

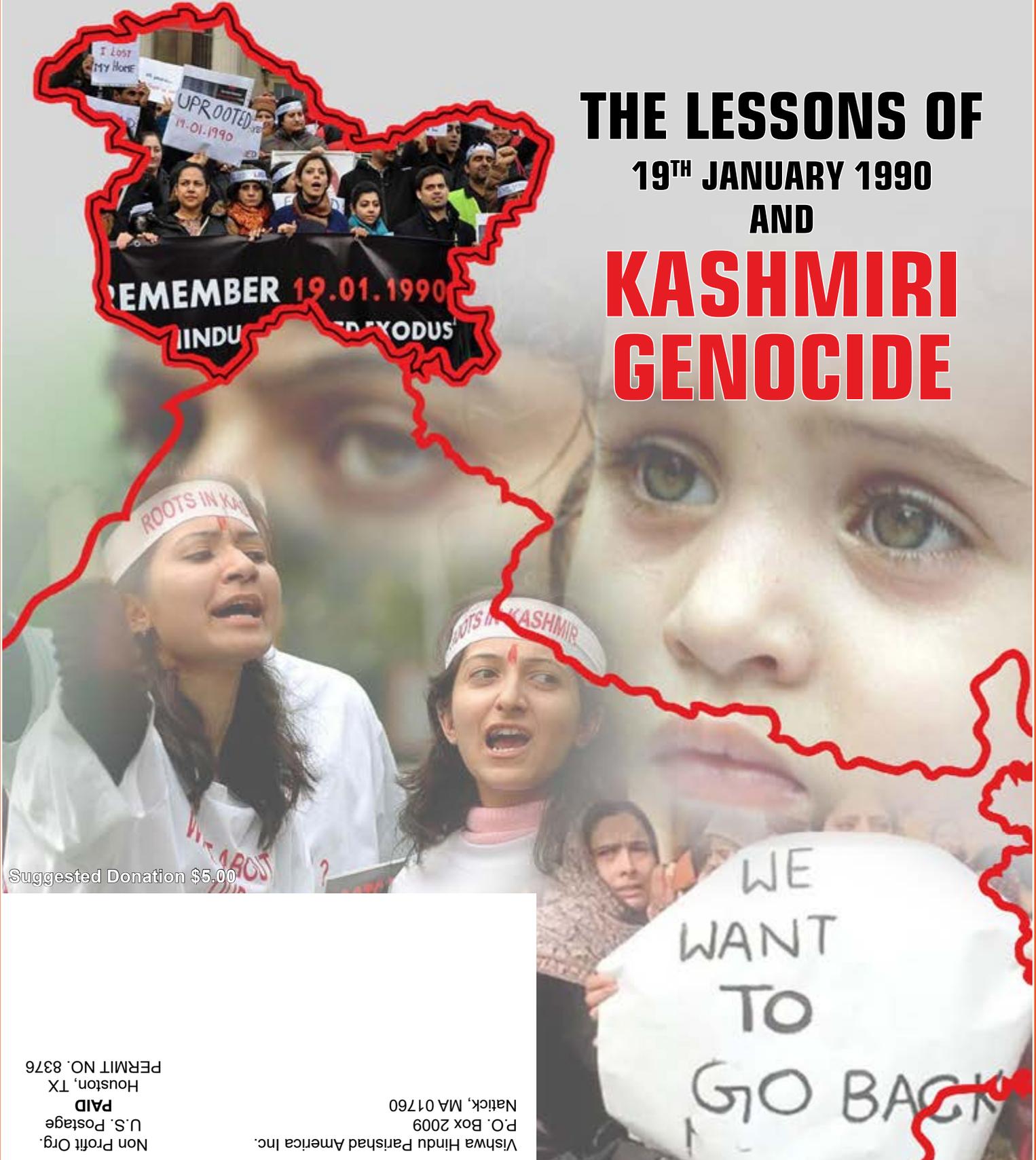


Yugabdh: 5122
Shaka Samvat: 1942
Vikram Samvat: 2077

VOL: LI
No: 1
January-March 2021

|| HINDU || || VISHVA || Vishwa Dharma Digest

THE LESSONS OF 19TH JANUARY 1990 AND KASHMIRI GENOCIDE



Suggested Donation \$5.00

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

Vishwa Hindu Parishad America Inc.
P.O. Box 2009
Natick, MA 01760



World Hindu Council of America (VHPA)
proudly announces establishment of

Endowment Fund



Please create your legacy by generously giving tax deductible donation to support this noble cause

PURPOSE

Build Hindu Community centers across the USA to serve you and your future generations and sustain and propagate Hindu heritage

The Centers will provide -
Broad range of services*
(Educational, Cultural, Spiritual and Seva) to the community



GOAL

Raise \$10 million by 2020
Initial pledge received \$100,000



* Services :

- Hindu Dharma Education (Vedic scriptures, languages)
- Balvihar
- SAT classes
- Humanities
- Music
- Dance
- Library
- Yoga
- Festival celebrations
- Weddings
- Senior Center
- Community service

Donate Online at

<https://www.vhp-america.org/>

or

Mail check payable to **VHP of America**

Address : **P.O. Box 2009, Natick, MA 01760**

For donations from Retirement Distributions, Investment Accounts, Life Insurance and other Non-Cash Assets.

Please contact:

Abhaya Asthana 508-314-6069 • Sanjay Mehta 412-251-9133

Umesh Shukla 908-240-7720 • Vimal Sodhani 973-476-3901

VHPA – In your service for the last 48 years

WORLD HINDU COUNCIL OF AMERICA (VHPA)

NATIONAL OFFICE:
P. O. Box 2009,
Natick, MA 01760

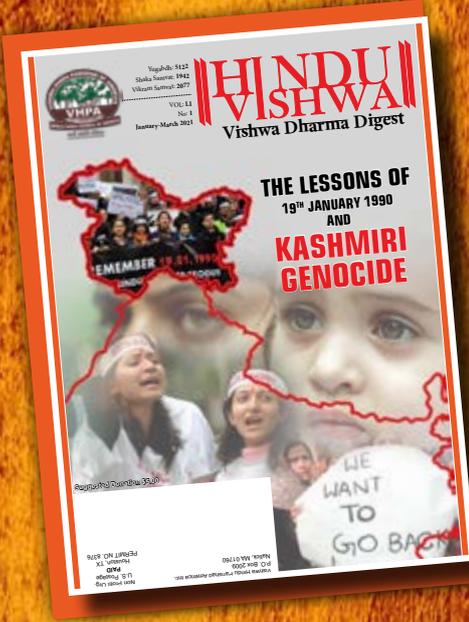
www.vhp-america.org

Tel.: 732-744-0851
office@vhp-america.org

VOLUME: LI

NO: 1

JANUARY - MARCH 2021



EDITORIAL TEAM

Managing Editor

Shyam Tiwari

srtiwari@hotmail.com

Editor

Ronica (Rajranee) Jaipershad

ronica@ronica.com

Associate Editor

Sanjay Gupta

sgatlanta@gmail.com

Advisor

Dr. Abhay Asthana

abhayaji@gmail.com

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥

-श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता 9.4

*mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ jagad avyakta-mūrtinā
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni na chāhaṁ teshvavasthitah*

-BHAGVAD GITA 9.4

Lord Krishna said: This entire cosmic manifestation is pervaded by Me in My unmanifest form. All living beings dwell in Me, but I do not dwell in them.

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 @ 7709622669 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 2021 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.

SEE IN THE ISSUE...

Editorial	03
Validating History using Astronomy: Book Launch and Panel Discussion	04
In India Mega Beasts Coexisted with Humans for 30K Years.	06
The Essence of Gita - A Textual Analysis	10
A Case of Good Nationalism: DK Chakrabarti on Historiography	12
The Lessons of 19th January 1990 and Kashmiri Genocide	17
The Big Scandal of Indology	20
A Doctor's Fight against Opioid Crisis	25
Hindudvesha Webinar Series Explores and Exposes Systemic Hinduphobia	28
Spirit of India through the Eyes of a Westerner	31
Hindu Women's Network Celebrates International Women's day	34
Important or Trivial?	36

THE ESSENCE OF GITA - A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS



10

THE LESSONS OF 19TH JANUARY 1990 AND KASHMIRI GENOCIDE



17

A DOCTOR'S FIGHT AGAIN OPIOID CRISIS BY MANU SHAH



25

IN INDIA MEGA BEASTS COEXISTED WITH HUMANS FOR 30K YEARS.



04

SPIRIT OF INDIA THROUGH THE EYES OF A WESTERNER



31



WHAT DO WE WISH FOR?

Each year, on January 1, we wish each other a Very Happy New Year, and all the best! We wish and pray that peace, prosperity, good health, safety, and so much more, will be bestowed on us, and on everyone we know, and love, and on the whole world. As is the norm, we all look forward to a peaceful, and happy transition to the new year, with expectations for a better year than the one past. Unfortunately, 2020, was different. The world was taken by shock. The deadly Corona Virus had struck!

I am convinced that no one wished for this virus to come to us, and now, everyone is wishing, and praying for it to disappear. Its presence was first discovered in the US, around January 20, 2020. We were 'hit' with a pandemic that has spread across the world and changed lives in many ways. We have now become a masked world. Some of us have lost our loved ones due to the virus, and, in some cases, we can't even visit them, or be present at their departures. Our children are unable to go to schools and interact

with others. Some fortunate ones are able to be home schooled. But others? Some are likely to have setbacks.

The presence of this virus has presented many challenges, including, being vaccinated. Not everyone has yet been able to get the vaccine, making it difficult for them to get back to normalcy. Many are out of work and are facing difficulties in supporting their families. Life has become difficult for many.

There is hope though! As I write this editorial, we are seeing some reduction in cases and opening up of schools and businesses. We hope that soon this pandemic will be contained, and even eradicated, so that we can go back to the life we lived, before Corona struck! We must stay safe and follow the rules to avoid the virus! Our sympathy goes out to all who have lost a loved one, or endured hardships, due to the Corona virus. Please take all precautions against the Corona! ■

सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः

**SARVE SANTU NIR-AAMAYAAH
MANY ALL BE FREE FROM ILLNESS**



Validating History Using Astronomy: Book Launch and Panel Discussion

Rarely are we presented with a finding significant enough to shape our identity as a society and validate our evolution. A unique event organized by Hindu Media Bureau pivoted precisely on such a topic: “Validating History Using Astronomy: Book Launch and Panel discussion.” The Zoom webinar aired on Sunday Feb 21, 2021 at 11 AM EST. Author Dr. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Prof. Subhash Kak and entrepreneur Mukesh Chatter participated in a panel discussion for a critical examination of the sheet anchors of Indian History. The webinar was simulcasted over YouTube, Facebook and other social media platforms.

The webinar was conducted as a panel discussion that highlighted the issues with the currently perceived timeline, the methods of Mr. Roy’s discovery, and the applications of the new understanding in various fields.

We learned from Dr. Raja Roy about his inspiration, the process, and methods employed in his research which establishes the zero points of Jain and Vedic astronomy. Very lucidly he highlighted the scientific explanation for the gap between the western understanding of the Indian history and the true history of India.

One of the world-renowned experts in the area, Dr. Subhash Kak and Mukesh Chatter, a visionary investor, and serial-entrepreneur shared their views on the value, applicability and validity of such data driven approaches to the study of Indian history. The panel was introduced by Sanjay Kaul, and the 90-minute lively panel discussion was ably moderated by Dr. Abhaya Asthana, Chairman of World Hindu Council of America.

“The study of Indology is largely based upon the timeline of Indian history as presented by the

Greek historians. It considers King Alexander and Chandragupta Maurya to be contemporaries. Many scholars have argued that the original timeline of India is different and had its point of origin at least 700 years earlier,” Hindu Media Bureau said in a statement. “Most of the original body of evidence that could shed light on the possibility of another timeline was destroyed during several invasions of India. The lack of scientific evidence persuaded modern historians and Indologists to build upon the timeline that was presented to them.”

Mr. Roy took the challenge to establish truth in the arguments in a scientific way. Years of research paid off when he discovered a way to use astronomy to support his inquiry. He has written several books featuring various aspects of his research, the statement said.

Professor Subhash Kak who has written extensively on the academic dishonesty in chronology papers spoke eloquently about the “Big scandal of Indology,” where all we have in academic textbooks about ancient India is “either superficial, banal, half-truths or plain wrong.” He firmly pointed out that Western writings on Indian sciences and the arts has been mired in colonialist and racist assumptions. Their understanding of earliest India is based on flimsy foundations and a deep misunderstanding of the texts.

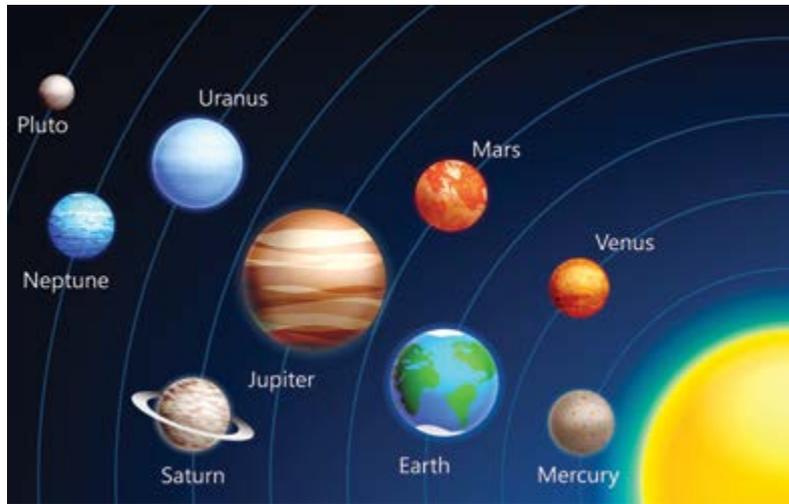
The audience appreciated Mukesh Chatter’s amazing ability to simplify and explain the root cause of why so many Indologists get the Indian history wrong. They loved the analogy of the poisoned well and his thought leadership

combined with the progressive idea to create an AI based eco system to credibly approach the study of Indian history.

Said Dhanashree Ramachandran, one of the organizers of the panel. “Dr. Raja Roy’s work is of legendary status. I feel fortunate to have attended this discussion by the four scientists in real time because I can see how it is going to define elements that will shape the future of how contributions of India will be seen in the world.”

The three books written by Mr. Roy that explain an alternative timeline using scientifically

proven, new zero points of the Jain and Vedic astronomy are- Zero Points of Vedic Astronomy, An Alternative Timeline of the Indian History, and Zero Point of Jain Astronomy. The books can be purchased from



Amazon sites of respective countries. Here is the link for Amazon USA:

https://www.amazon.com/Raja-Ram-Mohan-Roy/e/B00QFPZJW8/ref=dp_byline_cont_pop_ebooks_1

The discussion has brought a new wave of enthusiasm among those who watched the program. There are many ideas that came up during the discussion, in the chat and later. For those who couldn’t attend the event, the program content for now is available at YouTube live link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Mqy8z-BiMc> ■

IN INDIA, MEGA BEASTS COEXISTED WITH HUMANS FOR 30K YEARS

Chandrima Banerjee, TNN

About 100,000 years ago, mega beasts started disappearing from the face of the planet — the 13-ton elephant ancestor *Stegodon*, the 600-kg lizard-like *Megalania*, the 100-kg Giant Beaver. It was a period of significant climate change. It was also when prehistoric humans started expanding their footprint outside Africa. Wherever humans arrived, large animals died out. But not in Africa and south Asia.

It's a pattern that has puzzled paleontologists for decades. But while Africa has been studied for six decades, India has never been. In a new study, for the first time, researchers from Yale University, the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, the University of Nebraska and the George Mason University have compiled a database of recent fossils from the Indian subcontinent to fill this gap.

Lead author Dr Advait Jukar said "co-evolution" has been used to explain the survival in Africa. "Co-evolution is this interesting hypothesis developed in the 1960s by American

paleo archaeologist Paul Martin ... He saw we still have a lot of large animals in Africa, but not in the Americas. So, he thought about it and came up with the idea that because humans had evolved in Africa, other large species had evolved along-side them," Jukar told TOI. "It's kind of like an evolutionary rat race, where one species has to be better than the other to survive."



*Advait Jukar studying tooth from a *Stegodon* from India at Natural History Museum, London*

So, if humans got better at hunting, animals would get better at escaping. If humans lived



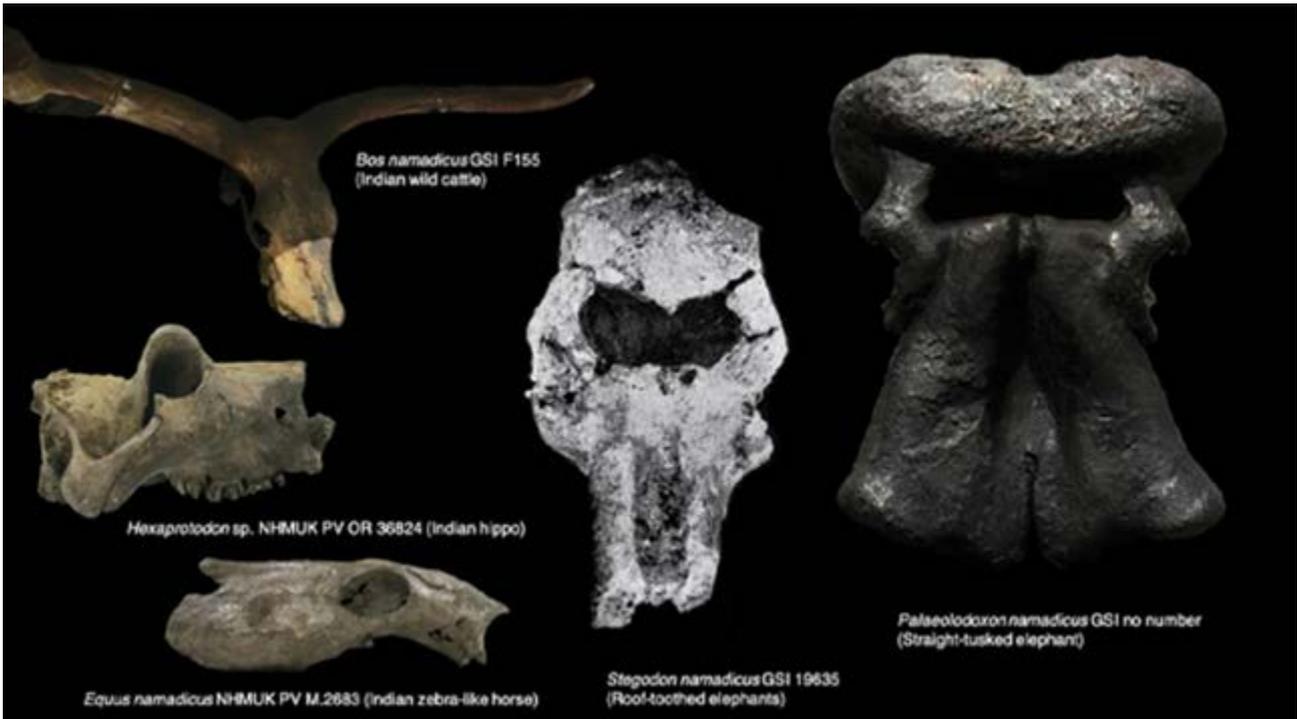
in riverine plains, animals would move into the safety of dense forests. “We don’t know what the exact mechanism is. We just know, based on the patterns we see, that this is a likely hypothesis to explain the survival and extinction pattern,” Jukar said. This worked for Africa. But India remained a mystery.

Jukar’s study documents the extinction of five large mammals — two massive elephant relatives (*Palaeoloxodon namadicus* and *Stegodon namadicus*), a prehistoric hippo (*Hexaprotodon*), a wild zebra-like horse (*Equus namadicus*), and the wild ancestor of the modern domestic Zebu cattle (*Bos namadicus*) — on the Indian subcontinent. Along with these five species, they also document the local extinction of ostriches, which are only found in Africa today.

With fossil records from 25 sites in India and statistical analysis, they put together data on when these animals went extinct, if they were larger than survivors, the extinction rate here and how that compared to those in other parts of the world. Then, they compared it with historical climate data and records of the emergence of humans to see if causal patterns emerged.

What they found was that these five species represent only ~4% of India’s land mammals, a very small number compared to the rest of the world, but very similar to what has been known from Africa.

The disappearance of large animals appears to have begun some 30,000 years ago and continued up to 8,000 years ago. This is around the time that there was a drop in the Indian



Indian megafauna samples that were studied

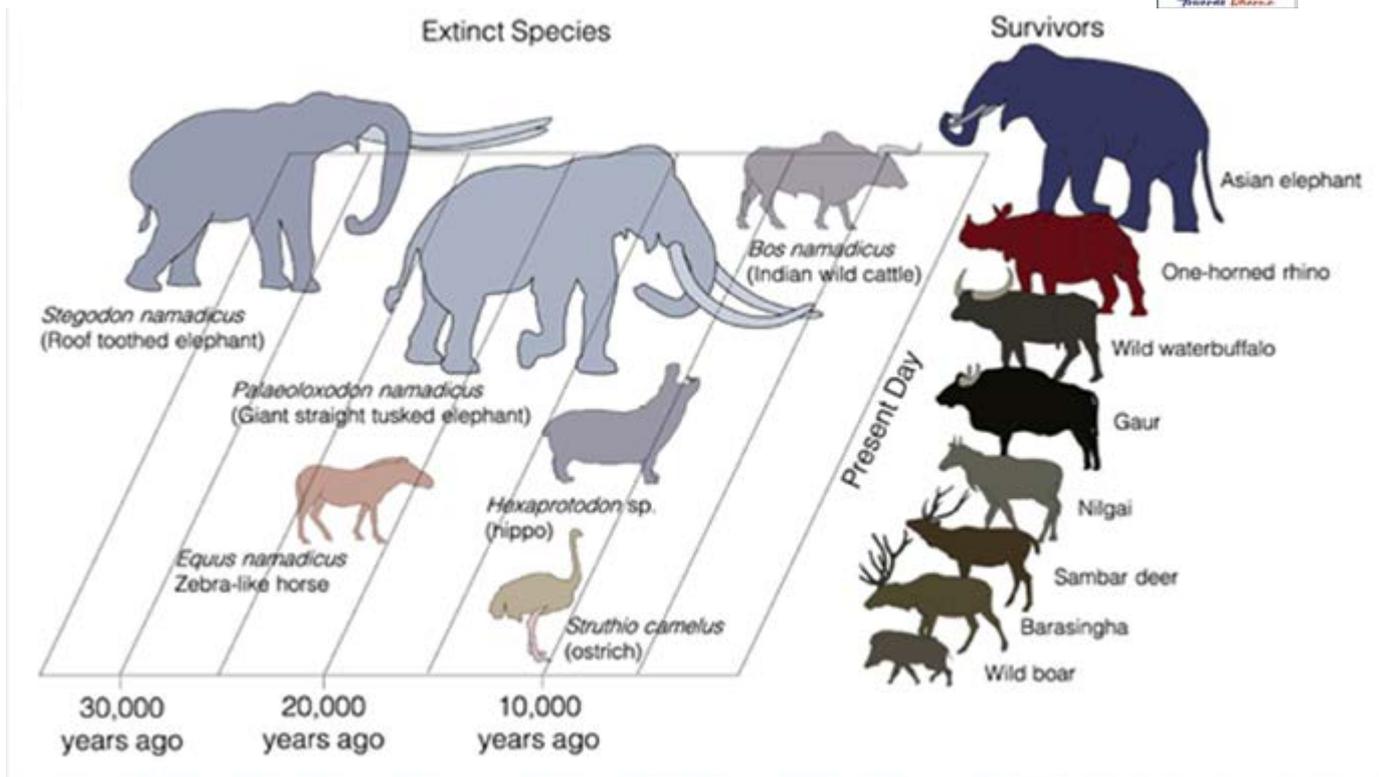
Monsoon (there were three prominent cold and dry periods, when low monsoon intensity led to droughts), the paper said. Rain-fed rivers like Son and Belan show signs of sedimentation between 40,000 and 16,000 years ago. The Ganga river valley also showed reduced activity between 28,000 and 15,000 years ago. Yet, they noted, “all of the species we document going extinct survive several intervals of prolonged drought during the late Pleistocene (126,000 to 12,000 years ago).” Even the arrival of Homo sapiens from Africa 60,000 years ago, clearly, does not coincide with the extinctions. In fact, on the Indian subcontinent, there is a 30,000-year gap between the appearance of

humans and disappearance of megafauna, like the Stegodon.

JUKAR’S STUDY DOCUMENTS THE EXTINCTION OF FIVE LARGE MAMMALS — TWO MASSIVE ELEPHANT RELATIVES (PALAEOLOXODON NAMADICUS AND STEGODON NAMADICUS), A PREHISTORIC HIPPO (HEXAPROTODON), A WILD ZEBRA-LIKE HORSE (EQUUS NAMADICUS), AND THE WILD ANCESTOR OF THE MODERN DOMESTIC ZEBU CATTLE (BOS NAMADICUS) — ON THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT.

The only clear link, it turns out, is with the time that humans start using projectile tools. The study said, “The timing of the extinctions does correlate with a shift in tool technologies and an increase in human population density. A shift to microliths (sharp flint-like small tools of stone, used as spearheads) during the Middle Paleolithic-Late Paleolithic transition (45,000–35,000 years ago) indicates the use of composite tools, such as projectiles and bows and arrows, thus making hunting more efficient.”

Because the extinctions were limited to



Indian megafauna chronology

large species, Jukar argues for a strong human role as a primary cause. However, we still have elephants, tigers, and rhinos in India.

Four factors may have helped large animals survive in the Indian subcontinent. India has been home to different species of humans in the past, just like Africa, with a record going back almost 2 million years. Jukar said this would have led to co-evolution, just like it's been hypothesized in Africa. Additionally, prehistoric humans here hunted smaller prey like monkeys or more abundant game like deer, evidence of which has been found in Sri Lanka, and butchery sites in India. Then, there is the beginning of cattle domestication some 9,000 years ago, as evidence from Mehrgarh in Baluchistan suggests, which means people started settling down. Finally, the large geographic area over which animals were distributed — many found in India ranged all the way from Turkey to Southeast Asia until very recently — may have helped them survive. “The species that go extinct were all

endemic [found nowhere else] to the Indian subcontinent ... with no source population outside to ‘rescue’ collapsing populations.”

“Up until our study, no one had synthesized any of these records to try and figure out what was going on in India ... I can count the number of vertebrate paleontologists in India on both hands and I am one of them,” Jukar said. “India has one of the longest records of fossil mammals anywhere on the planet. We have a record in the Siwalik, which goes back about 24 million years. The only other places where we get comparable records are North America and parts of China. In India, research has been held back because of a lack of resources.” ■

Source:

https://m.timesofindia.com/india/in-india-megabeasts-coexisted-with-humans-for-30k-years/amp_articles/79642678.cms

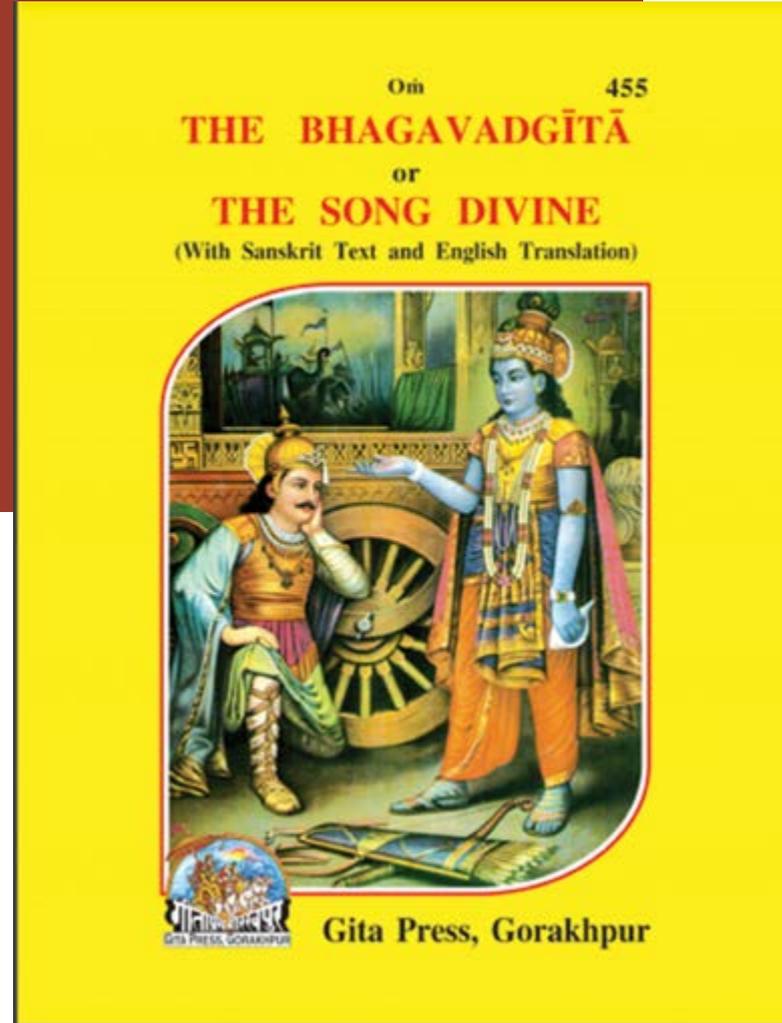
THE ESSENCE OF GITA – A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Sanjay Gupta

Many great rishis and sages over thousands of years have read, reread, and analyzed the layers of the meaning written in the immortal Shrimad Bhagavat Gita. They have tried to distill its message and make it accessible to us at different times in different formats with the technology available at the time so that their contemporaries could understand it. Inspired by this tradition, I am attempting to do a textual analysis based on word count to discover and present what we can glean from this great scripture.

There are many versions of the Gita in English prevalent today with many extremely erudite and earnest attempts at translation from the original Sanskrit. My analysis is based on the English version of the sacred text as published by the legendary Gita Press of Gorakhpur, India. It is considered one of the, if not the, most authentic and literal translations of this great epic.

I started with the word count of all the distinct words present. Then, I eliminated the stop words like “a”, “and”, “the” etc. The next step was to do a process of stemming to get a set of words by reducing inflected words of their endings to collage them in a group. The final step was to perform lemmatization on the word set to group them based on their root meaning.



So, what do the verses reveal and what insights can we glean from them? Let's look at the result first.

The most common occurrence is the word related to action (karma), a total of 437 times; of these, the majority of the words (234 out of 437) relate to detachment or renunciation.

The second most common occurrence are the words related to wisdom or intellect, it occurs a total of 391 times.

The third most common word refers to various forms and names of gods numbering 376. It is not a surprise since the sacred scripture deals with the supreme being's relationship to the mortal beings; incidentally human beings are addressed a total of 251 times that places them at number 5 by descending order of count.

Any guesses for the word that I missed in the above



ranking that should have been at number 4? Let me provide you with a hint: it is a word that is most familiar to the western world and has been repeatedly tried to be appropriated and digested by making it separate from the Hindu dharma. No marks for guessing it right, it is the word Yog or Yoga as it called in anglicized discourse.

So, these round out the top 5 themes:

- Karma, roughly translated as deeds with emphasis on righteous action with detachment from the outcome of those actions.
- Wisdom, variably referred to as mind, intellect, knowledge, and science.
- Cosmic deity as Bhagavan, god, brahman, lord, and many other names that refer to the supreme being.
- Yog or yoga, meditation, various variety of yogas like jnanayoga, rajayoga or bhaktiyoga.
- Human beings who are the intended audience of the discourse by the lord in the context of this teaching.

If you are wondering that there is something amiss in

this list then I have good news for you. Just outside the pale of these top five and at number six is the exhortation to the devotion, worship, and glory of the supreme being who is encouraging us to practice karma(action) with dharma(righteous duty without attachment) and form a yoga(union) with Him. Isn't it the ultimate goal of life? Nirvana, anybody.... ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sanjay Gupta frequently writes on the civilizational and cross-cultural issues. His interests include the comparative study of various cultural and social phenomena and their evolution with respect to Indic civilization. He has a Bachelor's degree in Comp Sc., and MBA from Georgia Tech, Atlanta, USA. His professional career includes founding several technology and non-technology ventures.

Email: sgatlanta@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1660077749>

Twitter: @sgatlanta



A CASE OF GOOD NATIONALISM: DK CHAKRABARTI ON HISTORIOGRAPHY

Koenraad Elst

Outside India, and in India's secularist circles, "nationalism" counts as a bad thing, a kind of collective self-centeredness, a refusal of solidarity with the rest of the world. In the 19th century, it counted by contrast as a form of generous solidarity with people you didn't know, simply because they belonged to the same nation. The Great War of 1914-18 saw the highest tide of nationalism. Thus, in my native Belgium, an artificial state without a soul, it was the war

that first created a national feeling, focused on war leader King Albert I. In the inter-war years, all manner of associations for trade-unionism, sports or even music affected military mannerisms with parades and uniforms, an atmosphere in which the emerging authoritarian-nationalist movements could flourish. India's newly founded mass movement RSS (1925) followed this same fashion, and has kept it up till today, long after it disappeared abroad.

At the same time, the war was followed by the emergence of a pacifist and internationalist spirit, embodied at the highest level by the creation of the League of Nations. A number of writers expressed this weariness of the nationalist passions that first had led to the war and then been exacerbated by it, such as Goodbye to All That by frontline veteran and famous classicist Robert Graves. After World War Two, when the Axis powers had profiled themselves as fervently

nationalist (and in spite of the fact that the Allies and the Resistance movements had done likewise), nationalism definitely went out of fashion. Intellectuals developed a keen eye for the distortive influence that nationalist (even more than other) passions had on history-writing

Nationalism in the British period

But now Dilip K. Chakrabarti, emeritus professor of Archaeology at Cambridge UK, defends nationalism as a research framework: Nationalism in the Study of Ancient Indian History (Aryan Books International, Delhi). Not the fanatical nationalism of some Hindutva trolls, but the modest and quiet nationalism visible in the colonial-age and Nehru-age Indian historians. Their historiography simply and unsensational paid proper attention to the scientific and cultural achievements of Hindu civilization and to its already ancient search for unity.

This nationalist tendency marked itself off against the rival tendency of colonialist history. The latter would deny any originality or agency to Indian culture, all inventions and important doctrines borrowed from Greek or other foreign sources. This tendency persists among today's dominant anti-nationalist or self-described "secularist" school, for political reasons out to belittle India's achievements. Yet, we get to see that the great British historians (discussed on p.76-156), as distinct from non-historians like TB Macaulay, rarely gave signs of belittling India.

At the other end we find the traditionalists, who were then and still are scornful of the canons of academic history. They derive history from sources like the Puranas and take the epics literally. Ridiculed but persistent, they are impervious to

scholarship. There is for any reader of this book, or any other by Chakravarti, no occasion for confusing him with these far-fetched chauvinists.

Chakrabarti surveys the British-age Indian historians at length. (p.157-250). An interesting example was Rajendra Lala Mitra (p.157-173) We may quote him here for disturbing the common Hindu chauvinist allegation that the alleged Indian lack of historical sense is but a colonial concoction meant to belittle India. No, it is a fact based in common observation, also by Indians themselves. Mitra is quoted as lamenting his own civilization's lack of historical sense: "India never produced a Xenophon or a Thucydides, and her heroes and their mighty exploits, her greatness and her early civilization, where they live, live but in song (...) there are few ancient books which bear authentic dates". (p.159)

**LIKE
A VERY
LARGE NUMBER OF
HINDUS, CHAKRAVARTI
ASSUMES, FOLLOWING
THE AIT SCHOOL
THAT "COMPARATIVE
PHILOLOGY" NECESSARILY
IMPLIES THE AIT; AND IS
THEREFORE TO BE
SHUNNED.**

Not that the Indians lacked a calendar system – they had too many of them: "It was held to be a distinguishing mark for a great sovereign to establish an era (...) But unfortunately Indian writers never brought their systems of chronology to bear upon history; and in the absence of chronology their history degenerated into the most inconsistent fables and legends. (...) Almost every date is doubtful." (p. 167)

Same remark by the greatest historian of the 20th century, RC Majumdar, whose voluminous work is discussed in detail. (P.226-8 and p.273-287) He is quoted as diagnosing the "almost all-encompassing absence of historical texts from the earliest times to the Muhammadan conquest" and the "absence of a definite chronology". (p.380) Like Mitra and Majumdar, Chakrabarti is clearly not a nationalist in the sense of a blind glorifier of his country. But acknowledgement

of India's weak points is all the easier as the said flaw is compensated by the many achievements of Indian civilization. And moreover, the admitted weakness has a silver lining: India's record of its early history is a bit garbled, but on the other hand it reaches deeper in time (with very pre-Vedic histories of Manu and his successors) than comparable records in the other great civilizations.

Indo-European

Another pioneer was Ramesh Chandra Dutta, who "like many of the period [= late 19th], was an avid supporter of the Aryan theory". (p.182) He is quoted as considering the results of the "industry, perseverance and genius" of early Indo-Europeanists like "Bopp, Grimm, and Humboldt" as "one of the noblest and most brilliant of the century": the Indo-European language family. (p.183)

Today, many nationalists including Chakrabarti himself reject the notion of Indo-European, but he concedes that back then, far from being resented by the Indians of the day as an imperialist concoction, they generally welcomed it, because: "The Aryan hypothesis implied that the ruling Anglo-Saxons and the ruling Indians (at least the higher castes among the North-Indians) belonged to the same stock and could claim a cousinship, however removed, with their rulers." (p.183)

But he himself is not convinced: "To the present author, the Aryans are a historical non-issue because this is nothing more than a historical concoction to imagine a group of all-conquering dominating people on the model of the Europeans in the 16th-20th centuries." (p.9)

Like a very large number of Hindus, Chakravarti assumes, following the AIT school that "comparative philology" necessarily implies the AIT; and is therefore to be shunned. He rejects not only the Aryan Invasion/Immigration Theory but the Out-of-India Theory as well: "The so-called 'out-of-India' theory postulated for the

Aryan origin, which is current among a section of Indian scholars, should not mean anything historically tangible or verifiable because the whole Aryan issue is irrelevant to the rational understanding of ancient India." (P.9-10)

Well, some of the historians he discusses contradict this view. Mountstuart Elphinstone was the Governor of Mumbai Presidency before he became a historian, which makes him formally an out-and-out colonialist. Yet, he was in two minds about the Aryan invasion thesis. In his day (1841), the Aryan Invasion Theory was still young (August van Schlegel posited a Caucasus homeland in 1834) and disputed. He simply notes the dilemma whether the high castes had been invaders or "merely a portion of one of the native states (a religious sect, for instance) which had outstripped their fellow citizens in knowledge". (p.115)

Then he proceeds to give a cautious answer. Even if conquest was at the origin of the power equation in caste society, that doesn't make it a *foreign* conquest: "It is opposed to their foreign origin that neither in the code [of Manu], nor, I believe, in the Vedas, nor in any book that is certainly older than the code, is there any allusion to a prior residence". (p.115)

To be sure, there is no such recorded memory among the other Indo-European branches either, e.g. the Germanic Edda of ca. 1200 CE knows nothing of an immigration whereas the Out-of-India Theory (and even the still-common peri-Caucasus homeland theory) posits their immigration into Northern Europe ca. 2500 BCE, obviously because the long time-lapse made this forgetfulness a natural outcome. The Aryan Invasion Theory, by contrast, posits an immigration ca. 1500 BCE and immediately thereafter the composition of the Rig-Veda, including (at least in the AIT school's reading) descriptions of battles between invaders and natives. So unlike in the Edda, especially in the

Vedas we ought to find references to very recent foreign origins, given the importance that ancient peoples in general and Indians in particular attached to origins.

Where I completely agree with Elphinstone but Chakrabarti does only partly, is this: “The common origin of the Sanscrit language with those of the west leaves no doubt that there was once a connection between the nations by whom they are used; but it proves nothing regarding the place where such a connection subsisted, nor about the time, (...) To say that it spread from a central point is a gratuitous assumption (...) Where, also, could the central point be, from which a language could spread over India, Greece and Italy, and yet leave Chaldaea, Syria and Arabia untouched? The question, therefore, is still open. There is no reason whatever for thinking that the Hindus ever inhabited any country but their present.” (P.115-6)

Indeed, we agree that the Hindus came from India. As for the Europeans, we say that the linguistically decisive part of their ancestry came from India, whereas most Indians including Chakrabarti say it didn't; though essentially they don't give a damn about these non-Indians, as their horizon stops at the Khyber Pass. Here, persuasion will have to come from Chakrabarti's own field: archaeology. So far it has shown a complete absence of indications of Aryans moving into India (as opposed to Europe, where both archaeological and genetic evidence of the Aryan invasion is plentiful), but much less work has been done to identify Indian emigrant traces in the Central-Asian record. These will

give more body to a scenario of Aryan expansion via a secondary homeland on the steppes, then into Europe.

Negationism

One great merit of this book is the insider's account of the Leftist take-over of the education establishment, mainly during Indira Gandhi's 1972-77 tenure, with PN Haksar as her political secretary, Saiyid Nurul Hasan as her Education Minister, and card-carrying Communist Prof. RS Sharma as the first chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research, newly founded in 1972. (P.3-20, p.293-311, *passim*) Sharma's

textbook *Ancient India*, the ICHR's first, with the protest against it by archaeologist Swarajya Prasad Gupta, was the first salvo in the 'textbook controversy' that has never really died down ever since.

As for his own experience: “In several Indian universities that I can think of – Delhi University, for instance -- students were positively discouraged to read those 'nationalist' writings” (p.4), i.e. sober India-minded historians like RC Majumdar. Chakrabarti himself served at Delhi University for a while, and was the target of Communist slander there. Editing *A History of Ancient India* in 2013, he found that major publishers refused, slated contributors withdrew etc.: “cancel culture”.

After SP Gupta, a very small handful of minor publications dealt with this Communist coup against objective historiography. Then “the first major criticism of the 'left-liberal' or 'progressive' historians was made by Arun Shourie with special reference to the state of the ICHR in their control.” (p.11, referring to Shourie's 1998 book

**THE LEFT
PURPOSELY
CONFLATES BHĀRĀTĪYA
VIDYĀ BHAVAN (THAT
PUBLISHED RC MAJUMDAR'S
MAGNUM OPUS) HISTORIANS
WITH THE ECCENTRIC
BHĀRĀTĪYA ITIHĀS SAṆKALAN
YOJANĀ HISTORY-REWRITERS.
THEY ALSO PORTRAYED
THEMSELVES, THOUGH
POWER-WIELDERS, AS
OPPRESSED.**

Eminent Historians. Their Technology, Their Line, Their Fraud) The title *Eminent Historians* refers to how they call each other to pull rank against the non-conformist historians mostly excluded from an academic career; it is also pun on a colonial-age book title, *Eminent Victorians*. The book documented the eminent historians' misuse of the lavish subsidies they received, and focused on their systematic history manipulation.

Though “these earlier scholars never transcended the limits of objective historical research in their championing of some nationalist premises” and “in no case did they try to glorify ancient India at the expense of objectivity”, yet “the communists launched a propaganda war against the earlier scholars by styling themselves ‘progressives’ as opposed to the ‘revivalist’ and ‘regressive’ Indian scholars of the earlier generations. They did not find the necessity of citing facts to support their contention”. (p.381) The Left purposely conflates *Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan* (that published RC Majumdar's *magnum opus*) historians with the eccentric *Bhāratīya Itihās Sankalan Yojanā* history-rewriters. They also portrayed themselves, though power-wielders, as oppressed.

Thus, DN Jha's *Myth of the Holy Cow* (Verso, 2002) tried to shock the Hindus, who protested. So Jha roped in worldwide sympathy by presenting himself as a victim of Hindu fanaticism. Yet the case of historian Rajendra Lala Mitra's 1881 book *Indo-Aryans*, with the same message, had not led to any persecution. (p.169) The Hindu public had had no problem with the message that Hindu norms had been different 3000 years ago compared to today; only with the Hindu-bashing that Jha added to it.

Did the scene change under Narendra Modi, the supposed Hindu fanatic? Not quite: under BJP rule, no counter-strategy was developed, and the much-discussed problem of “Right-wing history rewriting” remains a figment of the

feverish Leftist imagination: “The communists had a free run so far, their opponents being no match in the psychological warfare launched by the communists. These opponents have had the control of the ICHR uninterrupted since 2014 but they have basically been unable to neutralize the communist lobby in Indian historical studies. They are not motivated enough and focused enough. They regrettably are not even professional enough to realize where the communists have to be hurt to their disadvantage. They remain content by merely uttering platitudes about the Aryans or the Sarasvati. In the latter enterprise they regrettably have been joined by a large number of people who have never taken a day's course in historical studies on a professional level.” (p.382)

To sum up: this book is a very good overview of the main trends in Indian historiography. It introduces the main conflicts within the field, marking these for future in-depth studies. The Left would have liked us to ignore their motivated power-grab, but after this book, this will become impossible.

Dilip K. Chakrabarti: *Nationalism in the Study of Ancient Indian History*, Aryan Books International, Delhi 2020, 398 pp., ISBN 978-81-7305-648-2, Rs 995. ■

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.

Source:

<https://koenraadelst.blogspot.com/2021/02/a-case-of-good-nationalism-dk.html>

THE LESSONS OF 19TH JANUARY 1990 AND KASHMIRI GENOCIDE

Rajat Mitra

A young scholar, a Kashmiri Pandit once told me about this conversation he had in a conference on social justice and while being out of the country. There were several Kashmiri Muslims who were in the conference and before he was to present his paper, one of them came up to him. After greeting him with a warm smile asked him in which year was he born. Puzzled by the question as to why in a conference on social justice where he was making a presentation, they wanted to know when he was born. He still told them, a little baffled.

It was after he came back and described this to his father that he explained why they had asked

him so. “They didn’t want to know your age. They wanted to know whether you were born before 1990 or not. That was the intention.”

“What difference does it make and why would they ask me before my presentation?”

“If you the pre-1990 generation, you become a witness to what had happened to us. They did so because they wanted to find out if you would talk of the holocaust and if you did so as a witness, how to counter your arguments.”

Since he wasn’t of the pre-1989 generation, they had felt relieved and gone.



Image courtesy: dailyo.in

“What if I was not and belonged to the earlier generation had come and talked about it?” he asked.

“These men had come ready for such an eventuality,” his father had answered, “and perhaps do at every forum where they feel such a possibility exists. Then they would have done something to discredit you, prove you wrong.”

The story is chilling and eerie in that it tells us of the attempt by a people, their supporters writers and historians included, institutions to hide and whitewash their crime year after year at every possible opportunity, whether at local or international forums and where they feel they have to hide it from the eyes of the world. This event bears a resemblance to groups, societies and individuals that want to hide, who have the murder of innocent persons on their hands and are trying to cover it up from the glare of the world.

This is something that the perpetrators of Kashmiri Pandits have tried to do in the last century, more so in the last thirty years and the most after the abrogation of Article 370 and the increase of transparency in a place marked by distrust.

There is something else that one may notice about the above generation. It tells us that there was a civilization that for centuries tried to save and preserve its identity from extermination and lived in silence because it found the world silent to their call for help. Once we look at that, the issue seems to give us a deeper understanding of what it has meant to be a Hindu, to belong to the era where he was an infidel and had to face either genocidal extinction or run away to preserve his faith.

“Being a German in my generation,” once said the prize-winning author, Carolin Emcke,

“means to distrust myself.” What she meant was the shadow of the holocaust is so long that it hangs over every society for generations and one that forever tries to come to terms with its past and the exterminations of its people. That perhaps is what can be said to be true of Kashmir, the Kashmiri people adding that the shadow of the holocaust, in this case, is a very long one, over five hundred years, one that has terrorized generations all along leaving them to forever wanting to adapt and survive. It makes little difference that it happened

in phases, sometimes almost slow and unseen while at other times systematically decimating everyone and every symbol of anything that came in the path of the domination of one faith, exterminating everyone who tried to resist it over seven exoduses.

Exact dates are important in genocide and central to its occurrence. It is forgotten by the perpetrators but remembered by the survivors. The survivors talk of it in a chilling way remembering the exact time, place and the persons who were the perpetrators of the crime. Apart from that, the talk of the survivor is a banal one, the survival being a task of being alive in midst of indifference and terror to preserve the fragmented self, an attempt by the psyche to preserve its fragility in the midst of alienation.

For Kashmiri Pandits born before 19th January 1990, dates are extremely important. If one was born before that time and was seven, one heard and remembered the slogan ‘raliv, chaliv ya galiv’ (convert, runaway or die) coming from the mosques all over Kashmir for you because you were a Hindu. If one was older than that, one heard that it is the women, including your little sister who your neighbors wanted you to leave

**FOR
KASHMIRI
PANDITS BORN
BEFORE 19TH JANUARY
1990, ONE HEARD AND
REMEMBERED THE SLOGAN
'RALIV, CHALIV YA GALIV'
(CONVERT, RUNAWAY OR
DIE) COMING FROM THE
MOSQUES ALL OVER
KASHMIR FOR YOU
BECAUSE YOU WERE
A HINDU.**

behind in order to create an Islamic Kashmir. If you were older than that, you perhaps wondered why India and the rest of the world remained silent and understood that Kashmiri Hindus had no one to speak for them. Silence too long has been known as the language of trauma and genocide its expression.

Last year while traveling in the USA on a book promotion, an octogenarian Kashmiri lady on hearing I am an author had called me aside and told me in one breath all the events in her life from the time of partition to the present in the minutest detail. “I don’t want them to be forgotten.” The earliest included when she was a teen and was given a small packet containing poison if she was picked up by Pakistani raiders (Kabali) and the one in 1990 when she had passed on the same to her granddaughter telling her the same. “The women of our community preserved it and kept it ready, perhaps over centuries. Every mother taught it to her daughter and asked her to pass it on with time. Maybe it will stop now as there is no Hindu left in Kashmir valley anymore,” she had commented and said, “I hope this episode will not be forgotten.”

The survivors remained silent because of shame, the shame of rape, not able to protect one’s land. Did the perpetrators, in this case, the Kashmiri Muslims remain silent due to guilt? Hardly so but a few do, a minuscule percentage do. “If we acknowledge the enormity of what our fathers and forefathers did, we will have to radically change our identity of who we are and what we have believed in and I don’t think I have the courage to do so,” was a rare voice who told me once when I asked him why they don’t take any accountability for the crime they committed on 19th January 1990. “Maybe we are leaving to the next generation.”

Bruno Bettelheim once famously said, “What cannot be talked about can also not be put to rest and if it is not, the wounds continue to fester from generation to generation.”

So, which will be the generation that will break the silence of the holocaust that took place in Kashmir? Is it the fear that if acknowledged it will lead to the acknowledgment of all other genocides that have taken place on the Indian soil? “Will it not lead to more bigotry and violence than what has already taken place?” ask its critiques. The answer to that is what Martin Luther King famously said, “True peace is not merely absence of tension; it is the presence of justice,” and, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere...”

The Indian response of silence to the holocaust in Kashmir was born to its response to history of persecution that we as a nation don’t acknowledge and haven’t come to terms with. Till we do that more Kashmiris will happen and we will wonder why all this doesn’t move us and make us rise up and protest against this assault on our identity.

Some time ago I was talking to a Jewish psychologist and she asked me in my opinion which is the safest country for Jews in the world today. When I mentioned Israel, she smiled and said, “No, I and many others believe it is Germany.” Seeing my puzzled face she said, “It is because of the decades of German people working off the past. They introspected, searched for and finally found the evil within themselves that lurks within all of us and rarely under control. Only those who acknowledge it and don’t deny it can ever say that they will protect others against genocide.”

The history of India is beset with mass atrocities and genocidal violence. We need to begin with Kashmir and that perhaps will lead us to come to terms with our past so that we can leave a safer world for our children. I hope that beginning happens sooner than later and happens now. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rajat Mitra is a Psychologist, Speaker and Author of ‘The Infidel Next Door’
www.rajatmitra.co.in

THE BIG SCANDAL OF INDOLOGY



Dr. Subhash Kak

Imagine this: While traveling through a foreign land, you find an announcement of a public lecture about your country at your hotel. Being free that afternoon and feeling nostalgic for home, you and your spouse go to the lecture and discover that while the speaker knows the broad elements of the history of your country, his understanding is so shallow that it borders on nonsense.

What can you do? You can't just say, "Excuse me, but you have it all wrong." No, because you're in a foreign country, and your spouse will never forgive you for creating a commotion. Not wanting to be rude or be accused of grandstanding for attention, you hold your tongue and walk out at the first opportunity. Later, you speak privately with the speaker and find it is not just him, he was taught wrong stuff at his college; it is pervasive.

This is the big scandal of Indology: Almost all you have in academic textbooks about ancient India is either superficial, banal, half-truths or plain wrong. The understanding of the earliest India offered by the

Indology community is based on flimsy philosophical and methodological foundations and a deep misunderstanding of the texts.

Worse, *it is a racist enterprise* in which the stated objective is to teach Indians what their books mean. Its premise is that Indians are culturally backward, they never developed scientific or critical thinking, and they lack access to the "true" meaning of their texts. It is further implied that the original authors of the ur-texts, which over the millennia have expanded into voluminous tomes with what they say *have internal contradictions*, were outsiders like the Indologists themselves, and the current confusing state of the texts reflects cultural shortcomings of Indians as a consequence of the intermingling of the original Indo-Europeans with the lesser races of India!

Hold it, you say! Isn't it stupid to believe this? India is one of the cradles of world science and of logic, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, aesthetics, moral and political discourse, not to mention stories and fables. Modern science itself has much that is based on Indian contributions and Indians are in the vanguard of contemporary science. The Indologists are generally ignorant about science so they respond by saying that these are contributions to Western enterprises and besides, they add, what they are pointing to are Indian *cultural deficiencies* (although they mean *race* but they are savvy enough to know that it is not politically correct to mention it).

You say that couldn't be true, for Indians are amongst the most successful entrepreneurs in the West and the wealthiest ethnic group in the United States, where there



is a level playing-field. They say, maybe “yes”, but it’s only because Indians are mimicking the Westerners. And then they change the subject and say that when it comes to the old texts, Indians carry so much of emotional baggage that only they (the Western Indologists) can interpret them correctly.

But how can people in the academy believe in such racist stuff? Why haven’t these folks been *drummed out of their jobs for stupidity*, if nothing else?

First hubris, then scandal

The answer yields a complicated story. But first, the calling attention to this scandal is not a reaction of Indians to the painful memory of their colonized past. Scholars both in the West and India have for decades pointed to the hollowness of the assumptions of Indology and the absurdity of their conclusions.

Neither does the scandal have anything to do with the national origin of the professors or whether they belong to one tradition or another. Many Westerners have done wonderful work on India and paralleling that

many Indian “scholars” have done shoddy work. To get true insight in any field, one needs to approach it with humility and pure heart, and suspend the lens of one’s own tradition, whatever that might be. In the world of wisdom and insight, class, nationality or race do not matter: we are all equal.

In private conversations with academics who work on India, there is acknowledgement that there is a cabal that consists of racists, European supremacists, leftists and others, who might be sincere but so marinated in an obviously wrong paradigm that they don’t even know they are wrong. And then, of course, there are the thick-headed ones who just don’t get it; one of those once wrote me an email saying that only “philologists have the authority to interpret ancient India.”

One of the most astonishingly stupid statements I ever read is the one by Frits Staal who in the preface of his book *Discovering the Vedas: Origins, Mantras, Rituals, Insights* says: “The Rigveda is composed in a language so distant even from classical Sanskrit, that only Europeans who were familiar with their own

classical languages could have begun to crack its forms and codes.” I knew Frtis Staal a bit, and before he left to live in Thailand upon retirement, he gifted me his book on stamps of Jammu and Kashmir; in his earlier career he had done some nice work on the Agnicayana ritual and Indian grammatical tradition. The only explanation for the quoted statement is that in the isolation of his retirement he reverted to atavistic European views.

Unbiased editors, themselves academics, are aware that many Indology faculty are so fanatical and politicized so as to have lost contact with the truth. This explains how I came to be invited to write several dozen encyclopedia articles on ancient India: if you look, for example, at Stanley Wolpert’s authoritative *Encyclopedia of India* (2005), you will see I have the second-most number of contributions, 18, next only to Wolpert’s own 19.

To be fair, the Indologists made useful contributions in lexicography, manuscript preservation and collation in the 19th century. If one may use Bhartrhari’s categories, it was good work at the *vaikharī* and the *madhyamā* levels but quite wrong at the *paśyantī*.

The Indologists missed the larger meaning that provides coherence to the Indian texts; this is why their mistakes have continued generation after generation. Sri Aurobindo was right to point out that the European interpretations of the Vedas are essentially worthless.

To make sure that there is no misunderstanding, what I mean by the enterprise of the Indologists are narratives on ancient India and to the extent they affect understanding of the later periods. I acknowledge the great contributions scholars from the West have made

to the study of the classical period and what followed thereafter.

Academic Indology

Historically, the universities in Germany began the academic study of India and this serves as basis for western interpretations of ancient Indian history and traditions. In *The Nay Science: A History of German Indology*, Vishwa Adluri and Joydeep Bagchee chart the history of the discipline to show its questionable philosophical assumptions, anti-semitic and anti-Brahmanic attitudes, and racial prejudice.

In an interview, Adluri calls the racism of Indology insidious. “The Indologists had for so long told themselves that Indians lacked access to the “true” meaning of their texts that they no longer considered it a prejudice but a methodological principle and a necessary one at that.” The Indologists declared that the texts were not to be read as Indians read them for they lacked scientific and critical thinking; they [Indologists] are the final judge of what India’s culture and civilization was and is and only they can change India by intervening in its history by teaching Indians to understand their past that will give them the agency to make change.

Hermann Oldenberg, a 19th century leader of academic Indology, said that Indians are under the tyranny of “the misshapen, wild, cruel, [and] lascivious Hindu Gods, at their head Shiva and Vishnu.” The Indologists saw themselves as revolutionaries who want to save the Hindus quite in the same spirit as the Christian missionaries and the Tablighi Jamaat want to save Hindus.

**INDIAN TEXTS
REQUIRE NAVIGATING
THROUGH THEIR OWN
PROTOCOLS. THIS IS WHERE THE
GURU OR THE TEACHER COMES
IN, AND ORAL INSTRUCTION IS
EXTOLLED. THE INDOLOGIST READS
THIS SOMEWHERE AND GETS LOST
AND THINKS THIS MEANS THAT THERE
IS NO WRITTEN STUFF ANYWHERE!
THEY DON'T GET THAT THE CONTEXT
IS EVERYTHING AND THE
DECLARATIONS WITHIN THE
TRADITION ARE NOT TO BE
TAKEN LITERALLY.**

Indologists saw Indian art as grotesque. John Ruskin, the English art historian of the Victorian era, decreed that Indian architecture was systemless for it sprang from an irrational religion. The attempt to fit Indian art to Western rationality sprang from the same impulse that led to iconoclasm in Christian Europe. But the 19th century belonged to the Age of Reason, so they didn't want to physically destroy the art. They wished to control thought about it so that the only natural place for it would be the museum.

Images mediate abstract thought as is clear from the wealth of stories and cosmologies connected with the images of, say, Visnu or Śiva, Durgā or the Buddha in India, or Athena, Apollo, and Dionysius in ancient Europe. Behind each image lies an entire epistemology, a knowledge system regarding lived reality. Idol-breaking is a projection of power over thought.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos speaks of "epistemicide," that is, the extermination of knowledge and ways of knowing, as a key component of the drive in Europe and later in the Arab/Turkic worlds to power and domination. Its operation varied from burning books to extermination of people. Catherine Nixey in her book *The Darkening Age* describes how most of the artwork and literature of European antiquity was destroyed by zealots. Faces, arms and genitalia of statues were mutilated, if not entirely broken. According to one estimate, only about 10% of European literature survived. Similar destruction occurred in Arabia, Iran, Central Asia, and India.

Enrique Dussel argues that centuries of "I conquer, therefore I am" (*ego conquiro*) was accompanied by the genocide/epistemicide of the "I exterminate, therefore I am" (*ego extermino*). It is from there that Descartes' slogan "I think, therefore I am" (*ego cogito*) emerged. It was not a call to free thought, for here "I" represented the European, and everything outside of Europe was deemed inferior. Ramón Grosfoguel argues that the Western university has continued this process of epistemicide in the social sciences.

The drive by the Indologists to define India on their terms is entirely consistent with the larger European project of epistemicide.

Academic control

Christopher Minkowski, at his Inaugural Lecture for Boden Professorship at Oxford University is very transparent about the need to control Sanskrit studies. Lamenting that the Indian claim to Sanskrit's authority has not withered in spite of continual assault by the Indologists, he claims that "if they accepted that claim, it would put them into a rivalry with the language's traditionally trained, hereditary "native" experts."

Minkowski adds: "Modern scholars, then, sought a method for containing Sanskrit's potential to activate its cultural politics, by subjecting the study of Sanskrit to scholarly protocols which were antithetical to the language's genius and charisma. They opted for a decidedly unromantic array of curatorial and antiquarian forms of scholarship: philologizing, cataloguing, typologizing, organizing into chronologies, and so on; eminently useful practices, no doubt, but none of them glamorous."

In other words, the protocols are to deny Indian scholars of Sanskrit a place at the academic table.

So here we have a situation of parallel worlds, for traditional Indian scholars reject literally all Western academic scholarship and as far as they are concerned this stuff doesn't even exist.

Delusion and *ātmanvidyā*

One reason that the Indologists are befuddled is because of incorrect assumptions about the nature of Indian society. In my view, India was not fundamentally different from the rest of the world, and jātis are very much like communities elsewhere in the world. The caste system as we see it was created by the British for the jātis "were not aware of the specific varna class they belonged to but were squeezed into the varna system by the British administrators."

Likewise, the Brahmins were not unlike priestly

communities the world over and their class was not closed. We know from modern times that communities can just declare themselves to be Brahmins (like the Saurashtras) and the same process doubtlessly occurred in the past.

Even if one were to excuse their self-confessed bias, why did the Indologists turn out to be so totally wrong in their understanding of the texts? Many of them were competent and patient scholars who were trying their best to make sense of what they had in front of them.

The answer is that the Indian texts have traps for the uninitiated. If the process of understanding involves many steps in a ladder, there is much in the texts that will let you believe you have reached the top at whatever step, if that is where you want to be. Thus, there is room in the texts, both for those who believe that the ritual is only outer, and others who believe it is symbolic.

When it comes to moral precepts, the dharmasāstras present material that might be contradictory in details because different subsets of these precepts were embraced by different communities. It was a system perfected for diversity!

Most significantly, if *ātmavidyā*, the central science of the Vedas, cannot be described in the usual categories of language as Mundaka Upanisad instructs us, then the description through different lenses (not just the six main darśanas but many more that can be imagined) will have elements that are in contradiction. It is indeed a case of the six blind men feeling an elephant and coming up with different descriptions. The contradictions are both at the philosophical and the ritual levels, and part of the instruction is to reach these contradictions (as crises of faith) to prepare oneself for intuitive insight that takes one to a deeper understanding.

Indian texts require navigating through their own protocols. This is where the guru or the teacher comes in, and oral instruction is extolled. The Indologist reads this somewhere and gets lost and thinks this means that there is no written stuff anywhere! They don't get that the context is everything and the declarations within the

tradition are not to be taken literally.

I have been surprised at how many Western acolytes interpret stories of a spiritual master's presence at two places at the same time as the literal truth. Growing up in the company of sadhus and other spiritual people, one learnt to separate the word from the image.

The Indologists are using concepts from their society to look at India. Concepts that are too limiting. They don't get India for they misunderstand the foundations of its culture. This will explain the strange books and articles being churned out on how there was no writing in India no matter if Panini says he knew writing, how the Brahmins cunningly converted most of Asia to their ideology, and how through yoga, which in their view has nothing to do with Hinduism, even though it is the heart of the Bhagavad Gita, and one of the six darśanas, they are spreading their ideas around the world.

One might ask how did the Indologists prosper for this long? There was a convergence in the program of the Indian political left (to save India from the clutches of tradition) and that of the Indologists. Due to centralization of the academic system in India and its control by the left for decades, the alliance had patronage.

If Indian ideas are spreading, it is only because the Indian tradition speaks to the problem of consciousness, which is also the frontier of modern science; it is a problem that the Western traditions have largely ignored.

The Indian system does not depend on the machinations and cunning of any specific class of people. It offers a universal message open to all in which each person is equal for the same purusa (consciousness) resides within each, and it is more than high talk, for it offers practices related to self-discovery. That is something that the Indologist does not appear to understand. ■

Source:

<https://subhashkak.medium.com/the-big-scandal-of-indology-2994f178f0d9>

A DOCTOR'S FIGHT AGAINST OPIOID CRISIS

Manu Shah

On 5th July 2020, Ikonkar Manmohan Singh Sandhu, a young 23 year old boy, died from an opioid overdose in Michigan just months before he was to be married. He is by no means an isolated case in the Indian American community.

A small group of doctors are sounding the alarm on the nation's opioid crisis. Dr. Arun Gupta is one of those who is urging health authorities to wake up to this catastrophe, which is ripping through communities with scant regard for race, gender, educational level or financial standing.

To be fair, before COVID-19 ravaged the country, the growing opioid addiction was giving the nation's health officials sleepless nights. The pandemic put this issue on the back burner, and while more Americans are dying from the virus, it can be just as deadly, if left unchecked.

Opioid overdoses have killed more than 70,000 young people annually between the ages of

18-54 for the past five years. In 2011, the CDC reported that overdose deaths superseded auto accident deaths for the first time in 32 states. This is now virtually true for all 50 states. The organization also reported that more than 700,000 young Americans have died between 1999-2017 from poly drug overdose. That number is expected to be as high as one million by the end of 2020. The report further states that, "preventable disease & retroactive analysis show that most of these deaths were unintentional." Isolation, stress and the depression that came in the wake of the pandemic is shooting cases through the roof. "Parents are burying their children and children are burying their parents," says Dr. Gupta.

Contrary to the common perception, Indo American families have also been affected by

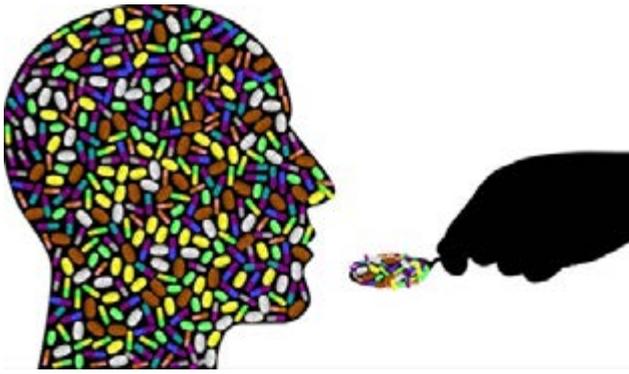
this affliction. It is growing trend in community, largely to parents' unrealistic expectations for their children or young generation that conflicting cultures. What worsens it, is that many are either in denial or wary of seeking professional help for fear of being stigmatized or shunned. These are lives that could have easily been saved, much like the case of a distant relative who died because the family hesitated to reach out for help or were unaware of the problem according to Dr. Gupta.



Dr. Arun Gupta

A physician for 34 years, of which 14 years are as a doctor of addiction management, Dr. Gupta has seen enough to be worried. He has been charting the surge in cases throughout the nation for the past decade and is seeing it played out at his doorstep – the rural region of Monroe, Michigan where he runs his private practice.

For 11 years, Dr. Gupta was the local prison doctor where he saw the interplay of drugs and death up close and the ineffectiveness of the administration's efforts to curb it. This pushed him to change tracks from being a general physician, to addiction management. Rural communities, he observes, are more prone to opioid addiction than urban areas where the population is better educated, and have higher paying jobs. The problem is compounded when there is family instability, lack of education, poverty, physical, mental and sexual abuse in childhood, mental illness or addiction, both in the family and the patient.



So why are addictive opioids prescribed in the first place and how do they hook us? About 25 years ago, pharma company Purdue, manufacturers of the painkiller Oxycodone, pushed the government to sanction prescribing painkillers for non-cancer related pain. The American Pain Society also classified pain as the fifth vital sign after blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and weight. Statistically, 40% of the country's population is in chronic pain and many require pain medication to carry out their daily activities, or even go in to work.

Addiction starts innocuously enough with a prescription for a painkiller to treat post-surgery or chronic pain as in instances of back pain. Consuming these painkillers diminishes the pain but also brings on a euphoric feeling as it raises dopamine - the brain's pleasure hormone. Celebrities like Michael Jackson were known to use them before a performance, a term referred to as, "spotlight euphoria." Additionally, it changes the perception of reality for those dealing with psychological issues such as an inferiority complex or anxiety, these people now start "liking themselves and feeling good." This altered reality quickly spirals into an emotional and social need followed by dependence and cravings for the painkiller.

The signs of addiction are evident in drastic mood changes, lethargy or impaired

decision-making, among others. Discontinuing the painkillers could lead to a host of withdrawal symptoms such as chills, tremors, body aches, bone pain, vomiting, diarrhea or irregular respiration. However, Dr. Gupta clarifies that not everyone gets addicted to painkillers and the risk of addiction is only about 10%.

Soon, Oxycodone grew so popular that it began to have, "street value." When prescriptions ran out, users turned to the streets where it could be obtained illegally. Hustlers began faking health issues to procure and sell these painkillers giving rise to the term "pill-mill." The cost of one milligram of Oxycontin is one dollar so

someone using 1000mg was spending \$1000 a day. While insurance took care of legitimate prescriptions, those who were addicted were shelling out their own money. This, of course, was done in connivance with "some doctors who played the game." Dr. Gupta estimates that about 1000 doctors have been apprehended so far for violating this practice and have "tarnished the image of doctors."

IN 2002, A DRUG (BUPRENORPHINE) WAS APPROVED FOR ADDICTION TREATMENT, AND TEN YEARS LATER ANOTHER DRUG (ZUBSOLV) MADE IT TO TREATMENT PLANS. THESE DRUGS BLOCK THE OPIOID RECEPTORS IN THE BRAIN AND REDUCE A PERSON'S CRAVING FOR THE PAINKILLER.

There is an obvious connection between mental disorders and addictive disorders and its consequences can sometimes be life threatening. Doctors, however, are required by law to treat pain with painkillers even if there is a sense/awareness that this medication could become addictive to the patient. On the other hand, if doctors practice caution in prescribing pain medication, they risk a bad review on their practice, something every doctor understandably wants to avoid.

In 1999, the Center for Disease Control went on record for the first time and shared its report of 4000 young Americans who died from drugs. The government scrutinized the problem and rolled out the Drug Addiction Treatment Act of 2000. For the first time, this law allowed practicing doctors to learn and treat

addiction with an FDA approved drug. The law also stipulated that any practicing doctor could complete an addiction program and receive an X DEA license which would allow them to treat 30 patients per month for a year. If the doctor's records are found in order, they could treat 100 patients per month. Past President Barack Obama signed a law that would allow some doctors with specific credentials to treat 275 patients a month. This number was controlled to prevent its misuse but sometimes the best-intentioned laws have unintended consequences. And this one exactly did that.

Only 4300 doctors in the US can treat 275 patients a month and Dr. Gupta is one of them. It's a drop in the ocean for the estimated 20-40 million people who need help overcoming their addiction. There are more than 100,000 healthcare providers in the country that include doctors, nurses and physician assistants who have the necessary X-DEA credentials to treat opioid use disorders. But less than 20,000 are actively involved in dealing with the growing opioid epidemic in the country. This lack of access to a healthcare provider aggravates the problem leading to more deaths than recoveries. Meanwhile, the pandemic has not made things easier. There is excessive stress and limited counselling due to the shutdowns, and prescriptions cannot be given on the phone without the necessary drug testing. This explains the rise in overdose deaths and addiction cases in the past nine months.

Apart from flawed policy, the American Society of Addiction states that every doctor who graduates from medical school is required to study addiction management. There are 179 medical schools and approximately 9000 residency programs in the country and not one of them teaches this course. Moreover, addiction management is not considered on par with other areas of medical specialization, and neither do insurance companies view addiction like other chronic diseases, such as blood pressure or diabetes.

In 2002, a drug (Buprenorphine) was approved for addiction treatment, and ten years later another drug (Zubsolv) made it to treatment plans. These drugs block the opioid



receptors in the brain and reduce a person's craving for the painkiller. Another ingredient in the drug, naloxone, reverses the effects of opioids. Together, they prevent withdrawal symptoms and deter the abuser from snorting or injecting it. Dr. Gupta pairs medication with counselling, and non-addictive medication in cases of insomnia or anxiety. Recovery takes anywhere from six weeks to six months depending on the severity of the addiction, but the struggle to remain clean continues for the rest of their lives.

With death rates from opioid misuse surging, more than 500 laws were enacted in the last 10 years against doctors, pill mills and pharmaceutical companies to curb the problem, but this has only exacerbated the issue. Addicts are now forced to go to the streets instead of visiting a doctor for treatment. Dr. Gupta notes that national autopsy results over the last 5 years consistently show that fentanyl, heroin and cocaine are the first three drugs in more than 55% of the people with drug overdose deaths, as opposed to prescription medication.

Over the past few years, Dr. Gupta has presented more than 150 talks to schools, doctors, healthcare systems and social organizations, like Rotary clubs and the Kiwanis Club, to highlight the gravity of the problem and his message that addiction can be cured. He is talking to elected officials to leverage their influence and galvanize the government to rethink the limit of patients, and allow greater access to people who want to overcome their addiction.

Addiction, he warns, has become synonymous with a death sentence in this country. ■

HINDUDVESHA WEBINAR SERIES EXPLORES AND EXPOSES SYSTEMIC HINDUPHOBIA



Dr. Jai Bansal



Mr. Kalyan Vishwanathan

For a long time, Hindus have been at the receiving end of a contemptuous discourse about their dharmic beliefs, traditions, rituals, social structure and way of life. The discourse was set in motion during the colonial period, as evidenced by James Mill’s “History of British India”, which characterized Hindus as imperfect, barbaric, savage, wild, vague, wavering, obscure, rude, primitive, regressive, frivolous, wretched, imbecile, mean, absurd, base, gross, monstrous, superstitious, stupid, degraded, hierarchical, oppressive, immoral, disorderly, violent, selfish, corrupt, deformed, disgusting, groveling, ridiculous, inconsistent, incoherent, ignorant, credulous, timid, dirty, weak, given to exaggeration and flattery, engulfed in darkness and confusion, and hardly different from monkeys [1]. Mill and his cohorts spawned a whole new field of study called Oriental Studies, which later morphed into European/Western Indology, where academic scholars essentially competed with one another in inventing ever more virulent polemics against the Hindus.

In contemporary times, such offensive language may not pass the test of the “appearance of objectivity.” However, today’s Indologists continue to use these ideas subtly to suggest, hint, indicate, imply, insinuate, suspect, wonder about, propose, assert, conclude, and to construct their anti-Hindu arguments. The school textbooks in the Western world, taking their cue from the academics, continue to proliferate these denigrating constructs about Hindu Dharma through the education system.

The World Hindu Council of America (VHPA) and Dharma Civilization Foundation have recently joined hand to launch a monthly educational series of webinars titled “Hindudvesha – An Initiative to Explore and Expose Systemic Hinduphobia”. The purpose of this initiative, as the name implies, is to raise the awareness of Hindu Americans about this relentless, all-pervasive attack on their culture and values.

Hindudvesha versus Hinduphobia

We have deliberately chosen to introduce a relatively new term, Hindudvesha, to describe the underlying phenomenon. This article will seek to define and differentiate “Hindudvesha” from its more popular cognate “Hinduphobia.”

Since “phobia” is a Greek word meaning extreme or irrational fear or aversion of something, it is logical to ask if Hinduphobia is a suitable term to describe the disdainful ambient pressure that Hindus are experiencing. The answer would appear to be a resounding ‘No’ since there is absolutely no reason why anyone should be afraid of Hindus. After all, what have Hindus done to evoke fear in others? Hindus have not threatened anyone; they are not proselytizing by nature; they do not seek to convert the entire world to Hinduism; they do not wish to replace all the other religions, philosophies, and ideologies in this world; they do not seek to conquer the world and they have no history of invading, conquering, colonizing, enslaving, and exterminating peoples in any part of the world, as some other ideologies have done and continue to do. Any encounter with a Hindu in the workplace, marketplace, college, school, neighborhood, or any public sphere, does not cause a primal, inexplicable fear in the “other.” On the contrary, Hindus in America are mostly well-educated – doctors and engineers, scientists and technologists, entrepreneurs, businesspersons, teachers, and professors. What could possibly be the reason for fearing the Hindus in that fundamental and visceral way that a term like Hinduphobia seeks to represent?

Therefore, it seems reasonable to dismiss the term “Hinduphobia” as an inaccurate term to describe the underlying phenomenon. Hindudvesha, on the other hand, seems to accurately capture the essence of this phenomenon.

“Dvesha” is a Sanskrit word meaning “aversion”, “repulsion” or “hatred” – a deep-rooted emotional response that negatively influences one’s perception of something, or someone. Hindudvesha, like systemic racism or anti-Semitism, is an ambient, all-encompassing

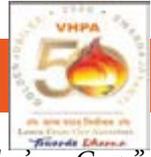
discourse that denigrates and delegitimizes Hinduism and the Hindu people as it relentlessly problematizes, dehumanizes, and demonizes them. Its accusatory rhetoric treats Hindus as objects or patients to be examined and diagnosed.

“Linking Hinduism with backwardness and primitiveness,”[2] the Hindudvesha discourse freezes Hinduism in time as ancient, obsolete, and irrelevant in contemporary times and continues to produce a form of incontestable “received knowledge” about the Hindus. The narrative structure of Hindudvesha frames “the superiority of Western culture both as its presupposition and its conclusion”[3] and “can be traced back to the Christian theological understanding of ‘heathen’ religions [which] have become the foundation of the descriptions of India [Hinduism and Hindu culture] as developed by later generations of social scientists.”[4]

In the academic study of Hinduism, the scholar’s relationship to his subject has been as framed as a conflict between modernity and tradition, between reason and revelation; and the scholar’s role has been primarily that of an iconoclastic subversion of tradition, albeit in the name of “criticism,” “universal values,” and “enlightened modernity”. [5] Thus, both Christian theology and enlightened modernity almost completely agree on the conclusion that Hinduism is irredeemably bad and wrong, evil and demonic. They seek to redeem the Hindus through urgent eradication, using secularization, civilization, modernization, westernization, Christianization, or Islamization. In other words, Hindus must be emancipated, liberated, and saved from Hinduism itself, or at the very least be regulated, policed, accused, interrogated, monitored, shamed, and silenced.

Impact of Hindudvesha

Ultimately, like “Anti-Semitism”, Hindudvesha perpetuates a state of disharmony and conflict, leading to systemic discrimination and violence against the Hindus. As a discourse it justifies and camouflages all those forces directed at destroying Hinduism, the Hindu people, their culture and their civilization. And in so far as it shames, embarrasses, gaslights,



and silences the Hindu people, it is a remarkably successful discourse. If as a Hindu, you are in any way embarrassed or ashamed of your Hindu heritage, or if you find yourself frequently being interrogated for the apparent mis-deeds of your ancestors, such as the caste system, or if you find yourself constantly on the defense about your traditions, and feel compelled to defend or denounce them, or if you feel pressured to distance yourself from your heritage, or actively participate in denigrating and devaluing Hinduism, through name-calling and other strategies, then you may need to determine if you are a victim of Hindudvesha just as a victim of systemic racism needs to do.

Task Ahead

Our task, going forward, is to distinguish the strategies that promote Hindudvesha as the objective truth about the Hindus; and to illustrate and demonstrate its ambient presence through examples and case studies in academia, media, school and college campuses, movies and the public square, politics, and policy domains. It is incumbent on all right-thinking persons, more so Hindus, to identify, call out and legislate against the principal players and stakeholders who institutionalize and perpetuate Hindudvesha.

To find out more...

Hindudvesha website, www.Hindudvesha.org, is currently under construction, and is expected to be completed by end of March, 2021. Once operational, all activities related to Hindudvesha initiative will be posted there. ■

References

- *Mill, James and Wilson, Horace Hayman, "The History of British India", In Nine Volumes, Volume I, Fourth Edition with Notes and Continuation, London, 1848, (originally published by James Mill, 1817) – Every adjective or phrase used in this paragraph have been taken from the writings of James Mill.*

- *Sharma, Arvind, "The Ruler's Gaze", HarperCollins Publishers India, 2017, Page 27*
- *Balagangadhara, S.N., "Reconceptualizing India Studies", Oxford University Press, 2012, Page 10*
- *Ibid, Page 10*
- *Adluri, Vishwa and Bagchee, Joydeep, "Jews and Hindus in Indology", published in academia.edu, 2017*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Jai Bansal is a recognized expert in the field of energy efficient utilization of hydrocarbon resources. His most recent appointment was as a Distinguished Fellow at the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago, where he advised the Argonne scientists as well as the US Department of Energy on fuel efficient transportation technologies.

Fully retired from professional life, Dr. Bansal now shares his time between family and service of the Hindu community through organizations like the World Hindu Council of America (WHCA).

Mr. Kalyan Viswanathan is a longtime student of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati of Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, and was associated with his work for over 20 plus years. Prior to his involvement with Hindu University of America, Kalyan was a Global Practice Head for one of India's largest IT Services Company, with a 20-plus year track record. He holds a Master's Degree in Computer Science and a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from BITS, Pilani. Currently, he is enrolled in the MA/PhD Program in Hindu Studies at Hindu University of America. He is also the President of Dharma Civilization Foundation, Los Angeles, California and Sanatana Dharma Foundation, Dallas, Texas.

SPIRIT OF INDIA THROUGH THE EYES OF A WESTERNER



Robert Arnett

India's spiritual heritage is legendary, and like so many other travelers from around the world, that is what attracted Columbus, Georgia native Robert Arnett to India. In the last 25 years, without itinerary or expectations, Arnett has made numerous trips to India, capturing for posterity in two multi-award-winning books (India Unveiled: Spirit, Tradition and People and a children's book Finders Keepers?) the traditional values of ancient India still flourishing in modern India. His travels throughout the country revealed that the values of the Sanatana Dharma are deeply ingrained in Indian society: that as India continues to shift from an agrarian to an industrial society, becoming a world leader in technology, its own culture will be stronger for it—and the eternal verities of India will remain as vibrant as ever.

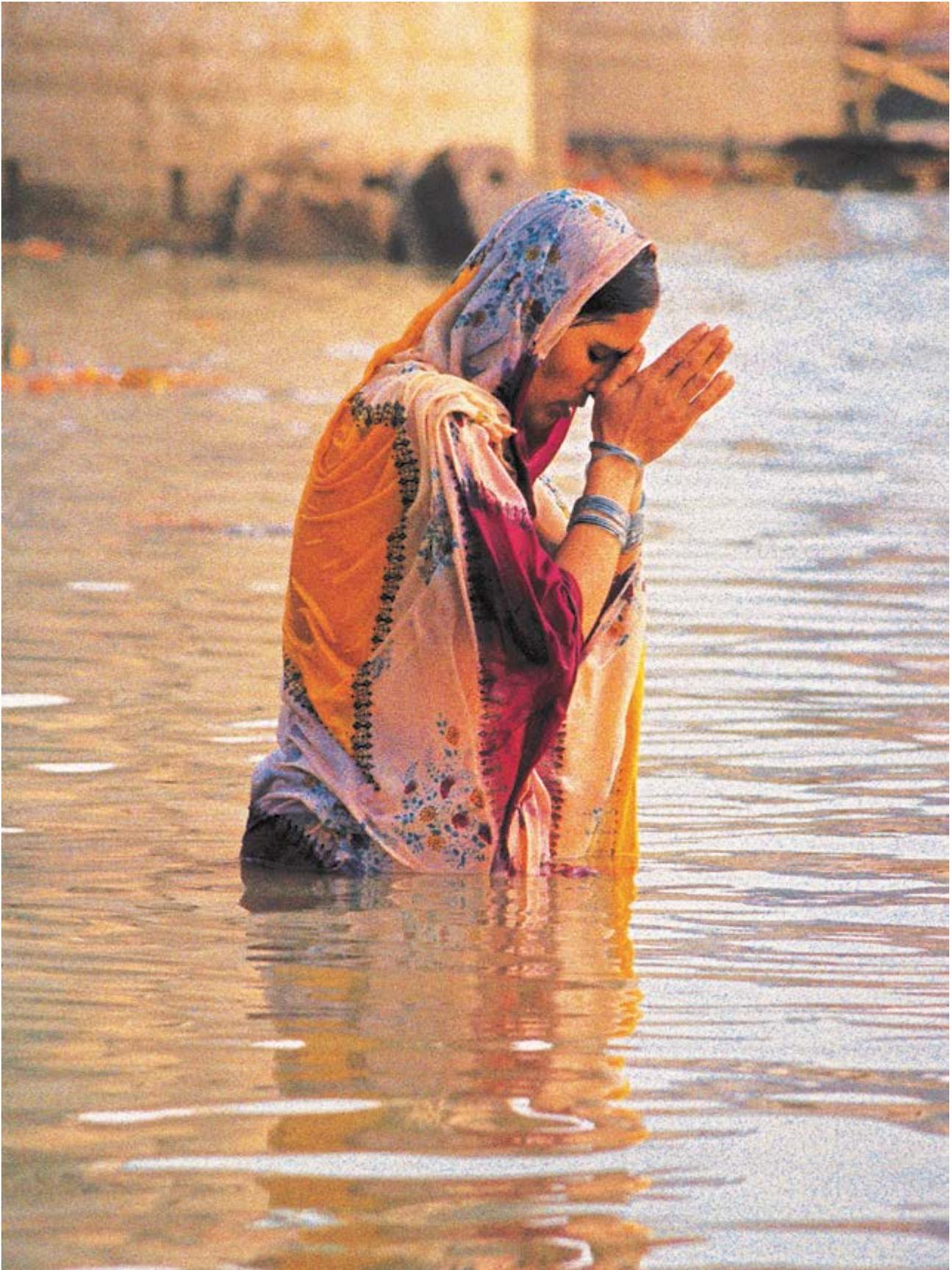
Recently, Robert Arnett shared many of his favorite travel experiences in India during a talk arranged by Vedic Friends Association (VFA) on February 27th, 2021. This was one of the talks of a Talk Series organized by VFA, Tools for Human Empowerment - A Yogic Perspective. The talk began with a verse from Srimad Bhagwad Mahapuran as an invocation and warm welcome

by VFA President Shri Balabhadra Dasa (Benny J Tillman) and the host of the program. It was quickly followed with the formal introduction of Robert by Anjali Nagrani. With candor and humor, Arnett talked about the India that he knows and loves so dearly. Arnett's spontaneous impressions are truly a tribute to the timeless culture and spirit of the people.

When asked what he found to be the distinctive characteristics of the Indian people, Arnett's reply was their peacefulness, devotion, and innate spirituality. When asked what he found to be the distinctive characteristics of India's culture, his response was dharma and hospitality (the guest is God), and he proceeded to share an abundance of informative and interesting stories to illustrate each point.

Some of the stories took place in small Indian villages where even most Indians have not gone. He also told some stories from the Kumbha Mela





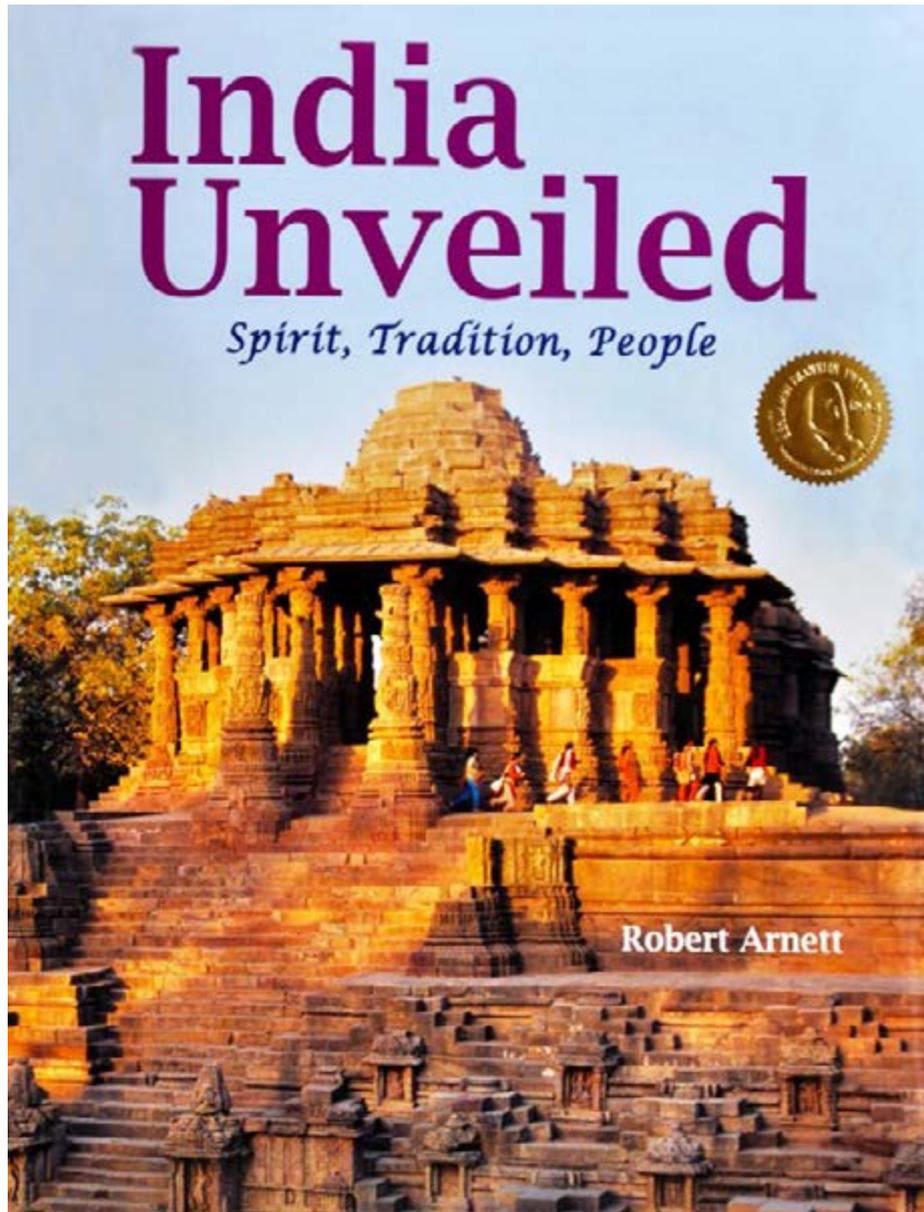
A Woman praying in the holy Ganges River, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

at Prayagraj that those who have never attended a Kumbha Mela will find interesting.

The talk will be of particular interest to students and young adults who have not grown up in India.

Below is the link of the recording of the talk posted on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fBzsitzUqI>

For more information about Robert Arnett and his work, visit (www.AtmanPress.com). ■



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Arnett is the author and photographer of the internationally acclaimed book *India Unveiled: Spirit, Tradition, People* that has won 3 national book awards. He is also the author of *Finders Keepers?*, a children's book set in India, illustrated by Smita Turakhia, that has won 5 national book awards and has been translated into Spanish, German, Portuguese and Japanese.

HINDU WOMEN'S NETWORK CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The Hindu Woman: Inspiration through Action

Hindu Women's Network (HWN) held an online Conference and Panel Discussion, Sunday March 7, 2021 to celebrate International Women's day. The theme of the Conference was "The Hindu Woman: Inspiration through Action."

The program started with Shankh Naad and Deep Prajwalan by Bhawna Sharma. Eight-year-old Shree Kotadia set the mood by enchanting Stutis in praise of various Devi/Devatas, recited with perfect pronunciation. Shree is a student of Bal Vidya Mandir in Ashland, MA.

Everyone enjoyed a short movie about Hindu Women's Network, its mission, vision and goals, and its history and achievements. We saw a short documentary of an inspiring talk by Sarojini Naidu during her visit to USA in 1928.

The Hindu woman plays a significant role in being the torch bearer of Hindu samskaras and inspiring others to sustain our culture and traditions. The HWN seeks to motivate every woman to achieve this ideal, to strengthen her own family and society and enable all women to reach their full potential.

The moderator of the day, Toral Mehta, led the panel through a series of questions that brought out their viewpoints.

Aparna Rayasam opened the event with her rousing keynote address, a call to all women to lead through example. Aparna is an IT professional and dedicated Bal Vihar teacher. Aparna spoke about her exposure to all the extraordinary women in her life's journey, and the roles they played in shaping her life, from her mother, her mother-in-law, her aunts, her two daughters, her co-workers, all of whom inspired her with the unique choices they made and the legacy they passed on, based on the bedrock of Hindu Dharma. She talked about four major themes as a framework to inspire: Truth or Satya, which leads one to discover one's authentic self. Dharma, which helps us set our priorities in life, Karma, which are our actions to achieve our Dharma, and Shakti, which is the strength inherent in each of us, which we need to discover.

The distinguished panel consisted of women from varying walks and different stages of their lives. Toral then introduced the panelists, who addressed different aspects of their journey to discover the potential in themselves, and lead by example.

Swapnali Puradkar, a resident of Japan for the past 15 years and who works in International finance with two young children, spoke about finding balance or 'Santulan' in our life, to use our Shakti during moments of crisis, and to help us



think rationally. She urged everyone to practice meditation as a tool to help not only yourself but also your family, to help the mind and body connect.

Heena Rathore spoke about her entrepreneurial journey, and how she overcame the fear of failure, which initially kept her from starting her company of biodegradable products. Her mother played a big role in her life and taught her to believe in her own inner strength, how our inner shakti creates our outer reality.

Sucharita Jayanti, who is a student in New Hampshire and part of the leadership team of Hindu Students Council, discussed the major challenges facing our youth, which was to connect, assimilate and fit into the world around them, to understand their own Dharma and culture, their need for spiritual, emotional, and mental strength. She urged them to go back to the basics - Spiritually, to find Gurus who are guides, mentors, mentally, to have strong family units that can guide them, and to have access to resources, to have volunteers who can create these resources.

Yashwini Desai talked about balancing her career with her extended family, and with illustrations from her own life, showed how her Hindu background helped her lead by example.

The last question by the moderator went to all the panelists and the Keynote speaker. What Hindu value can be used collectively to sustain Hindu culture for the coming generations?

Aparna talked about educating ourselves in the infinite wisdom of Hindu Dharma, to start our own journey of education. Swapnali urged everyone to adhere to our Dharma faithfully

and start teaching children from an incredibly young age. Heena spoke about being persistent in connecting children to their Hindu roots. Yashwini encouraged everyone to become a cultural ambassador.

Next, to give a welcome break before the Q and A session, everyone was treated to a wonderful performance by a young artiste, Aanika Patel. Aanika performed a beautiful dance in Kuchipudi style, on Bhama Kalapam. She enthralled everyone with her rendition of Satyabhama, the vivacious wife of Krishna, and made it come alive with her eloquent expressions.

Smita Daftardar ably led the Question-and-Answer session and made sure that maximum number of questions were asked, while still adhering to schedule.

The discussion ended with Shobha Patel, who summarized the takeaway points of the event, as expounded by the speakers: Accountability, be bold, confidence, devotion to family, and education.

The event ended with a prayer by Manju Tiwari.

Hindu Women's Network is a project of World Hindu Council of America (VHPA). For more information or to start a chapter of Hindu Women's Network in your area, please contact Neelam Jaiswal at Neelam.jswl@gmail.com or Manju Tiwari at msrtiwari@gmail.com

To view the event in its entirety, please click on the link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJff4yogi1o>

IMPORTANT OR TRIVIAL?

Words of Wisdom

Siddheshwari Devi (Didi Ji)

Time is a priceless commodity that we may not have much of. What are you spending your time on? Important matters or trivial pursuits?

You are once again wondering what your neighbors are up to. Why do they get so many visitors? What's really going on with them? They seem to be involved in something fishy. – Trivial Pursuit and Waste of Time.

You are reflecting on why your sister's words made you fume with anger, and you are realizing how wrong you were. You are making a promise to yourself never to act up like that, ever again. – Important, because you are trying to shape yourself into a better person.

The better part of your day is spent browsing social media and posting selfies. Even as you should be concentrating on school or work, your mind wanders and searches for your gadgets. You feel comforted when you get your hands on your electronics. – You are being frivolous with your time.

You are reading inspiring literature and watching inspirational talks, in an effort to learn

how to mend the mind and control your thoughts. You are getting the benefit of philosophers' thoughts and musings of saints. – Great use of time.

You are getting involved in other people's business, advising them whether or not they solicit your help. You are making judgments on people, dismissing some as unworthy and praising others as being *crème-de-la-crème*. – Waste of time.

When asked to take sides, you excuse yourself and step away. You know very well that no one is completely free of blame, just as no one ever does everything right all the time. Moreover, you were not designated a judge or a supervisor by the Creator. – Wise decision.

Let's use time wisely.

Help those who are grieving

When a relative, friend or coworker is grieving, many of us do not know how to offer consolation. We don't know what to say or how to act. So, we send a card and flowers but prefer to stay away. We hesitate to call, and we don't visit. We fear saying something inappropriate or being tongue-tied

and saying nothing. Consequently, the grieving ones are often treated as outcasts at a time when they need our emotional support the most.

Words spoken from the heart carry a lot of weight. These words prove to be extremely powerful. We were not present when Dr. King spoke on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, but we do know his powerful “I have a dream” speech, which was a defining moment for the civil rights movement. Kennedy’s words, “Ich bin ein Berliner” (I am a citizen of Berlin) were met by a thunderous applause as they communicated solidarity and support. If you speak from the heart, your words can help mend a broken heart and bring solace to someone in the midst of grieving.

Most people like to talk about their deceased loved ones. Just because your friend has lost her spouse, he has not ceased to exist for her. Use your discretion and mention him in your conversations. Ask questions about him. It can be very healing for her. But if you are absolutely stuck for words, a simple touch on the arm or a loving hug goes a long way to communicate your genuine concern and affection.

Our Journey Together

I received a beautiful message. The author is unknown but I am sharing with you the message.

A young lady sat in a bus. At the next stop, a loud and grumpy old lady came and sat by her. She squeezed into the seat and bumped the young lady with her numerous bags. The person sitting on the other side of the young lady got upset and asked her why she did not speak up and say something.

The young lady responded with a smile, “It is not necessary to be rude or argue over something so insignificant; the journey together is so short. I get off at the next stop.”

This response deserves to be written in golden

letters:

It is not necessary to argue over something so insignificant; our journey together is so short”

If each one of us realizes that our time here is so short; that to darken it with quarrels, futile arguments, not forgiving others, discontentment and a fault-finding attitude would be a waste of time and energy.

Did someone break your heart? Be calm, the journey is so short.

Did someone provoke or intimidate you? Be calm, forgive; the journey is so short.

Did someone betray, bully, cheat or humiliate you? Be calm, forgive; the journey is so short.

Whatever troubles anyone brings us, let us remember that our journey together is so short.

No one knows the duration of this journey. No one knows when their stop will come. Our journey together is so short.

Welcome, 2021

The entire world celebrates the arrival of the New Year. Different cultures celebrate in their own unique and fun-filled ways. It’s not wrong to celebrate having survived a year full of difficulties, heartaches and challenges. At the same time, we should ponder life and reflect on the fact that another year has passed, leaving us with less time.

A prison inmate looks forward to the passing of days. The more time passes, the happier he becomes, anticipating a sweet reunion with family and friends. He knows that he has less time left before his release. What kind of release are we looking forward to? Our time is precious. Our moments are predetermined and premeasured. How we choose to spend these invaluable moments depends on us.

Make 2021 your best year by gaining control of your worldly desires and material attachments.



Make this year significant; a year in which you control the usage of your iPhone and other such distractions. Let this be the year of less anger and more calmness; less pride and more humility; less avarice and more generosity; fewer words and more action.

Time passes quickly. Today we are at the start of January. Before we know it, a whole year will have passed. Perhaps we will be fortunate enough

to welcome 2022. For that we need to work hard right now. One year later, we should be satisfied, knowing that we did not waste precious time. For this to happen, we need to spend this year very wisely.

Welcome, 2021. Stay with us and don't leave so soon. ■

Email: s_didi@radhamadhavsociety.org

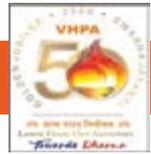


VHPA - Executive Board (EB)

Name	Title	
Ajay Shah	President	shahajay@gmail.com
Amitabh Mittal	General Secretary	amitta19@gmail.com
Tejal Shah	Jt. General Secretary	tshahnj@hotmail.com
Renu Gupta	Vice President Support A Child	renurajvanshigupta@gmail.com
Sanjay Kaul	VP Hindu Diaspora Outreach	sanjaykaul@hotmail.com
Shyam Tiwari	VP Publications	srtiwari@hotmail.com
Vasav Mehta	National Treasurer	vasavmehta@gmail.com
Toral Mehta	Jt. General Secretary	trexmehta@gmail.com
Jai Bansal	VP Education	jaigb0@gmail.com
Rakhi Israni	Legal Counsel	rakhi@exceltest.com

VHPA - Extended EB with Special Invitees

Name	Title	
Umesh Shukla	VP Hindu Mandir Relations	umeshshukla123@gmail.com
Anit Gupta	Assistant Treasurer	anitgupta@gmail.com
Dhaval Joshipura	VP Membership	djosh58@gmail.com
Jayesh Mehta	Treasurer VHPA	jayesh17@hotmail.com
Sneha Mehta	VP Advocacy Out Reach	shama.mehta7@gmail.com
Sanjay Shah	Director of Financial Planning	shahsanjay@hotmail.com
Jayant Daftardar	Director, Seva / Fundraiser	daftardarj@yahoo.com
Makarand Abhyankar	Org. Sec. Organizational Growth (Chapter Relations)	makuabhyankar@gmail.com
Manju Tiwari	National Bal Vihar Network	msrtiwari@gmail.com
Utsav Chakrabarti	Media / PR / Advocacy	utsavc@gmail.com
Neelam Jaiswal	Hindu Women's Network	neelamjswl@gmail.com



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

National Office: P.O. Box 2009, Natick, MA 1760 Tax ID#51-0156325
 Tel.: 732-744-0951 Email: office@vhp-america.org Website: 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 of 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 Yatra

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
 Security Code:

Signature _____ **Date**

Mail to: VHPA, P. O. Box 2009, Natick, MA 01760, 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 .

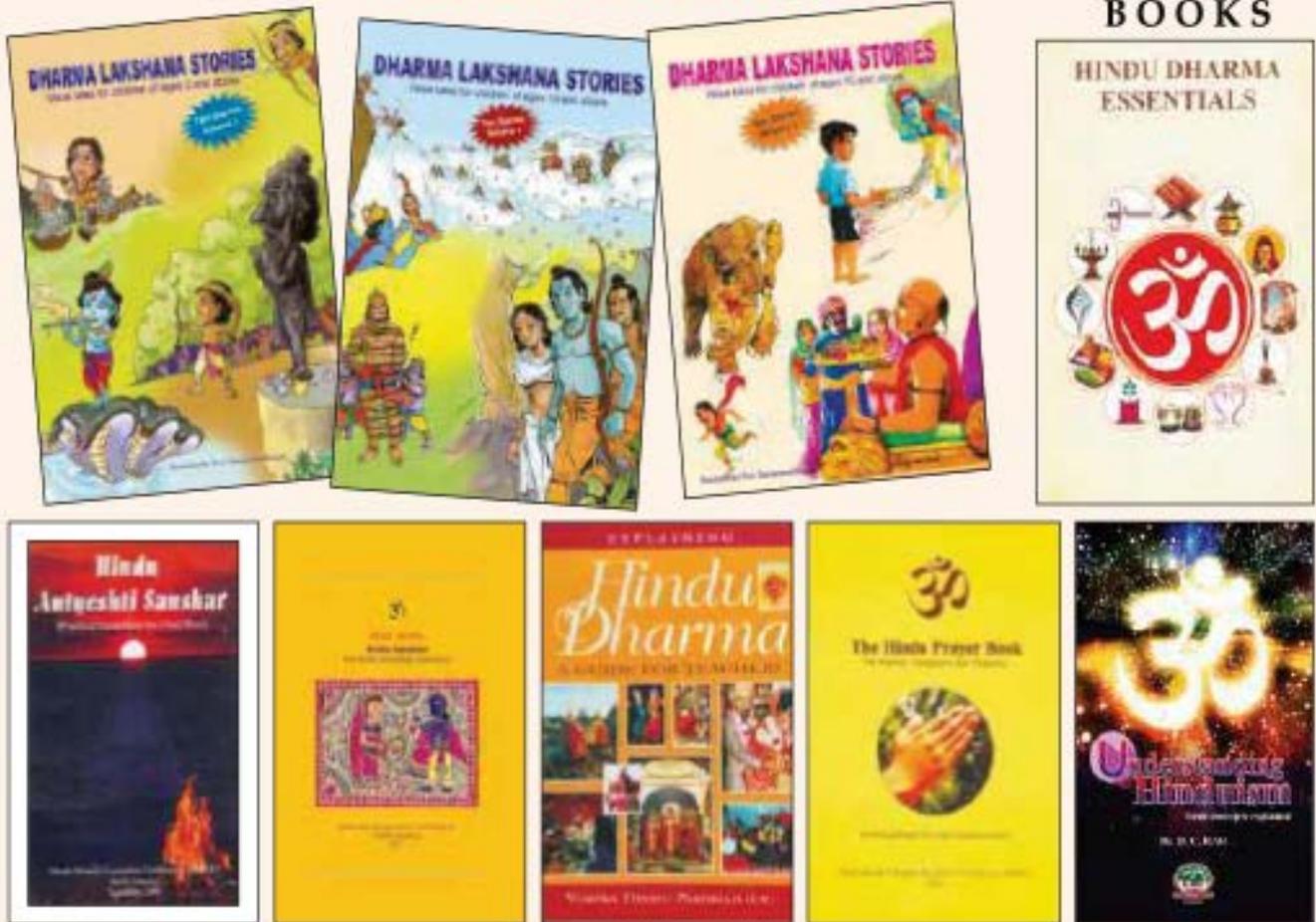
ॐ असतो मा सद् गमय । तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय । मृत्योर्मांसमृतम् गमय ।।

Om, Asato Maa Sad Gamaya; Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya Mrityor Maa Amritam Gamaya

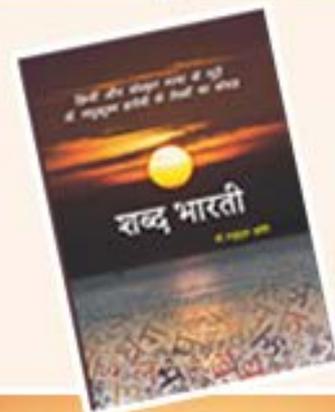
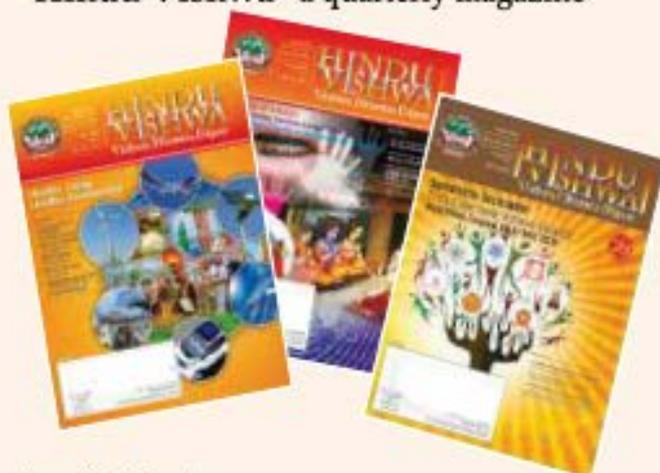
ॐ शांतिः शांतिः शांतिः

OUR PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS



Hindu Vishwa - a quarterly magazine



Available at:

World Hindu Council of America (VHPA)

National Office: P. O. Box 2009, Natick, MA 01760

Tel.: 732-744-0851

Email : office@vhp-america.org

Web : www.vhp-america.org





SUPPORT A CHILD (SAC)

Project of VHPA



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 1229, Mason, OH 45040

Email: request.SAC@gmail.com | Phone: 513-953-9580

Web: www.supportachildusa.org

BUILD THE LIFE OF UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN OF BHARAT

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