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## I. Historical Background ad the Western Indologists

### 1. Swami Vivekananda's Four Classes (Castes) Theory of History

We have to assume historical events follow a logical sequence and not a purely random process. A central goal is to explain human events causally by deriving them from antecedent social, political, economic, psychological, etc. laws. Yet, the leading historians of the West have had a difficult time in discovering the fundamental laws of history, in the hopes of making more accurate predictions of the future. Swami Vivekananda advocated the "Four Classes Theory of History" concerning the circulation in the structure of the elites. "Human society is in turn governed by the four castes--the priests [Brahmins], the soldiers [Kshatriyas], the traders [Vaishyas], and the labourers [Shudras]. Each state has its glories as well as its defects." "Among the Chinese, the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Aryas, the Iranians, the Jews, the Arabs--among all these ancient nations, the supreme power of guiding society is, in the first period of their history, in the hands of the Brahmin or the priest. In the second period, the ruling power is the Kshatriya, that is, either absolute monarchy or oligarchical government by a chosen body of men. Among the modern Western nations, with England at their head, this power of controlling

society has been, for the first time, in the hands of the Vaishyas or mercantile communities, made rich through the carrying on of commerce." "Last will come the labourer (Shudra) rule. Its advantages will be the distribution of physical comforts--its disadvantages, (perhaps) the lowering of culture. There will be a great distribution of ordinary education, but extraordinary geniuses will be less and less.... Yet the first three have had their day. Now is the time for the last--they must have it--none can resist it." "The upper classes will no longer be able to repress the lower, try they ever so much. The well-being of the higher classes now lies in helping the lower to get their legitimate rights."<sup>1</sup> In Europe during the Middle Ages the nobility (2nd class) controlled the manors the chief source of economic production, while in later centuries the businessmen (3rd class) were in charge of industrial production. The switch in power and authority from one class to another does not occur naturally, but often involves an intense power struggle.

Over a long period of time of many centuries in most countries the nature of the four castes has change. The closed caste system based on birth has been replaced by the open class system based on performance. For example, formerly the Brahmins were the priests, but now the intellectuals, particularly Universe professors are the most influential members of the caste. The kshatriyas are composed of political and military leaders. Previously, the hereditary monarchists dominated the caste, but now in many countries elected political officials are the most important, while in some it is the dictator. The military is still run by professionals, but they also rely on soldiers that are serving a limited time period, and during wartime depend heavily on draftees. With the Vaishyas caste the traders have been replaced by the capitalist who range from billionaires to people who own small businesses. The shudras were formerly the uneducated villagers, but today many are literate laborers. Formerly, people were born as pariahs but now it is based on their activity. The new pariahs are the people who live on the street, many in tents.

Traditionally power struggles occurred between the two highest classes. Incidentally, the Brahmin caste of India is probably the longest existing aristocracy in the world, and yet they maintained their status without an army, wealth, or an organization.<sup>2</sup>

From the standpoint of Western history, during the priestly era (Brahmin) sacred knowledge and religious thought predominated during Biblical times. Philosophical thought (including political) arose in Greece with the pre-Socratics, Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, and others. During that political-military-legal era kshatriyas such as Alexander the Great and the Roman Caesars carried far more weight than the priests. Christianity brought back the importance of the priests and religious values, eventually clashing for influence with the politically oriented royalty.

Can we think of the first class as concentrating on the production of ideas, the second on power (political and military), the third on wealth, and the fourth on social equality? Each of the four classes has a different idea on how a society should be organized culturally, socially, politically, and legally. Of course in the greatest society all classes are represented and work together for the benefit of humanity.

Vivekananda adds, "When in course of time, the priestly power totally estranged itself from the subject masses, the real dynamo of its power, it was overthrown by the then kingly power taking its stand on the strength of the subject people; again, the kingly power, judging itself to be perfectly independent, created a gaping chasm between itself and the subject people, only to be itself destroyed or become a mere puppet in the hands of the Vaishyas [Business class], who now succeeded in securing a relatively greater co-operation of the mass of the people."<sup>3</sup>

During the Kshatriya period tradition dominates over innovation and change, land is the main source of wealth, and there is relatively little upward mobility. The next section deals with the Vaishya era. The historical movement is not that of a pendulum of reversing the cycle

from Shudra to Vaishyas to Kshatriya and back to the Brahmin Age. Chapter VII covers the contemporary transition from the Shudra to the Brahmin era. At any stage in history all four classes are active, but one is predominant. Since each of the four classes tends to view the world from their own standpoint, it is best that each of these classes be represented in the ideal society.

During each of these four periods the dominant ideology of the society represents the values, beliefs, attitudes, beliefs, morals, and attitudes of the prevailing class. They determine to a large extent how the majority of the population thinks about the nature of society, their place in society, and all of the various aspects of life.

## 2. The Rise of the Western Mercantile Capitalist (Vaishya) Class and its Impact on India

A new phase in world history began in 1492 when Christopher Columbus of Spain discovered the Bahamas in the Americas, and in 1498 when Vasco da Gama of Portugal reached Kerala, India, paving the way for Indo-European commerce. When da Gama arrived, a sizable Christian population was there quite likely going back to two of Christ's disciples, Thomas (48 A.D.) and Bartholomew (55 A.D.).<sup>4</sup>

On a world wide scale this was the beginning of a series of four major historical events that occurred over the next five centuries: 1) the rise of the mercantile classes after 1500 and industrial capitalism after 1750 (I. Wallerstein); 2) the "Secularization of the Earth" from the perspective of values, ideals, and ideas (P. Sorokin); 3) the "Western Europeanization of the Earth" from the standpoint of a very large group of people (W. Halbfass); and 4) the "Globalization of the Earth" (R. Robertson).<sup>5</sup> In other words, in time this process created the modern world. Since that time remarkable progress has occurred in every field of endeavor. Originally this development occurred in Western Europe, but then it expanded to North America and now too much of the world.

During this period of history that began with Columbus' discovery of America, the Western European colonialists transmitted a new a new secular ideology and value system that transformed the thought-structure of the world. Contact with Western countries brought about a new technology, institutions, knowledge, beliefs, and way of life. This was a tremendous rajasic force. Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean seeking a new route to India and China. He discovered the Americas, thinking he had reached the Far East (India) and so he gave the name Indios (Indians) to the indigenous people he encountered.<sup>6</sup>

Early roots of Western European secularism began with the Latin translation of Arabic mathematics and science (some of the ideas originating in India) in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. During the Middle Ages the Western Europeans had some knowledge of the teachings of the great Greek and Roman philosophers like Aristotle and Plotinus. Later during the Renaissance they gained more knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome, which helped bring about a transition from the Late Middle Ages to the Modern Era. This event occurred during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries though proponents of the long Renaissance extend it from 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The cultural movement began in Italy and eventually spread through Western Europe and to a lesser degree to Eastern Europe. Its effects were felt in the areas of "art, architecture, philosophy, literature, music, science and technology, politics, religion, and other aspects of intellectual inquiry." The rediscovery of ancient texts and invention of the printing press in 1440 contributed to a faster propagation of ideas. An increased reliance on empirical observation and inductive reasoning led to great contributions in the fields of astronomy, physics, biology, and anatomy.<sup>7</sup>

The enormous potentiality of colonization was quickly realized by the Spanish Hernan Cortez (1485-1547). In 1519 with an army of only 500 troops he landed in the Yucatan Peninsula. Acquiring the support of over 3,000 indigenous warriors and employing a "divide and conquer" strategy, by 1521 he brought an end to the Aztec Empire and a large

portion of mainland Mexico was now under the rule of the King of Castile in Spain. He had the full support of the Church whose clergy converted many people to Christianity.<sup>8</sup> Some Western European leaders began to realize that a small number of organized people could conquer these countries and gain from their wealth.

Colonialism was closely allied with the emergence of mercantilism that began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when geographic discoveries by Western European merchants brought about a rapid growth in overseas trade. In Western Europe there was a gradual transition from a feudal economy and organization of society to early forms of capitalism. In time the nobility lost its creativity in the Euro-Asian societies and in many countries of Western Europe were replaced by the Middle Class composed of businessmen and professionals.

The physical science revolution and an expansion in secular knowledge took place in the middle 16<sup>th</sup> century concomitant with the rise of Protestantism. Max Weber (1864-1920) emphasized that the spread of modern capitalism was aided by the worldly ascetic ideal of the Protestants. This movement benefitted from the rise of Protestantism, a religion highly supportive of the business class, and modern trends away from feudalism. They tended to favor a religion that was rational, ethical, this-worldly oriented, and congregational; rather than mystical, emotional, other-worldly, and miraculous. This is an example of the sociology of knowledge, meaning changes in social events (broadly defined) bring about changes in the way people think in many areas of endeavor including religion.

Next to arrive in India after the Portuguese were the Dutch, Danes, British, and the French in that order. In 1526, the Muslim Turks established the Mughal Dynasty in India. An important historical event occurred in the year 1600, with the establishment of the British East India Company by Queen Elizabeth I.

Exploratory voyages across the oceans led to the discovery of new lands and the expansion of sea trade. "Money replaced land as the most

productive resource. The center of life shifted from the countryside to the towns where opportunities for trade and business were in greater abundance. The center of power shifted from the aristocracy to the business class."<sup>9</sup> The Western European's converted knowledge into power and wealth.

Economic factors became more decisive in world history. According to the American sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein (1930-2019) in the process of the origin of a mercantile economy in conjunction with colonialism in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a capitalistic World System was formed consisting of an international tripartite division of labor of countries. The three components are the economically dominant core countries (originally in Western Europe, later North America), along with semi-periphery and periphery countries. India and China were peripheral countries, but later with increased industrialization moved up the ladder to a semi-peripheral status. In other words a worldwide hierarchal open class system has been formed at three different levels, not within but between nations. Each country has a different and varying status in world society. Since that time, Europe and North America utilized its advantages and gained control over the bulk of the world economy consisting of multiple political centers. Wallerstein's Theory explains the unequal development and wealth between societies and the cyclical patterns of expansion and contraction in the modern capitalist world. It has the advantage of dealing with large-scale structures (countries of the world) over a long-term process of many centuries. Societies are depicted as "dynamic parts of a broader collective social reality" subject to "changes in the position of societies in the larger world system as well as changes in the structures and processes of the world system itself." The limitation of this view is that it tends to center around an economic orientation with some political ramifications, somewhat ignoring other important cultural factors.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, we can even think of religions as occupying

different positions (that are subject to change) in the worldwide class system.

It was estimated by the British economist Angus Maddison (1926-2010) that in the year 1700, India had 24.4 % of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), China 22.3%, all of the countries of Europe combined 24.9%, and the rest of the world 28.4%. In 1700, he estimated that India had 27.4% of the world's population, China 22.9%, all of Europe 21.0 %, and the rest of the world 28.7%. Following the commencement of the Industrial Revolution (in England in 1750), by 1870 India's share of the world's GDP had dropped to 12.1%, and all of Europe combined had risen to 37.6%. Due to a larger population in 1700, India's GDP was 8.4 times and in 1820, 3.1 times greater than the United Kingdom.<sup>11</sup> Per capita GDP varied little between each of the major countries of Asia and the whole of Eastern Europe in 1700, though Western Europe was about 75% higher. With the Industrial Revolution, the egalitarian structure broke down considerably and a tremendous income inequality emerged among the countries of the world. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the trend began to reverse itself and the countries of Asia (particularly China, South Korea, and India) showed a significantly faster per capita GDP growth rate than the wealthier countries of the world.<sup>12</sup>

By 1707, the Mughal Empire of 1.7 million square miles in India had weakened considerably and was not able to resist foreign military intervention. The kingdoms of India were gradually taken over by Western Europeans and indirectly controlled by puppet rulers. Their primary interests were economic to acquire wealth and political to gain new territory.

In time France became the most powerful European power in India, with the British thinking of withdrawing from the country. In 1751 when things were at a low ebb for the British, Robert Clive (1725-74) a former clerk took charge of an army composed of 60% Indian soldiers. Being a man of outstanding military, political, and business skills, Clive pulled off



a surprise attack on the superior French forces turning the tide in Britain's favor. As a result of the Seven Year's War (1756-63) in Europe, there was a renewal of the conflict between British and French trading companies in India. Crucial was the Battle of Plassey in 1757, when Clive's British East India Company army composed of 3,200 troops (65% Indian soldiers) defeated the Nawab of Bengal and his French allies to take over Bengal. This was aided by the decline of the Mughal Empire in India. It was possible for a company to take over parts of India because the native armies of professional soldiers were so small in number. From 1757 to 1947, India was under British colonial rule. Consequently, the East India Company controlled Bengal and Bihar (often through puppet rulers) during 1757-84, followed by a joint government of the Company and the Crown of England 1784-1858, which was then replaced by the British Raj 1858-1947. In South India during 1760-61 the British armies eliminated French power. In the future this meant that Indians would receive the benefit of being educated in the English language. In time it became the dominant language in politics, law, computing, business, and science.

The countries of Northwestern Europe particularly the English, French, and German speaking people, aided by the knowledge of the Enlightenment (c. 1637-1800) with emphasis on reason, empiricism, science, humanitarianism, democracy, equality, freedom, individualism, tolerance, historical progressiveness of society, secularism, and the new philosophy initiated by Descartes which was separate from theology; the Industrial Revolution; and a strong rajasic will to power; became the dominant nations of the world in the political, military, economic, and technological realms. Emphasis on oldness, continuity, and tradition was replaced by newness, change, and progress Their system of thought gradually spread to North America, Eastern Europe, Japan, and then to other areas of the world like India, China, etc. affecting science, technology, economics, politics, the social-cultural system, religion, ways of life, and individual values and behavior patterns.<sup>13</sup>

Vivekananda described the Western Vaishyas, "whose war flag is the factory chimney, whose troops are the merchant-men, whose battlefields are the market-places of the world, and whose Empress is the shining Goddess of Fortune herself!"<sup>14</sup> The business class represented a much larger proportion of society than the religious or political-military. Consequently, three of the greatest virtues of the Western Vaishya era were to educate the mass of people by significantly raising the literacy rates, the rise of democracy that received the support of the Middle Class, and creating an open class system allowing people to raise their status in society. They realized that a well-educated public was essential for an effective democratic government. Western Europeans allowed for more freedom of thought than most countries and had the advantage of a variety of diverse cultures making for a diversity of ideas.

As a result of the Industrial Revolution, mercantilism was replaced by capitalism resulting in an acceleration in the Western Europeanization and Secularization of the world process. The Industrial Revolution with its factory system eventually brought about organized labor and the rise of the laboring class. In democratic countries, many adults had a vote and so the politicians had to appeal to them to win support. At one time wars were fought by the professional soldier, but now with the draft system a strong and capable mass of people were required to win wars. Literacy rates rose significantly since an intelligent labor force and army were best for the country. Laborers supported egalitarian values such as a fair wage for all workers, respect for the working class, and universal education for the mass of people. As social, economic development and progress occurred, countries become increasingly secular.

Sister Nivedita (1867-1911) recorded that Vivekananda "launched off into a glowing prophetic forecast of how America would solve the problems of the shudras—the problems of freedom and cooperation." America would fulfill this democratic function in the future.<sup>15</sup> The higher

rajasic secularism involves hard work, productivity, and improved education. While the lower tamasic secularism is characterized by lust, greed, and destructiveness.

Particularly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Shudra laboring class values (adopted by members of other classes) have become a significant factor in the tremendous expansion of popular and "mass culture" being expressed through newspapers, magazines, television, motion pictures, YouTube, novels, music, art, consumer products, and other mediums. These ideas, tastes, and values have permeated the world and created to some degree a consensus across the higher, middle, and lower classes. Often mass culture is not created by Shudras but by people higher on the social scale. A successful business is one that gives the mass of consumers what they are looking for. Consequently the standards of mass or popular culture are below that of authentic and dignified "elite culture" that operates on a higher intellectual and moral level.

To quote Karl Marx (1843), "The ruling ideas of any age are the ideas of the ruling class." Now in the Global Age, replace the word "class" with "countries" and we have, "The ruling ideas of any age are the ideas of the ruling countries." The core countries (the Western powers) described by Immanuel Wallerstein not only dominate the economic, political, and military realms, but also the prevailing ideology that has an effect on the culture, values, and norms of the various countries. In time the mode of thinking of the core countries began to permeate the thought system of the world. These ideas become the dominant ideology and accepted cultural norm and beliefs of the society. Ideological power is based on persuasion and not on force. They are taught in the schools, mass media, and in interpersonal relations. This way of life is considered to be natural and inevitable, rather than human created. Thought leaders who encourage people to follow the norms appear to be detached observers but are actually part of the system receiving benefits from it.<sup>16</sup>

Another reason Western countries achieved this status, is that they transmitted universal ideas and concepts in every area of study that transcend national boundaries and are applicable to all people. There are many good things to say for the “higher secular values” that include: universal education, democracy, economic prosperity, social justice, and many forms of physical, social-political and behavioral scientific, and artistic knowledge. Hopefully, being better educated will make it easier for people to manifest their Atman nature. On the other hand the “lower secular values” include: a loss of faith in religion; metaphysical skepticism, nihilism, and cynicism; a hedonistic life style, drug use, increased criminal activity, excessive violence, and with the advent of nuclear weapons the possibility of mass destruction.

The Western influence on India was verified by Sri Ramakrishna who while in samadhi in 1875, had a vision of members of the Brahma Samaj before he met them. He said to the Divine Mother, “Mother, these people hold the view of ‘Englishmen [Westerners]. Why should I talk to them?’ Then the Mother explained to me that it would be like this in the Kaliyuga [Iron Age].”<sup>17</sup> Another example is the Parliament of Religions in 1893 that reflected the spirit of the modern age and soon resulted in five of Ramakrishna’s disciples coming to America. Vivekananda was the first monastic from India who came to the West to teach the message of the Indian religion.

Particularly after the coming of the Industrial Revolution, some of the Western nations overwhelmed many countries of the world with their wealth and technical skills, political and military power, and secular knowledge, resulting in a will to power and a superiority complex. It was a humbling and traumatic experience for these third world countries resulting in cultural shock. They saw their indigenous culture come under attack both from without, and from within as many people lost confidence in their traditional way of life. Modern technology also brought a disruption in the traditional economic-technology system throwing it out of balance, particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in China and

India. This “challenge” brought about different responses in India, China, and the Muslim world. In China it meant creating a form of Communism somewhat compatible with traditional Neo-Confucian culture and values. In Islam the response to the tension between traditional and modern beliefs is still being worked out in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A transition process from the end of the Middle Ages to the present span a period over 500 years in Europe. The modernization process occurred much quicker in Third World countries causing these people much stress.

Swami Saradananda (1865-1927) wrote near the beginning of his biography *Sri Ramakrishna and His Divine Play*, “There is no doubt that the West has influenced the East; it seems inevitable that in the course of time the whole world will be Westernized.”<sup>18</sup> Of all of the countries in the world, why were the leading nations of Western Europe able to initiate this feat? Previously, India, China, and some Muslim countries possessed an economic, scientific, and secular system of thought comparable to that of Europe. An extremely important reason for the Western European breakthrough is that they had the best secular education system in the world both at the elite university and at the mass level. Mass and elite education brought great progress in the realm of ideas and technology. It produced many specialists who could work on the same project, each contributing their own expertise. Education produces a new type of person with added self-confidence and new original ideas. With great optimism they felt they could change the world and they did. Can we think of this as a secular manifestation of the Atman rather than a spiritual one? Does this emphasis on education aid a person in their personal evolutionary development?

As Vivekananda stated, “The Englishman believes he is born the lord of the world. He believes he is great and can do anything in the world ... that makes him great.”<sup>19</sup> “Education, education, and education alone!... What made the difference? Education was the answer I got. Through education comes faith in one’s own Self, and through faith in one’s own Self the inherent Brahman is waking up in them, while the

Brahman in us is gradually becoming dormant."<sup>20</sup> This is why religion and philosophy are not isolated from the rest of society. They depend on the nature of the political, educational, and social system that allow them to flourish. Another difference is that while Russia, China, and India were large countries; Western Europe was divided into a number of smaller populous countries. After 1500 Western Europe was also aided by the rise of the business and Middle Class. Unlike the nobility they could expand beyond Medieval ways of thinking.

Western European literacy rates averaged about 16% in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, but after that quickly escalated particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, far exceeding most of the other countries of the world. For example, in 1870 the adult literacy rates were about 76% in England compared to 19% for the entire world. Going back in time, by the year 1293 there were nineteen recognized universities in five countries of Western Europe, and in each century after that the number increased significantly up to modern times.<sup>21</sup> During the 1450-1650 period, more than 80% of the European scientists were university trained, of which approximately 45% held university posts.<sup>22</sup>

Education gave the people the opportunity to develop themselves and realize their potential. Illiterates often accept the status quo, while educated people seek to improve the society by making progressive changes. One of the reasons the Western Europeans accomplished this task was because of their appreciation for organization. When Vivekananda came to the United States in 1893, he was very much impressed by the level of organization in many fields, and when he returned to India in 1897, a top priority was to establish the Ramakrishna Mission. Another example is Japan who in 1900 had an elementary school enrolment level of over 90 percent of the child population.<sup>23</sup> In many countries they made the mistake of thinking educating the mass of people would disrupt the equilibrium of the society.

As Vivekananda explained, "From the day when education and culture began to spread gradually from patricians to plebeians, grew the distinction between the modern civilization as of Western countries, and the ancient civilization as of India, Egypt, Rome, etc. I see it before my eyes, a nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses."<sup>24</sup>

In the majority of countries of the world (outside of Western Europe and North America), the business class was too weak and dependent on the nobility to challenge their authority, and consequently they fell behind in wealth and power. Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) mentioned this was the case in Czarist Russia and he thought only a militant industrial urban working class could fulfill these functions. After the Russian revolution, most businesses then fell under state ownership.<sup>25</sup>

First came a rise in education followed by the three fruits of knowledge, power, and wealth. From a functional standpoint, because of this major educational advantage, Western Europeans were better equipped to fulfill the secular needs of the time than the other countries of the world. Raising educational standards also brought about a desire to change society culminating in movements like the Protestant Reformation and democracy. As more countries became democratic they realized it functioned much better if its citizens are educated. A differentiation of thought occurred, when the specialized disciplines of the various physical sciences, political science, philosophy, and literature, etc. came into existence. Differentiation was followed by integration of ideas into a meaningful whole. In history there have been times when more barbaric groups conquered the civilized people because of their discipline and toughness, but in modern times the advanced nations enjoy a much higher level of military technology.

Following the "Reincarnation Theory of History," the most intelligently creative people will seek rebirth in societies that provide them the best opportunities for their personal development and where

they can manifest their talent. This is what happened in some Western European countries. For example, at that time it was only in Western Europe where a Galileo or Kepler could receive the type of scientific education they needed to develop their astronomical theories. Henceforth, they were able to communicate their ideas to other advanced thinkers in their country and beyond.

According to the analysis of A. R. Desai (1915-94), the Muslim conquest of large sections of India involved a major change in who ruled the political regime. At that time efforts centered on forming a resistance to Muslim religious conversions of Hindus. The basic economic structure, and the self-sufficient village system where most of the people lived remained intact and in many ways their way of life changed very little. On the other hand the European domination of India was far more inclusive involving changes in all areas of life. They brought with them a new type of society. None of the earlier invaders of India brought a mode of economic production that was superior to the prevailing feudal economy. The British takeover of India was by a capitalistic society that had abolished feudalism. A capitalistic nation with a more advanced technique of production is socially, politically, and economically more united and powerful than less integrated feudal people. British virtues included national solidarity, patriotism, co-operation, and a capacity for organization. In India, the British introduced capitalistic modes of production that uprooted the feudal base of traditional Indian society, having major repercussions in the economic, political, social, and religious realms. Needless to say, this presented a far greater challenge for the preservation of Indian society and culture than any previous conquest. In India religion and social institutions and relations had to be remodeled to meet the needs of the new society. It had to be revised in the spirit of the principles of nationalism, democracy, an optimistic and positive attitude to life, and even rationalist philosophy."<sup>26</sup>



Concerning the Hindu religion British political and business leaders followed a policy of neutrality, seeking to win the peoples allegiance rather than alienate them by opposing their practices. This is in stark contrast to some other societies where the colonialists attempted to eliminate indigenous practices of religious worship. The British government did not want to antagonize the Indians, so for the most part they let them retain their indigenous culture.

As part of this new world view, in 1918 Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) mentioned that the, "Ptolemaic System of History" where all events orbit around Western Europe, must now take into account "the Copernican discovery in the historical sphere, in that it admits no sort of privileged position to the Classical or the Western Culture as against the Cultures of India, Babylon, China, Egypt, the Arabs, Mexico--separate being which in point of mass count for just as much in the general picture of history as the Classical, while frequently surpassing it in point of spiritual greatness and soaring power."<sup>27</sup>

The "Western Europeanization of the Earth" has no doubt led to the "Secularization of the Earth" and the "Modernization of the Earth." Concerning the latter, Pitirim Sorokin (1889-1968) divided society into three fundamental types. During the Middle Ages, Ideational (Sacred) Culture predominated, stressing nonmaterialistic and nonutilitarian values. Ultimate reality and the source of happiness were to be found in the spiritual, transcendental, and supersensuous. Emphasis was placed on transcending the empirical world. This was followed by Idealistic or Integral Culture where both spiritual and sensate values were stressed and integrated. After 1492, in Western Europe Sensate (Secular) Culture with materialistic and empirical values began to predominate. Reality is the world that is experienced by the five senses, and is to be scientifically investigated through empiricism and rationalism. The empirical world is to be manipulated and mastered to improve the quality of life.<sup>28</sup>

On the positive side Sensate society is associated with support for democracy, tolerance of foreigners, ethnic minorities, and homosexuality, gender equality, national identity, and cultural diversity. There is less emphasis on religion and traditional family values. Divorce, abortion, and suicide are considered to be relatively acceptable.

As Vivekananda stated according to a summary of his lecture, "The study of the Greeks was the outer infinite, while that of the Aryans [Indians] was the inner infinite; one studied the macrocosm, and the other the microcosm. Each had its distinct part to play in the civilization of the world. Not that one was required to borrow from the other, but if they compared notes both would be the gainers."<sup>29</sup> The Greek perspective has led to the modern Sensate Culture and a major aspect of the Indian to the Ideational. At the present time the best path to follow is to combine the best of each into a modern Integral Culture.

Vivekananda asked, "Why are the black, the bronze, the yellow, the red inhabitants of Asia, Africa, and America bent low at the feet of the Europeans? Why are they the sole rulers in this Kali-Yuga?... The supreme power that rules the world is Europe."<sup>30</sup> Following the process that began with Christopher Columbus in 1492, the Western Europeans went out not only with the purpose of conquering other countries but eventually to intellectually, culturally, and technologically transform them so they could make progress. Its negative side was imperialism, the exploitation of one country by another. New theories such as those of Darwin were used to justify the increasing political and economic domination of colonial imperialism in that they considered the Western Europeans to be higher involves than the native populations. The positive aspect of this tremendous rajasic force was transporting the many benefits of Western civilization to the other countries of the world. This included educational (university's and mass education), political (democracy), social (egalitarian), scientific, economic, medical, and technological development. There has been a great increase in life-expectancy and productivity so the population and wealth of many

countries has increased greatly.

The Westerner's agenda included the spread of Christianity, which worked out well in the Americas, Sub-Sahara Africa, and the Pacific Islands. To their credit Christian missionaries not only taught the *Bible* but were engaged in humanitarian efforts particularly medical, e.g., Albert Schweitzer and were involved in educating the people. Creating a Western mentality among the people of the world has no doubt been a valuable aid in the spread of Christianity. Universally the desire to proselytize one's beliefs is one of the most common human psychological traits. In some geographical areas the results were disappointing. Christians met resistance among peoples who already had a highly developed religion, i.e., the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Jewish people.

Following the "Functional Theory of History" the Western Europeans dominated because (in spite of their shortcomings) they were the best-equipped countries to secularize the world and bring about positive changes in technology and other realms. Similarly the most successful political or economic system, religion, etc. is the one that functions to meet the need of the largest number of people. The "Survival of the Functional" follows the principle of the "Survival of the Fittest;" that group dominates which is best qualified to benefit society. If they become self-centered and think only they have the right to the benefits of society, then they will proceed downhill. This has happened many times in the history of the world. The United States rose under presidents like Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, both Roosevelt's, Kennedy, and Obama because these people wanted to benefit other groups of people than their own.

Vivekananda states, "The voice of Europe is the voice of ancient Greece." "The whole of Europe nowadays is, in every respect, the disciple of ancient Greece, and her proper inheritor." "Europe and America are the advanced children of the Yavanas [Indian name for Greeks, Ionians], a glory to their forefathers."<sup>31</sup> The dominant form of European culture

began in ancient Greece and later combined with Christianity. Fortunately today with modern communication and transportation, aggressive wars and imperialism are not necessary for the spread of civilizations.

The German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) believed that early Greek ways of thinking led Europe to a scientific and technological mode of rationality that after 2500 years now dominates humanity. He identifies Greek-European culture, with the universal claims of modern science and technology; and objectivity and theoretical mastery in the physical, social, historical, and cultural spheres. It is of planetary significance far exceeding that of any prior localized civilization. Unlike the 19<sup>th</sup> century European optimists, Heidegger realized that Westernization has a negative side creating new problems since modern technological civilization has taken the meaning out of our lives and replaced it with the values of advanced capitalism such as utility, profit, power, wealth, efficiency, and productivity. The global presence of European thought does not mean it will supersede non-Western thought. In the "thinking of the future" we must reach "beyond Occident and Orient." The future dialogue with the Orient cannot be planned; we must wait and see what happens. India's encounter with European thought has been brilliantly and most originally discussed by Wilhelm Halbfass in his book *India and Europe* (1990).<sup>32</sup> The decline of religion, deadening of life, atomization of humanity; and alienation from oneself, others, and nature are common negative themes in contemporary thought. Concerning the Greeks laying the foundation of European thought, Vivekananda stated, "Two minds in the dim past of history, cognate to each other in form and kinship and sympathy, started, being placed in different routes. The one was the ancient Hindu mind, and the other was the ancient Greek mind. The former started by analyzing the internal world. The latter started in search of that goal beyond by analyzing the external world." "The Greeks applied their concentration to the external world, and the result

was perfection in art, literature, etc. The Hindu concentrated on the internal world, upon the unseen realms in the Self, and developed the science of Yoga."<sup>33</sup> Vivekananda believed that though Vedanta philosophy is best developed in India, its principles are universal.

In relation to the future dialogue between the East and West that Heidegger mentions, Vivekananda made this point, "As everywhere else, the attempts at finding the solution of the great problems of life have been through the external world. Just as the Greek mind or the modern European mind wants to find the solution of life and of all the sacred problems of Being by searching into the eternal world, so also did our forefathers, and just as the Europeans failed, they failed also. But the Western people never made a move more, they remained there, they failed in the search for the solution of the great problems of life and death in the external world, and there they remained, stranded; our forefathers also found it impossible, but were bolder in declaring the utter helplessness of the senses to find the solution.... but they did not stop there; they fell back upon the internal nature of man, they went to get the answer from their own soul, they became introspective; they gave up external nature as a failure, as nothing could be done there, as no hope, no answer could be found; they discovered that dull, dead matter would not give them truth, and they fell back upon the shining soul of man, and there the answer was found."<sup>34</sup>

It was because of the materialistic transformation brought about by this worldwide historical phenomenon that necessitated the return of the Avatara Sri Ramakrishna and his band of followers. They came to spiritualize the secular world. On the positive side, a universal system of transportation and communication was created facilitating the spread of ideas. Negatively, following the Middle Ages up to the time of Ramakrishna there was a major worldwide rise in materialism and subsequent decline in religion and spiritual values.

The idea of the Western Europeanization of the Earth must be qualified in many ways. This "challenge" brought about different

responses in India, China, and the Muslim world. First, there is the selection process where for example, India has chosen democracy and China favored communism. Both political systems originated in the West, but they differ to a large extent in their application. Second, there is the indigenous culture, so that in spite of Western influence there remains a considerable difference between the societies of India, China, and the Muslim world (Glocalization, Localization). Third, in India and the Islamic nations most people did not adopt a Western religion but retained their original faith, along with food habits, music, language, etc. Fourth, Western technology in transportation and communication made it possible to bring about a greater unification in the Indian people and religion. But this did not make the country more Western (or Europeanized).

The discoveries of Columbus and others marked the first phase of modern Globalization, a new worldwide historical process that would dramatically affect all nations. After which European nations gained some political-economic control over many countries, religious conversions were made varying greatly from one region to another. The European idea at that time in India was not to antagonize the people, but to make as few alterations in the culture and society as possible. A second phase of Globalization began with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, a great boon to modern secularism and urbanization that started around 1750 in Great Britain. The Industrial Revolution represented radical changes in methods of production and economic and social organization due to the introduction of power-driven machinery and the consequent rise of the factory system. Hand production at home or a small shop was replaced by machine production centered in factories, resulting in the creation of standardized goods with interchangeable parts, the rise of a nonagricultural class of factory workers, and the growth of large cities. A vast quantity of material goods was now available to the majority of the population.<sup>35</sup>

Technological innovations became a far more important determinate of social structure and culture, and historical change. Now it was possible to make significant changes in the material culture and economy of colonial countries, resembling to some extent those of Northwestern Europe. The result was industrial capitalism and the use of heavy machinery, making possible the accumulation of vast amounts of capital. In the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the development of the factory system of manufacturing, the steamship, and a complex division of labor brought about the establishment of the global domination of the capitalist mode of production.<sup>36</sup> This was explained by Adam Smith's, *Wealth of Nations* (1776) an essential work in understanding the nature of classical economics and its relation to the political economy. Industrialism also brought about a rapid increase in urbanization and secularization, which was extremely beneficial for the rising business class (Western vaisyas). Many people believe that urbanization produces a new type of person that is necessary for an advanced civilization to prosper. Most important in the unification of India was the construction of the railroad system that accelerated trade and travel in India. In 1880 in India there were 8,500 miles of track, and by 1920 the total was 38,500 miles.<sup>37</sup> Later technological improvements in transportation and communication were essential in bringing people together and creating a common way of thinking both in India and in the world.

In India the third phase of globalization began in 1835 (this date obviously differs in other third world countries), when English education was introduced in India to replace traditional Hindu-Sanskrit learning. This phase that greatly affected India is discussed in the next chapter. Now it was possible not only to colonize other nations and to change their material culture, but to alter their way of thinking and value system, to be more in conformity with that of the Northwestern Europeans. A worldwide consensus and commonality to some degree in material and ideological culture along with the aid of a common

language are necessary to bring about the cross-cultural understanding within the globalization process.

The next stage is that of mature globalization, which requires more than an advanced technology and knowledge of the physical sciences, but also a need for an ideology that supports and guides the course of development. Near the end of the nineteenth century there was a great intellectual advancement (an explosion in knowledge) in sociology, political science, economics, the study of history, secular philosophy, behavior psychology, etc. that has prepared the way for the coming Global Age. These events served as preparations for a more advanced form of globalization. In time this process led from nationalism to internationalism and eventually to the Global Age and a new World Culture with a great deal of national variation, which we are in the process of witnessing today. The early stages were marked by the will to power, accompanied by economic exploitation. In the more mature fourth stage of globalization after 1945 a major concern is to maintain world peace and harmony. At this time the United Nations began (1945), the World Council of Churches was established (1948), etc.

More recently, as a result of new immigration policies many Indians have moved to the United States. Of all of the religious communities in America, Hindus have the highest rates of educational attainment and the highest household income, along with the lowest divorce rates. About half of the Hindu population reported praying every day. In 2008, 80% of adults who were raised as Hindus continued to adhere to Hinduism, which is the highest retention rate for any religion in America.<sup>38</sup>

Globalization promotes Cosmopolitanism that we are members of a universal community and citizens of the world. Maintaining our national divisions we should consider the people of the world as equal members of a cohesive and united community. As global citizens we share the universal rights of humanity and the recognition of human dignity.<sup>39</sup> Due to technological improvements in transportation and



communication systems the modern world is better connected today than ever before, resulting in a more homogenous global society. Consequently, the different communities have an impact on each other's customs and ways of thinking.

Over the centuries in the process of globalization many things have occurred including: 1) Homogeneity and universality: due to cultural diffusion countries became more alike in life styles, beliefs, values, attitudes, and aspirations. A new discovery made anywhere on the planet can quickly diffuse throughout the world for the benefit of all. 2) Heterogeneity and Glocalization (Localization): there is a co-presence of universalizing and particularizing cultural identities within a single society. At times there is a tension between the diffusion of foreign elements and the local culture, which requires a transformation process to make the new item acceptable. For more on this subject, see Ch. V. Social Philosophy, Section 2. Implications of Vivekananda's Theory of National Dharma. 3) Relativization: in the family of nations, universal standards derived from a common conception of humanity are formed. Each country assumes its own distinct role and identity relative to the others. The status of countries vary as to wealth, power, type of government, intellectual level, cooperativeness, etc., which over a period of time are subject to change. 4) Freedom of choices: within a single nation a much wider variety of lifestyles are possible and people are more open to ideas from other cultures. 5) Global identity: family, village, and regional identities expanded into a national, international, and particularity after 1945 a global consciousness of the world as a whole. Our lives are shaped by the events and decisions made in foreign countries. 6) Economic prosperity: the per capita national product has increased significantly in most countries of the world.

What we are witnessing today in many parts of the world, differing nations and religions have more respect for one another and there is a decline in large-scale wars. The intermingling of people and cross-cultural contacts causes them to learn about other societies and

consequently to become more tolerant of other cultures. The result is the formation of shared norms and knowledge. This process is aided by television and movies, the Internet, world travel, mass migration, student exchange, international trade, increase in literacy rates, etc.<sup>40</sup>

### 3. The Beginning of the Study of Modern Indology in the Eighteenth Century

Prior to this period there was some missionary involvement in the area of Indian study. In order to successfully convey Christian values to the indigenous Indians, they had to have a better understanding of the language, religious scripture, and beliefs of the people. Hence, the missionaries became the Western pioneers in the study of Indian languages and they in turn presented the first knowledgeable accounts of Indian thought to the West. Most noticeable was the Italian Jesuit missionary Roberto Nobili (1577-1656), "the first European Sanskrit scholar" who mastered the Telugu, Tamil, and Sanskrit languages under the instruction of an Indian teacher. Dressed as an Indian Sannyasin he engaged in dialogue with Hindu scholars. His new approach and the success of his mission at Madurai, led to new ways of thinking among the Christians, concerning the proper methods involved in missionary activity. In his written work Nobili explained that the role of the Brahmin caste, and customs such as wearing a "sacred thread" and the "tuft of hair" were social in nature, devoid of religious implications and therefore not in contradiction to the spirit of Christianity. In his view, which many did not accept, the Church should be more "adaptive" showing respect for the Brahmins, while trying to win them over to Christianity.<sup>41</sup> Well versed in Sanskrit, the Jesuit Heinrich Roth (1620-68) contributed a copy of the *Vedantasara* to the Vatican library. He also wrote a chapter on the ten incarnations of Vishnu.<sup>42</sup>

Toward the end of the Age of Enlightenment, after the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in England, the colonial administration

began to take a concerned interest in the characteristics of traditional Indian culture. They wisely wanted to understand the Hindu religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions from the standpoint of the Indians themselves. It was the intention of Lord Warren Hastings (1732-1818), the first Governor-General of Bengal (1773-85), to guide and control the Indians within the structure of their own laws and social customs. To do this he had to have more knowledge about the workings of Indian society. This policy brought about a new stage in the European understanding of India. Hastings held great respect for the ancient Indian religious scriptures. Hence, he went to the Brahmins versed in Indian law, and had them compile a work based on the ancient Indian law books. No one was able to translate it from Sanskrit to English, so it had to be rendered into Persian, and then into English under the title *A Code of Gentoo Law* (1776) by Nathaniel Halhed.<sup>43</sup>

It is possible that Hastings was the first European political leader in over 2,000 years to show an interest in Indian philosophy and religion. Going back a couple of millennium, the Macedonian emperor Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) was a student of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). When Alexander led his armies into Northwest India (327/326 B.C.) he became very much interested in the holy men who lived there. Mandanes their Indian leader praised Alexander, "I commend the King, because although he governs so vast an empire, he is yet desirous of acquiring wisdom, for he is the only philosopher in arms that I ever saw." Vivekananda mentions, "And in my mind rises from the past the vision of the great Emperor of the West, Alexander the Great, and I see, as it were in a picture, the great monarch standing on the bank of the Indus, talking to one of our Sannyasins in the forest; the old man he was talking to, perhaps naked, stark naked, sitting upon a block of stone, and the Emperor, astonished at his wisdom, tempting him with gold and honour to come over to Greece. And this man smiles at his gold, and smiles at his temptations, and refuses; and then the Emperor standing on his authority as an Emperor, says, 'I will kill you if

you do not come,' and the man burst into a laugh and says, 'You never told such a falsehood in your life, as you tell just now. Who can kill me? Me you kill, Emperor of the material world! Never! For I am Spirit unborn and undecaying: never was I born and never do I die; I am the Infinite, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient; and you kill me, child that you are!'"

Alexander did persuade one Indian yogi to come to Greece whom they called Kalanos. He became a good friend of Alexander, but during the trip back to Greece he grew ill and heroically threw himself into the flames of the pyre in front of the Greek army. When this occurred, "By Alexander's orders, an impressive salute: the bugles sounded, the troops with one accord roared their battle-cry, and the elephants joined in with their shrill war trumpeting."<sup>44</sup>

The Western Indologist, Sir William Jones (1746-94) sailed to India from England being appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court in Bengal, India in 1783. Jones a friend of Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Priestley had supported the Americans (not the British) in the Revolutionary War and he opposed slave trade. He soon came to the conclusion that the Hindu religion is "one of the major theologies of the world [that] deserves to be made known to and respected by the West." Jones described the Hindus as, "a people with a fertile and inventive genius who in some early age ... were splendid in arts and arms, happy in government; wise in legislation, and eminent in various knowledge." "I am in love with the gopis," he wrote to Charles Wilkins (who translated the *Bhagavad Gita* into English in 1784-85) in 1784, "charmed with Krishna, an enthusiastic admirer of Rama and a devout adorer of Brahma and Yudhisthira, Arjuna, Bhima and other warriors of the *Mahabharata*." Henceforth, he pioneered Sanskrit studies laying the foundations for the modern study of Ideology and the rediscovery of India's glorious past. This was the beginning of a new era where Westerners took part in making ancient Indian thought known to the West.

Most important, Jones founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 with the support of Governor-General Warren Hastings (1732-1818). This organization exists today under the name of "The Asiatic Society." The journal *Asiatic Researches* that he initiated and edited followed in 1789, and in the following ten years Jones produced a flood of work. The Asiatic Society pioneered Indian scholarly research through the translation of religious, philosophical, and literary books, along with a study of Indian language, history, archeology, arts and agriculture, folklore, mathematics, and science. The work of the Asiatic Society very much created in Europe an interest in the culture and wisdom of India.

In his other studies, Sir William Jones an innovative thinker came to the conclusion that the Indian, the pre-Socratic Greek philosophy and language, and the pre-Christian Latin religion were each an offshoot of a common source. Jones pioneered the modern idea of an Indo-European family of languages. In 1788, concerning Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin he indicated, "No philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists." Furthermore, they might also be related to Gothic, Celtic, and the Persian language. This is the monogenesis idea of a single origin of these languages. This insight was confirmed in 1816 by Franz Bopp in Germany, the first person to systematically demonstrate the cognate relationship between Indic and the European languages. Jones also found a number of similarities between the ancient Indian and Greek philosophies. "The analogies between Greek and Pythagorean philosophy and the Sankhya school are very obvious." "The six [Indian] philosophical schools, whose principles are explained in the *Darsana Sastra*, comprise all the metaphysics of the old Academy, the Stoa, the Lyceum; nor is it possible to read the Vedanta, or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the Sages of India." "We are told by the Grecian writers that the Indians were the wisest of nations, and in moral wisdom, they were certainly

eminent."<sup>45</sup> He identified the Indian Ganesh with the two-headed Roman Janus. Both are deities of new beginnings, and most experts on the subject believe the month of January originally received its name from Janus. They differ in that Janus has two heads and Ganesha first has a human head and later an elephant head.

The British Orientalists were taught Sanskrit by Indian pundits who also supplied them with the sacred books to be rendered into English. In order to complete a Digest of Hindu and Mohammedan law and to properly judge legal issues, Jones maintained a list of learned Sanskrit pundits living at several locations in India. We do not know the extent of the contributions of these pundits in translating Sanskrit works into English. He introduced into government service scholarly pundits like Radhakanta and Jagannatha Tarkapanchanan and Muslim maulvis such as Ali Ibrahim Khan. Jones translated *The Institutes of Hindu Law: or Ordinances (Laws) of Menu* [Manu] (1794) so that the British judges could rule India employing her own laws. He described the book as, "A spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures pervades the whole work: the style of it has a certain austere majesty, that sounds like the language of legislation and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence on all beings but God, and the harsh admonition even to kings are truly noble." His rendering of the *Isa Upanishad* came out in 1799. After Jones' passing, the project was completed by Henry Colebrooke (1765-1837) being published as the *Digest of Hindu Law* in 1797-98. Each of the scholarly members of the Asiatic Society was aided by a full time Indian pundit. In *Asiatic Researches*, Jones published translations, with due acknowledgement of papers he received from learned Indian pundits. For the work he was doing, both the Indians and the Westerners held "Oriental Jones" in high regard.<sup>46</sup>

The single most important translation by a British Orientalist under Hastings' jurisdiction was the first European language version of the *Bhagavad Gita* (1785) by Charles Wilkins (1749-1836). Wilkins a civil

servant learned Sanskrit from Kashinatha Bhattacharya who headed Sanskrit College in Benares. It was soon translated into French (1787) and German (1802). In the preface, Warren Hastings affirmed, "I hesitate not to pronounce the *Gita* a performance of great originality, of a sublimity of conception, reasoning and diction almost unequalled, and a single exception among all the known religions of mankind of a theology accurately corresponding with that of the Christian dispensation and most powerfully illustrating its fundamental doctrines." Hastings included the prophetic expression, "The writers of the Indian philosophies will survive when the British Dominion in India shall long have ceased to exist, and when the sources which it yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrances."<sup>47</sup> These efforts gradually brought about a completely new European and American conception of India, a growing appreciation that manifested in the following century.

The Irish born British statesman and parliamentary orator Edmund Burke (1729-97) is regarded by political experts to be the founder of modern political conservatism in the West. In the House of Commons, Burke was a severe critic of the East India Company calling for more humane treatment of the Indians. He wanted the East India Company to govern India employing higher moral standards. Burke stated that the Indian nation consists, "of a people for ages civilized and cultivated; cultured by all the arts of polished life while we [Englishmen] were yet dwelling in the woods. There have been in India princes of great dignity, authority, and opulence. There is to be found an ancient and venerable priesthood, the depository of laws, learning and history, the guides of the people while living and their consolation in death. There is a nobility of great antiquity and renown; a multitude of cities not exceeded in population and trade by those of the first class in Europe; merchants and bankers who vie in capital with the banks of England; millions of ingenious manufacturers and mechanics; and millions of the most diligent tillers of the earth."<sup>48</sup> Following the "Conservative Principle,"

Burke realized that India should be governed according to Indian tradition, lest the fabric of their society will be destroyed.

Early on, educated Western European understood the importance of the Indian achievements in science and mathematic. The French astronomer Jean-Sylvain Bailly (1736–93), an expert on the history of science, and mayor of Paris concluded in 1787, "The motion of the stars calculated by the Hindus vary not even a single minute from the tables of Cassine and Meyer (used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). The Indian tables give the same annual variation of the moon as discovered by Tycho Brahe (1546-1601)--a variation unknown to the school of Alexandria and also to the Arabs who followed the calculations of the school."<sup>49</sup>

A most interesting individual was Major-General Charles "Hindoo Stuart" (1758-1828), an Irishman and a member of the Asiatic Society, who arrived in India in his teens. Within a year after coming to Calcutta he adopted the Hindu practice that he continued to his death, of walking each morning from his house to bathe in and worship the Ganga. "Incredible as it may sound," wrote one officer, "there is at this moment a British General in the Company's service, who observes all the customs of the Hindoos, makes offerings at their Temples, carries about their idols with him, and is accompanied by fakirs who dress his food." Colonel William Linnaeus Gardner mentioned how Stuart "regularly performs his puja and avoids the sight of beef.... Every Hindoo he salutes with Jey Sittaramjee [Victory to Lord Ram and Queen Sita]." Stuart learned Indian languages, built a Hindu temple at Saugor, and in his writings championed all things Indian acknowledging, "As far as I can rely on my own judgment, it appears [to be] the most complete and ample system of Moral Allegory that the world has ever produced." After his passing, Hindoo Stuart's collection of Hindu sculptures formed the basis of the British Museum's Oriental collection, known as the Bridge collection. Virtuous Hindu moral traits were also observed by James Young (1782-1848) an officer of the Bengal Horse Artillery, and twice sheriff of Calcutta. He remarked Indians "are perhaps the most



remarkable people in the world. They breathe an atmosphere of moral purity, which cannot but excite admiration.... Many Indian households afford examples of the married state in its highest degree of perfection. This may be due to the teachings of the Shastras."<sup>50</sup>

Turning to Germany, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) a Lutheran Pastor and leader of the Romantic Movement established the fundamental ideas of the importance of thought on language. Many members of the German Romantic Movement believed that civilization and all of its components, language, religion, law, etc. originated in India. They viewed India not as a foreign alien tradition, but as the forgotten source of European civilization. Herder looked upon India as the, SEP SEP "lost paradise of all religions and philosophies," "the cradle of humanity," and its "eternal home." He believed, "Mankind's origins can be traced to India, where the human mind got the first shapes of wisdom and virtue with a simplicity, strength and sublimity which has frankly spoken--nothing at all equivalent in our philosophical, cold European world." "The Hindus are the gentlest branch of humanity. They do not with pleasure offend anything that lives; they honor that which gives life and nourish themselves with the most innocent of foods, milk, rice, the fruits of the trees, the healthy herbs which their motherland dispenses ... Moderation and calm, a soft feeling and a silent depth of the soul characterize their work and their pleasure, their morals and mythology, their arts and even their endurance under the most extreme yoke of humanity." Furthermore, he believed each nation should be judged in its own terms, "By no means, moreover, could European culture serve as the general standard for comparison."<sup>51</sup>

#### 4. Nineteenth Century British Indology

Much credit must be given to the successive generations of Western Indologists who dedicated their entire academic career to studying, compiling, editing, and translating the traditional Indian texts,

and to the writing of expository treatises on Indian culture, religion, philosophy, and history. Because of their admiration for India, there were a number of writers in the Romantic Movement who were inspired by their literature. An English poet, Robert Southey (1774-1843) read the *Bhagavad Gita* as preparation for his lurid narrative poem "The Curse of Kehama" written in 1810. It describes the descent of the Ganga River from Mount Meru, along with the interaction of Shiva and the Goddess Parvati. The Holy Ganga River is also alluded to by the renowned lyric poets William Wordsworth (1770 -1850) in "The Excursion" (1814). Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) tells us about the image of the Indian Vishnu floating on the "infinite ocean" contemplating through an expanse of time composed of millions and millions of years. This reference occurs at the end of a conceptual process that Coleridge describes as a "spiritualization of his intellect." The Vishnu image recurs in Coleridge's dramatic fragment "The Night Scene" (1817), where he writes, "The God, who floats upon a lotus leaf, [L SEP] Dreams for a thousand ages; then awakening, [L SEP] Creates a world, and smiling at the bubble, Relapses into bliss."<sup>52</sup>

Sir Thomas Munro (1761-1827) originally from Scotland held various posts in the colonial administration of India, serving as Brigadier-General during the third Maratha War (1817–18), and the appointed Governor of Madras in 1819. In a statement made by him in 1813 before a Committee of the House of Commons, concerning India he noted, "If a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching, reading, writing and arithmetic; the general practice of hospitality and charity among each other; and above all, a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect, and delicacy, (if all these) are among the signs which denote a civilized people, then the Hindus, are not inferior to the nations of Europe; and if civilization is to become an article of trade

between England and India, I am convinced that England will gain by the import cargo."<sup>53</sup>

The following four 19<sup>th</sup>-century British Isles historians wrote of their appreciation for Indian mathematics, language, philosophy, and science. In the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1834) the Irish born William Cooke Taylor (1800-1849) author of *A Popular History of British India* (1842), paid a glowing tribute to Sanskrit literature and philosophy, "It was an astounding discovery that Hindustan possessed, in spite of the changes of realms and chances of time, a language of unrivalled richness and variety; a language, the parent of all those dialects that Europe has fondly called classical - the source alike of Greek flexibility and Roman strength. A philosophy, compared with which, in point of age, the lessons of Pythagoras are but of yesterday, and in point of daring speculation, Plato's boldest efforts are tame and commonplace. A poetry more purely intellectual than any of those which we had before any conception; and systems of science whose antiquity baffled all power of astronomical calculation. This literature, with all its colossal proportions, which can scarcely be described without the semblance of bombast and exaggeration claimed of course a place for itself - it stood alone, and it was able to stand alone."<sup>54</sup>

Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859) the Scottish statesman and historian came out with the two-volume *The History of India* (1841). He disclosed, "In the *Surya Siddhanta* is contained a system of trigonometry which not only goes beyond anything known to the Greeks, but involves theorems which were not discovered in Europe till two centuries ago." Comparing Indian and Greek algebra, Elphinstone declared, "There is no question of the superiority of the Hindus over their rivals in the perfection to which they brought the science. Not only is Aryabhatta [476-550] superior to Diaphantus [c. 250] (as is shown by his knowledge of the resolution of equations involving several unknown quantities, and in general method of resolving all indeterminate problems of at least the first degree), but he and his successors press

hard upon the discoveries of algebraists' who lived almost in our own time!" Elphinstone knew of the kinship between the Sanskrit and European language, but found the hypothesis of their "spread from a central point... a gratuitous assumption." He concluded, [LSEP] [LSEP] "Neither in the *Vedas*, nor in any book ... is there any allusion to a prior residence ... out of India.... There is no reason whatever for thinking that the Hindus ever inhabited any country but their present one."<sup>55</sup>

Scottish born Joseph Davey Cunningham (1812-1851) in *A History of the Sikhs* (1849), acknowledged the accomplishments of ancient Indian religion and astronomy, "Mathematical science was so perfect and astronomical observations so complete that the paths of the sun and the moon were accurately measured. The philosophy of the learned few was perhaps for the first time, firmly allied with the theology of the believing many, and Brahmanism laid down as articles of faith the unity of God, the creation of the world, the immortality of the soul, and the responsibility of man. The remote dwellers upon the Ganga distinctly made known that future life about which Moses is silent or obscure, and that unity and Omnipotence of the Creator which were unknown to the polytheism of the Greek and Roman multitude, and to the dualism of Mithraic legislators."<sup>56</sup>

Another outstanding British Indologists was John Dowson (1820-81) a professor of Hindustani at University College, London and Staff College, Sandhurst. His book *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion* (1879, 1968) remains one of the most comprehensive and authoritative works on the subject.<sup>57</sup>

On December 3, 1893, a few days after Vivekananda's departure from Des Moines, Iowa, the *Iowa State Register* wrote among other things, "Vivekananda recommends Sir W. Wilson Hunter's 'Short History of the People of India [1880]' as being official and perfectly reliable, and almost the only book published in English about India and the religion and customs of the Hindoo people that can be depended upon." In other lectures, Vivekananda referred to Hunter's books as verification of

ancient India's contribution to modern medical science, and the education of Indian women in the Middle Ages.<sup>58</sup> Born in Glasgow, Scotland, Sir William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900) acquired knowledge of Sanskrit and joined the Indian Civil Service in 1862, remaining in India for twenty-five years. His informative, objective, and pleasant reading books made India better known to the English-speaking world. Hunter's historical statements on Indian knowledge include, "The Astronomy of the Hindus has formed the subject of excessive admiration." "The Hindus attained a very high proficiency in arithmetic and algebra independently of any foreign influence." "Bhaskaracharya [1114-85] knew the law of gravitation. The *Surya Siddhanta* [12<sup>th</sup> century] is based on a system of trigonometry. Professor Wallace says: 'In fact it is founded on a geometrical theorem, which was not known to the geometers of Europe before the time of Vieta [1540-1603], about two hundred years ago. And it employs the sine of arcs, a thing unknown to the Greeks.' The 47<sup>th</sup> proposition of Book I of Euclid, which is ascribed to Pythagoras was known long ago to the Hindus and must have been learnt from them by Pythagoras." "The grammar of Panini [c. 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.] stands supreme among the grammars of the world, alike for its precision of statement, and for its thorough analysis of the roots of the language and of the formative principles of words." Pāṇini's comprehensive and scientific theory of grammar marks the beginning of Classical Sanskrit. It included 3,959 rules of syntax, semantics, and morphology (the pattern of words and how they are formed and relate to each other).<sup>59</sup>

In 1830, the estate of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Boden (d. 1811) of the Bombay Native Infantry was endowed to establish the Boden Chair in Sanskrit at Oxford University. Boden wrote, "A more general and critical knowledge of the language will be the means of enabling my countrymen to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India in the Christian religion, by disseminating a knowledge of the Sanskrit scriptures among them, more effectually than by all other means

whatever." Horace Wilson (1786-1860) translator and commentator on the *Vishnu Purana* (1840) with copious notes, held the Professorship up until the year of his passing. He was followed by Sir Monier Monier-Williams (1819-1899) who held the position until 1888, while encouraging Christian evangelization in India. During that time his greatest contribution to the field was his monumental 1333 page *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, the most outstanding volume ever produced on the subject. The first edition appeared in 1872, being a significant enlargement of an earlier 1851 version.<sup>60</sup>

After Monier-Williams retired from the Professorship in 1887, he expressed a more supportive view of Hinduism. In the Preface of *Brahmanism and Hinduism* (1891), Monier-Williams acknowledged, "And yet it is a remarkable characteristic of Hinduism that it neither requires nor attempts to make converts. Nor is it at present by any means decreasing in numbers, nor is it being driven out of the field by two such proselytizing religions as Mahomedanism [*sic*] and Christianity. On the contrary, it is at present rapidly increasing. And far more remarkable than this is that, it is all-receptive, all-embracing and all-comprehensive. It claims to be the one religion of humanity, of human nature, of the entire world. It cares not to oppose the progress of Christianity nor of any other religion. For it has no difficulty in including all other religions within its all-embracing arms and ever-widening fold. And in real fact Hinduism has something to offer which is suited to all minds. Its very strength lies in its infinite adaptability to the infinite diversity of human characters and human tendencies. It has its highly spiritual and abstract side suited to the philosophical higher classes. Its practical and concrete side suited to the man of affairs and the man of the world. Its aesthetic and ceremonial side suited to the man of poetic feeling and imagination. Its quiescent and contemplative side suited to the man of peace and lover of seclusion. Indeed, the Hindus were Spinozists 2,000 years before the birth of Spinoza, Darwinians centuries before the birth of Darwin, and evolutionists' centuries before the

doctrine of evolution had been accepted by the Huxley's of our time, and before any word like evolution existed in any language of the world." This statement drew the attention of Swami Vivekananda who on 1 July 1894 remarked in a letter to Mrs. G. W. Hale, "He seems to have got the idea quite correct."<sup>61</sup>

Friedrich Maximilian Müller (1823-1900) of Oxford University was the most successful of all of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Western Indologists largely because of his tireless work and enormous literary output. Vivekananda states, "Among the Sanskrit scholars of the West, Professor Max Müller takes the lead." "Professor Max Müller is a perfect Vedantist, and has done splendid work in Vedantism." Müller did more than any other scholar to awakened interest in Indology among educated Westerners. His first major accomplishment was his twenty-five-year study, the four volume *Rigveda Samhita, the Sacred Hymns of the Brahmans, together with the Commentaries of Sayanacharya* (1849-74). Prior to this event, the *Rig Veda* was for the most part an inaccessible manuscript that was too sacred to be publically published. As Max Müller divulged concerning the *Rig Veda*, "There existed manuscripts of it, but not very many, and the only way recognized in India of learning the *Veda*, without destroying its sanctity and efficacy, was to learn it by heart from the mouth of a qualified teacher. Every word, every letter, every accent of the *Veda* had been settled by authority as far back as about the fifth century B.C., and from that point of view the authority of oral tradition was, and is still considered much higher than that of a mere manuscript. Formerly, as in the time of the *Laws of Manu*, it was even forbidden to write the *Veda* or to sell copies of it."<sup>62</sup> He thought that since the Indo-European languages are related to each other they must have been derived from one common language. To this day the original language has not been determined.

During his lifetime, Max Müller came out with many very popular books of the highest quality covering Indian, religion, philosophy, literature, language, and contemporary biography. One of the founders

of the Comparative Study of Religions he inaugurated and edited the 50 volume series of religious scriptures and philosophy in translation, titled *Sacred Books of the East* (1879-1904). The series included Müller's translation of the principal *Upanishads* (1879, 1884). These authoritative translations are still sold today.<sup>63</sup> In 1853, Müller tried to prove that the Indians were not a foreign people completely separate from the Europeans. That at one time the Indians, Persians (Iranians) and Europeans live together and spoke a common language. In addition, he is credited with being one of the founders of the academic discipline of "Comparative Religions." He supported the "Historical proof of the existence of God," that God has revealed Himself throughout history in a progressive evolutionary manner. By studying religion in India since the time of the *Rig Veda*, one could trace the progressive development of religious ideas. Vivekananda agreed with him on this stating, "The *Vedas* should be studied through the eyeglass of evolution. They contain the whole history of the progress of religious consciousness, until religion has reached perfection in unity." In addition, Müller came up with the concepts of henotheism the stage of development intermediate between polytheism and monotheism; and adeism the denial of the gods, but not of God (which is atheism). Henotheism is to accept many deities, but only one as supreme.<sup>64</sup>

His interests extended to contemporary India as Vivekananda signified, "The Brahmo Samaj guided by Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen, the Arya Samaj established by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and the Theosophical movement--have all come under the praise or censure of his pen." It is to Max Müller's credit that of all the Western Indologists he took the keenest interest in the contemporary Indian religious movements. In addition to Ramakrishna, he also penned essays on many prominent nineteenth century Indian leaders including: Rammohan Roy, Dwarkanath Tagore, Debendranath Tagore, Raja Radhakanta Deva, Keshab Sen, with whom he corresponded for a long



time, Ramtanu Lahiri, Dayananda Saraswati, Pawhari Baba, and Rai Shaligram Saheb Bahadur.<sup>65</sup>

In his writings Max Müller extols Indian thought, "If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered over the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of the Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw the corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human a life ... again I should point to India."

With emphasis on the *Upanishads*, "[SEP][SEP] I maintain that for everybody who cares for himself, for his ancestors, for his history, for his intellectual development, a study of Vedic literature is indispensable. [SEP][SEP] The *Upanishads* are the ... sources of ... the Vedanta philosophy, a system in which human speculation seems to me to have reached its very acme.... I spend my happiest hours in reading Vedantic books. They are to me like the light of the morning, like the pure air of the mountains--so simple, so true, if once understood."

Müller emphasizes ancient Indian literature as the source and origin of modern intellectual thought, "The Vedic literature opens to us a chamber in the education of human race to which we can find no parallel anywhere else. Whoever cares for the historical growth of our language and thought, whoever cares for the first intelligent development of religion and mythology, whoever cares for the first foundation of Science, Astronomy, Metronomy, Grammar, and Etymology, whoever cares for the first intimation of the first philosophical thoughts, for the first attempt at regulating family life, village life and state life as founded on religion, ceremonials, traditions

and contact must in future pay full attention to the study of Vedic literature."<sup>66</sup>

When Vivekananda travelled to England in May 1896, Max Müller treated him and Edward Sturdy (1860-1957) with great cordiality. In his essay "On Max Müller" Vivekananda relates, "The Professor was kindness itself, and asked Mr. Sturdy and myself to lunch with him. He showed us several colleges in Oxford and the Bodleian library. He also accompanied us to the railway station; and all this he did because, as he said, "It is not every day one meets a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa"... [Vivekananda asked him], 'When are you coming to India?'... The face of the aged sage brightened up—there was almost a tear in his eyes, a gentle nodding of the head, and slowly the words came out: 'I would not return then; you would have to cremate me there.'"<sup>67</sup>

The Swami met Müller again at Oxford University in September or October 1896 accompanied by Captain (1846-1900) and Charlotte Sevier (1847-1930), and Paul Deussen (1845-1919).<sup>68</sup> Vivekananda very much appreciated the work the Western Indologists were doing. He often praised Müller whom he believed was a reincarnation of a distinguished Indian Vedic pundit, stating "Sayana [1320-87] who is born again as Max Müller to revive his commentary on the *Vedas*."<sup>69</sup> Vivekananda informs us, "I have seen professors of Sanskrit in America and in Europe. Some of them are very sympathetic towards Vedantic thought. I admire their intellectual acumen and their lives of unselfish labour. But Paul Deussen—or, as he prefers to be called in Sanskrit, Deva-Sena—and the veteran Max Müller have impressed me as being the truest friends of India and Indian thought.... There is now happily coming into existence in Europe a new type of Sanskrit scholars, reverential, sympathetic, and learned--reverential because they are a better stamp of men, and sympathetic because they are learned. And the link which connects the new portion of the chain with the old one is, of course, our Max Müller. We Hindus certainly owe more to him than to

any other Sanskrit scholar in the West, and I am simply astonished when I think of the gigantic task which he, in his enthusiasm, undertook as a young man and brought to a successful conclusion in his old age."<sup>70</sup>

In a letter written to Vivekananda in the spring of 1896, Max Müller made the following wonderful statement about Ramakrishna, "As for your beloved master of blessed memory, Bhagaban Sri Ram Krishan, how can I ever tell you what he is to me, I love and worship him with my whole heart. To think of him makes my eyes fill with tears of gladness that I was permitted to hear of him. His sayings, published in the *Brahmavadin*, are my greatest delight. How wonderful that his teachings should have been borne to this far-off land where we have never even known of his existence! If I might only have known him, while he was yet with us! My greatest desire is to one day visit the spot which [was] sanctified by his presence, while he lived, and I may be so fortunate as to fulfil the wish."<sup>71</sup>

In 1898, Max Müller came out with the first book-length biography of Ramakrishna written by a Westerner entitled, *Ramakrishna His Life and Sayings*. Leading up to that event Swami Saradananda tells us, "[Müller] asked Vivekananda to furnish him with enough material for a book so he could write about Sri Ramakrishna in greater detail. Vivekananda agreed to help. When he returned, he asked me to undertake the job forthwith. I worked hard and gathered all the incidents in the life of the Master and the teachings of the Master and showed the manuscript to Vivekananda. I thought Vivekananda would edit it and make extensive corrections. He didn't do that. He simply changed a few words for fear of exaggeration and sent the whole manuscript to Professor Müller. As I remember, Professor Müller incorporated the completed manuscript in his book and published it without making any alterations."<sup>72</sup>

The biography was a success receiving glowing reviews from leading Western Indologists like Maurice Bloomfield in America and Sylvain Levi in France among others. Vivekananda commented, "The

greater portion of the book has been devoted to the collection of the sayings, rather than to the life itself. That those sayings have attracted the attention of many of the English-speaking readers throughout the world can be easily inferred from the rapid sale of the book. The sayings, falling direct from his holy lips, are impregnated with the strongest spiritual force and power, and therefore they will surely exert their Divine influence in every part of the world."<sup>73</sup>

An adaptation of one of Sir Edwin Arnold's (1832-1904) hymns appears in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (pp. 871-72). It is taken from *The Light of Asia* (1879), the life and teachings of Buddha as told in verse by an Indian Buddhist. On October 23, 1885 when Ramtaran sang the song, Sri Ramakrishna entered into samadhi. Swami Vivekananda showed appreciation for *The Light of Asia* and Arnold's other works.<sup>74</sup> During 1856-61 Edwin Arnold was the Principal of the Government School, Deccan College, in Bombay, India. At that time he gained an appreciation for Indian culture, literature, and philosophy. Arnold's poetical biography of the Buddha enjoyed tremendous public and critical popularity, undergoing eighty editions in the United States. After revisiting India, in 1886 Arnold wrote most appreciatively of the people, "We brought our goodwill to India, and leave it with that goodwill doubled and trebled. I myself have found nothing but friendliness and courtesy among the countless millions of this land ... I have witnessed a thousand instances of simple virtues—of charity, of domestic affection, of natural courtesy, of inherent modesty, of human dignity, of devotion, of piety, of glad human life ... I wish that there were space to speak here of the Indian wives and mothers, among whom are to be counted humble saints and angels by the lakh—gentle, patient, laborious, faithful, pure, contented, cheerful, and affectionate souls.... I declare myself not so much her [India's] friend as her lover. I leave my heart behind me in leaving these Indian peoples, who have taught me, as I have wandered among them, that manners more noble and gentle, learning more modest and profound, loyalty more sincere, refinement

more natural, and sweeter simplicities of life, and love, and duty exist in the length and breath of British Asia than even I had gathered from my old experiences, before India was 'revisited.'"<sup>75</sup>

Theosophist leader Annie Wood Besant (1847-1933) was Irish-born, as were other supporters of India like Edmund Burke, Major-General Charles "Hindoo Stuart," William Cooke Taylor, and Sister Nivedita. She made contact with Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions in 1893 and wrote a glowing tribute about him. Four years later in a Theosophy publication, she wrote well of Swamis Vivekananda, Saradananda, and Shivananda. Annie Besant came to love, work for, and live in India where she was imprisoned. She was a cofounder of Central Hindu College in 1898, which later became the nucleus of Banaras Hindu University. That year she wrote of Sri Ramakrishna's "purity and devotion" when reviewing an article about him written by Max Müller. In 1895 she revealed, "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 that the great religion known by the name of Hinduism. Make no mistake, without Hinduism, India has no future" and in 1902, she passionately declared, "I love the Indian people as I love none other. My heart and my mind ... have long been laid on the altar of the Motherland." Annie Besant went on to become President of the Indian National Congress in 1917.<sup>76</sup>

Many British military officers who served in India were involved in Indian studies. They include the previously mentioned Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Boden (d. 1811) and Irish born Major General Charles "Hindoo Stuart," (1758-1828); Colonel George A. Jacob (1849-1918) an accomplished Sanskrit scholar who wrote *Concordance to the Principle Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita* (1891); Scottish Colonel Laurence Waddell (1854-1938) author of *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism* (1895); Lieutenant Colonel Francis Younghusband (1863-1942) leader of the British military expedition to Tibet (1903-04) where he had a profound mystical experience, who praised Sri Ramakrishna in his book

*The Gleam* (1923) and *Dawn in India* (1931) and attended the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna (1937) accompanied by his American friend Colonel Charles Lindbergh (1902-74)<sup>77</sup>; Colonel Arthur E. Powell (1882-1969) an insightful Theosophist, author of many books including *The Astral Body* (1927), *The Mental Body* (1927), and *The Causal Body and the Ego* (1928), and Major Francis Yeats-Brown (1886-1944) who praised Sri Ramakrishna and authored his best-selling autobiography *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* (1930) and *Yoga Explained* (1937).<sup>78</sup>

## 5. Nineteenth Century German and French Indology

In the 1657, Prince Dara Shukoh (1615-59) the favored son of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan translated (or had translated) fifty *Upanishads* from the original Sanskrit into the Persian language. With the title *Sirr-i-Akbar* ("The Great Secret") he hoped it would influence Muslim scholars. In addition, he recognized a number of similarities between the Hindu Advaita Vedanta and the Indian Muslim Sufi doctrines, both of which teach the oneness of God and the Absolute. Many of these Sufi ideas originated with the teachings of the great Muslim philosopher Ibn al-'Arabi (1165-1240). In 1801-02, Dara Shukoh's Persian translation was rendered into Latin in two volumes by the French scholar Anquetil-Duperron (1731-1805), with the title *Oupnek'hat*. He visited India as a young man between 1755 and 1761, and later was the first person to recognize a correspondence between the *Upanishads* and the metaphysical philosophy of Immanuel Kant. In this way European readers were introduced to fifty *Upanishads*. Most important, it is from this translation that the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) learned of the contents of the *Upanishads*, and also the philosophers Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854) and Karl C. F. Krause (1781-1832). This book contributed a great deal to awaken European interest in Indian philosophy. In the 1940s definitive English

language translations of the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad Gita* were written by Swamis Prabhavananda and Nikhilananda.<sup>1</sup>

As a member of the German Romantic movement, Friedrich von Schlegel (1772-1829) believed Europe had lost its sense of unity and harmony and the capacity for deeper religion. During the Enlightenment (c. 1637-1800), also known as the Age of Reason, a more critical attitude developed toward religion particularly toward its mythological aspects. The Industrial revolution caused many people to live a more secular life style. Schlegel proposed a return to the sources of Indian wisdom as a remedy for the current loss of faith and spiritual impoverishment. In a letter dated September 15, 1803, he wrote, "Here is the actual source of all languages, all the thoughts and poems of the human spirit; everything, everything without exception comes from India." "There is no language in the world, even Greek, which has the clarity and the philosophical precision of Sanskrit." In 1808 he published an important work of European Indology, *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians*. It is "the first work in the German language in which the Indian language, literature, and history are presented upon the basis of a study of original sources." Impressed with Indic spirituality in the volume he declared, "It cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of the true God; all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions, noble, clear and severely grand, as deeply conceived and reverentially expressed as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God.... Even the loftiest philosophy of the European, the idealism of reason as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers, appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigor of Oriental idealism like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory of the noonday sun, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished.... The Divine origin of man, as taught by Vedanta, is continually inculcated, to stimulate his efforts to return, to animate him

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<sup>1</sup> Halbfass, pp. 33-35, 62-67; Londhe, #200. Dara Shukoh.

in the struggle, and incite him to consider a reunion and reincorporation with Divinity as the one primary object of every action and exertion." In his later writings Schlegel turned to other areas of interest, but still referred to the Indians as the "most cultivated and wisest people of antiquity."<sup>79</sup>

Frederich's brother August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767-1845) was the first Professor of Indology in Germany, a position he held at Bonn beginning in 1818. Through the investigation of Indian sources he thought a regeneration of Europe might be possible. His most important contribution to Indian studies was a Latin translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* (1823).<sup>80</sup> The Prussian Minister of Education, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), was a brilliant linguist who made important contributions to the philosophy of language. Later in life he was greatly moved by Schlegel's *Gita*. Humboldt made an extensive study of the volume, considering it to be, "The most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue... perhaps the deepest and loftiest thing the world has to show." He wrote to his friend, statesman Frederick von Gentz (1764-1832) in 1827, "I read the Indian poem for the first time when I was in my country estate in Silesia and, while doing so, I felt a sense of overwhelming gratitude to God for having let me live to be acquainted with this work. It must be the most profound and sublime thing to be found in the world." He published a book on the *Bhagavad Gita* in 1826.<sup>81</sup>

In London in 1896, Swami Vivekananda had this to say about Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), "I should like to remind you how Schopenhauer predicted that the influence of Indian philosophy upon Europe would be as momentous when it became well known as was the revival of Greek and Latin learning at the close of the Dark Ages. Oriental research is making great progress; a new world of ideas is opening to the seeker after truth."<sup>82</sup> And in his first public speech after returning to Asia on January 16, 1897 he added, "At the beginning of this century, Schopenhauer, the great German philosopher, studying from a not very clear translation of the *Vedas* made from an old



translation into Persian and thence by a young Frenchman into Latin, says, '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, it will be the solace of my death.'<sup>83</sup>

Schopenhauer was born exactly 1,000 years after the traditional birth date assigned to Shankara in 788. In his classic two-volume *The World as Will and Representation* (1819, 1844), Schopenhauer discussed such topics as Asia, Avatar, *Bhagavad Gita*, Brahma, Brahman, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Hindus, India, Krishna, maya, Max Müller, metempsychosis, nirvana, *Oupenk'hat (Upanishads)*, rebirth, sannyasins, Sanskrit, Shiva, Tat tvam asi, *Upanishads*, Vedanta, and Vishnu.<sup>84</sup> In 1814, he became acquainted with the thought of the *Upanishads* from reading Anquetil-Duperron, Latin translation from Persian. Concerning the *Upanishads*, Schopenhauer remarked, "The conviction here described and arising directly out of the apprehension of nature must have been extremely lively in those sublime authors of the *Upanishads* of the *Vedas*, who can scarcely be conceived as mere human beings. For this conviction speaks to us so forcibly from an immense number of their utterances that we must ascribe this immediate illumination of their mind to the fact that, standing nearer to the origin of our race as regards time, these sages apprehended the inner essence of things."<sup>85</sup>

Schopenhauer thought that he (combined with the philosophical achievements that Kant had helped to prepare) had systematized the thoughts of the *Upanishads*. He wrote, "The *Upanishads* ... have no scientific form, no presentation that is systematic ... Yet when one has grasped the teachings which I have advanced, one may afterwards derive all of those most ancient Indian statements as conclusions and then recognize their truth, so that it must be assumed that what I have recognized to be the truth had also been grasped by those sages at the beginning of earthly time and uttered according to their fashion, even if it did not become clear to them in its unity."<sup>86</sup> Apparently, Schopenhauer did not know that before his writings, Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva

had already accomplished the task of forming a systematic presentation of the *Upanishads*, and that their teachings constitute a living perennial and well-practiced religion that has inspired many devotees on their quest for a higher existence.

Sir William Jones translated Kalidasa's (c. 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) famous Sanskrit play *Shakuntala* in 1789. Kalidasa is regarded as the greatest poet and dramatist in the Sanskrit language. A leading figure of modern German literature is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), dramatist, novelist, poet, and author of the play *Faust*. In the Spring of 1894, Vivekananda attended the presentation of *Faust* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. In 1830, the Orientalist A. L. de Chézy (1773-1832) sent Goethe his edition of the original version of *Shakuntala* in French. In reply Goethe wrote to the Frenchman expressing his gratitude, "The first time I came across this inexhaustible work it aroused such enthusiasm in me and so held me that I could not stop studying it. I even felt impelled to make the impossible attempt to bring it in some form to the German stage. These efforts were fruitless but they made me so thoroughly acquainted with this most valuable work, it represented such an epoch in my life, I so absorbed it, that for thirty years I did not look at either the English or the German version.... It is only now that I understand the enormous impression that work made on me at an earlier age." The Holy Ganga River is alluded to in "Auf Flugeln des Gesanges," a poem by the influential German Romantic Heinrich Heine (1797-1856). One of the noblest preludes in European music is the *Shakuntala Overture* (1865) composed by the Hungarian musician Carl Goldmark (1830-1915). Richard Wagner (1813-83) the celebrated German composer absorbed Indian ideas and transformed them to be in harmony with his aesthetic ideals. They appear for example in the libretti of the 1882 opera "Parsifal," where he used an episode from the great epic, the *Ramayana*.<sup>87</sup>

Victor Cousin (1792-1867) who exerted major influence on the extension of primary education in France concluded in *Introduction to*

*the History of Philosophy* (1832), "When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East--above all, those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe--we discover there many a truth, and truths so profound ... that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East, and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy."<sup>88</sup>

Concerning the *Rig Veda* which he translated, Adolf Kaegi (1849-1923) a Swiss Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Zurich discerned, "Its value for mankind cannot be easily overrated.... It best displays the first development of intellectual activities of our race." Since the time of Rammohan Roy, most studies comparing Indian texts with the *Bible* focus on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Yet in 1886, when Adolf Kaegi made the remarkable discovery of 116 parallel passages between the *Bible* and the Indian *Rig Veda* texts (with a few from the *Atharva Veda*), he found that 104 (90%) were from the *Old Testament* and only 12 (10%) from the *New Testament*. Forty-six percent of the comparable *Old Testament* passages he cited were drawn from the book of Psalms, 16 % from Job, 9 % from Jeremiah, 6% from Isaiah, and 23% from the remaining chapters of the *Old Testament*. More than 82% percent of the parallel passages are centered in the seven-book range from Job, the eighteenth book of the *Old Testament* to Jeremiah the twenty-fourth.<sup>89</sup> The first five of the seven books belong to the wisdom tradition.<sup>90</sup>

Well over half of the *Rig Veda* and *Atharva Veda* references that parallel Biblical passages, are taken from the comparatively small number of hymns offered to the deity Varuna. Yet in the *Rig Veda* only about 30 of the 1028 hymns are addressed to *Varuna* and generally in association with Mitra. During the Vedic period, Varuna was the supreme deity that most resembles the Hebrew Yahweh (Jehovah). Etymologically Varuna is related to the Greek sky deity Ouranos, the Baltic Velinas, and the Mitanni (of Eastern Anatolia (Turkey)) Aruna.<sup>91</sup> Ashura Varuna also shows many affinities with Ahura Mazda the supreme God of the Zoroastrian religion. One of the oldest Vedic

deities, Varuna is a universal monarch who resides in heaven and is the omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent universal creator, sustainer, and sovereign ruler of the physical and moral order (AV 4:16). He supports and controls the celestial, atmospheric, and terrestrial regions. His ordinances cannot be violated by deities or humans. Ethical and devout hymns are addressed to him as the moral governor of the universe who punishes sinners. In the post-Vedic literature his status was reduced, and he no longer held this supreme position.<sup>92</sup>

There is a rough correspondence in the order of events in the development of Hindu and Christian thought. Stage one Kaegi brings out the *Vedas-Old Testament* correspondence. Stage two there are some resemblances between the *Upanishads* and the Greek philosophy of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. Stage three is that of the *Bhagavad Gita* that shares a number of parallel passages with the *New Testament*. This was first pointed out in F. Lorinser (1821-93), *Die Bhagavad-Gita*, 1869. Stage four involves the commentaries on the scriptures. There is a correspondence between the Indian division between Nondualist and Dualist Vedantists and the Christian division between Classical Theism and Theistic Personalism that is supported by Biblical theology.

For the 50-volume *Sacred Books of the East* (1879-1904) series, George Thibaut (1848-1914) undertook two very difficult translations requiring profound skill in both language and philosophical knowledge. They are the two-volume *The Vedanta Sutras with the Commentary by Shankaracharya* (1890, 1896, 1904), and *The Vedanta Sutras with the Commentary by Ramanuja* (1904). The former was the premier Western translation until Swami Gambhirananda's edition (1965) and the latter still is. At one time an assistant of Max Müller, Thibaut a German scholar was Professor and the Principal of Benares Hindu College and later at Muir Central College in Allahabad. Upon his passing he received many scholarly tributes, including one from Lokmanya Tilak (aka Bal

Gangadhar Tilak, 1856-1920) who wrote, "In him India has lost the warmest friend, the wisest lover, and the most enthusiastic admirer."<sup>93</sup>

Swami Vivekananda visited the German Indologist and philosopher Paul Deussen (1845-1919) at his home in Kiel, Germany on September 9-10, 1896. A leading Indologist, Deussen was Professor of Philosophy at Kiel University between 1889 and 1919. They travelled together to Hamburg, Bremen, Amsterdam, and then to Wimbledon, England, holding long and enthusiastic conversations in English and Sanskrit. In Wimbledon, they moved to separate residences, but met on a daily basis for two weeks discussing Indian philosophy and related subjects.<sup>94</sup> After his meeting and discussions with Vivekananda, Deussen produced a translation of the *Sixty Upanishads of the Veda* (1897), *The Philosophy of the Upanishads* (1899), and *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (1908). Concerning the *Upanishads*, he made the important point, "No translation can ever do justice to the beauty of the original."<sup>95</sup> Vivekananda was no doubt greatly inspired by the deep philosophical discussions that he held with Deussen for nearly a month. After returning to England, between October 15 and November 5, 1896, Vivekananda delivered a series of eight penetrating metaphysical lectures that constitute the first half of his highly philosophical masterpiece *Jnana-Yoga*.<sup>96</sup>

## 6. Nineteenth Century American Interest in India

A man of many talents, Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) the famous chemist (generally credited with the discovery of oxygen) and Unitarian clergyman arrived in America from Great Britain in 1794. Drawing on European sources, his work entitled, *A Comparison of the Institutions of Moses With Those of the Hindoos and Other Ancient Nations* (1797) offered an account of the religion, philosophy, and social customs of India. He wrote, "The institutions of the Hindoos, civil and religious, are the most respectable for their antiquity of any that now subsist, at least

of any that are extant in writing." In addition, Priestley mentioned that the ancient Hindus were far more advanced in the arts and sciences, particularly astronomy than most other nations.

Priestley's sermons were attended by an acquaintance and correspondent, John Adams (1735-1826) the 2<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States (1797-1801) and former Vice-President under George Washington. The third President of the United States (1801-09) Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) acquired a copy of William Jones' translation of Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* in 1791. Many years later in a correspondence with Thomas Jefferson dated December 25, 1813, John Adams mentioned that Priestley "ought to have told us that in India he [Pythagoras] conversed with the Brahmins, and read the Shasta [Shastras], five thousand years old, written in the language of the sacred Sansosistes [Sanskrit?], with the elegance and sentiments of Plato. Where is to be found theology more orthodox, or philosophy more profound, than in the introduction to the Shasta? 'God is one creator of all universal spheres, without beginning, without end.' These doctrines, sublime, if ever there were any sublime, Pythagoras learned in India. God governs all the creation by a general providence, resulting from his eternal designs. Search not the essence and the nature of the eternal, who is one; your research will be vain and presumptuous. It is enough that, day by day, and night by night, you adore his power, his wisdom and his goodness, in his works. The Eternal willed in the fullness of time, to communicate of His essence and of His splendor, to beings capable of perceiving it. They as yet existed not. The Eternal willed and they were. He created Birma [Brahma], Vitsnou [Vishnu] and Siv [Shiva]. These doctrines, sublime, if ever there were any sublime, Pythagoras learned in India, and taught them to Zaleucus and his other disciples. He there learned also his metempsychosis [reincarnation]."

Two months later (February 1814) John Adams wrote to Jefferson that he had read everything he could collect concerning Oriental history and the Hindu religion. He added, "The Trinity of Pythagoras and Plato,

their contempt of matter, flesh, and blood, their almost adoration of fire and water, their metempsychosis, and even the prohibition of beans, so evidently derived from India." A little over three years later (26 May 1817) Adams mentioned to Jefferson in a letter that he had read Sir William Jones' eleventh discourses before the Asiatic Society.<sup>97</sup>

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82) the famous American Unitarian minister, essayists, transcendental philosopher and poet, had a great admiration for Indian knowledge, which is exemplified in his numerous praises of Indian literature and culture. He exchanged letters with Max Müller whom he made contact with in England in 1873, and he received written praise from P. C. Mozoomdar. His main sources were the English language versions of the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Katha Upanishads*, *Laws of Manu*, *Vishnu Purana*, *Bhagavata*, and a few other translations. The following quotations are taken from Emerson's *Essays* and *Journals*.<sup>98</sup>

Emerson's praises of India and its literature from his *Essays* (1836-) include, "In all nations there are minds which incline to dwell in the conception of the fundamental Unity. The raptures of prayer and ecstasy of devotion lose all being in one Being. This tendency finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, and chiefly in the Indian Scriptures, in the *Vedas*, the *Bhagavat Geeta*, and the *Vishnu Purana*.... What is the great end of all, you shall now learn from me. It is Soul [Atman]--one in all bodies, pervading, uniform, perfect, preeminent over nature, exempt from birth, growth and decay, omnipresent, made up of true knowledge, independent, unconnected with unrealities, with name, species and the rest, in time past, present and to come. The knowledge that this spirit, which is essentially one, is in one's own and in all other bodies, is the wisdom of one who knows the unity of things" (*Essays*, IV:49-51). "The country of unity, of immovable institutions, the seat of philosophy delighting in abstractions, of men faithful in doctrine and in practice.... If the East loved infinity, the West delighted in boundaries (*Essays*, IV:52). "Led the Hindoos to say, 'Fate is nothing but the deeds committed in a prior state of existence'" (*Essays*, VI:12). "'A man' says the

*Vishnu Sarma*, 'who having well compared his own strength or weakness with that of others, after all doth not know the difference, is easily overcome by his enemies'" (*Essays*, VI:235). "The highest object of their religion was to restore that bond by which their own Self [Atman] was linked to the Eternal Self (Paramatman); to recover that unity which has been clouded and obscured by the magical illusion of reality, by the so-called Maia [Maya] of creation" (*Essays*, VI:426, footnote). "The poverty of the saint, of the rapt philosopher, of the naked Indian, is not comic. The lie is in the surrender of the man to his appearance; as if a man should neglect himself and treat his shadow on the wall with marks of infinite respect" (*Essays*, VIII:169). "Names of men who have left remains that certify a height of genius in their several directions not since surpassed, and which men in proportion to their wisdom still cherish, as ... the grand scriptures, only recently known to Western nations, of the Indian *Vedas*, the *Institutes of Menu* [Manu], the *Puranas*, the poems of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*" (*Essays*, VIII:214). "The genius of the Hindoos, whom no people have surpassed in the grandeur of their ethical statement" (*Essays*, VIII:239). "The subtle Hindoo, who carried religion to ecstasy and philosophy to idealism, produced the wonderful *Epics* of which, in the present century, the translations have added new regions to thought" (*Essays*, X:243).

From Emerson's *Journals*, "'What living creature slays, or is slain What living creature preserves or is preserved? Each is his own destroyer or preserver, as follows evil or good'-- *Vishnu Purana*" (*Journals*, VII:127). "The Indian ... teaches to speak the truth, love others as yourself, and to despise trifles. The East is grand--and makes Europe appear the land of trifles. Identity, identity! friend and foe are one stuff... Cheerful and noble is the genius of this cosmogony" (*Journals*, VII:129-30). "I owed--a magnificent day to the *Bhagavat Geeta*. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spake 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. Let us not now go back and apply a minute criticism to it, but cherish the venerable oracle" (*Journals*, VII:511).

"Know that which does not see by the eye; and by which they see the eyes, as Brahma, and not what is worshipped as this.' 'Know that which does not think by the mind, and by which they say the mind is thought, as Brahma, and not what is worshipped as this'" (*Journals*, IX:57). "A grander legend than Western literature contains, is the story of Nachiketas" (*Journals*, IX:58). "Well, when India was explored, and the wonderful riches of Indian theologic[al] literature found, that dispelled once for all the dreams about Christianity being the sole revelation--for, here in India, there in China, were the same principles, the same grandeurs, the like depths, moral and intellectual" (*Journals*, IX:197).

Emerson's neighbor and good friend, Henry David Thoreau (1817-62) the well-known American Transcendental philosopher, author, and naturalist, held great respect for Indian knowledge, which is exemplified in his affirmative statements concerning Hindu religious literature, practices and thought. He published ten pages of extracts from *The Laws of Menu* [Manu] for the journal, *The Dial* in January 1843. Thoreau expressed his admiration for the *Gita*, "The reader is nowhere raised into and sustained in a higher, purer, or rarer region of thought than in the *Bhagavat-Geeta*.... It is unquestionably one of the noblest and most sacred scriptures which have come down to us.... It deserves to be read with reverence even by Yankees, as a part of the sacred writings of a devout people; and the intelligent Hebrew will rejoice to find in it a moral grandeur and sublimity akin to those of his own Scriptures.... In comparison with the philosophers of the East, we may say that modern Europe has yet given birth to none. Beside the vast and cosmological philosophy of the *Bhagavat-Geeta*, even Shakespeare seems sometimes youthfully green and practical merely.... In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagavat-Geeta*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its

literature seem puny and trivial; and I doubt if that philosophy is not to be referred to a previous state of existence, so remote is its sublimity from our conceptions."<sup>99</sup>

Concerning the *Laws of Menu* [Manu] Thoreau wrote, "I know of no book which comes down to us with grander pretensions than this, and it is so impersonal and sincere that it is never offensive nor ridiculous. Compare the modes in which modern literature is advertised with the prospectus of this book, and think what a reading public it addresses, what criticism it expects. It seems to have been uttered from some eastern summit, with a sober morning prescience in the dawn of time, and you cannot read a sentence without being elevated as upon the tableland of the Ghauts.... The sublime sentences of Menu carry us back to a time when purification and sacrifice and self-devotion had a place in the faith of men, and were not as now a superstition. They contain a subtle and refined philosophy also, such as in these times is not accompanied with so lofty and pure a devotion."<sup>100</sup>

On the *Vedas*, "In the Hindoo scripture the idea of man is quite illimitable and sublime. There is nowhere a loftier conception of his destiny.... What extracts from the *Vedas* I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary, which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum, - free from particulars, simple, universal.... One wise sentence is worth the state of Massachusetts many times over. The *Vedas* contain a sensible account of God. The religion and philosophy of the Hebrews are those of a wilder and ruder tribe, wanting the civility and intellectual refinements and subtlety of the Hindoos. Man flows at once to God as soon as the channel of purity, physical, intellectual, and moral, is open. With the Hindoos virtue is an intellectual exercise, not a social and practical one. It is a knowing, not a doing."<sup>101</sup>

Thoreau's views on other Indian topics include, "It was fit that I should live on rice, mainly, who loved so well the philosophy of India." "A wise man will dispense with repentance. It is shocking and passionate. God prefers that you approach him thoughtful, not penitent,

though you are the chief of sinners. It is only by forgetting yourself that you draw near to him. The calmness and gentleness with which the Hindoo philosophers approach and discourse on forbidden themes is admirable." "I do not prefer one religion or philosophy to another. I have no sympathy with the bigotry and ignorance which make transient and partial and puerile distinctions between one man's faith or form of faith and another's- as Christian and heathen. I pray to be delivered from narrowness, partiality, exaggeration, bigotry. To the philosopher all sects, all nations, are alike. I like Brahma, Hari, Buddha, the Great Spirit, as well as God."<sup>102</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi was very much inspired by Thoreau's' essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience," which he first read in 1906-07. Up to that time, Gandhi's methodology in South Africa was referred to as "passive resistance." He also read Thoreau's book *Walden*, and he printed lengthy extracts from Thoreau's essays in pamphlet form.<sup>103</sup>

The great American novelist Herman Melville (1819-1891) often referred to Hindu myth and thought in his writings. In his most famous novel, *Moby Dick: or The Whale* (1851) he offers a fairly detailed description of the story of Vishnu incarnating in the form of a fish, which he interprets as a whale. Walt Whitman (1813-1892) was influenced to some extent by the New England Transcendentalists, and his famous book *Leaves of Grass* in 1855 later contained the poem entitled "Passage to India." Ralph Waldo Emerson once described Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* as a "blending of the *Bhagavad Gita* and *the New York Herald*" newspaper.<sup>104</sup>

Edward Washburn Hopkins (1857-1932) who in 1895 became Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at Yale emphasized that the philosophical ideas of many Greek philosophers were first known by the Indians. The three following quotes are from his *Religions of India* (1895, 1902). Hopkins expounded, "Both Thales and Parmenides were indeed anticipated by Hindu sages, and the Eleatic school seems to be a reflection of the *Upanishads*. The doctrines of Anaximander and

Heraclitus were perhaps not known first in Greece." He adds, "Plato is full of Sankhyan thought, worked out by him, but taken from Pythagoras. Before the sixth century B.C. all the religious-philosophical ideas of Pythagoras were current in India (L. Schroeder, *Pythagoras*). If there were but one or two of these cases, they might be set aside as accidental coincidences, but such coincidences are too numerous to be the result of chance." "Neo-Platonism and Christian Gnosticism owe much to India. The Gnostic ideas in regard to a plurality of heavens and spiritual worlds go back directly to Hindu sources. Soul and light are one in the Sankhyan system, before they became so in Greece, and when they appear united in Greece it is by means of the thought which is borrowed from India. The famous three qualities of the Sankhyan reappear as the Gnostic 'three classes.'"<sup>105</sup>

The eminent American novelist Mark Twain (aka Samuel Clemens, 1835-1910) embarked on a yearlong around the world tour in 1895. His three months stay in India was the centerpiece of his popular travelogue, *Following the Equator* (1897). He loved India, exchanging books with Swami Bhaskarananda (1833-99) in Benares, and left us with the following comments. "So far as I am able to judge, nothing has been left undone, either by man or nature, to make India the most extraordinary country that the sun visits on his rounds. Nothing seems to have been forgotten, nothing overlooked." "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." "India had the start of the whole world in the beginning of things. She had the first civilization; she had the first accumulation of material wealth; she was populous with deep thinkers and subtle intellects; she had mines, and woods, and a fruitful soul." "India has two million gods, and worships them all. In religion all other countries are paupers; India is the only millionaire." When traveling through India, he had exclaimed that

though a week had only seven days, Indians seemed to celebrate eight festivals every week.<sup>106</sup>

Almost paradoxically, the process of modernization has proven to be a great impetus for the revival of traditional values and cultural patterns. Through modern scholarship and archeology, India's temporarily forgotten past, its ancient history, books, and monuments have been rediscovered and reconstructed, motivating people of today. According to the Indian statesman and diplomat K. M. Panikkar (1895-1963), the past was reconstructed through the translations of the ancient religious and secular texts, and deciphering of ancient Indian script, creating a much-needed sense of history. Reawakened was the lost story of India's prior greatness through many centuries, which had to its credit many achievements in many spheres of knowledge. Information on the founding of empires, the extension of Indian civilization to other lands, unique monuments of architecture; each provided Indians with a sense of national pride.<sup>107</sup>

In the United States, Colonel Thomas Higginson (1823-1911) was an honorary vice-president of "The Ramakrishna Guide of Help in America" who invited Swamis Vivekananda and Abhedananda and Sister Nivedita to speak before the Free Religious Association. Vivekananda held an interesting conversation with Colonel Robert Ingersoll (1833-99) at the World's Parliament of Religions (1893).<sup>108</sup>

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century a number of India-West comparative philosophy books have been published such as: Swami Paramananda, *Emerson and Vedanta* (1918), Swami Paramananda, *Plato and Vedantic Idealism* (1924), F. I. Carpenter, *Emerson and Asia* (1930), K. L. Leidecker, *Josiah Royce and Indian Thought* (1931), A. Christy, *The Orient in American Transcendentalism* (1932), R. Otto, *Mysticism East and West* (Shankara-Eckhart, 1932), R. K. Tripathi, *Spinoza in the Light of Vedanta* (1951), F. K. Lazarus, *Ramanuja and Bowne* (1962), S. N. L. Shrivastava, *Samkara and Bradley* (1968), M. S. Modak, *Spinoza and the Upanishads* (1970), A. N. Dwivedi, *Indian Thought and Tradition in T. S. Eliot's Poetry* (1977), D.

Ghosh, *Indian Thought in T. S. Eliot* (1978), R. L. Singh, *An Inquiry Concerning Reason in Kant and S'amkara* (1978), R. B. Harris, *Neoplatonism and Indian Thought* (1982), J. W. Sedlar, *India in the Mind of Germany: Schelling, Schopenhauer* (1982), R. Prasad, *Ramanuja and Hegel* (1983), A. N. Bhattacharya *The Idealistic Philosophy of S'amkara and Spinoza* (1985), H. G. Coward, *Jung and Eastern Thought* (1985), R. K. Dhawan, *Henry David Thoreau, A Study in Indian Influence* (1985), V. P. Gaur, *Indian Thought and Existentialism* (1985), P. S. Sri, *T. S. Eliot, Vedanta and Buddhism* (1985), G. Misra, *Sources of Monism: Bradley and S'ankara* (1986), C. M. Kearns, *T. S. Eliot and Indic Tradition* (1987), G. Parkes, *Heidegger and Asian Thought* (1987), U. Patri, *Hindu Scriptures and American Transcendentalism* (1987), Harold Coward, *Derrida and Indian Philosophy* (1990), and A. K. Sharma, *Walt Whitman and Rabindranath Tagore* (1992).<sup>109</sup>

## References

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<sup>1</sup> CW, IV:449-51; VI:380-82; VII:149.

<sup>2</sup> Pitirim Sorokin, *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1928, 1956), pp. 306, 427.

<sup>3</sup> CW, IV:471; cf. VII:172-73.

<sup>4</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom\\_of\\_religion\\_in\\_India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_religion_in_India)

<sup>5</sup> This is not to say that the interaction of people from different continents did not occur before 1492, but at his time there was a large-scale systematic escalation of these events that has been occurring for over five centuries.

<sup>6</sup> CW, VII:357.

<sup>7</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance)

<sup>8</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hernan\\_Cortez](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hernan_Cortez)

<sup>9</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_development\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_development_theory)

<sup>10</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World-systems\\_theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World-systems_theory); Francisco Ramirez, "Comparative Social Movements," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* (1981), p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_regions\\_by\\_past\\_GDP\\_\(PPP\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_regions_by_past_GDP_(PPP)); [www.ggdc.net/MADDISON/other\\_books/appendix\\_B.pdf](http://www.ggdc.net/MADDISON/other_books/appendix_B.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Angus Maddison, *Contours of the World Economy 1-2030 AD* (Oxford University, 2007), pp. 116-17, 176-77, 345, 382-83.

<sup>13</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age\\_of\\_Enlightenment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment)

<sup>14</sup> CW, IV:452.

<sup>15</sup> Sister Nivedita, (Calcutta: Udbodhan Office, 1957), p. 21.

<sup>16</sup> Web: [www.thoughtco.com/cultural-hegemony-3026121](http://www.thoughtco.com/cultural-hegemony-3026121)

<sup>17</sup> GSR, p. 831.

<sup>18</sup> Saradananda, p. 76.

<sup>19</sup> CW, III:243.

<sup>20</sup> CW, IV:483.

<sup>21</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval\\_university](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval_university);

[www.ourworldindata.org/data/education-knowledge/literacy/](http://www.ourworldindata.org/data/education-knowledge/literacy/)

<sup>22</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University)

<sup>23</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.com/wiki/History\\_of\\_education\\_in\\_Japan](http://en.wikipedia.com/wiki/History_of_education_in_Japan)

<sup>24</sup> CW, IV:482.

<sup>25</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uneven\\_and\\_combined\\_development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uneven_and_combined_development)

<sup>26</sup> A. R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism* (Oxford University, 1948), pp. 24-28.

<sup>27</sup> Oswald Spengler, "The World as History," in *Theories of History*, ed. Patrick Gardiner (New York: Free Press, 1959), p. 193.

<sup>28</sup> Theodorson, pp. 194, 376. There is no perfect time for the beginning of this historical process, but 1492 is certainly the best date to select.

<sup>29</sup> CW, III:434.

<sup>30</sup> CW, V:507.

<sup>31</sup> CW, IV:142, 401-02.

<sup>32</sup> Halbfass, pp. 167-70.

<sup>33</sup> CW, III:184-85; VI:124.

<sup>34</sup> CW, III:330-31.

<sup>35</sup> Theodorson, p. 201.

<sup>36</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_capitalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_capitalism). Some writers date the late modern period as beginning after the French Revolution in 1789.

<sup>37</sup> David W. Del Testa ed., *Global History* (Sharpe Reference, 2004), III, pp. 463, 467-69.

<sup>38</sup> Web: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism_in_the_United_States)

<sup>39</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmopolitanism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmopolitanism)

<sup>40</sup> Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992), pp. 1-2, 8, 27, 29, 59, 79, 102, 132, 175.

<sup>41</sup> Halbfass, pp. 38-42, 435.

<sup>42</sup> T. De Souza ed., *Jesuits in India* (Istituto Cultural De Macau, 1992), pp. 213-14.

<sup>43</sup> M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature* (University of Calcutta, 1962), pp. 8-9.

<sup>44</sup> CW, III:237-38.

<sup>45</sup> *Eminent Orientalists* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1991), pp. 6, 11; Londhe, #60. William Jones. We are very much indebted to Sushama Londhe an Indian-American for meticulously collecting a vast number of tributes on India's cultural heritage from the writings of approximately 500 thinkers, and making them available on the Internet. She has come out with

the material in book form entitled *A Tribute to Hinduism*, which can be purchased on the Internet.

<sup>46</sup> Garland Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones* (New York: Cambridge University, 1990), pp. 211, 225, 259, 286-89, 320, 350-51, 357; Garland Cannon, *Sir William Jones* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1952), pp. 61-66.

<sup>47</sup> Web: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\_Asiatic\_Society; Tathagatananda, pp. 325-30, 333-34, 340; Londhe, #3. Lord Warren Hastings.

<sup>48</sup> Londhe, #213. Edmund Burke.

<sup>49</sup> Londhe, #125. Jean-Sylvain Bailly.

<sup>50</sup> Londhe, #374. Major-General Charles Stuart; #317; James Young.

<sup>51</sup> Londhe, #43. Herder; Halbfass, pp. 69-72, 435.

<sup>52</sup> Londhe, #149. Robert Southey; #477; William Wordsworth; #495; Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

<sup>53</sup> Londhe, #172. Thomas Munro.

<sup>54</sup> Londhe, #272. William Cooke Taylor.

<sup>55</sup> Londhe, #237. Mountstuart Elphinstone.

<sup>56</sup> Londhe, #284. Joseph Davey Cunningham.

<sup>57</sup> Web: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\_Dowson

<sup>58</sup> CW, II:511, 513; V:203; IX:202; Burke, I, pp. 211-12.

<sup>59</sup> Londhe, # 307, Sir William Hunter; WARHD, pp. 363-64.

<sup>60</sup> Web: En.wikisource.org/wiki/Boden\_Joseph\_(DNB00);

En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monier\_Monier-Williams; Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. v, ix.

<sup>61</sup> CW, IX:24-25; Tathagatananda, pp. 348-49, 353-54.

<sup>62</sup> F. Max Müller, *Rammohan to Ramakrishna* (Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952), pp. 27, 33; CW, IV:409; V: 222. Since the time of Muller, the modern study of comparative religion now comprises many disciplines including anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, theology, philology, and the history of religion. It also encompasses a wide variety of methodologies.

<sup>63</sup> Valentina Stache-Rosen and Agnes Stache-Weiske, *German Indologists* (New Delhi: Max Mueller Bhavan, 1990), pp. 61-63.

<sup>64</sup> Johannes Voigt, *F. Max Müller: The Man and His ideas* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhapadhyay, 1967), pp. 5-27.

<sup>65</sup> CW, IV:411; VI:103. They are contained in the book, F. Max Muller, *Rammohan to Ramakrishna* (Calcutta: Susil Gupta, 1952).

<sup>66</sup> For these three quotes see: Londhe, #17. Friedrich Maximilian Müller.

<sup>67</sup> CW, IV:280-82; VI:362; VIII:378.

<sup>68</sup> Tathagatananda2, pp. 283-84.

<sup>69</sup> CW, IV:409, 414-15; V:222; VI:362, 495-96.

<sup>70</sup> CW, IV:274-76; WARHD, pp. 433-35. Overall Western Indologists have done an excellent job in spreading and clarifying the Ideas of Indian culture, but there are a few hypercritical exceptions. Following the ideas of the Palestinian born Arab Edward Said (1935-



2003) of Columbia University and the Indologist Ronald Inden of the University of Chicago, there are a small number of Westerners who think they possess some higher-order knowledge by which they can judge Indian society and detect its supposed irrational aspects. At times they try to create a Hinduism in their own image and in doing so they falsify it, resulting in an ideological fiction. Some consider only Western civilization to be “the product of rational human action.... guided by scientific reason in shaping its institutions and beliefs.” Whenever a hypercritical Westerner thinks they know more about Hindu culture than the Indians do, they are apt to make serious mistakes in their judgment (King, pp. 90-92).

<sup>71</sup> Burke, IV, pp. 170-71; Basu, p. 96.

<sup>72</sup> Areshananda, p. 20; WARHD, p. 47; F. Max Muller, *Ramakrishna His Life and Sayings* (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 2001), pp. 30-59. It appears that thirty page came from Swami Saradannada, but this is before he did extensive research on the subject.

<sup>73</sup> CW, IV:419. For a number of book reviews see WARHD, pp. 49-57.

<sup>74</sup> CW, I:86, 407; II:155; III:511; VI:97; VII:287; VIII:97.

<sup>75</sup> Edwin Arnold, *India Revisited* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1886), pp. 321-22, 324; WARHD, pp. 38-39.

<sup>76</sup> Londhe, #8. Annie Wood Besant; WARHD, pp. 45, 292-93, 677. In its early years the Theosophical Movement attracted many eminent public figures. The people who showed interest in Theosophy to varying degrees include: psychologist Roberto Assagioli, Annie Besant, Emile Burnouf the Orientalist, G. N. Chakravarti, Mohini Chatterji, chemist and physicist Sir William Crookes, Buddhist leader Anagarika Dharmapala, General Abner Doubleday at one time thought to be the inventor of baseball, renowned inventor Thomas Edison, astronomer Camille Flammarion, Kinza Hirai, Allan Octavian Hume who in 1885 became the founder of the Indian National Congress, Charles Johnston a translator of Indian scriptures, Wassily Kandinsky founder of Abstract Artistic Expressionism, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Maurice Maeterlinck the 1911 Nobel Prize winner in literature (his wife, a well-known opera singer, described herself as a “follower of the Vedanta Philosophy”), abstract artist Piet Mondrian, Colonel Henry Olcott, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur E. Powell, author George Russell (A. E.), Rudolf Steiner, Alexander “Mohammed” Webb, and the 1923 Nobel Prize winning poet and playwright William Butler Yeats (Bruce Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revisited* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 198), pp. 81-82, 120, 147-73). In addition Ian Stevenson’s who made a scientific study of reincarnation mother had an extensive library of Theosophy books (Carl Jackson, *The Oriental Religions and American Thought* (London: Greenwood Press, 1981), pp. 157-77, 251-52).

<sup>77</sup> WARHD, pp. 71-73, 93, 101.

<sup>78</sup> WARHD, pp. 93, 360, 562.

<sup>79</sup> Tathagatananda, pp. 62-63; Halbfass, pp. 74-81, 83; Londhe, #160. Frederich von Schlegel.

<sup>80</sup> Tathagatananda, p. 247; Valentina and Agnes Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists* (New Delhi: Max Mueller Bhavan, 1990), pp. 7-8.

<sup>81</sup> Londhe, #5.

<sup>82</sup> CW, V:195.

<sup>83</sup> CW, III:109.

<sup>84</sup> For Schopenhauer's relation to Indian thought see: Gopal Stavig, "Shankara, Kant and Schopenhauer," *Darshana International* (Oct. 1999), pp. 17-35; G. Stavig, "Shankara, Kant and Schopenhauer on Reality and Phenomenality," *Vedanta Kesari* (Feb. 2003), pp. 62-67.

<sup>85</sup> WWR, II, p. 475.

<sup>86</sup> Halbfass, pp. 114-15.

<sup>87</sup> Londhe, #68. Heinrich Heine; #70; Johann Goethe; #230. Richard Wagner.

<sup>88</sup> Abhedananda, pp. 11-12.

<sup>89</sup> Adolf Kaegi, *The Rigveda* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1886), pp. 197-98; Londhe, #487. Adolf Kaegi.

<sup>90</sup> Web: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisdom\_(personification)

<sup>91</sup> Other possible cognates of Varuna are the chief deities: Ooranna (Sumerian), Oannes (Babylonian); Uruwna (Hittite), Wuotan (German), and Odin (Nordic).

<sup>92</sup> V. M. Apte, "Religion and Philosophy," in Majumdar, R. C., ed., *History and Culture of the Vedic People, the Vedic Age* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965), pp. 368-69; Arthur Macdonell, *The Vedic Mythology* (Delhi: Indological Book House, 1897, 1971), pp. 20-29; Alain Danielou, *Hindu Polytheism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), pp. 118-21; John Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 336-38.

<sup>93</sup> Stache-Rosen and Stache-Weiske (1990), pp. 106-07.

<sup>94</sup> CW, IV:272-77; V:114; VI:374, 376-77, VIII:388, 391-92; Life, II, pp. 123-27; Burke, IV, pp. 281-85, 304, 390.

<sup>95</sup> Londhe, #50. Paul Deussen.

<sup>96</sup> For the lectures see: CW, II:57-202; Burke, IV, pp. 281-89, 307.

<sup>97</sup> G. Stavig, "Pre-Transcendentalist American Interest in Indian Religion and Philosophy," *Prabuddha Bharata* (May 1976), pp. 229-33; Andrew Lipscomb, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Washington, DC: Thomas Jefferson Memorial, 1905), XIV, pp. 39-40, 106-08; XV, p. 122.

<sup>98</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays*, ed. Edward Emerson (12 vols.; Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1904); Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Journals*, eds. E. Emerson and W. Forbes (10 vols.; Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1909). The volumes of the Journals cited in the text were written in the following years: IV (1836-38), V (1838-41), VI (1841-44), VII (1845-48), IX (1856-63) and X (1864-76). Many of these quotes and others appear in G. Stavig, "Ralph Waldo Emerson's Appreciation of India in His Own Words," *Prabuddha Bharata* (May 2001), pp. 269-72; while the longer list is unpublished.

<sup>99</sup> *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau* (Hereafter WR) (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1906), I, pp. 142, 147-49; II, pp. 328-29.) Dates for the volumes of the *Writings* are: volume I (1849); II (1854); Gopal Stavig, "Henry David Thoreau's Appreciation of India in His Own Words," (Unpublished Manuscript) contains these and many more quotes.

<sup>100</sup> WR, I, pp. 155-56; *The Journal of Henry D. Thoreau* (Hereafter JO), eds. Bradford Torrey and Francis Allen (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1906, 1949), I, p. 280. Dates for the volumes of the *Journal* are: volume I (1841-42); II (1850-51).

<sup>101</sup> JO, I, pp. 275-76; II, p. 4.

<sup>102</sup> WR, II, p. 67; JO, II, pp. 3-4.

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<sup>103</sup> Tathagatananda, pp. 439-440.

<sup>104</sup> Londhe, #80. Walt Whitman; #124. Herman Melville.

<sup>105</sup> Abhedananda, pp. 24-25, 33.

<sup>106</sup> Londhe, #6. Mark Twain; WARHD, p. 526.

<sup>107</sup> Panikkar, pp. 210, 215.

<sup>108</sup> WARHD, pp. 374, 502, 707.

<sup>109</sup> Halbfass, p. 422. Many of these books can be purchased from Web: [Bookfinder.com](http://Bookfinder.com).