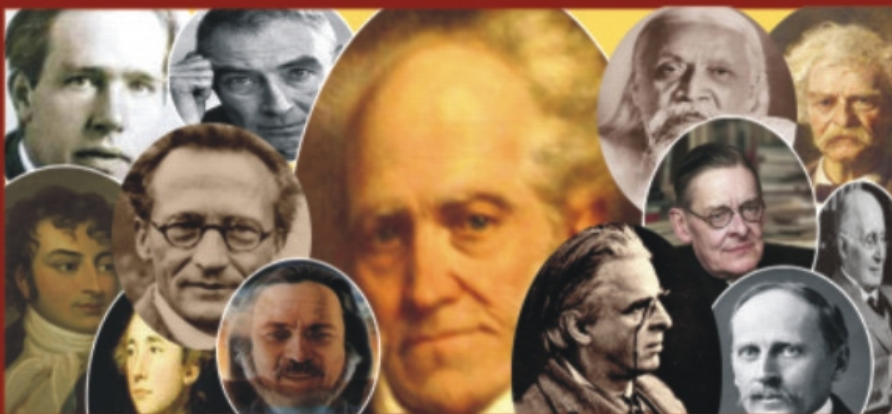




What is India ?

**Know the answer from the world
renowned intellectual giants**



- Salil Gewali

**Thus speak the great
scholars on India**

N o t e

*All quotes reflected in the book are the original quotes of the respective
scholars taken from the credible sources.*

**(1888-1965), Great
American poet,
philosopher, critic,
received Nobel Prize for
literature in 1948**



T. S. Eliot

**Indian philosophers' subtleties make most
of the great European philosophers look like
schoolboys.**

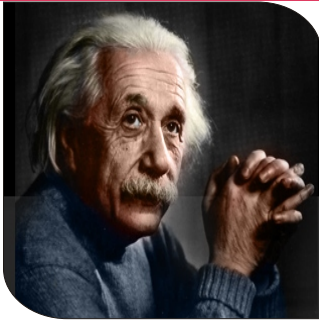
*

**Two years spent in the study of Sanskrit under
Charles Lanman, and a year in the mazes of
Patanjali's metaphysics under the guidance
of James Woods, left
me in a state of enlightened mystification.**

source: *After Strange Gods*, TS Eliot

1

*He learnt Sanskrit and was well versed in Vedas,
Upanishad, Bhagavad Gita and Yogasutra. He became more
powerful writer after having plunged into the Indian
philosophies.*



(1879-1955), One of the greatest scientists, philosophers, received Nobel Prize in Physics

Albert Einstein

We owe a lot to Indians who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made.

source: <http://www.hindu.com/mp/2004/08/16/stories/2004081602620400.htm>

**(1901-76), One of the
greatest physicists, co-
founder of *Quantum
Physics*, received Nobel
Prize**



Werner Heisenberg

**After the conversations about
Indian philosophy, some of the
ideas of **Quantum Physics** that
had seemed so crazy suddenly
made much more sense.**

source: http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Werner_Heisenberg



(1904-1967), One of the world's greatest physicists, known as '*the father of the Atomic bomb*'. His achievements include the Born - Oppenheimer approximation, electron-positron theory, the Oppenheimer-Phillips process, and a first prediction of quantum tunneling.

Julius R. Oppenheimer

What we shall find in Modern Physics is an exemplification, an encouragement and a refinement of old Hindu wisdom.

source: *The Tao of Physics* by Fritjof Capra

*

Access to the Vedas is the greatest privilege this century may claim over all previous centuries.

source: *India as a Creative Civilization* - by N. S. Rajaram

*

The juxtaposition of Western civilization's most terrifying scientific achievement with the most dazzling description of the mystical experience given to us by the Bhagavad Gita, India's greatest literary monument.

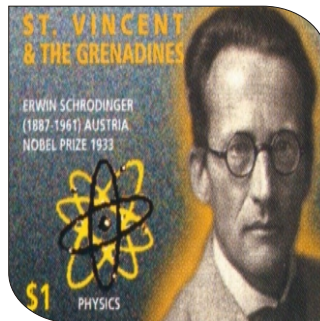
source: *The Eye of Shiva: Eastern Mysticism And Science* - by Amaury de Riencourt

While witnessing the first Atomic bomb explosion at the Trinity Test in New Mexico on July 16, 1945 he emotionally exclaimed two couplets from the Bhagavad Gita:

4

*'If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst at once into the sky, that would be like the splendor of the mighty one...'
'Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.'*

(1887-1961), One of the greatest physicists of 20th century, awarded Nobel Prize for his invention of *Wave Mechanics*, his *Schrödinger equation* has been regarded as the most important achievement of the twentieth century



Erwin Schroedinger

Some blood transfusion from the East to the West is must to save Western science from spiritual anaemia.

source: <http://canalhyptia-pensamientosciencia.blogspot.com/2009/03/frijof-capra.html>

*

**In all world there is no kind of framework within which we can find consciousness in the plural; this is simply something we construct because of the temporal plurality of individuals, but it is a false construction....
The only solution to this conflict in so far as any is available to us at all lies in the ancient wisdom of the Upanishad.**

source: *My View of the World* - by Erwin Schroedinger.

5

Schrodinger was deeply influenced by the philosophical wisdom of the East. He read widely and thought deeply the teachings of Hindu scriptures. He was particularly fascinated by Vedanta and Upanishads. He also wrote about 'The Basic view of Vedanta' by expounding Sankara's version of *advaita* and *non-dualism*.



(1694-1778), One of the greatest French writers and philosophers

Francois M. Voltaire

I am convinced that everything has come down to us from the banks of the Ganga — Astronomy, Astrology, Metempsychosis, etc.

It is very important to note that some 2,500 years ago at the least Pythagoras went from Samos to the Ganga to learn Geometry...But he would certainly not have undertaken such a strange journey had the reputation of the Brahmins' science not been long established in Europe...

source: *The Invasion That Never Was* - by Michel Danino and Sujata Nahar

*

The Veda was the most precious gift for which the West had ever been indebted to the East.

source: *Empire of the Soul: Some Journeys into India* - by Paul Williams Robert



(1835-1910), Most celebrated American humorist, satirist, lecturer and writer

Mark Twain

Land of religions, cradle of human race, birthplace of human speech, grandmother of legend, great grandmother of tradition. The land that all men desire to see and having seen once even by a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of the rest of the globe combined.

Source: *Banaras: City of Light* - by Diana L. Eck

*

Our most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India.

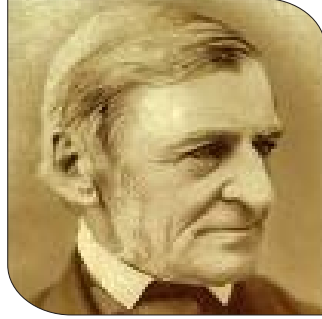
source: *Hinduism* - by Linda Johnsen

7

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9774140451

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**(1803-1882), Great American
author, essayist, lecturer,
Unitarian Minister**



Ralph Waldo Emerson

**The Vedas haunt me. In them I have found eternal
compensation, unfathomable power, unbroken peace.**

source: *The Commemorative Sanskrit Souvenir 2003*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

**I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad Gita. It was as if an
empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene,
consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age
and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same
questions which exercise us.**

source: *The complete idiot's guide to Hinduism* - by Linda Johnsen

**All science is transcendental or else passes away. Botany is now
acquiring the right theory - the avatars of Brahman will presently
be the text-books of natural history.**

source: Autobiography of a Yogi - by **Paramhansa** Yogananda

A great writer Thomas Carlyle to Emerson :"*This (Bhagavad Gita) is a most inspiring book;
it has brought comfort and consolation in my life---I hope it will do the same to you. Read it.*"



(1931-1981), Wife of King Paul of Greece and research scholar of Advanced physics

Queen Fredricka

You Indians are fortunate to inherit such knowledge. I envy you. While Greece is the country of my birth, India is the country of my soul.

source: source: A Newsletter of the Kanchi Kamakoti Center of California and From the new physics to Hinduism

*

It was my advanced research in physics that had started me on a spiritual quest. It culminated in me accepting the non-dualism or absolute monism of Shankara as my philosophy of life and Science.

source: <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Hinduism>

10

(1788-1860), One of the greatest German philosophers and writers whose works later influenced great minds like Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Wagner, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Erwin Schrödinger, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Otto Rank, Carl Jung etc.



Arthur Schopenhauer

In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; and it will be the solace of my death.

They are the product of the highest wisdom.

source: *The Discovery of India* by Jawaharlal Nehru

*

How entirely does the Upanishad breathe throughout the holy spirit of the Vedas! How is every one, who by a diligent study of its Persian Latin has become familiar with that incomparable book, stirred by that spirit to the very depth of his Soul!

source: *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramhansa Yogananda

Comments by a great writer on the book

Salil Gewali has lovingly compiled an excellent set of quotations that illustrate how highly great thinkers from all over the world valued Indian spiritual culture and how it transformed their lives. An inspirational read that reminds us of our amazing ancient heritage and why we need to incorporate it into our lives as modern Indians.

Prof Chitra Divakaruni, US based renowned writer, her famous novel, 'The Mistress of Spices' was released as a film starring Aishwarya Rai and Dylan McDermott.

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Comments by a great NASA scientist

'WHAT IS INDIA' is simply outstanding! I never knew that such a compilation exists and we all should be thankful to Salil Gewali ! These great quotes should be embossed (on plaques) and displayed on the walls of our Parliament, State Assembly Halls, and at all our educational institutions. Most importantly, the material should be made a compulsory reading for all the school students --- elaborating more on ' who is who' and the monumental contributions of these intellectual giants.

Prof. A. V. Murali, Ph. D, NASA scientist
4003 Martinshire Drive
Houston, TX 77025

Prof. Murali is an internationally recognized NASA scientist in the fields of geochemistry/cosmochemistry and Planetary Science. He is one of the few scientists selected to study the lunar samples collected by both Apollo (USA) and Luna (former USSR) missions and explain the origin and evolution of Moon.

**(1772-1829), German writer,
critic, philosopher,
philologist, the most
prominent founder of
*German Romanticism***



Frederich von Schlegel

There is no language in the world, even Greek, which has the clarity and the philosophical precision of Sanskrit, and this great India is not only at the origin of everything, She is superior in everything, intellectually, religiously or politically and even the Greek heritage seems pale in comparison.

(source: *Arise, O India* - by Francois Gautier

*

The ancient Indians possessed a knowledge of the true God, conceived and expressed in noble, clear and grand language...Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealization of reason, as set forth by the Greeks, appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigor of oriental idealism, like a feeble spark in the full flood of the noonday sun.

source: *Hinduism Invades America* - by Wendell Thomas

15



(1856-1939), Most eminent poet, dramatist, essayist of 20th Century, received Nobel Prize for literature. He also co-translated '*The Ten Principal Upanishads*'

William Butler Yeats

It was only my first meeting with the Indian philosophy that confirmed my vague speculations and seemed at once logical and boundless.

source: *India and World Civilization* - by D. P. Singhal

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Comments by a scholar

At the age of 59, I am still a student of India and I have not come across such RICH compilation book by anyone. I am absolutely thrilled at the quality and depth of this compilation. A 'must read' for every scientist and an educated man

-- S.Murthy Divakaruni,
Energy and Utilities Senior Executive
Houston, Texas, USA

Comments by scholars

It was very rewarding to read the book “What is India?” It is a non-trivial compilation of the critical observations made by intellectual giants, mostly from the west, on the Hindu philosophy. The editing and the selection task is superb. This book is a good starting point for any-one interested in getting a glimpse of the wealth of knowledge that existed in the ancient Indian sub-continent.

Dr. Laxmi P Gewali, Ph.D

Professor

School of Computer Science

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA

To my mind, this treatise should be a precious possession both for the Hindus and the non-Hindus. For, it should enable the Hindus to look at themselves through the Western eyes as a means to rekindle their belief that Hinduism as defined in our ancient scriptures are not for the Hindus alone but for the entire mankind. As for the non-Hindus, it should help immensely in appreciating the unquestionable values and paths of salvation laid down in our Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and what have you.....

Manas Chaudhuri, Former Education Minister of Meghalaya, Shillong.

(1915-1973), Eminent English philosopher and one of the widely read prolific writers of the 20th Century



Alan Watts

It is, indeed, a remarkable circumstance that when Western civilization discovers 'Relativity Theory' it applies it to the manufacture of atom-bombs, whereas Oriental civilization applies it to the development of new states of consciousness.

source: *The Legacy of Asia and Western Man* - by Alan Watts

*

To the philosophers of India, however, 'Theory of Relativity' is no new discovery, just as the concept of light years is no matter for astonishment to people used to thinking of time in millions of *kalpas*, (one kalpa is about 4,320,000 years).

source: *Spiritual Practices of India* - by Frederic Spiegelberg

Comments by scholars

It is a remarkable effort to compile the words of wisdom about treasure of Indian knowledge, heritage and legacy from the mouths or pens of greatest scholars of the world around. The educational institutes should incorporate this book in academic curriculum if it really revere its sacred land.

-Dr Priyanka Roa, California

The book is a wonderful source of inspirational thoughts for we all Indians who have lost the sight of India`s values and her contribution to the world and to the modern science. It is doubtlessly a mirror of the intellectual prowess of our rishis who created Vedas and Upanishads.

- Prof Shubham Das, Prof of Nuclear Physics, Switzerland

**(1817-1862), Greatest
American philosopher, writer,
social critic,
transcendentalist**



Henry David Thoreau

**Besides the Bhagavad Gita, our Shakespeare
seems sometimes youthfully green...
Ex oriente lux may still be the motto of scholars,
for the Western world has not yet derived from the
East all the light it is destined to derive thence.**

source: *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau - Walden*

*

**One sentence of Vedas is worth the State of
Massachusetts many times over.**

source: *The Journal of Henry D. Thoreau*

Comments by a reader

Very great compilation. The Government of India should honour Salil Gewali with Bharat Ratna. If India wants to be great in the world these quotes should be compulsorily taught to every school student and see in 15 years --- how all Macaulay's children becoming truly patriotic. Why alone that --- -the whole world would be inspired to follow in the footsteps of Emerson, Yeats, Schlegel, Oppenheimer, Romain Rolland. A big revolution would take place in which the world community would be like one family as stated in VEDAS. I think all sensible people immediately should join and cooperate the compiler in the propagation and dissemination of this work.

– Dr Naresh Mishra, Delhi

Comments by a reader

Thanks for the enlightening compilation of the quotes by the most renowned scholars. India's knowledge is what we need to live in a better way, in a human way. Spiritual masters have brought us the light we need to join East with West. I hope someday this will be a reality, and we will be able to develop our spiritual nature.

East, specifically India, is the light the world needs for real progress, as a civilized humanity.

Yes, we have the privilege of access to Vedic Scriptures, it's the best contribution that India has made to all human kind, and to all living entities.

---**Cynthia Tejada Del Pozo,**
Lima, Arequipa, Peru

Comments by a reader

A study of India's ancient literature leads inevitably to the core basis of all modern religion and modern science. It is always the Vedas, as I find, which provide the clearest answers to the complexities of Soul saving wisdom. For one who cannot understand them, there are Upanishads. For one who does not see answers in the Upanishads, there are Gita and the Ramayana...

In this booklet "What is India?" Salil Gewali clearly illustrates the impact of the ancient literature in modern time. Here we see India through the eyes of some of the world's greatest thinkers and poets and are left with a hunger to know more. Much more!

---John Palmer

Eastern Ave, Las Vegas, Nevada 89123

Comments by a great scientist

I must congratulate Salil Gewali for bringing out such a wonderful booklet containing the quotes of the world renowned intellectuals on Vedas, Upanishads and the Gita which are in appreciation about the supremacy of the Indian wisdom. The youth of today should be wholly aware these great quotes so that they will have better appreciation of our Indian culture, tradition and heritage.

--- **Dr. D. Swaminadhan,**
prominent scientist, UNESCO International Consultant,
Vice Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University,
Hyderabad

(1866-1944), Great French writer, dramatist, critic, historian, Nobel laureate



Romain Rolland

Religious faith in the case of the Hinduism has never been allowed to run counter to scientific laws, moreover the former is never made a condition for the knowledge they teach, but there are always scrupulously careful to take into consideration the possibility that by reason both the agnostic and atheist may attain truth in their own way.

source: *Vivekananda*, by Romain Rolland

Comments by a reader

When the two essential pillars in any human beings development are considered - numeracy and literacy - it should be openly acknowledged that Mother India is the land where those pillars were originally carved and perfected. Salil Gewali's research proves beyond any doubt that there is a conspiracy in the basic education given to our children of this world to hide the truth about the origins of knowledge. However Truth always floats back up to the surface and is there for the seeker. The Truth is that the ancient VEDIC seers were indeed superior beings who enjoyed God's highest blessings for they followed Dharma and hence their knowledge of everything was so vast. They openly shared and debated their sciences through their voluminous scriptures. Unlike Western minds, the Hindu Mind humbly stated with humility that God was their Inspiration, Source and the Inventor behind all the streams of wisdom.

– **Mr Ajay Kumar,**
Director of Divine Yoga Limited

Comments by a reader

‘What is India’ is a great book. More than an East/West philosophical encounter, this book reveals how the Upanishads and other Indian classics transformed the thinking of many western thinkers.

This booklet brings to light the ancient wisdom of the East, and reminds us in the West that spiritual knowledge, not the pursuit of pleasure, is the true source of happiness.

— **Robert Maldonado**, Neuropsychologist, New York

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Professor at Oxford, award-winning television writer, producer, journalist, critic and novelist

Paul William Roberts

The Vedas see the ultimate Truth behind all ephemeral truths. The Creation leads us to the Creator, to the highest knowledge, which is integrated into one.

*

The Vedas still represent eternal truth in the purest form ever written. And they are what drew me to India in the first place, what kept me there, and what draws me back still.

*

India is the only country that feels like home to me, the only country whose airport tarmac I have ever kissed upon landing.

source: *Empire of the Soul: Some Journeys in India* - by Paul William Roberts

Comments by a reader

The collection of comments about India, by the world renowned intellectuals is a commendable attempt by Salil Gewali. The book makes us feel proud of the rich heritage inherited by us and it shall also serve the purpose of reminding Indians to take the past glory to newer heights in the coming time.

**- Sanjeev Trivedi, A noted business consultant,
Ahmadabad ,
Gujarat,**

Comments by a reader

Salil Gewali's *'What is India'* is an indispensable reference guide on India's glorious legacy and its priceless heritage. World renowned intellectuals including writers, philosophers, scientists and academics have made their observations about India in the past. The author has meticulously compiled them for the benefit of all. The Orientalist have made remarkable contribution in propagating the cultural legacy of India in the past. Through their writings, the westerners came to know more about India and its heritage. This has given impetus to others in learning more about India and through them many classical books got translated into various foreign languages.

The book throws light on all those people who wrote about India, its people, its languages, its literature and above all its antiquity. The author has aptly titled the book which catches the attention of all. The observations of the great personalities listed in the book are very much relevant today. In fact, their impartial observations give credence to the view that *"India is not only at the origin of everything" but she is "superior in everything"*. The book should be a constant companion to all those who wish to know about India and its ageless heritage.

V.N. Gopalakrishnan, a social activist and writer

Powai, Mumbai



(1940 -), Great Welsh physicist, the youngest Nobel laureate, head of the Mind-Matter Unification Project, credited for the prediction of the eponymous Josephson effect.

Brian David Josephson

The Vedanta and the Sankhya hold the key to the laws of mind and thought process which are co-related to the Quantum Field, i.e. the operation and distribution of particles at atomic and molecular levels.

source: *Science and Vedanta* - by H. M. Ganesh Rao

Comments by readers

A great book indeed for inspiration for the knowledge seekers.

I have very personal experiences with India as I lived six years in this sacred land. What India gave me or prepared me for was to love every place so much, like everywhere one finds oneself is a paradise. India for me is the spiritual fountainhead of the planet in the sense that all esoteric traditions have roots in India.

All Branches of Buddhism originate in India.

Christianity has its source in India as a result of Jesus having traveled there and studied with various esoteric traditions. In my own experience I traveled to India for six years and met personally with over thirty fully awakened spiritual masters and this lay the ground work for my own awakening into the essential knowing of all the awakened ones-- *Sat Chit Anand, Nirvana, Moksha, paradise* and pure divine presence.

India is the perfect place to start or end and spiritual search or awakening and yet this type of awakening is available here and now and anywhere.

Dr. God Dieux, Canada

All have got to go and read this compilation, it is amazing and very interesting. India is the land of my soul. The Vedas and Upanishads are very inspiring, there is so much to discover in Indian philosophy.

---- Agnes Goyvaerts, Huston, USA



(1817-1862), One of the greatest American philosophers, writers, social critics, transcendentalists

Henry David Thoreau

In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial.

source: *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau - Walden*

*

Whenever I have read any part of the Vedas, I have felt that some unearthly and unknown light illuminated me. In the great teaching of the Vedas, there is no touch of sectarianism. It is of all ages, climes and nationalities and is the royal road for the attainment of the Great Knowledge. When I am at it, I feel that I am under the spangled heavens of a summer night.

source: *The Hindu Mind* - by Bansi Pandit

Comment by a reader

Well, I would like to offer my impressions of your book. Let me recall a quote from Gandhi ----- 'the deeper I dive, the more treasures I find'. Reading "What is India?" is extremely enlightening. I will have now years of pleasure studying and enlightening my spirit with the treasures found in this book. Your book has inspired me to learn more about India and her precious treasures of *Vedanta*, *Sankhya philosophy*, *Bhagavad Gita* and more! I appreciate all your hard labor in putting all these quotes together to open the eyes of society with what must be very precious to all!

I feel the revival of right knowledge should come to the masses. Following the ancient wisdom I am on the right path and I am also proud to be a representative of the Universe now (not US, Texas), the idea I learnt from Upanishads and Buddhism.

--- **Miss Sherrie Lake**
1404 Avenue V
Hondo, Texas 78861



(1767-1845) Great German scholar, poet, critic and principal philosopher of German romanticism

August Wilhelm von Schlegel

Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans appears like a feeble spark before the Vedanta.

Source: *Is India Civilized? - Essays on Indian Culture* - by Sir John Woodroffe

Comments by a reader

Congratulation for an excellent compilation. As other scholars my intense efforts in quest of real wisdom led me to Indian spiritualism. I can't describe this experience, neither to show it. Every Act is Gratitude, Meditation, Devotion now. I can live my humble vocation in Joy at every moment... the credit goes to the Indian literature. Well, please do not forget to mention Pythagoras of Samos, who made a long journey into the Indus, and studied the *Sulba Sutras* and carried to Greece, studies including geometry and trigonometry (with applications to astronomy, geography, navigation, spiritualism etc.)

Prof. Philippe Le Marechal
Morbihan, Brittany, France

Comments by a reader

So delighting to come across your great quotes book, 'What is India'. It's again exciting to find the quotes of TS Eliot, my favorite poet, who was a Sanskrit scholar too. He wrote a huge epic poem about *Dattatreya*, one of the most interesting and mysterious of the divine characters in the Vedic tradition. My fascination for Indian knowledge and culture have brought me to set up a spiritual centre in the Santa Cruz mountains of California and a small temple -- dedicated to sharing the ancient knowledge of India, and healing.

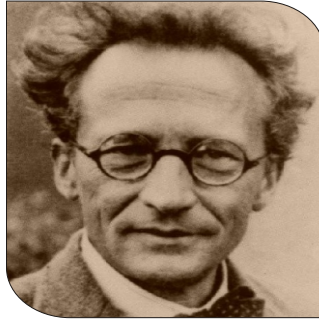
---- **Ms Alx Uttermann**, Bonny Doon, California,
United States

Comments by a reader

It's marvelous book and so lovingly written indeed ! It clearly depicts the compiler's passion for the subject. I always felt similarly about our country but never imagined that I would one day get to read such a beautiful compilation of it all . And to think that it came my way from the very author himself and in such an unlikely manner , is more than I could ever imagine ! I think its only further evidence of the interconnectedness of the universal consciousness that I happen to be looking into currently.

~ **Dr M Angie**, Delhi

(1887-1961), One of the greatest physicists of 20th century, awarded Nobel Prize for his invention of *Wave Mechanics*, his *Schrödinger equation* has been regarded as the most important achievement of the twentieth century



Erwin Schroedinger

Vedanta teaches that consciousness is singular, all happenings are played out in one universal consciousness and there is no multiplicity of selves.

source: *What is life? the physical aspect of the living cell & Mind and matter* - by Erwin Schrodinger

The unity and continuity of *Vedanta* are reflected in the unity and continuity of *Wave mechanics*. In 1925, the world view of Physics was a model of a great machine composed of separable interacting material particles. During the next few years, Schrodinger and Heisenberg and their followers created a universe based on super imposed inseparable waves of probability amplitudes. This new view would be entirely consistent with the Vedantic concept of *All in One*.

source: <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Hinduism>



(1947-), French historian of mathematics, his most famous book was '*The Universal History of Numbers*'

Georges Ifrah

It is the ancient Indian culture that has regarded the science of numbers as the noblest of its arts...

A thousand years ahead of Europeans, Indian Savants knew that the zero and infinity were mutually inverse notions.

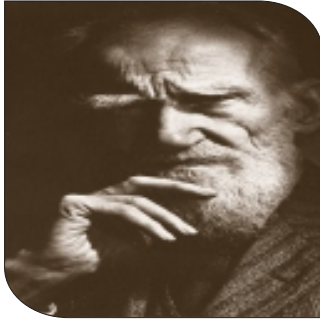
*

In short, Indian science was born out of a mystical and religious culture and the etymology of the Sanskrit words used to describe numbers and the science of numbers bears witness to this fact.

*

The early passion which Indian civilization had for high numbers was a significant factor contributing to the discovery of the place-value system, and not only offered the Indians the incentive to go beyond the "*calculable*" physical world, but also led to an understanding of the notion of mathematical infinity itself.

source: *The Universal History of Numbers* - by Georges Ifrah



(1856-1950), Great Irish dramatist, received Nobel Prize for literature

Bernard Shaw

The Indian way of life provides the vision of the natural, real way of life. We western veil ourselves with unnatural masks. On the face of India are the tender expressions which carry the mark of the Creators hand.

The apparent multiplication of gods is bewildering at the first glance, but you soon discover that they are the same GOD. There is always one uttermost God who defies personification. This makes Hinduism the most tolerant religion in the world, because its one transcendent God includes all possible gods. In fact Hinduism is so elastic and so subtle that the most profound Methodist, and crudest idolater, are equally at home with it.

source: <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Hinduism>

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Comments by a reader

I congratulate Salil Gewali for this beautiful quotes book on Indian classical literature. True intellectual minds who are free from prejudices always appreciate Indian wisdom. Indian wisdom is secular and universal. A big proof is Salil's book with eminent scholars' comments.

I really wish the depth of Hinduism's metaphysics will one day echo across the universe , depending on the *karmic* forces... It is the only universal force with frequency that absorbs all of human's diversity... it is the only answer for humanity's quest for peace... Peace, peace!

— **Margaret Drummond**

Dundee, Scotland

Comments by the readers

I was very fortunate to go through your wonderful collection "What is India". Its message needs to be spread to make the modern youth to realise the truth about India.

R Raghunathan, Educationist and social worker
Govandi, Mumbai -400 088

It is doubtless a unique venture and the compiler Salil Gewali deserves kudos for having accomplished such an onerous task as to compile comments on India and Hindu wisdom by a galaxy of Western intellectual giants and then to choose the best and the most relevant ones.

-Bikash Sarmah, The Chief Editor, The Sentinel, Guwahati



(1932 -), One of the greatest British writers of modern times, received Nobel Prize for literature in 2001.

V S Naipaul

The key Hindu concept of dharma - the right way, the sanctioned way, which all men must follow, according to their natures - is an elastic concept. At its noblest it combines self-fulfillment and truth to the self with the ideas of action as duty, action as its own spiritual reward, man as a holy vessel.

source: *The Treasury of Hinduism* - by Harischandra Lal Singh

*

The older I get, the more Hindu I become.

source: Hinduism Today August 1999

Comments by a reader

It is a must-read for every Indian, particularly for him or her who is not very happy with the image of India as projected today by some unpatriotic, unscrupulous people with vested interests. It is a shame that we do not think highly of our own motherland and look to The West for whatever reasons.

- Omar Luther King, columnist, Delhi



(1917-1992), One of the most eminent quantum mechanical physicists and philosophers

David J. Bohm

One would say Atman is more like the meaning. But then what is meant would be Brahman, I suppose; the identity of consciousness and cosmos....This claims that the meaning and what is meant are ultimately one, which is the phrase '*Atman equals Brahman*' of classical Hindu philosophy.

source: <http://www.ourworldharmony.com/kDavidBo.htm>

Comments by a reader

I love the slides show presentation of 'What is India'. Being a lover of science, philosophy, and literature, I have long believed that most of these intellectual folks had an eastern influence to many of their ideas. It is enlightening to have such a connection acknowledged and so well documented.

I find it too interesting that eastern thought is so permeated with the concept that there are different aspects to what we think of as *Self*. While different traditions will split it up in different ways, they seem to agree that there is a self that is driven by emotion and a self that is driven by rationality. The East goes far beyond these two selves. Therefore Eastern wisdom is far beyond the comprehension of small mind as stated in Upanishads.

– **ANDREW**
New England, USA

Comments by a reader

It is natural for a human being to seek wealth, pleasure, happiness.....and so on. If I am right to divide the geographical world as India and the rest as WEST, for the west, India (Bharat) is still a picture of poverty, malnutrition and the streets filled with beggars, filth.....

For modern Indian, the west (so called advanced) is the final destination with wonders of comfort, latest technological achievements, which includes many medical break through.....etc.,(at what cost ?) .

Between these two imaginary perceptions, the real truth (happiness) is where one finds divinity and to ponder about many questions such as from where we have come from? Whom am I? What is nature? What are the invisible forces which control our dreams, thoughts and finally our actions/inactions....., many great scientists or science itself do not have complete answer to these questions.

Many centuries back our Sages have propounded answers, not just theory based on Vedas/Upanishadswith great wisdom. This is proven to be true for ages and eternal.

But unfortunately the present generation has forgotten all these and has no knowledge of our rich heritage and wisdom. They are not the only to be blamed; it is a collective failure of parents, teachers, our political system and others who successively failed to put the true concept of education based on our rich scripts and heritage.

'What is India?' compiled by Mr. Salil Gewali is a very bold attempt to bring about the views of many renowned philosophers, scientists, educationists and others on our great scripts (Vedas, Upanishads....) in the form of a colourful book.

**Dr. H.N.Vasan
Principal Research Scientist
Indian Institute of Science,
Bangalore 960 012**



**(1891-1953), Eminent
British philosopher,
author and teacher**

C. E. M. Joad

**The thought of the Upanishads is
bold and free, and their general
conclusion is that mystical
experience is the pathway to reality.**

source: *The Story of Indian Civilization* - by C. E. M. Joad

Comments by a reader

It seems to me that one of the distinctions that can be usefully made between the East (beginning with India) and West (epitomized in the USA) is that the West has excelled at investigating and manipulating the Exterior world, while the East has specialized in understanding and transforming the Interior world. This book is a superb eye-opener.

---Dr K Bruder, Ph.D., M.Ed
Communication scholar, psychotherapist

**(1885-1981), Prolific American
writer, historian, and
philosopher, world renowned
for his work *Story of
Civilization* in 11 Volumes**



Will Durant

India was the motherland of our race, and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages: she was the mother of our philosophy; mother, through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics; mother, through the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all.

source: *The Case For India* - by Will Durant

**(1847-1933), Celebrated
writer, socialist, George
Bernard Shaw regarded her as
the greatest woman public
speaker of her time**



Annie Wood Besant

After a study of some forty years and more of the great religions of the world, I find none so perfect , none so scientific, none so philosophical and none so spiritual than the great religion known by the name of Hinduism.

source: India: Essays and Lectures Vol- IV by Annie Besant

*

India is the mother of all religions. In her are combined science and religion in perfect harmony, and it is India that shall be again the spiritual mother of the world.

source: *Hindu Superiority* - by Har Bilas Sarda - Besant's lecture at the Grand Theatre

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Comments by a reader

It is truly an enlightening experience to know what is Vedas, Vedanta and India from perspective of the renowned intellectual Giants of the West especially in India when pseudo intellectuals, politicians and its own people denigrate it and demean it in name of secularism. Often facts are distorted to suit personal and political agenda. This book by Salil Gewali will certainly help in bridging the gap in knowing real India and her real culture and fathomless wisdom.

In India all the facts and past achievements are deliberately hidden from the masses, there is propagation of falsehood and bogus intellectualism instead of Truth. I hope every Indians should know these facts and look up to the cultural and intellectual heritage of Vedas/India which were the foundation of wealth, peace and prosperity of ancient Indian civilization. These foundations on which our rishis/sages have built ancient Bharat have withstood the test of time and many bloody invasions by Arab and power/wealth hungry imperialism of British invasion.

— Lt Cdr (Retd) Rashmi Sahu

Chandigarh

Comments by a reader

It was truly providential that I laid my hands on this great work of Mr.Salil Geawali without any reference from anyone and it simply electrified and inspired my soul.

The pseudo-secularists and the biased Mass Media both print and electronic in India which have been functioning for unpatriotic bosses have been propagating wrong information about our great country *Bharath* for their own selfish ends. It should be the endeavour of each patriotic Indian to see that this book reaches the maximum hands in the shortest possible time.

---- **P Suryanarayanan**

Chartered Accountant,
Madurai 625014

Comments by readers

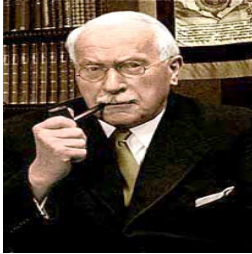
An excellent depiction of who we are and what the scholars of the world thought about our religion, culture, ancient wisdom, and glorious History of the greatest land in the world.

---- Girish Gandhi, scholar, Florida, USA

This is a beautiful book, with quotes of great thinkers of the world.

Many great minds agree on India as the cradle of divine philosophy.

**--- Susanne Steinicke,
Hamburg, Germany**



(1875-1961), World famous Swiss psychiatrist, an influential thinker and the founder of analytical psychology_ often known as *Jungian psychology*

Carl G. Jung

No system of thought or body control is more widely known today than Yoga. When a religious method recommends itself as '*scientific*', it can be certain of its public in the West. Yoga fulfills this expectation. 'Quite apart from the charm of the new and the fascination of the half-understood, there is good cause for Yoga to have many adherents. It offers the possibility of controllable experience and thus satisfies the scientific need for 'facts'; and, besides this, by reason of its breadth and depth, its venerable age, its doctrine and method which include every phase of life, it promises undreamed of possibilities.

source: *Let's regain our lost soul* - by Nani A Palkhivala

**(1888-1965), Great
American poet,
philosopher, critic,
received Nobel Prize for
literature in 1948**



T. S. Eliot

**Long ago I studied the ancient Indian
languages, and while I was chiefly interested
at that time in philosophy, I read a
little poetry too; and I know that
my own poetry shows the influence of Indian
thought and sensibility.**

source: *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* by T. S. Eliot

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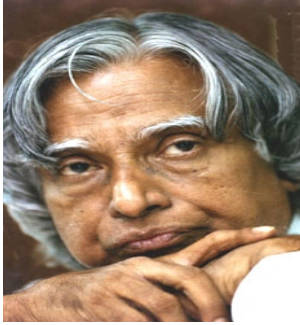
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(1931-) 11th President of India, eminent scientist and writer

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Vedas are the oldest classics and the most precious treasures of India. The soul of Bharatiya sanskriti dwells in the Vedas.

The entire world admits the importance of the Vedas.

source: *Vedas, soul of India* - by *Dina Nath Mishra*

*

Tell me, why is the media here so negative? Why are we in India so embarrassed to recognise our own strengths, our achievements? We are such a great nation. We have so many amazing success stories but we refuse to acknowledge them.

Why?

source: http://www.nutquote.com/quote/Abdul_Kalam



Articles

Explore the majestic Indian philosophies

Indian philosophers' subtleties make most of the great European philosophers look like schoolboys.

- T. S. Eliot

by *Salil Gewali*

It is worth millions if one has developed an enthusiasm to be more virtuous in life though living in abject poverty. But know it is worth naught if one has earned billions but has not developed any enthusiasm to acquire those virtues. Here virtues mean those simple human qualities that help promote the wellbeing of not just oneself but of the entire universe. And of course, all the existing religions in the world preach such values. In fact it is one of the fundamental aims of every religion ___ to seek to purify the filths of demons with virtues of God. And, as no religions advocate and encourage any attributes in man that stand as an impediment in having environment of piety, one has no right to disrespect others' faiths.

But very unfortunately, some of the believers of a certain religion proclaim themselves to be the best and they are obviously ill-disposed to others. They assertively

profess their own exclusivity. That is viciously disastrous. How paradoxical and how sacrilegious that evil of intolerance, dogmatism and hatred explosively often emanate from the holy ground of religions! As a searing sense of enmity has often been seen to be developing so conspicuously amongst the various sects that it naturally occurs to many why not to become atheist or agnostic than stay stewed in the hot juice religiosity.

However, the Hindu religion, nay, philosophy, never believes in propositions and doctrines that cause confrontation, vindictiveness and fanaticism. It primarily preaches universal fraternity, tolerance and magnanimity and significance of spiritual knowledge. It informs us, '*Sarva dharma sama bhava*', 'have tolerance for other religions'. The different paths of religions existing in the world are essential for spiritual evolution for a particular class of people born with particular character and propensity. It says, according to one's mental leaning, aptitude and subtle inner faculties that were acquired in past lives, the 'Nature' causes one to take birth in one particular religion which is best suited for him. So therefore, one has no right to choose one's religion on

whims. Like a person with O+ blood group can't thrust A+ blood into his bloodstream. If he does, then he will only invite multitude of health complication later.

Look at this illustration. In order to illuminate different types of bulbs we need batteries of different voltages. So, to help evolve the souls of different individuals require a certain faith, which is not our job to choose ___ it is Nature that decides best. Well, to make it still simple, an act of converting religion is akin to feeding a Linux compatible software into MS Window loaded machine that only causes conflict in the system leading to complex malfunctioning.

It is therefore, nowhere in Vedic thoughts does one find the references that suggest non-Hindu to quit his religion and embrace Hinduism. It is the Indian system of knowledge that objectively vindicates the importance of other faiths in this world of diversity. It says that 'diligently following the faith one has taken birth in, he attains a certain level of perfection'.

Yes, we can find still more universal aspect of Hinduism. in the following couplets from the Gita :

***Whosoever (of any faith) desires to worship
whatever deity (using any name, form, style and method
practised in that particular faith), HE (Supreme Brahman)
makes the devotee's faith steady in that very deity.
Endowed with steady faith, the devotee worship that deity
And obtain his wishes through that deity.
Those wishes are, indeed, granted only
by HIM -- Supreme Brahman alone.***

(7/21-22)

(Here 'Supreme Brahman' refers to 'The only immutable, subtlest and all-pervading omnipotent Energy in the form of Absolute Bliss, Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Existence')

This is the greatness of the Indian Philosophy ___ so secular, so liberal, so accommodating and scientific to the core. Truly, any teachings from the Vedas may be rigorously tested by any super scientific minds to ascertain their validity. Vedas never force one to believe in God blindly, but show scientific ways to realize that ultimate truth — that 'it is God alone that exists and the rest are transient illusion'. Ralph Emersion was dazzled, Henry David Thoreau had started to live ascetic life

when they learnt from the Vedas alone that '*it is only the ignorance to see no God in every bit of manifested things, let alone the unmanifest*'. Vedas say, nothing can ever exist without energy of divinity which is all pervasive. The Creator and the Creation are one, and a person who can see that, he alone is the man of knowledge, the rest wallow in ignorance. Upanishads say, the only objective of a religion, in fact, is to create an environment of piety that helps cleanse oneself of earthly vices, so one can steadily be more and more perceptive to see the truth in right perspective. Yes, Vedic knowledge alone convincingly expounds 'universalism, absolute unity in complex diversity and absolute divinity which is wholly dynamic in nature and also the eternity of Time which is cyclic in nature. It is doubtlessly this lofty philosophy of ancient India that informs the whole world first that this absolute and inconceivable divinity is intrinsically present within every being, living or non-living and visible or non-visible __ the wisdom greatly awestruck the modern rational scientists as Erwin Schroedinger (one of the greatest physicists of 20th century), Julius R. Oppenheimer (father of Atomic

Bomb) and Werner Heisenberg (co-founder of Quantum Mechanics). The Bhagavad Gita exhorts mankind to realize that *Divinity* in the workshop of Karma Yoga or Bhakti Yoga or Gyana Yoga or Raja Yoga, remaining in one's own faith one has taken birth in (never converting to other religion). Behold, attaining the merger with the ***'absolute knowledge, absolute bliss and absolute existence which is formless and timeless phenomenon'*** is the sole goal of every life-entity, affirm the Vedas in divine rhyme!

Writer may be contacted at : sgewali@gmail.com

Indians' bankruptcy of patriotism

by *Salil Gewali*

I feel a very few of us know what most of the western eminent scholars we adore have said about our Indian philosophies and the ancient seers. Yes, they have held them in the highest esteem. They have proudly acknowledged that the Vedic literatures as the only treasure of profound knowledge that has no parallel in the whole universe.

**Even the loftiest philosophy of the
Europeans appears like a feeble spark
before the Vedanta.**

August Wilhelm von Schlegel, (1767-1845) A great German philosopher, poet and critic)

But it is a matter of astonishment that all these truths about Indian system of knowledge have been less discussed or brought to light in India. So far our students

have not been encouraged to learn in schools or colleges about the uncanny philosophies as the Vedanta or Yoga literatures in any manner which in fact have become the core source of inspiration for most of the western poets, philosophers, scientists et al. Why are we not being taught in the schools the fact that Pythagoras came to India to learn Geometry and spiritualism all the way from Greece who was quite senior to Socrates and Plato? Why are we not allowed to know that a seer of India over 5000 years ago was the first to tell about the speed of light that has a mention in Rig Veda, while the West discovered it much later in the 17th century AD?

We are committing to memory T. S. Eliot's '**The Waste Land**' but never want to know that he became powerful poet because he assimilated every sublime philosophy of the Upanishads and the Vedas which he himself has mentioned at several places. Why have we suppressed these facts about the wisdom of ancient India? Have we become so unpatriotic that we love to wink at the richest legacies of our own motherland and

become blind admirers of illusive civilization of the west?
Time has come to do a real introspection. Time has come to seriously get down to learn the knowledge that mesmerized and enlightened the scientists like **Niels Bohr** and **Oppenheimer** and philosophers like **Voltaire** and **Schopenhauer**.

-

Kernel of Hinduism

by *Bikash Sarmah*

Hinduism is often misconstrued as a ritualistic religion. It is not. True, rituals mark the conduct of Hinduism in day-to-day life, but that is just the contour of any practising faith for that matter, with the exception that Hinduism has a rainbow configuration of numerous gods and goddesses. Even then, the religion transcends the sheer number of gods and goddesses. For, the quintessence of Hinduism is its philosophy.

What would be Hinduism without the concomitant philosophy? That it has no founder adds to its flexibility and justifies its character as a philosophical or spiritual pursuit. And the pursuit is emblematic of man's quest for a meaning of his existence, his place in the mysterious cosmos, and his own divine potential.

A realization of that potential is spirituality, which no dogma can help realize, nor any conditioning of the past or conventional mind set. What it takes is a radical approach to life so as to decode the mystery of human existence. This is Hinduism, which is, therefore, a way of life.

In other words, Hinduism is a liberating experience. It does not, and cannot by virtue of its own intrinsic

character, assert its supremacy or condemn other faiths. That stands proscribed in the truly Hindu scheme of things. What Hinduism calls for is a philosophical or spiritual experimentation, well beyond the shackles of rigid doctrines and man-made barriers. And only the results of the experimentation would prompt one to accept the cardinality of what essentially is Hinduism. If one is convinced about his divinity that is otherwise latent, he may proceed further; if he is not, he may further experiment. There are no rules for that experimentation. Only, one has to realize the kind of path he has taken, outside of the mundane world of materialism.

As for its philosophical touch, Hinduism has this wondrous character of blending philosophy with spirituality. You do not have to go the Himalayas to meditate and realize your potential and understand the meaning of human existence. You may be in a moving bus and yet meditate — that is, observe yourself, the play of your emotions and passions, the restlessness of your mind, your irresistible temptations, your very nature and character. That observation itself is meditation. And from it will germinate wisdom, as distinct from knowledge. This is Hinduism, and it is only Hinduism that allows that scope — the scope to be oneself, to understand oneself, free from

doctrinaire diktats and conditioning.

The Vedas and the Upanishads are a treasure trove of knowledge transformed into wisdom. Their message is in fact so very simple: first be a man, realize that all men are equal, and then ensure that you have become capable of accepting the fact that the only religion that can do service to humanity is humanism. This is the gist of the Vedic renditions and the Upanishadic enlightenment. Is not Hinduism then such a man-centric and man-making pursuit?

I am an agnostic, for I have no reason to believe in God or dismiss His existence. At times I turn an atheist too, for I find far more justification in dismissing God than in accepting His supernatural powers. However, it is Hinduism that has given me that scope. I am a Hindu not because I believe in the Hindu deities, but because I have realized what it takes to be a true Hindu — the right to be oneself, the right to take my own path to understand life and its nuances, the right to not worship any god and yet be a proud Hindu for having introduced myself to the philosophy of Hinduism.

I wonder: if I were not a Hindu, would I be allowed to be an agnostic or atheist? Surely not. That distinguishes Hinduism. That is the glory of Hinduism. Only,

One has to understand Hinduism in the true sense of the term. And for that one has to first understand that life has a potential beyond the immediate and the apparent. This is what Hinduism has led me to.

(The writer is the Editor of 'The Sentinel', a Guwahati-based daily, and has written extensively on philosophical matters too, pertaining to Eastern Philosophy)

Modern Education: A Threat to Mankind

by *Salil Gewali*

Study hard, get hold of enviable degree and kick-start the gorgeous career in the field of your choice and make money. The money, your want. By hook or by crook. Certainly, your primary need in life. Use your all wiles how best you can amass and manage it. Well, you are capable of that. Very early you will be flushed with the good amount. No point dillydallying, you may desire the choicest materials of comfort and luxury — palatial buildings, swanky cars, computer, ruby, diamond and lot more. You are given the choice of enjoying every moment by drawing the utmost pleasure being in the midst of your possessions; relish them to your heart's content.

Why worry? Make the best of your time; you are virtually accentuated with awesome profession. Set your heart on anything your money can purchase. You may drink to death. Visiting the night club and indulging yourself drooling at an enticing girl who unabashedly takes leave of her modesty, could be your new found passion. Yes, you may swing yourself into action by organizing the most

sensational beauty contest ever held, that perhaps becomes an exciting event to watch and emulate from. Or, be adventurous and go around the globe to see the things of your interest. Or, take off to marvel at galas in Las Vegas, or scale the Mountain tops, or plod along the icy Antarctica—these all are jolly fashionable crazes.

Please understand, in this age of sophistication, to make one capable enough to afford any desired stuff of pleasure and conveniences that satisfy his whim is seemingly a one-pointed goal in life. So, don't hold back, go in with guns blazing to achieve them. Make your affluence as ostentatious as you wish. Yes indeed, it is the much touted education, as normally believed, which promises this glitzy world of opulence, entertainment and name and fame. The targeted aims of any wannabe doctor, engineer, politician, model, film star and so on are to achieve the brilliant profession and occupation and reputation and start quenching the thirst for ever insatiable sense gratification till ones breathe their last. Basic necessities apart, with the success their material wants and desires may swell up that could be in any form depending upon the mind-set. But be sure, there will never be the point of time when they find themselves absolutely content.

The definition of Education in modern day? Very crisp and direct. Be hot at your chosen area of studies available, the rest will unfold for you. No limitation, no restriction, no social stigma nor even inhibition. Darn the consequential chaos and upheaval and subtle loopholes, provided the disciplines chosen are materially roaring and smashing. Damn the ethical norms if they are overwhelmingly endorsed by the so-called modern day elites. No problem, you being bloody cunning, self-centered, uncompassionate, irreligious, undisciplined, violent, licentious if you can handle and elude them artfully.

Dr. X, a widely reputed surgeon of precision, is unkind, ill-tempered and a notorious womanizer. He refuses downright to operate on any underdogs if they cannot make hard payment that is fixed. But, he is a much-sought after Mr. Right who has mastered every part of your anatomy. Significantly, he can neatly deal with any organs of your body, so we have legally no right to question his personal flaws and morals. In his elaborate study of the science there is practically no references and emphasis that he must be morally acceptable and sympathetic in character before pursuing the profession.

Similar is the case with a lawyer. He can be a dangerously double standard fox. He may cook up crafty schemes for making money out of petty cases. He may make illiterate and poor lots his grazing ground. He can prove a wrong as a right and vice versa. Well, a heinous rapist gets away through his contrived design and skill. A heartless murderer gets acquitted if his only lust for money is fulfilled. Perhaps, to sum up, he is the Messiah of evildoers.

No exaggeration, so is the case with the literate men of any trade and profession. But do not be critical, they are the blessed recognized people of letters and esteemed designation. Please update yourself, there are a colossal number of careers and employments put forth by the education of modern day. Why to waver, be a star on par with Aishwarya, all the splendour will be at your feet. Or, choose to ape the demeanour and sensuality of Britney Spears or Jennifer Lopez to entertain and stir the lust of the global masses. More? You may burn the midnight oil to acquire the exclusive art of Mariah Carey and practice how artfully you can drive the virile hawk into submission.

Why to shrink to do more exciting and impressive

if you have gained mastery of the English, one of the most fashionable languages on earth. You can pick up a crap and discuss astutely till you feel jaded. Well, publish hot journals like *Cosmopolitan* by piecing together all the filths and sleazes which potentially set the reader on sensual fire. Hey think big, produce the movies that liberally and flagrantly shed light on how best one can flirt with the sex-senses, the project will be an instant crowd puller and more gainful.

No worry about the sleaze factor at this cutting age of development, if you can competently defend yourself. Immodest Madonna has attended icon status, eccentric Michele Jackson has a great number of die-hard fans. Marilyn Monroe and Helen are legendary figures and a source of inspiration for the present world that swears by fashion and modernity. Yes, what about our leaders who rule us and make laws for the society? Yes, the leaders who are ruling us are no more men of rectitude and scruples but devils of hell. They have no qualms about indulging in any sorts of immoral or criminal activities. Kidnapping, murder, corruption, pervert sex are what characterize this age of sophistication and consumerism.

Frankly speaking, here we all have thus succumbed

to the devilish heat of lust, anger, greed, desire and ego. This is how perspires and stinks the rumpus world of decadence and illusion. The cloud of illusion seems so thick that the mankind has almost lost the sight of immutable truths. Further, in pursuance of exploring the ways and means for better and easier life it has merrily gone blind to the most subtle facts about human psychology, function and behaviour of the bossy five senses. To make the matter worse, perhaps being overwhelmed by the startling ambience of advanced conveniences and luxury, the so-called academic pundits in delusion have virtually omitted the moral values from the recipe of education. Who have sense to care now that the mother Nature sternly requires a man to live within the periphery of morality and sensibly to control his senses in order to lead a sane and peaceful life or else they (the senses) will drive his mind turbulent rendering him physically and mentally feeble and stressful that may, in course of time, culminates in complete degeneration of the self.

But regrettably, the mainstream education has apparently never taught us to regulate the senses for self purification and realization of inner joyfulness. No

strange, we normally find ourselves ceaselessly engrossed and obsessed with the thoughts of short-living sense gratification and desire fulfillment or anxiety, fear, envy and anger. I am afraid, while having been unable to control the nagging mind, we have increasingly become a mere meek slave to it being ever preoccupied in the task of supplying more tempting sense objects to the senses as dictated by the former. Please note, gradual weakening of the faculty of intellect, memory and creativity is because of one being engulfed by mental agony caused by excessive indulgence in sense pleasure and high expectations from the things pertaining. Therefore, here it seems the modern education has been obviously working as a catalyst in the laboratory of the glossy world where evils alone are precipitating. Maybe, being intensely apprehensive of the impending nightmarish situation, the great thinker Albert Einstein had also warned us as saying — 'Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind', — here the religion means that which teaches us, besides about the existence of the omnipresent Almighty, moral values and significance of humanity. And therefore I firmly believe, the true education is that which teaches first the ways and skills

how best one to control those bullying five senses and mind with a sole aim to enable the inherent divine virtues to be blossomed . Once that is achieved, the enlightenment and inner joyfulness come on its on accord, as teaches the Gita. In essence of this long discussion let me conclude thus ----- *'Education is the vehicle for self-development, righteous action its fuel, intelligence the driver, must ply on the road of morality to reach the light of eternal knowledge that opens up the landscape of blissfulness and divinity.'*

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foreword

The idea of compilation of what some of the celebrated thinkers and intellectual giants from the West think of Hinduism and the time-tested teachings of our seers, is both timely and meaningful. For a milieu that can hardly fathom the depth of Hindu philosophy and religion, and at a time when everything from the West seems to get accepted at face-value, this attempt to collect and collate some of the gems from the Western philosophers may not be misplaced after all.

To my mind, this treatise should be a precious possession both for the Hindus and the non-Hindus. For, it should enable the Hindus to look at themselves through the Western eyes as a means to rekindle their belief that Hinduism as defined in our ancient scriptures are not for the Hindus alone but for the entire mankind. As for the non-Hindus, it should help immensely in appreciating the unquestionable values and paths of salvation laid down in our Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and what have you.

It is a universally acknowledged fact that Vedas are the oldest known human documents in terms of religion, philosophy and literature. As we all are

aware that Vedas offer priceless teachings to human life for ever. The Vedas are invaluable documents of Indian sacred lore and learning which show the path of ultimate release from the human bondage through Righteousness, Self-knowledge and Surrender to the human soul. That the appeal of the Vedas cuts across all imaginable boundaries of Country and Age is understatement; in essence the Hindu teachings truly belong to the humanity. This has been wonderfully brought home once again in this booklet through the adulation of the ancient wisdom by the Western thinkers and philosophers.

Viewed against the backdrop, the effort of the publishers is highly commendable. I am absolutely certain that this anthology of Western thoughts on Indian existential wisdom will serve its own purpose of reinforcing our own belief and, at the same time, dispelling doubts, if any, in the psyche of the non-Hindus about the eternal values of life given to mankind by our seers.

Manas Chaudhuri

Education Minister

Government of Meghalaya

Shillong, (Meghalaya),

Date : 12th January 2009

MESSAGE

I am immensely pleased to see in this book a compilation of thoughts of renowned intellectual thinkers of the West on Indian Philosophy and rich Knowledge System. It is heartening to learn from the quotes presented in this book that Western Philosophers were deeply impressed with the depth of the Hindu Philosophy and religion.

As I envisage, this collection would do tremendous good for both the believer and non-believers of Hinduism. The Hindus could get an idea of how the West looked at their religion as inscribed in ancient scriptures and thereby, feel good about it. The non-Hindus would give due recognition by appreciating the value of life which is Karma as explained by all great Indian Philosophers of yesteryears.

Though Karma as a concept originated in India,

similar ideas can be found in religions and cultures around the world. This was first introduced in the West by the likes of Emerson, the Philosopher. Karma is both simple and complex and its fundamental aspect is its balancing role in nature. Human beings are responsible for their actions, resulting in personal Karma. So our actions do affect all of humanity. The emergence of transpersonal and spiritual ideas in contemporary western psychology has helped throw new light on the doctrine of Karma.

On this backdrop, this publication would help non-Hindus to think positive about the eternal values of life on this earth and at the same breath; Hindus would also see its worth in practicing the teachings of our Seers which Western Philosophers recognised with utmost sincerity.

Professor Pramod Tandon

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