता उसका मूल्य भी कम नहीं था। मेरे घर अरुण आता, सदैव अपना घर समझकर। दुख में आँसू बहाता, सुख में आनंद उठाता। अपने सुखदुःख मेरे परिवार से बाँटे बिना ना रहता। मेरी कठिनाईयोंमें उत्साह से सहायता करता। और बेटी के विवाह में तो तीन दिन तक दौडभाग करता रहा। एअरपोर्ट से अतिथियों को लाना, उनके अल्पाहार और निवास का प्रबंध सतत खड़े रहकर प्रतिबद्ध सहायता। मुझे बड़ा भाई मानता, मैं उसे छोटा भाई।

मैंने उसी से सीखा की संगीत सुनना स्वयं एक कला है।

मुझे रागों की जानकारी और रुचि दृढ़ करने का श्रेय मैं अरुण को ही दूंगा।

अरुण का विशेष गुण था उत्साह। इस उत्साह से हर परिस्थिति में वह आनंदित रहता। उसके डॉक्टर ने भी उसके इस गुण की प्रशंसा की थी। कैसे हर परिस्थिति में उत्साहित और आनंदी रहा जाए यह एक गुण उसका विशेष था, असामान्य था। यह उधार नहीं लाया जाता, और बिलकुल आसान नहीं है। संसार में प्रत्येक व्यक्ति अपनी प्रतिमा को सुधारने में लगा हुआ है। जो स्वयं नहीं है उसकी झूठी प्रतिमा बनाने में सारा जीवन खपा देता है। खोखली प्रतिमा को चमकाने में कड़ा परिश्रम करता है। पर उससे कम परिश्रम में तो अपने आपको वास्तव में सुधार सकता है। यही वास्तविक संदेश अरुण के जीवन से उसके पारदर्शी व्यक्तित्व से व्यक्त होता है। यही संदेश दे कर यह पारदर्शी व्यक्तित्व संसार से विदा हो गया। ज्ञानी कहते हैं, संसार एक रंगमंच है, और मनुष्य इस रंगमंच पर अभिनय कर रहा है। निर्देशक ईश्वर है। जब भी अभिनय समाप्त होता है; निर्देशक संकेत देता है। तो रंगमंच छोड़कर जाना पड़ता है। लिखते लिखते मेरे

आँसू जमने लगे।

मेरा परिवार सदस्य, मेरा छोटा भाई था अरुण।

वंग परमेश्वर दिता आत्मा को शान्ति प्रदान करे।

कबीर जी कह गए हैं,

कबिरा जब हम पैदा हुए, जग हँसे हम रोये।

ऐसी करनी कर चलो, हम हँसे जग रोये॥



Does the multiplicity of forms of God mean Hinduism is polytheistic?

No!

By Dr. D.C. Rao

Is Hinduism Polytheistic?

Judaism, Christianity and Islam are often described as the world's three great monotheistic religions, implying that Hinduism is polytheistic. Attempting to label Hinduism as either

'Monotheistic' or 'polytheistic' is being unaware of what Hinduism really is. Hindu scriptures speak of a single Supreme Being who is both transcendent and immanent, manifest in a multitude of forms. It is a mistake to seek in Hinduism an equivalent of the Creator God or Father figure who dwells in Heaven, presides over a Final Judgment and offers Salvation to those who

believe in Him. To understand what 'God' means in Hinduism, we need to reflect more deeply on the various meanings attached to the word 'God.'

Many would agree that 'God' may be seen as the Supreme or Ultimate Reality. But, in practice, for most human beings, God is not an abstraction but a Person, with personal attributes. Hebrew scriptures, the Bible and the Quran have extensive descriptions of the attributes of God: compassion, love, forgiveness, justice and jealousy (Exodus 34.6, 7, 14); seven attributes including power, wisdom and glory (Revelations 5.12); the Quran refers to Allah as Most Gracious and Most Merciful; and, drawing on references in the Quran, Islamic tradition has compiled a list of 99 Most Beautiful Names that devout Muslims are asked to remember.

In Hinduism, 'God' is truly One but scriptures present various descriptions of 'God' to satisfy the spiritual needs of practitioners and devotees at different levels of spiritual development: the Ultimate Reality, the



Inner Controller, and a devotional anchor. The very heart of Hindu spiritual practice is captured in the teaching: "by any means whatever, rest your mind in God".

The Upanishads discuss the Ultimate Reality. "In the beginning there was Existence alone...One alone, without a second" . "...that which is invisible, ungraspable, birth less...eternal, the source of all." These statements relate to Brahman, Pure

our projection of attributes to meet our own mental needs. In the language of Vedanta, *Ishwara* is a 'superimposition' on the One Reality that is *Brahman*, which means that *Ishwara* has no reality separate from Pure Consciousness. Such superimposition is encouraged by the Hindu scriptures as a practical aid to spiritual progress. Meditating on the attributes of *Ishwara* is a powerful spiritual practice.⁵²



*World's three great monotheistic religions,
Judaism, Christianity and Islam.*

Consciousness, that has no name, no form, is indescribable and beyond the human mind. If God means Ultimate Reality, there can be no more monotheistic declarations than these. Brahman is free of all attributes since to think of Brahman as a Person is to impose limitations on that which is Infinite. The attribute of being tall excludes short; being bright excludes dark; and so on. Being free of all attributes, Brahman is said to be "indescribable." The Upanishads declare that although beyond description, Brahman can be experienced by negating all concepts that arise in the mind and by making the mind so still and pure that we become aware of the very source of our awareness.

Because it is extremely hard for the human mind to grapple with such an abstraction, Hindu scriptures offer another way of thinking about God: *Ishwara*. Unlike *Brahman*, *Ishwara* has attributes: all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal and ever-free of all human limitations. *Ishwara* is the inner controller who dwells in the hearts of all living beings. By deep devotion and surrender to *Ishwara* the spiritual seeker is able to realize the true Self and overcome sorrow. *Ishwara* is one. Although *Brahman* is the only true reality, *Ishwara* arises out of

For most, *Ishwara* is also too abstract. How are they to connect with God, develop deep devotion to God and ultimately rest their minds in God? Hinduism addresses this human need by presenting God in specific forms. Such forms are clearly recognizable and so lend themselves to deeper personal relationships. For example, Lord Ganesha, the God of Wisdom, is portrayed with the head of an elephant, which is known to be a highly intelligent animal; and there are numerous stories about Lord Ganesha that devotees can enjoy and relate to. Other names and forms in which God is portrayed include celestial, human and other beings; male and female; austere and opulent; fierce and serene; master and servant. These forms reflect the vision that

God is not merely a remote 'Creator' of the universe; rather, the whole universe is a manifestation of God's creative energy. This is why Hindus regard the whole of nature as sacred.

Mountains and rivers, trees, animals and all planets can be objects of worship as manifestations of the One Supreme Reality.

This proliferation of names and forms in which God might be worshipped by Hindus has two important benefits: first, persons of every temperament can find a form of God that appeals to their heart and to whom they can offer deep devotion; and second, seeing Divinity in so many different forms creates in Hindus a reverence for the Creator who has brought forth this wondrous diversity.

In referring to these forms of the Supreme Reality, another Sanskrit term that is used to denote 'God' is *Bhagavan* or *Bhagavati*. *Bhagavan* refers to male and *Bhagavati* to female forms of Divinity. Both terms signify one who possesses six special attributes known collectively as "*bhaga*": Knowledge, Detachment, Sovereignty, Righteousness, Renown and Glory. There is of course no limit to the list of Divine attributes. For example, the Divine Mother is described as the source of 21 attributes in each living being; and Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita:

"there is no end to My Divine Glories..."⁵⁵ Reciting

the thousand names of Vishnu or Lalita are popular prayers, for each of the names is associated with a Divine attribute and helps in fostering devotion to God.

Does the multiplicity of forms of God mean Hinduism is polytheistic? No, for all these different forms are merely various manifestations of the One Pure Consciousness. The scriptures never tire of pointing this out. Even the Hindu who is not philosophically inclined and unaware of the scriptures relating to Brahman as the One Ultimate Reality does not regard the different forms of God as competing Divinities. The scriptures that present specific forms of God themselves proclaim that form to be the same as the One universal, infinite

IN THE **BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD**, THE QUESTION IS POSED: "HOW MANY GODS EXACTLY ARE THERE?" THE FIRST ANSWER IS "THREE HUNDRED AND THREE". THE QUESTION IS REPEATED MANY TIMES, ELICITING A SERIES OF ANSWERS: "THIRTY-THREE"; "SIX"; "THREE"; "TWO"; "ONE-AND-A-HALF"; "ONE". THIS DISCUSSION ENDS WITH THE QUESTION: "WHICH IS THE ONE GOD?" TO WHICH THE ANSWER IS "IT IS **BRAHMAN...**"

Reality. Furthermore, the Upanishads caution against seeing the object of worship as being separate from Brahman. When Hindus worship God in a specific form, they do so to connect with the all-powerful Higher Being that is the One Ultimate Reality.

Another Sanskrit term that is commonly translated as 'God' is *deva* or *devata*. Devas and devatas are divine beings that are

manifestations of the One Supreme Being in all aspects of creation.

Deva literally means 'shining being' and is seen as the divine force presiding over each field of activity, whose blessings we invoke for success in what we do in that field. Each *deva* is merely one aspect of the Supreme Being who, being transcendent and immanent, is to be seen in all forms. Devas exist as cosmic forces as well as forces within us. They are invoked through prayer and worship as well as through a variety of yogic and tantric practices. Translating *deva* or *devata* as 'God' or 'gods' invites conflict with the idea that there is only One Supreme Being that some other religions call God. From this misinterpretation comes the incorrect inference that Hinduism is polytheistic. If there has to be a label for Hinduism, a better one might be 'pluriform monotheism.'

Hindu scriptures offer many manifestations of the One Reality - from Brahman as the most abstract to *Ishwara*, *Bhagavan*, Personal manifestations such as

Vishnu, Shiva, Durga or Lakshmi and Divine incarnations on earth such as Rama and Krishna. The goal of each spiritual seeker is to connect with the infinite Divinity that is both transcendent and immanent, that can appear in any form even while being essentially beyond all forms. The scriptures encourage all seekers by leaving open all possibilities, allowing the seeker to choose a spiritual practice according to his or her own level of understanding. In the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, the question is posed: "how many Gods exactly are there?" The first answer is "three hundred and three". The question is repeated many times, eliciting a series of answers: "thirty-three"; "six"; "three"; "two"; "one-and-a-half"; "One". This discussion ends with the question: "Which is the One God?" to which the answer is "it is Brahman..." All the forms in which Hindus worship 'God' are various manifestations of the One. ■

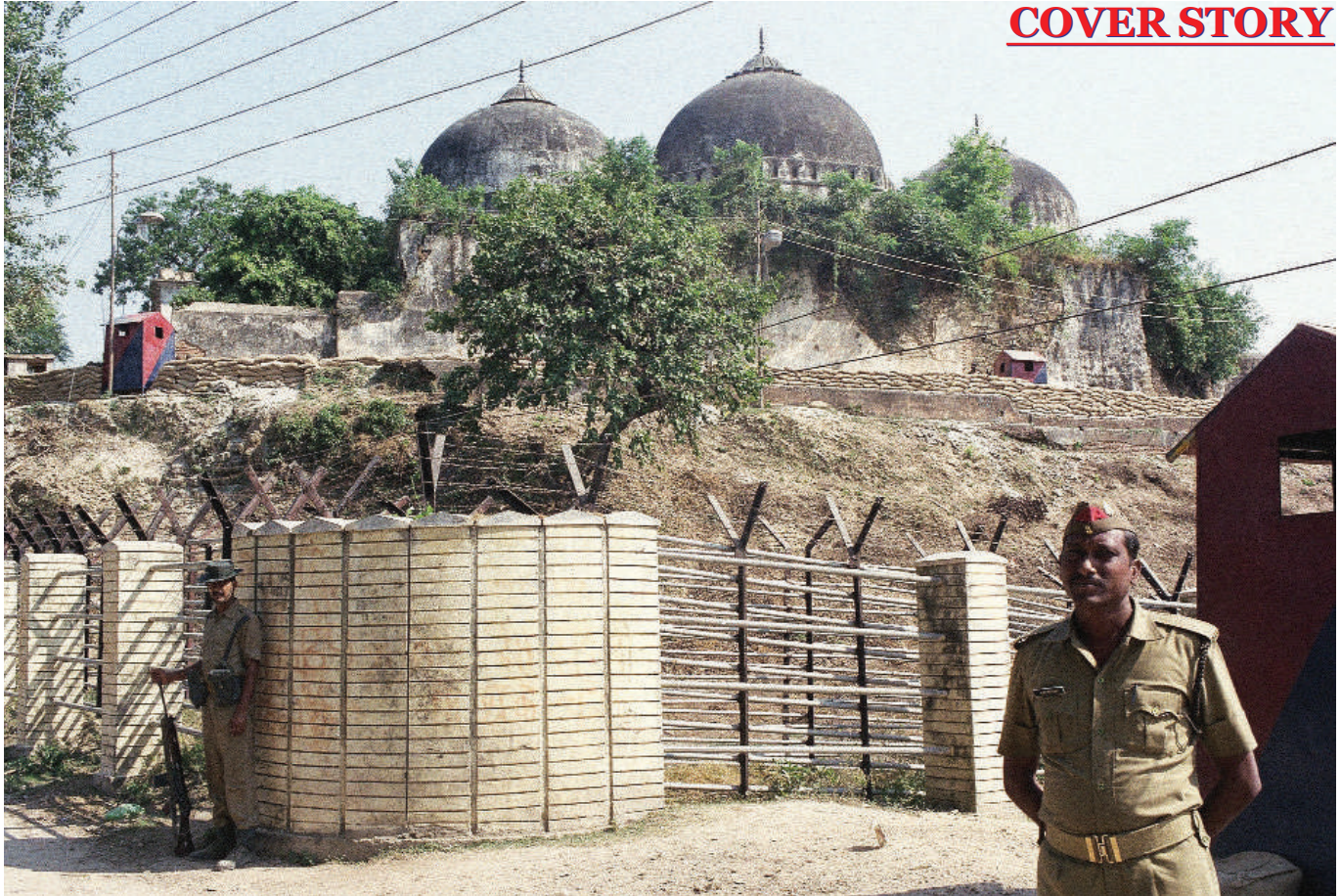
About the Author

Dr. D. C. Rao

retired from the World Bank in 1995 to pursue an intensive *adhyatmic* education and practice. He is a Trustee at the Chinmaya Mission, Washington D.C. and actively associated with the Himalayan International Institute of Yoga Science and Philosophy at Honesdale, Pa. He is a member of the Assembly and former President of the Inter Faith Conference of Metropolitan Washington, where he has contributed to work on Strengthening Teaching About Religion (STAR) for several years. He has degrees from the University of Mumbai, India, Cambridge University, U.K., and a Ph. D. in economics from the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A.



Above is part of a larger collection of essays written by Dr. D. C. Rao and published by the Hindu American Foundation. The full e-book is available at <http://hafs.org/hinduism-101/recommended-reading-hinduism>.



Left historians prevented peaceful resolution of Ram Janmabhoomi dispute



Irfan Habib

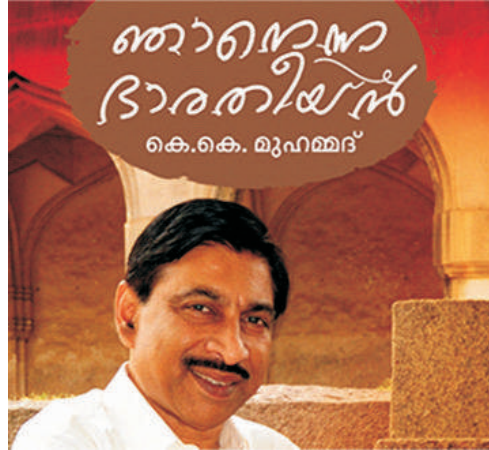
Startling revelation by a man who was on the ground zero when evidences were dug out & also close to a man who for decades tried to mislead judiciary, polity, media & public!



*Dr. KK Muhammed
Archaeological Survey of India
ex regional head*

By KA Antony

Twenty four years after the demolition of Babri Masjid, a former archaeologist has come out with the allegation that Left historians like Irfan Habib and Romila Thapar had thwarted an amicable settlement to the Babri Masjid issue. The allegation made by Dr. KK Muhammed, former Regional Director (North) of Archaeological Survey of India, in his autobiography titled *Njan Enna Bharatiyan* (I an Indian) in Malayalam also claim that remains of a Hindu temple were found during the excavation made by a team of archaeologists headed by Professor BB Lal, then director general of the Archaeological Survey of India during 1976-77, in which he was also a member.



*The cover of the book **Njan Enna Bharatiyan** by KK Muhammed.*

The autobiography released on Sunday has become a debating point among historians in Kerala. While renowned historian MGS Narayanan fully agree with Muhammed, Left centric historians like Dr KN Panikkar dubbed the arguments raised by the author as baseless and aimed at giving leverage to the BJP which is making all out efforts to open an account in Kerala assembly in the upcoming election.

Besides blaming the Left wing historians for failing to reach an amicable settlement in the Babri Masjid issue, the book also brings to focus the longstanding rift between historians supporting the Marxist view and others opposed to it.

Talking to Firstpost on his claims made in the book, Muhammed said the action committee held several meetings under the leadership of Irfan Habib, the then chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research. "The Babri issue would have been settled long ago if the Muslim intelligentsia had not fallen prey to the brain washing by the Leftist historians. A set of historians including Romila Thapar, Bipin Chandra and S Gopal argued that there was no mention of the dismantling of the temple before 19th century and Ayodhya is Bhudhist-Jain center. They were supported by historians Irfan Habib, RS Sharma, DN Jha, Suraj Ben and Akthar Ali," he said.

"It was they who connived with the extremist Muslim groups to derail all attempts to find an amicable solution to the Masjid issue. Some of them even took part in several government-level meetings and supported the

Babri Masjid Action Committee," he said.

Muhammed endorses in his book that a temple existed at the site of the Babri Masjid based on the unearthing of temple pillars during the excavation under Professor Lal in 1978. In the chapter "Whatever I learned and said are nothing but historical truth", Muhammed says that he got a chance to be part of an excavation team led by Lal in 1978. He was a student at the School of Archaeology in New Delhi at that time.

"We found not one but 14 pillars of a temple at the Babri Masjid site. All these pillars had domes carved on them. The domes resembled those found in temples belonging to 11th and 12th century. In the temple architecture domes are one of the nine symbols of prosperity. It was quite evident that the Masjid was erected on the debris of a temple. I went on writing to several English dailies in those days about the finding. Only one newspaper published my view and that too in the letters to Editor column," says the book.

According to Muhammed the Left historians even tried to mislead the Allahabad High Court on the issue. Even after the court had pronounced its verdict Irfan and his team were not ready to accept the truth. They simply questioned the logicity of the verdict. He said he knew Professor Irfan Habib from his Aligarh University days. "He always went to the extent of stifling the voices of those who disagreed with him. After all historians are mere historians, it is we the archaeologists who provide them the data," he said adding that even Qutub Minar and Taj Mahal were built on the debris of Hindu temples.

After his retirement from the ASI in 2012, Muhammed is working as the director of Aga Khan Trust project in Hyderabad.

Asked if his book would not fan up communal hatred, Muhammed sounded negative. "I do not think so. Besides, communalism in Hindu religion is not fundamental in nature but a spontaneous reaction. Godhra was such an instance of such a reaction," he said.

Professor MGS Narayanan, former chairman of Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), said Muhammed is perhaps right about his claim on the existence of a Hindu temple at the disputed site. "Many mosques and monuments were erected on sites where temples existed earlier. I also agree with what Muhammed has said about Prof. Irfan. It was during his

**Romila Thapar**

tenure as chairman of ICHR the democratic functioning of the institution was destroyed. It very difficult to work with him. I have my own bitter experiences. It was he and his team that had branded me an RSS man. It was he and his team that turned Jawaharlal Nehru University and the ICHR in to a den of Marxist historians," MGS said.

Dr KN Panikkar, who belongs to the Marxist school of historiography, said he was yet to see the book. "But I very much doubt the intention and timing of the book. The book comes at a time when the Sangh Parivar is getting ready for another 'silanyas'. His (Muhammed's) claims are new. He had made this claim even earlier. But his claims are not based on any scientific findings. As for his criticism against Irfan Habib and others, some people like him have been doing this for quite some time. I need not defend Habib. Everybody knows how great a scholar the man is," he said.

group of eminent historians of India. Muhammed's attempt to reduce a complex issue such as the Babri Masjid dispute into a mere conspiracy of few individuals appears quite silly and shallow. Babri Masjid assumed a sinister character in the background of the opportunist politics played by the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the Shah Bano case. To circumvent the court verdict he tried to appease the Muslim fundamentalists by a constitutional amendment to nullify the court verdict. The VHP used the same to spread the theory of minority appeasement and the Sangh Parivar looking for a new opening for the BJP reduced to a 2-member party in the parliament in the 1984 elections. Everybody knows that the Gandhi government played into the hands of the Parivar by opening the gates of the closed mosque for poojas," he said.

Sethunath is of the opinion that Muhammed's charges against historians such as Romila Thapar, Bipin Chandra, RS Sharma and Irfan Habib will not stand the scrutiny of serious scholarship. "It is also a known fact that the places now referred as Ayodhya had vestiges of Jaina-Budha influences. Many of the mosques and monuments on the debris of makeshift places of worship used by the Indian community. Muhammed is an eminent archaeologist but his outlook is totally against the



According to Muhammed, Qutub Minar and Taj Mahal were built on the debris of Hindu temples.

KP Sethunath, a student of history and journalist said, "I have not read the book fully. But whatever information available from the extracts that appeared in various newspapers appears to me more of an allegation than a scholarly repudiation of the position adopted by a

concept of history and archaeology pursued by Dr Thapar and Habib. Instead raising allegations he can better go for a healthy discourse on the issue," he said. ■

Source: <http://www.firstpost.com/india/left-historians-connived-with-extremists-mislead-muslims-on-babri-issue-says-archaeologist-in-new-book-2592188.html>

The Guilt of the 'Eminent Historians'

By Koenraad Elst

Few marginal media reported that archaeologist KK Muhammad had a startling revelation on the responsibility for the Ayodhya controversy and all its concomitant bloodshed.

Young people may not know what the affair, around 1990, was all about. Briefly, Hindus had wanted to build proper temple architecture on one of their sacred sites, the Rama Janmabhumi ("Rama's birthplace"). So far, the most natural thing in the world. However, a mosque had been built in forcible replacement of the temple that had anciently adorned the site: the Babri Masjid. Not that this should have been a problem, because the structure was already in use as a temple, and the site was of no importance to the Muslims, who never go on pilgrimage there. So, Rajiv Gandhi's Congress government was maneuvering towards a compromise allotting the site definitively to the Hindus all while appeasing the Muslim leadership. This was not too principled, just pragmatic, but it had the merit of being bloodless.

Unfortunately, this non-violent formula was thwarted. An unexpected factor came in between. It stimulated and hardened Muslim resistance and especially, it made politicians hesitant to move forward on Ayodhya. As a consequence, street rowdies took over, killing hundreds. The Hindu-Muslim violence culminated in a multiple Muslim terror attack in Mumbai on 12 March 1993, which set the pattern for later terrorist attacks from New York and Paris to Mumbai again. On the other hand, it threw the issue into the BJP's lap, making it the principal opposition party in 1991 and ultimately bringing it to power.

So: who thwarted the Ayodhya solution, thus creating a new type of terrorism as well as setting the BJP on a course towards power? Though the contentious site had no special value for the Muslims at first, it had suddenly become the Mecca of another influential community: the secularists. They made it the touchstone of secularism's resistance against "aggressive Hindu fundamentalism".

'Eminent Historians' have blood on their hands

As a weapon against Hinduism, and as a way to whip up Muslim emotion, they alleged that the Hindu claimants of the site had been using false history. In fact, history was only

peripheral to the Hindu claim on the site: it is a Hindu pilgrimage site today, and that ought to suffice to leave it to the Hindus. Yet, secularism's favored "eminent historians" insisted on interfering and said that there had never been a temple at the site.

Then already, the existence of the temple was known



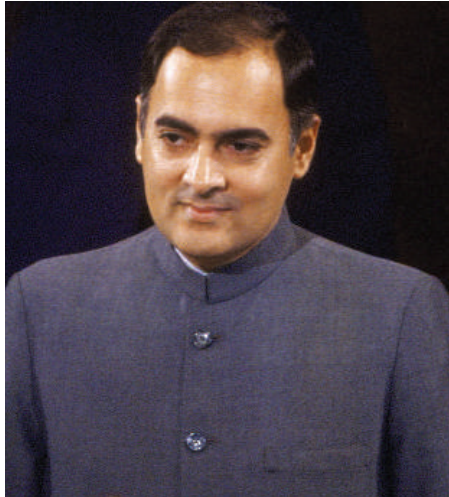
from written testimonies (Muslim and European) and from BB Lal's partial excavations at the site in 1973-4. Until the 1980s, the forcible replacement of the temple by the mosque had been a matter of consensus, as when a 19th-century judge ruled that a temple had indeed been destroyed, but that it had become too late to remedy this condition. The British rulers favored the status-quo, but agreed that there had been a temple, as did the local Muslims. It is allowed for historians to question a consensus provided they have new evidence, but here they failed to produce any.

Yet, in a statement of 1989, JNU's "eminent historians" turned an unchallenged consensus into a mere "Hindutva claim". It is symptomatic for the power equation in India and in Indology that this is a repeating pattern. Thus, in the Aryan Homeland debate, the identification of the Vedic Saraswati river with the Ghaggar in Haryana is likewise being ridiculed by secularist academics and their foreign dupes as a "Hindutva concoction", though it had first been proposed in 1855 by a French archaeologist and has been accepted ever since by most scholars.

After the historians' interference, the Indian



Rajiv Gandhi thought he could settle this dispute with some Congressite horse-trading: give the Hindus their toy in Ayodhya and the Muslims some other goodies that will keep everyone happy. But he failed



mainstream politicians did not dare to go against the judgment of these authorities. The international media and India-watchers were also taken in and shared their hatred of these ugly Hindu history-falsifiers. Only, the Court-ordered excavations of 2003 have fully vindicated the old consensus: temple remains were found underneath the mosque. Moreover, the eminences asked to witness in Court had to confess their incompetence one after another (as documented by Meenakshi Jain: Rama and Ayodhya, 2013): one had never been to the site, the next one had never studied any archaeology, a third had only fallen in line with some hearsay, etc. Abroad this news has hardly been reported, and experts who know it make sure that no conclusions are drawn from it. After the false and disproven narrative of the eminent historians has reigned supreme for two decades, no one has yet bothered to demythologize their undeserved authority.

For close observers, the news of the eminent historians' destructive role was not surprising. I had spoken on it in passing in my paper "The three Ayodhya debates" (St-Petersburg 2011, available online), and in an interview with India Facts (8 Jan. 2016): "The secular intelligentsia... could reasonably have taken the position that a temple was indeed demolished to make way for a mosque but that we should let bygones be bygones. Instead, they went out of their way to deny facts of history. Rajiv Gandhi thought he could settle this dispute with some Congressite horse-trading: give the Hindus their toy in Ayodhya and the Muslims some other goodies that will keep everyone happy. But this solution became unfeasible when many academics construed this contention as a holy war for a frontline symbol of secularism."

Facile dismissals are sure to be tried against me. They will be harder when the allegation comes from an on-site

archaeologist, moreover a Muslim.

The media had allotted an enormous weight to the Ayodhya affair: "Secularism in danger", "India on the brink" and similar headlines were daily fare. When the Babri Masjid was demolished by impatient Hindu youngsters on 6 December 1992, the Times of India titled its editorial: "A requiem for norms", no less. Given all the drama and moralistic bombast with which they used to surround this controversy, one would have expected their eagerness to report KK Muhammad's eyewitness account. But no, they were extremely sparing in their coverage, reluctant to face an unpleasant fact: the guilt of their heroes, the "eminent historians". These people outsourced the dirty work to Hindu and Muslim street fighters and to Islamic terrorists, but in fact it is they who have blood on their hands. ■

About the Author



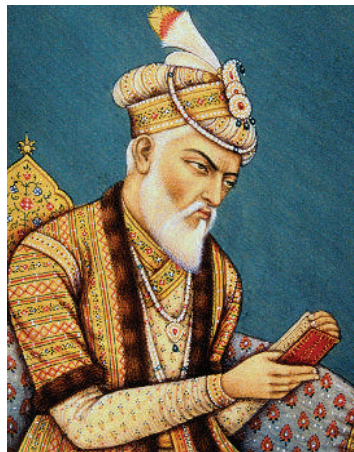
Koenraad Elst,
a renowned Belgian Indologist, has written several books on Indian history and culture. He is best known for his writings on controversies in Indian history.

The World's Biggest Holocaust: A Forgotten Story

By Priyal Sarda

Imagine being in a country where you had to obey everything a ruler said and if you didn't you were tortured and killed. Now imagine this leader was not even your country's leader, it was a leader from another group. They tortured you and your family if you didn't convert your religion to theirs. Unfortunately, you were trapped you had no way to run away or hide, the ruler's people were everywhere and none of the other groups, the same religion as you could help because the surrounding places were all the same religion as the ruler. The only option you had was to throw away all your religious belongings and convert to save not only you but your family. But some people didn't and they were killed, many were killed, thinking that the rulers would stop, seeing so many people die. What would you do, would you convert your religion or be beaten? This is the feeling the people living in India had. The Mughal Empire was ruling India at the time. They forced all the Indians to convert their religion to Islam. Many people didn't convert and so this caused the Hindu Holocaust, since most people living there were Hindus, many of them were killed.

When the Muslims came from the Middle East and elsewhere and conquered India, they brought their religious beliefs and cultures with them. Before being conquered by the Muslims, India was divided into various kingdoms ruled by their respective Kings. The Kings were fair and made sure their land was protected and their people were in good shape, but the Muslims defeated them and took over their land. These Muslim kingdoms joined hands and what later became the Mughal Empire, they controlled Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India. At the time they were all one country known as Hindustan which means land of the Hindus because '-stan' means land. After taking the land, they wanted the people that lived in India



Aurangzeb:
*One of the biggest Mughal
murderer of Hindus*

to convert to Islam. Many people disagreed and this made the Rulers angry and so they tortured and killed the people who didn't convert. They destroyed many temples and schools, and burned many houses. They not only did that but also they mutilated, smashed, or burned religious statues and sometimes melted them if they were made of precious metals, they did this to sculptures on walls or pillars, too. Another devastating thing they did was murder or molest Brahmin priests and other holy men around the temple and killed cows on the temple sites so that the Hindus could not use the temples again (*Birodkar*). The slaying of cows in Hinduism is not allowed because they believe that cows are equivalent to our mother since they give us milk and milk is needed for a child to grow. This chaos went on for more than 800 years. It started in around 800 AD. Though there were periods of relief because of some occasional fair kings like the rule of Akbar. Akbar tried not to discriminate on religious grounds, and was the ruler who took the *Jiziya* law or the non-Muslim tax law out. There are many stories that have been passed down about him. In fact, slavery also took place in India where the Hindus were sold to the Muslims. In this holocaust about 100 million people were killed making it the world's biggest holocaust. After 800 years of harsh rule, finally the Sikhs in Panjab and the Hindu Maratha armies in the other parts of India were able to overpower the Empire which collapsed in the late 1700s (*Brahmachari*).

There are many bad things that the Muslim Kings did. In one of the battles, known as the Battle of Tallikota, the capital of Vijayanagara, Hampi, was destroyed. A Persian King named Nadir Shah made a mountain of skulls of the Hindus he killed only in Delhi. Babur, another King, did the same thing at Khanua when he defeated Rana Sanga, a Rajput king, in 1527 and did the same after capturing the Fort of Chanderi. Rajput is a community in the state of Rajasthan. The Rajput Kings ruled in Rajasthan before the Mughals took their land. Akbar ordered a general massacre of 30,000 Rajputs after he captured Chithor, a place in Rajasthan, in 1568. The Bahamani Sultans killed a minimum of 100,000 Hindus every year. There were many more murders and troubles that the Mughal Kings did. In the passage "The



Biggest Holocaust in World History," it talks about these troubles.

The existing evidence for the holocaust is that there are mutilated architectures of remains of various sculptures and other architectural fragments from that period that show it was true. There are hundreds of thousands of pieces of these evidences, some in museums and some still somewhere in India waiting to be picked up, or some in Muslim monuments or old mosques (*Birodkar*). Even Hindu temples remains are buried beneath the different Mughal mosques because they would destroy the temples and build a Muslim building there. Other evidence comes from witnesses' accounts that they have written what they saw in it.

Many people don't know about this holocaust, even many Hindus don't know what it is. One reason is because it took place a long time ago. Since it is so long ago, it has not been vastly published and discussed, unlike the Jewish Holocaust. There is only accounts of eyewitnesses and journals that tell us what happened in addition to stories and information passed down from

decreased the population by 80 million between 1000 AD and 1525 AD, an Indian historian Professor K.S. Lal estimates. It caused much damage and many temples were lost. In fact there are many good stories that came out of the rule, an example is the story of Shivaji Maharaj, a Hindu Maratha King who won his land back from Aurangzeb, a Mughal king.

There is still a threat from many terrorist groups like the Taliban and the Al- Qaeda because they are attacking the same places that suffered greatly from the holocaust (*Koenrad*).

I used many methods or ways to find information for my topic, the Hindu Holocaust. The method I used the most is finding information online from articles and researching by reading the information put by different authors. Another method I used was asking my parents specific questions about things that I was curious about or not sure about. Since they studied in India, they know a lot about India's history and have learned about the Muslim conquest and the deaths caused by them.

Knowing about the past is important and if we know

Work Cited

- ★ "The Biggest Holocaust in World History...whitewashed from History." *Www.bnp.org*. 16 Apr. 2012. Web. <<http://www.bnp.org.uk/news/national/biggest-holocaust-world-historywhitewashed-history>>.
- ★ Subramaniam, Eshwar. "Why Has the World Has Forgotten the Hindu Holocaust - the Largest Holocaust in Human History?" *Www.quora.com*. Web. <<https://www.quora.com/Why-has-the-world-has-forgotten-the-Hindu-holocaust-the-largest-holocaust-in-human-history>>.
- ★ "The Biggest Hindu-Sikh Holocaust in World History Whitewashed." *Hinduexistence.org*. Ed. UpanandaBrahmachari. 4 Feb. 2015. Web. <<http://hinduexistence.org/2015/02/04/the-biggest-hindu-sikh-holocaust-in-world-history-whitewashed/>>.
- ★ Birodkar, Sudheer. "Hindu Holocaust." *Www.hindunet.org*. Web. <http://www.hindunet.org/home/dharma_and_philosophy/panchajanya/HinduHolocaust.htm>.
- ★ "The Biggest Holocaust in World History." *Www.hinduwebsite.com*. 2000. Web. 2015. <<http://www.hinduwebsite.com/history/holocaust.asp>>.

generation to generation (*Brahmachari1*). Another reason is that historians do not want to touch the subject because of its sensitivity. This is a sensitive issue because there are both Muslims and Hindus still living in India and this could create an offence one religious groups causing riots and killing.

Also, there are no museums on the Hindu Holocaust so the information of this holocaust is not spread. Museums have interesting artefacts and real memories causing more people to go there and see the cool materials. The Hindu Holocaust is not taught in school. Something to keep in mind is that, remembering something bad and keep weeping and feeling sorry for it, isn't going to help, learn from it and don't do it again, is the only thing that can be done.

There are both good and bad effects of the conclusion of this holocaust. For example, there are both Muslim and Hindu populations living in India, today. Also, it

about the past we will not do the same mistakes again in the future. Therefore, I believe that knowing about this holocaust will only benefit us by helping us in the future to not do these mistake again. It will make us aware about what happened and what should not happen again. Knowing this will give us success. This holocaust happened because of religious intolerance and one religion wanted to take over the others, this caused chaos. This still happens today, and I think if we learn about the effects of this, people won't do it again. ■

About the Author



Priyal Sarda,
based in GA and a seventh grader,
was awarded prize for the above essay
in her school.

Why The Battle for Sanskrit matters

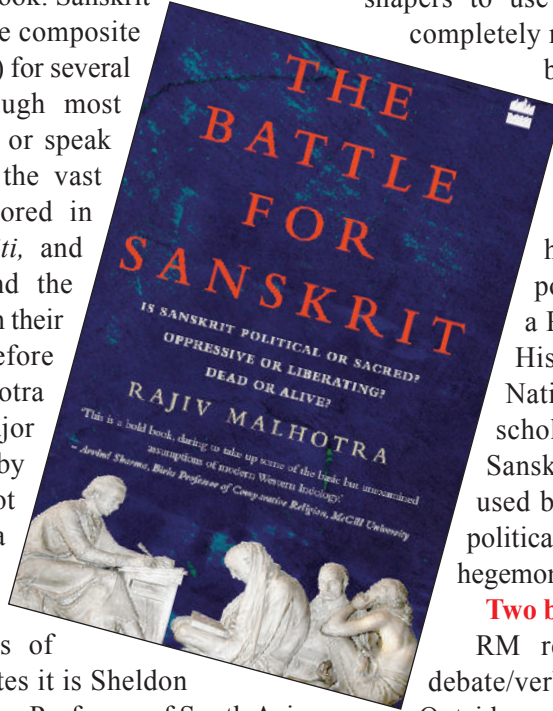


by Shrinivas Tilak

In chapter one of *The Battle for Sanskrit* the author Rajiv Malhotra succinctly explains his purpose (*prayojana*) in writing this book: Sanskrit has been the heartbeat of the composite Indian civilization (Sanskriti) for several thousand years. Even though most Indians do not read, write, or speak Sanskrit, they draw upon the vast reservoir of knowledge stored in Sanskrit texts—*Shruti*, *Smriti*, and *Itihasa* (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata) for guidance in their daily lives. One would therefore think, muses Rajiv Malhotra (hereafter RM) that a major takeover of Sanskrit studies by Western scholars would not go unnoticed in India particularly when their works discount or undermine the core values of Sanskriti. In the United States it is Sheldon Pollock (Arvind Raghunathan Professor of South Asian Studies at Columbia University, New York) who leads and shapes the project of keeping the custody of Sanskrit and Sanskriti studies in the Western hands.

The purpose of writing *The Battle for Sanskrit* (hereafter TBFS) is to expose, criticize, counter, and contest such studies and interpretations of Sanskrit and Sanskriti by politically active Sanskritists and scholars who occupy powerful academic positions in a number of fields in Indology from where they (1) control the editing and authoring of many influential works in and on Sanskrit and Sanskriti and (2) initiate or support petitions that attack Hindu institutions and leaders that encourage study of Sanskrit by all and invite active participation in Sanskriti. They also lobby in Indian political circles, exerting influence through the media.

Chapter two of TBFS provides a detailed account of Sheldon Pollock's activism (hereafter Pollock). A leading Sanskrit scholar, Pollock is regarded as a hero by many fellow academics and leftists in the USA and in India. He has trained and inspired an army of young American and Indian scholars, popular writers, and other opinion-



shapers to use his interpretations of Sanskrit for a completely new analysis of Indian society. The new breed of intellectual leaders groomed under his aegis includes a number of young scholars from across the world that pretend to claim and parade their newly earned 'authority' on Sanskrit history, social structures, and their political implications. Patrick McCartney, a PhD candidate in the School of Culture, History and Language at the Australian National University, is one such aspiring scholar inspired by Pollock's assessment of Sanskrit--though dead, Sanskrit is still being used by the Hindu right for its own moral and political agenda and to implement it as part of its hegemonic aims*

Two battling camps

RM refers to the two antagonists in the debate/verbal battle over Sanskrit and Sanskriti as Outsiders and Insiders (TBFS pp. 30-34). It was linguist Kenneth L. Pike who coined the terminology of 'etic' and 'emic' to refer to the views held by an 'Outsider' and 'Insider' on a given issue. While etic refers to a detached, trained observer's perception of the uninterpreted 'raw' data; emic refers to how those data are interpreted by an 'Insider' to the system. An emic unit is a physical or mental item or system treated by insiders as relevant to their system of behavior in terms of the context. The 'Outsider' allegedly brings with him/her a detached observer's view, which is one window on the world. The view of the local scene through the eyes of a native participant is a different window. Either view by itself is restricted in scope and may lead to distortion.

Thus, in the etic perspective, the color 'white' is perceived as equal presence of light of all wave-lengths by an average human eye. In the emic perspective, on the other hand, it denotes the notion of purity and auspiciousness (as in India) or mourning (as in China). RM argues that while the 'Outsider' looks at Sanskrit essentially from an Orientalist and Social/ anthropological studies point of view; the 'Insider' camp primarily holds a



traditional Indic view of Sanskrit and tries to understand Sanskrit the way the insiders see it.

Two important caveats may be entered here: (1) RM is categorical in stating that the 'Outsider' vs 'Insider' division is not set in stone nor is it based on race, ethnicity, or nationality. Thus, while in general the Western view looks at Sanskrit and Sanskriti with an Orientalist lens, any Westerner holding the traditional viewpoint on Sanskrit would be called an 'Insider.' By the same token Indians holding an exclusively Social/anthropological science point of view while denying the traditional view would come under the 'Outsider' camp; (2) though the 'battle metaphor' figures extensively; RM's battle for Sanskrit is not physical but verbal and metaphysical.

Purvapaksha, Uttara paksha, and Siddhanta

RM's overall argument as developed in TBFS is structured in a three tiered format of the traditional debate: Purvapaksha--faithful depiction and presentation of the views (*mata*) held prima facie by one's opponent concerning key ideas about a major precept or practice in philosophy, jurisprudence, or medicine (*pariksha*), Uttara paksha -critical assessment and subsequent refutation of the point of view of the opponent on the subject under scrutiny (*nirnaya* = decision) and Siddhanta -putting forth of a 'provisional' conclusion that is subject to revision after subsequent round/s of debate. The bulk of TBFS is given to presentation (*Purvapaksha*) and refutation (*Uttara paksha*) of four key propositions put forth by Pollock:

I Decoupling Sanskrit from the Vedas by removing the mystic aura surrounding it. Scholars then must direct their gaze through the window of Sanskrit into the history of India to expose the toxic role Sanskrit has had in social oppression as claimed by select historians,

II Secularizing the Sanskrit *kavya* tradition by peeling away its *paramarthika* (transcendental) dimension,

III Interpreting the Ramayana as a social and political weapon of oppression against women, shudras, and Muslims as claimed by some select historians,

IV Declaring the death of Sanskrit. The cause of its death was the structures of abuse that were built into it and Hindu kings accelerated that



Rajiv Malhotra

process. Pollock absolves Muslim invaders and British colonizers from any hand in the death of Sanskrit.

Though not as elaborate as his *Purvapaksha*, RM's *Uttara paksha* nevertheless undertakes a careful diagnosis certifying that Sanskrit is not dead. Rather, Hindus continue to celebrate it as a living language for its enduring sacredness, aesthetic powers, metaphysical acuity, and ability to generate and support knowledge in many domains (TBFS p. 30). *Siddhanta* expresses the hope that Hindus of today will set

up training academies to form 'home teams' of insider scholars to assure that Sanskrit regains and retains its power as a living language that sustains Sanskriti (with input from Prakrit languages; TBFS p. 372)**

Central message of TBFS

Dialogue (whether performed in public or written down) is an essential feature of Sanskriti that has always been multi-vocal and multi-lingual. Hindu doctrines, practices, and institutions are not controlled by one voice of authority (though Pollock et al want us to believe that all authority was vested in Brahmins). Hindu texts, doctrines, histories, rituals, ceremonies, architecture and art are products of a pluralistic culture and society. A harmonious sharing of a common cultural space and labor between Sanskrit and regional languages (from Bengali to Tamil) existed in the past. Available epigraphic evidence, for instance, suggests that while the genealogical account in many inscriptions is in Sanskrit, the 'business' portion (f. i. details of a land grant) are in a regional language. Today, Sanskrit could be used similarly to interpret, supplement, and re-describe the constitutional and legal reality while in the pragmatic day-to-day affairs regional languages would prevail.

RM next successfully drives home the point that Pollock (and others who follow him) must realize that



Sheldon Pollock

dealing with Sanskrit and Sanskriti (which together exert their ongoing and 'lived presence' upon hundreds of millions of Hindus) is different from dealing with the classics of a community which no longer has living practitioners of the religion/s or culture of that community. Living presence of those who read, understand, and use material stored in Sanskrit as well as actively participate in Sanskriti is both a challenge and an opportunity to Pollock et al.

Challenge because these users/ practitioners can react/respond to what Pollock has written or said about what they hold dear and practice (as TBFS does); opportunity because a scholar of Pollock's caliber can call on living users/ practitioners to test the validity of his claim: Sanskrit is dead, politically and socially oppressive, and freedom denying.

Concluding remarks

Since Outsiders and Insiders hold widely different views on Sanskrit and Sanskriti, each can profit from a dialogue with the other. A typical picture comprises perspectives that appear different in isolation. Taken together, however, the resulting 'stereographic' perspective can be novel and productive. RM believes that a dialogue carried out in a 'stereographic' manner would not only uncover commonalities as may exist but may also creatively develop them bringing the two camps closer in a spirit of mutual respect. An inclusive framework might then emerge that will draw upon the synergy existing between emic and etic approaches that would respect the sensibilities of Hindus who continue to live by Sanskrit and Sanskriti. Hindus on their part need to sustain and support RM in this endeavor by actively participating in debates and dialogues with the opposing camp on one or more of the eighteen topics listed in TBFS (pp. 375-378). ■

**** (Editor's note-DrTilak's article discussing RM's refutation of Pollock's four key propositions in more detail will be published in a later issue of Hindu Vishwa).**



The Battle For Sanskrit: Is Sanskrit Dead or Alive? Oppressive or Liberating? political or sacred?
By Rajiv Malhotra
(2016 HarperCollins Publishers India)

About the Author

Shrinivas Tilak

(Ph.D. History of Religions, McGill University, Montreal, Canada) is author of *The Myth of Sarvodaya: A study in Vinoba's concept*

(New Delhi: Breakthrough Communications 1984);

Religion and Aging in the Indian Tradition (Albany, N. Y.: State University of New York Press, 1989);

Understanding karma in light of Paul Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology and hermeneutics (Charleston, SC: Book Surge, revised, paperback edition, 2007); and

Reawakening to a secular Hindu nation: M. S. Golwalkar's vision of a Dharmasapeksa Hindu rastra (Charleston, SC: BookSurge, 2008). Contact

shrinivas.tilak@gmail.com

(https://www.academia.edu/19566419/Post-doc_Research_Proposal)

Hindu Gods: Forgotten in India Revered in Japan

KOLKATA: Did you know that at least 20 Hindu deities are regularly worshipped in Japan? In fact, there are hundreds of shrines to Goddess Saraswati alone in that country, along with innumerable representations of Lakshmi, Indra, Brahma, Ganesha, Garuda and others. Even deities forgotten in India are worshipped in Japan. A unique exhibition at Indian Museum here is set to throw light on the country's long lost history that survives in a foreign land.

The Japan Foundation and filmmaker and art-historian Benoy K Behl collaborated to hold an exhibition of rare photographs in the month of January. The research that accompanied Behl's photographs reveals startling facts about the importance of Indian heritage in Japan. For instance, the 6th century Siddham script is preserved in Japan, though it has disappeared from India. 'Beejaksharas' (or etymology of alphabets) of Sanskrit in this script are regarded as holy and given great importance. Each deity has a 'Beejakshara' and these are venerated by the people, even though most of them cannot read it. At Koyasan, they still have a school where Sanskrit is taught in Siddham, Behl's research revealed.

A number of words in the Japanese language have their roots in Sanskrit. In Japanese supermarkets, a major brand of milk products is called 'Sujata'. The company's personnel are taught the story of Sujata who gave sweet rice-milk to the Buddha, with which he broke his period of austerity, before he achieved enlightenment.

Behl wrote in his research, "In many ways, this philosophic understanding is most well preserved in Japan. Japan has not had the breakdown of cultural norms which India suffered when a colonial education system was created. Therefore, most Indians learnt about our own culture from the Western point of view. The dominant and admired language was English, which it remains till today." The National Geographic had carried an 18-page story on ancient Indian art revealed through Behl's photography. "The deep-rooted spirit of the Buddha's teachings energizes the Japanese people. Besides the Buddha, many ancient Indian deities and practices prevail in their temples. An Indian feels quite at home in Japan," Behl wrote. ■



From left to right, Benzaiten (Hindu equivalent: Saraswati), Kangiten (Ganesha) and Bishamonten (Kubera) in the Daisho-in temple. (Source: Wikipedia)



Teachers' Training Held at HTCI

Hindu Temple of Central Indiana (HTCI) organized a Teachers' Training Workshop conducted by Shri. Sanjay Mehta from Pittsburgh, PA on Sunday, Feb 28, 2016 at HTCI for Balagokulam and Chetana group teachers. The goal of the program was to discuss new ways of teaching and learn about what activities are performed on bigger (national) level so that those can be implemented here also. It was a very successful program and eye-opening for everyone to look at the bigger picture and what impact these programs have on kids and us.

The workshop also emphasized the importance of having a basic idea of other faiths which have deeply influenced the culture and language of the United States. A presentation on "Understanding Christianity" was done by BG teacher Sanjay Kalluparambil. The importance of holding on to the Sanskrit terms, like *Ishwara*, *Bhagavan*, *Atma*, *Om* etc., while teaching, were discussed. An analogy was drawn with the example: Just as when discussing Indian food the term "Dosa" may not be translated into "Pancake", *Ishwara* and *Bhagavan* need not be translated into God or Lord.

BG/Chetana Teacher Shri. Priyesh Kheradia also presented about the importance of Games and Physical activities during Balagokulam to keep the mind and

body fit. Various resources.

The following topics were discussed in the workshop:

- ★ Challenges faced by Hindu children & parents and how BG/Chetana program helps
- ★ BalGokulam Curriculum: Contents and Dynamics
- ★ Delivery of contents by teachers: Preparation and communication
- ★ Comparative Chart of major Religions
- ★ Re-rooting in Sanskrit
- ★ Importance of Physical activities

Participating teacher Vishal Singal said, "Workshop was a great learning experience for me as a parent and as a teacher in search of spirituality. It was great to experience the wisdom and humbleness of our presenters. A ton of thanks to Sanjayji for making the trip from Pittsburgh and spreading his knowledge. I am proud to be a part of the teacher's group which is helping lay a great foundation of values for our kids."

Participating teacher Anita Joshi said, "The experience of sitting down in workshop was very helpful.





We were encouraged to commit to the long term learning process.

Also encouraged to work on more modern and innovative methods of keeping our children's attention and focus. It was 3 hours that flew by."

Sanjay Mehta, the workshop coordinator, said, "My interaction with inquisitive and committed teachers over the weekend can be summarized in three words: Mandir (for mindful support of its management), Manah-Shakti (teachers' conscious commitment and coherence) and

Matru-Shakti (Mothers' leading role in the program with full support from spouses).

The Temple was inaugurated in 2006,



with a mission to serve the spiritual needs of Central Indiana's Hindu families and represent the diversity of Hindu faith and culture. Over the period BalGokulam and Chetana program has grown from 15 to 150 kids due to the commitment and vision of teachers, parents and temple management. ■



By Smita Daftardar

Empowerment Through Knowledge at Hindu Women's Conference in Atlanta

The World Hindu Council (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) of America, (VHPA), Atlanta chapter organized the 3rd Annual Hindu Women's Conference, on 27th Feb at the beautiful Yugal Kunj Saffron Hall of the Radha Madhav Society in Duluth, GAa. An event focused on empowering women through knowledge, the conference is a platform for addressing women's issues, ranging from spirituality, health and fitness, to financial security and legal rights. The conference is open to women of all ages and walks of life, and the organizers invite community leaders, inspirational speakers and professionals to share their knowledge with the participants. The number of attendees is limited to 100, with the purpose of keeping the gathering cohesive and to promote greater personal interaction between the audience and the speakers.

The conference started bright and early at 9:30 am with a welcome address by Veena Katdare, the coordinator for the event, who then invited Kusum Khurana, the Atlanta Chapter President of VHPA to address the gathering. The conference was inaugurated with the traditional lamp lighting ceremony by Smt. Anagha Srinivasan, wife of Consul Shri R Srinivasan, and followed by Ganesh and Saraswati Vandana.

The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Seshu Sarma, faculty at Morehouse College of Medicine, a gifted orator, talented musician, prolific writer and

recipient of the "Most Influential Asian in Georgia" award. In her keynote Dr. Sarma addressed "*Karmyog* in America", talking about issues faced by Hindu women today, living and raising their kids in the US, balancing religious beliefs and cultural practices with the mainstream American society. Dr. Sarma spoke about practicing the religion of humanity, quoting "*manav seva, madhav seva*" - service to humanity is service to God. She also emphasized that children should be taught the importance of leading a good life rather than just a successful life. A powerful message when teaching spirituality to kids was that while prayer might not guarantee fortune, it will certainly bring fortitude, giving them the strength to pick themselves up and start again, should they fail.

Dr. Sarma's speech was followed by a brief introduction of VHPA and the various volunteering activities it undertakes.

Expounding on the merits of volunteerism, Ujjwala Brahme, an IT professional and a dedicated volunteer with Susan G Komen, led a session on the significance of service. Participants were handed a survey asking if, where and how they volunteered and what motivated them. The discussion based on this survey touched several aspects - One being that Indians are reluctant to volunteer outside their community on the apprehension of "not fitting in." While some disagreed, citing examples of parents volunteering in schools, the discussion did call for some introspection on part of the Indian community at large to be more involved in mainstream causes. The session brought home the fact that volunteerism does not just help others; it is an enriching experience, giving a sense of purpose and fulfillment to the doer too, making it a perfect win-win situation.

The underlying theme of this year's conference was family wellness and how to deal with the factors that adversely affect a woman or her family. One of the common issues faced by women is emotional distress, anxiety and depression. Discussing mental health issues has long been a taboo in Indian society. Patients and family members, more often than not, fail to reach out for help, keeping issues under wraps rather than getting medical advice. Another concern on the rise among

families is substance abuse, especially among teenagers. Dr. Jyothi Mattam, a Board Certified practicing Psychiatrist, addressed these issues and offered advice on the best course of action. When asked about the merits of choosing a physician of Indian origin, Dr. Mattam clarified that cultural competence of the doctor, meaning familiarity with cultural background of the patient, could play a significant role, in treating mental health related issues. Her advice to families dealing with



drug abuse was to act sooner rather than later, to be able to identify the symptoms of substance abuse early on and take remedial actions, and not be in denial.

Indian society places a great importance on family; this reflects in the success of the institution of marriage among Indian Americans. However, no society is perfect and the issues like domestic violence, abuse and divorce do claim their victims every now and then. Indian



women living abroad and in abusive relationships are especially vulnerable.

In a session devoted to legal matters, Sharmila Nambiar, an experienced attorney specializing in family and immigration law spoke at length about legal rights of women in divorce cases. The session gave valuable insight into Georgia laws, with the hope that the attendees will be able to share the information with anyone who is in need. An important point to be noted here is that the Hindu Women's Network, the force behind the conference, does provide a support system for women in need.

Around mid-day, participants were treated to a delicious lunch by the volunteers of Yugal Kunj, after which the conference resumed with a 10 minute "Yog Nidra". Yog Nidra is a relaxation technique focusing on breathing, and serves to relax and rejuvenate the mind and body.

The post lunch sessions included a talk on comprehensive retirement planning by Manohar Kasetty, Financial Services Representative, Metlife Premier Client Group. In a typical patriarchal Indian family, majority of women, whether working or stay-at-home, tend to ignore financial aspects of managing a family. This fact was only too glaringly obvious when Mr. Kasetty asked how many of the attendees had ever taken a look at their social security benefits statement- a mere three hands went up. This segment of the conference was specifically aimed at raising financial

awareness in women, giving them tools to manage their finances if the need arose. Mr. Kasetty navigated the complex topic with illustrative examples and helpful slides, and fielded questions from the audience with admirable patience.

The next session of the day touched upon women's health issues. Women in general, and Indian women more so, usually put their family's welfare above their own, often neglecting nagging personal health concerns. The last speaker of the day, Dr. Satish Nair, highlighted the importance of diet and exercise to fix common ailments faced by women. Dr. Nair, a doctor of naturopathy and an effective speaker with a great sense of humor, gave an engaging and informative lecture. He stressed the need to strengthen the core and remove the root cause of illnesses, and urged women to take responsibility of their own health; most importantly, stop blaming heredity for their ailments!

The conference concluded with a short survey on social media consciousness, asking how participants would react to a variety of messages circulating on social media. Cases in point were rumors about diseases or offensive jokes targeting religious scriptures or certain communities. The survey revealed that most women exercised restraint in spreading such messages, checking the reliability of a source and in some cases, even calling out the person who posts offensive messages. On the topic of jokes, one of the participants correctly pointed out that we should not have to forgo opportunities to laugh, even at ourselves; however, it was certainly a fine line to walk.

The day-long conference ended with a vote of thanks to Yugal Kunj and all the sponsors of the conference, followed by VHPA Sangh Prarthana, a prayer for world peace. The conference was made possible by the generous sponsorship from Manohar Kasetty of Metlife Premier Client Group, Sharmila Nambiar, Attorney at Law, senior care center Apna Ghar Home Care, Aim High SAT and Raksha.

The conference was a huge success, based on the feedback received from the 100 plus participants. The Hindu Women's Network, under the umbrella of VHPA, will continue in its mission of empowering women through knowledge. A quote that comes to mind here is "Any time women come together with a collective intention, it's a powerful thing." Harnessing this power of collective intent to strengthen women socially, spiritually and physiologically, will effect positive changes, not just in the lives of women, but in the entire world. ■



"I heard everyone speak lovingly about you, and I thought you were dead." This joke has a lot of truth to it. People do speak lovingly of the dead. But why reserve loving words for only the dead?

Love is the most powerful of all emotions. We are



children of God, and since God is Love, we have a natural affinity for love. We are delighted when others speak to us and behave with us in a loving manner. Even they who speak harshly do not like it if others do the same.

Saint Tulsidas says, "Sweet words spread joy in all directions." You cannot get anyone to see your point of view by being harsh, insulting and condescending. You may throw your weight around and make demands, but you will not get very far. Love and understanding will go a very long way. This is not to say that you should put on an external show of love. Let your love be genuine; the kind that a child displays in abundance as he spontaneously throws his arms around you and gives you a big hug.

When you are angry at another person, think about all the good that he has done. If you must point out a mistake or some unfairness, do so gently. Think how you feel when someone speaks nicely to you. Extend to others the same courtesy. At first, you may feel like an impostor. You may think, "This is not me; I am just putting on an act." Give yourself time, and gradually you will find that sweet words and behavior have become a part of you. No longer will you feel like an impostor.

We are on earth for a short while, leaving our

By Siddheshwari Devi (Didi Ji)

footprints everywhere we go. Walk softly and gently.

Nourishing Power of Love

Love is a healer like no other. It picks you up when you are down. It gives inspiration when all seems lost. Love gives confidence when you most need it. It is a tonic that provides an instant boost of energy.

I speak not of superficial expressions of love communicated on social media through cute emoji's, but of a deep love which is kind, patient and understanding. The kind a teenager needs from her parents as she lashes out at them. The loving mother interprets the teenage daughter's hateful words and venomous behavior as, "I am frustrated, and I don't know how to deal with life right now. I know I am safe with you, and I know you will tolerate my rudeness. You also know I don't hate you."

A man shows love for his family by washing the dishes and changing the baby's diaper. A wife shows



love for her husband by cooking him a hot meal. A man should not confuse taking care of the infant with 'babysitting' the child. Babysitting is a job; taking care of the child is a responsibility and an act of love. A woman should not confuse lovingly taking care of her husband with slavery.

Children raised with love grow up to be well-rounded



and secure adults. They become confident in who they are. A strong foundation of love allows us all to add beautiful layers to our individual personalities.

Decide to Conquer

The world has known many conquerors famed for their great victories and conquests. Of the many kinds of conquests, none is greater than conquest of the mind. Gaining control of the mind is the biggest



Control the mind and make it obey commands

accomplishment of a human. All New Year resolutions point to conquest of the mind. The resolution to lose weight and become healthier is in fact a resolution to conquer the mind. The resolution to quit smoking or drinking is in reality a resolution to gain victory over the mischievous mind.

The first step is to understand that our mind is the most dangerous enemy we have. We do not have enemies on the outside. Oh no! Our enemy is hiding inside of us, and we treat it as our best friend and trusted advisor. We bow externally to the teachings of a perfect God and His perfect scriptures, yet inwardly put the corrupt mind on the pedestal and worship it wholeheartedly.

The next step is to become defiant. Do the opposite of what the mind tells you to do. Become stubborn with the mind. If you submit to it, it will keep you dancing. Make the mind dance to your tune.

My Spiritual Master used to give the example of a monkey and its trainer. To train a monkey, the trainer ties the monkey's neck to a 100-foot long rope. The monkey tries to run and jump beyond 100 feet, but the rope chokes the monkey's neck. Because of the choking pain,

the monkey resigns to jumping within 100 feet. At this point the trainer reduces the rope's length to 50 feet. Reducing the length of the rope further length, when the trainer reduces the length of the rope to just one foot, the monkey decides to sit quietly rather than struggle.

The monkey is our mind, and the rope is remembrance of God and His laws. Continue to shorten the rope further and further until the mind resolves to sit quietly and obey commands.

Be Thankful For Critics

The world is full of critics. If you are the quiet type, you are likely to be labeled a fool. If you like to talk, you may earn the reputation of being a 'motor mouth.' If you are confident, you may be called arrogant. If you are a gentle person, people may call you a 'wimp.' If you are direct, people may call you rude. If you are polite, people may say that you are unsure of yourself. If you take initiative people may call you bossy. If you let others take the lead, you are 'lacking a backbone.'

Dealing with critics is sometimes disheartening. At times you feel you can never do anything right. However, you can regard criticism to be constructive and improve yourself greatly. The one who finds fault with you is more beneficial to you than the one who flatters you.

Someone went to the extent of saying, "Put up a shack in your backyard for the one who finds faults with you." Why? First of all, the critic is beneficial in that he makes us aware of our mistakes; something we are not accustomed to doing ourselves. We cannot improve unless and until we become aware of improvements we need to make. It is only when we understand our shortcomings that we can work on eliminating them.

Secondly, the critic is helpful to you in that he does not allow your pride to increase. When someone flatters you constantly, you will certainly develop more pride. This is why saintly souls have said, "Regard criticism as nectar and words of praise as poison."

The world is full of critics. Thank God! ■

Visit www.radhamadhavsociety.org

Email: s_didi@radhamadhavsociety.org

DASAVATARAYANAM

DASAVATARAS, RELATED TEMPLES and LOCATIONS: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

By Rao S. Rapaka

The sacred land of Bharat Varsha has been the cradle of great civilizations and has been sanctified by God's presence. It has also been referred to as the land of *avatars* as God appeared on this land, whenever His presence was direly needed. The appearance of god is referred to as an '*avatara*', which literally means the 'descent' of god. The purpose of an *avatara* generally is to eliminate the evil, protect *dharma*, protect the learned, protect the Vedic scriptures, protect the innocent, and finally to establish *dharma* and establish natural balance or homeostasis. This is a highly controlled, specifically equipped and a custom-made appearance with the needed attributes and well-defined objectives. Out of the Hindu '*Trimurtis*' or the "Trinity" of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara or Shiva, the avatars always refer to Lord Vishnu/ Krishna, as Vishnu is the sustainer (*stithi*) and his primary function is to protect the universe. The *avatars* appear from time-to-time and they are innumerable in number. Veda Vyasa's *Srimad Bhagavatam* lists 22 major avatars and the top most critical avatars are called the *dasavataras*. Javadeva Mahakavi of Odisha composed the *Gitagovindam* and the very first *Astapadi* melodiously sings the praises of the *dasavataras*. The goal of this article is to research on the *dasavataras*, where these *avatars* could have appeared (the geographical location), the purpose of the *avatara* and how the Lord developed a custom-made strategy to eliminate the evil force threatening the equilibrium of the universe. The path followed for the appearance by these 10 avatars is defined as *DASAVATARAYANAM* (similar to *Ramayanam* meaning the path of Rama) and these ten avatars in sequence are: 1, *Matsya* (fish); 2, *Kurma* (turtle); 3, *Varaha* (boar, pig); 4 *Narasimha* (half man-half lion); 5, *Vamana* (dwarf man); 6, *Parasurama* (*Hala* or plough as a weapon); 7, *Sri Rama*; 8, *Sri*

Krishna/ *Balarama*, 9, *Buddha* and 10, *Kalki*. *Kalkiavatara* has yet to appear, however, extensive information is already available on this *avatara*'s future appearance.

Avatars 6-8, i.e. Rama, Krishna/Balaram, Buddha are the most recent and familiar to most, and a large amount of information is available and hence will be mentioned very briefly. The very first one is *Matsyavatara*. This *avatara* took place at the *Swayambhu Manvantara* and later again in the *Chakshusa Manvantara*. The important goals of this *avatara* were: to recover the submerged earth from the deep ocean waters of '*Pralaya*', to protect and preserve

the lives of the king Satyavrata and *saptarishis*, to preserve samples of all the living entities (plants, animals etc.), for the next *manvantara*, to teach the king Satyavrata and the *saptarishis* the intricacies of *brahmatatva* and answer their questions and train and prepare, the Dravidian king as the next *manu* (for the present *manvantara*). The lord appeared as a tiny fish in the hands of the king who picked up water to offer oblations to lord Vishnu and the little fish pleaded with him to take



him home and protect him. Soon, it grew huge being of unbelievable dimensions and the king realized that this mystique fish was none other than the lord Maha Vishnu. Lord Vishnu revealed His real form and informed him of the impending "*pralaya* and the deluge". Finally, the lord gave the king all the instructions, saved the king, the seven rishis, and selected living entities. In *Bhagavatam* the king was addressed as '*Dravideswara*' and reveals that Dravida is very ancient *puranic* word and it was a reference to geographical location, not a racial term, as suggested by the western scholars. The river where *Satyavrata* performed his rituals was *Krutamala* (present day Vaigai) and it provides confirmatory evidence that



this event took place close to the river Krutamala, the ocean and the south eastern coast. As the activity happened at the junction of a river and the ocean, fish avatara is strategically the most suitable. Based on information from the sthalapuram, the first temple where the deity appeared is near Nagalapuram. The location of Krutamala and many other sacred places were further confirmed by lord Balarama in his pilgrimage around India as described in Srimad Bhagavatam.

The second avatara is Kurmavatara and the lord came as a turtle with a very hard back (hard shell), an animal that can both live in the water and on the earth. During this time, both the devatas and rakshasas, in a joint effort decided to churn the ocean and extract several essential treasures including the divine nectar, Ambrosia/amruta from the ocean for the benefit of the universe, using mountain Mandara as the churning rod and serpent Vasuki as the churning rope. Both the devatas and the rakshasas participated in churning by pulling the rope in opposite directions for the churning (*mathanam*). When the mountain slipped deep into the ocean, only the lord was able to lift it up and served as churning platform. This activity happened near the golden eastern coast, near Vijayawada to Puri Jagannath, and the Bay of Bengal could have served as the docking station. At the end, Lord Kurma, experiencing a gigantic itch due to severe churning on his back, walked to the coast close by, to Srikakulam, to the north of the present day Visakhapatnam (a town called Srikakulam) and the temple is called the Srikurmam temple. Many sthalapuranas support the above information. This place was also visited by stalwart *mahapurushas* such as Sri Sankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, and Sri Chitanya Mahaprabu. Again turtle is the most appropriate being that was suitable for the *sagamathanam*.

The third is the varahavatara. Hiranyaksha, a very strong rakshasa stole the earth and he was hiding with it under the deep ocean. The lord assumed the form of a strategically suitable animal, a boar/pig with horns. Pig is the most suitable form as it can easily dive in the waters of *pralaya*, has superb sensitivity to smell and can use horns to dig and, at the same time use them as a weapon. The *varaha* soon jumped into the ocean, located the enemy and the earth, recovered the earth, safely placed at safe location and then killed Hiranyaksha. The *varaha* incarnation could have appeared on the Tirupathi hills and *varaha* jumped into action at the cost nearby. All the evidence, many sthalapuranas, especially the purana on Venkateswara Mahatyam provides strong basis for this assignment.

Again this place is visited by almost all of the religious stalwarts such Sankara, Ramanuja, Chitanya and others and prayers were offered to Lord varaha.

The fourth Avatara is that of Narasimha. This *avatara* provides an example of the best strategy to counteract the strength of the enemy, Hiranyakasipu, the twin brother of Hiranyaksha, whom the lord killed assuming the *varahavatar*. In this *avatara*, Hiranyakasipu was determined, at any cost, to avenge the killing of his brother by Sri Hari and performed fierce penance and obtained a number of smart boons from Brahma: that he should not be killed by humans, angels, birds etc., not in the day time or night time, not by any weapon and imposed several other boons so that nobody can kill him. In Bhagavat Gita, chapter 10, Vibhuti yoga, a quote that is often misunderstood is, "*dyutam chalaya tamsami*". This is often misquoted as "I am the genius of the gamblers". However, it really might mean, "tit-for tat" outsmart or out maneuver your opponents and win. The lord always devised the smartest strategy and that too, following the dharmic path only and not breaking or disregarding the boons already given by Brahma. The second goal of the lord was to protect his boy devotee, Prahlada, son of the *rakshasa*. Prahlada's father was angry at his own son as he was praying lord Vishnu and in anger wanted to kill his own son Prahlada by making the mighty elephants walk on his son, throwing him down from hills (Simhachalam hills, exist even today, six miles from Visakhapatnam), subjecting to snake bites etc. The lord protected Prahlada from all these and finally, when Hiranyakasipu challenged his son to show him, "his all-pervading god in the pillar", and then with a great force struck the pillar. Instantaneously, a fierce and angry Lord Vishnu, appeared as the *Narasimhavatara* and tore the *rakshasa* to death. This event happened at Ahobilam and this is assigned as the sight with certainty based on sthalapuranas, research by ISKCON, their magazine articles, visits by ISKCON devotees and many other great and distinguished mahapurusha to this site. Even today, the *Ugra Stambha*, from where god made his *avirbhava* (emergence) is still present and the readers are urged to visit this sacred place.

The next avatara is Vamanavatara: The goal of this *avatara* is to dethrone Bali, a *rakshasa* king, yet a noble and charitable one, and reinstall his elder brother Indra as the ruler of the three worlds. This is again an example of a highly customized *avatara*. Here Lord comes as a dwarf *Brahmin brahmachari*, as this is the most suitable appearance to beg and get a gift from a noble and charitable Bali Maharaja (the grandson of



Prahlad, a great Vishnu devotee). The Lord here had to face severe limitations: he could not kill Bali as the Lord earlier made a promise to Prahlada that he would not kill anybody belonging to Prahlada's dynasty. In addition, Bali was dear to Sukracharya and he had a rare skill/vidya by which he could revive a dead person. Moreover, Bali successfully performed "*Viswajit yagna*" and no one could defeat him. So the Lord appeared as a dwarf *vatu* and begged for 3 feet of land as a gift, as measured by his own foot. He came as a dwarf brahmin boy and his feet were very small. Thus the Lord outsmarted Bali and later on expanded his feet big enough to conquer the three worlds and finally placed his feet on Bali's head and kicked him down to *patalaloka*. Of course, as Bali Maharaj is a pious person, the Lord promised him, a mere rakshasa, to install him as permanent Indra in the coming manvantara period. This is one of the most glorious avatars. By all authoritative sources, this avatara made its appearance on the banks of the sacred Narmada River and Bali was close to Ujjain (present day Madhya Pradesh).

The sixth avatara is Parasuramavatara. Kartavirya arjuna is the king of Mahismati and one day while hunting, he stopped at Maharishi/ muni Jamadagni's *ashram*. The Muni welcomed the king and provided a memorable feast with the help of *Kamadhenu* or the sacred cow. The king asked the *muni* to give the cow to him and when the muni refused, the cow was abducted. Lord Parasurama, who was Jamadagni's son, was informed of this incident upon his return to the ashram. Lord Parasurama became very angry, went to the capital city of Mahismati, fought with the king, killed him and brought the *Kamdhenu* back. Again, when Lord Parasurama was away, the king's sons came to Jamadagni's ashram and killed him and abducted the cow again. This event made the Lord very angry and he also realized the ruling class has become very powerful and was not following the *dharmic* path. Parasurama went around the world 21 times and eliminated the *Kshatriya* Klan. Parasurama is a permanent *avatara* and will be present forever and he periodically makes his appearances as needed. So this *avatara* as described above, happened again on the banks of Reva or Narmada River close to Avantika (present day Madhya Pradesh) and this is confirmed by many sources including Vyasa Mahabharatam.

On the three following avatars, Rama, Krishna and Buddha, extensive recorded *itihasic* and *puranic* information is available and need not be repeated. These are mentioned very briefly. The seventh *avatara* is that of Lord Rama and this one of most popular *avatars* and

it is the most difficult task to describe the glory of this *avatara*. It is clearly and undoubtedly established that this *avatara* was from Ayodhya. The *ADIKAVYAM*, Valmiki Ramayana by *Adikavi* Valmiki, describes the glory of Ayodhya, Rama's birth place, and the glory of Rama. Similarly, the glory of *Krishnavatara*, no human can describe and it is no wonder there will be no Hindu anywhere, anytime that he/she not inspired with devotion and love when these sacred names are mentioned, remembered or uttered. *Krishnavatara* was originally from Mathura/ Brindavan/ Vraja, and later the Lord moved to Dwaraka. *Buddhavatara* was from Lumbini area, Nepal and Kapilavastu, in Bharat. *Buddhavatara* is revered today all over the world as a symbol of ahimsa, peace, love and meditation.

The tenth avatara is of Kalki and is yet come at the end of *Kali yuga*. In spite of its predicted future appearance, very extensive information is available from Srimad Bhagavatam and a number of *puranas* including Bhavishyapurana. It is predicted that Kalki will be born past the Nepal area, in a village called Shambhala as the son of Vishnuyasas. He will come on the horse, Devadatta, with a glittering sword and he will be trained in martial arts by Lord Parasurama. He will be assisted by two ancient kings that were waiting for him from ages in the Himalayan region (near Kalapi), Devapi and Maru. He will marry, Padmavati, a princess from Ceylon, and she is the incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi. As expected, He will kill thousands and thousands of corrupt kings and mlechhas, and reestablish dharma. The earth will be filled with dharma, peace and harmony. Kalki will rule for one thousand years will bring peace and tranquility.

This is a brief report on the *dasavatars* and the path of the ten *avatars* or *dasavatarayanam*. The main focus is on goal of the *avatars*, their place of origin, how they eliminated evil forces and re established dharma. ■

About the Author

Rao S. Rapaka

is a scientist/administrator from the Washington DC metro area and this article resulted from his interest in Sanskrit and Vedic literature, sanatana dharma and spiritual sciences. Rao attends and also organizes many conferences, presents talks on both sanatana dharma and science-related topics. His favorite topics of interest are the Bhagavat Gita, Srimad Bhavatam and Valmiki Ramayana.



Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America, Inc. (World Hindu Council of America)

National Office: P.O. Box 611, Iselin, NJ 08830 Tax ID# 51-0156325
Tel: 732-744-0851 Email: office@vhp-america.org www.vhp-america.org

VHPA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(Fields marked with * cannot be left blank)

Salutation _____ *First Name _____ M.I. _____ *Last Name _____

Spouse's Name: _____ *Street/P. O. Box No.: _____

*City: _____ *State _____ *Zip Code _____

*Home Telephone: _____ *Email Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

*Age Group 18-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-65 ☐ 65+ ☐ (Minimum age for becoming a member is 18 years)

Membership Desired: (select one)

☐ Patron \$1000

☐ Life Membership \$500

☐ Primary Membership, Five years \$100

☐ Primary Membership, Three years \$70

☐ Primary Membership, One year \$25

Please accept my Additional Contribution of \$_____ for

☐ General Use ☐ Seva in USA ☐ Seva in Bharat ☐ Support A child

☐ Youth Development Programs ☐ Publications ☐ Media Outreach and PR

☐ Liaison with Hindu Mandirs & Hindu Institutions ☐ Hindu Awareness Yaatra

I would like to be part of the mission to sustain and strengthen Hindu Dharma and traditions.
I believe in, practice and/or respect the spiritual and religious principles and practices having roots in Bharat (India).

Signature _____

Date _____

Check No. _____ (Check Payable to VHPA) OR Charge it to a credit card

(Name and address must match with that on the credit card, for using the credit card.)

Credit Card Name: ☐ VISA ☐ MASTER CARD ☐ DISCOVER

Credit Card Number

Month Year

Expiration Date

Signature _____

Date _____

Mail to: VHPA, PO Box 441505, Houston, TX 77244-1505 Contact Tel.: 732-744-0851

OR

Become member using your credit card on our website: www.vhp-america.org

Institutional Membership is available; First year dues are \$201 (\$90 Initiation fee + \$111 membership).

Call 732-744-0851 or email to office@vhp-america.org for application form and more information.



SUPPORT A CHILD (SAC)



A Way to Serve & Connect to Bharat \$250/year gift will provide:

Education | Lodging | Medical Care | Boarding | Samskara to a child

Many are waiting for your support | Internship program for students from USA



Send Donation to

VHP of America (SAC), P. O. Box 441505, Houston, TX 77244-1505

Email : renurajvanshigupta@gmail.com | Web : www.isupportchild.org | Phone : 513-860-1151

Build the life of underprivileged children of Bharat

An Educational Project of World Hindu Council of America (VHPA)