

INDIA_2_QUOTES

2.1 FOREWORD

“In India I found a race of mortals living upon the Earth, but not adhering to it. Inhabiting cities, but not being fixed to them. Possessing everything but possessed by nothing.” (Apollonius of Tyana; Greek philosopher and saint, c. 15-100 AD)

“Here is the actual source of all languages, all the thoughts and poems of the human spirit; everything, everything without exception comes from India.” (Schlegel, Friedrich von; German poet and indologist, 1772-1829)

“Follow the migration of mankind from East to West along the sun’s course and along the track of the world’s magnetic currents; observe its long voyage from Asia to Europe, from India to France. ... At its starting point in India, the birthplace of races and religions, the womb of the world...” (Michelet, Jules; French historian and writer, 1789-1874)

“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.” ”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.” (Twain, Mark; American writer, 1835-1910)

“India was the motherland of our race and Sanskrit the mother of Europe’s languages: she was the mother of our philosophy; mother, through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics; mother, through the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all.” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

“India is the primal source, the mother country.” (Menuhin, Sir Yehudi; Russian-born American violinist, 1916-1999)

“India suffers today, in the estimation of the world, more through the world’s ignorance of the achievements of the heroes of Indian history than through the absence or insignificance of such achievement.” (Smith, Vincent Arthur; British indologist and art historian, 1848-1920)

“We will study India with its philosophy and its myths, its literature, its laws and its language. Nay it is more than India, it is a page of the origin of the world that we will attempt to decipher.” (Burnouf, Prof. Eugene; French indologist, 1801-1852)

“I venture to suggest that the inhabitants of this country would do well if they were to assume the ancient, honorable, and national name of Bharata, remembering that India has become famous as Bharatvarsha, the land of the Bharats.” (Oppert, Gustav; German Indologist in Madras, 1836-1908)

“It was claimed by the British, and faithfully repeated by the Leftist intellectuals, that the British unified India. This is completely false. The unity of India, rooted in her ancient culture, is of untold antiquity. ... This unity was cultural though not always political. This cultural unity was seriously damaged during the medieval period, when India was engaged in a struggle for survival – like what is happening in Kashmir today. Going back thousands of years, India had been united under a single ruler many times. The earliest recorded emperor of India was Bharata, the son of Shakuntala and Dushyanta, but there were several others.” (Rajaram, Navaratna Srinivasa; Indian mathematician and writer)

“The British never created anything in India – they merely destroyed. Instead of uniting, they divided; so the question is meaningless. For five thousand years Hindus have chanted in their morning prayers: “Hail! O ye Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri, come and approach these waters.” There has been an explicit and clear geographical area that we have referred to as our land. Adi Sankara not only went to the four corners of this territory, he set up tens of shrines all over the Hindu land to be able to revive and revitalize Hinduism. It is absurd to think that India is a new idea.” (Saraswathi, Shri Jayendra; Shankaracharya of Kanchi (India))

“If all that I have said is viewed in entirety, this is the picture that will emerge: The period 6,500-3,100 BCE saw the growth of pre-Harappan/Indus-Sarasvati civilisation, corresponding broadly to the times when the Rig Veda was composed; that during the period 3,100 to 1,900 BCE, the Harappan/Indus-Sarasvati civilisation prevailed and these were the times when the hymns of four Vedas were composed; and that 1,900 to 1,000 BCE was the time of the late Harappan/Indus-Sarasvati civilisation which saw the decline and ultimate disappearance of the surface water of the Sarasvati, forcing the people to move eastward towards the Gangetic plain.” (hindustantimes.com, May 7 2006)

“India has had cultural continuity for at least 10,000 years. Before that we had a rock-art tradition which, according to some estimates, goes back to 40,000 BCE. Not only are we one of the most ancient civilizations, we have found in India the record of the earliest astronomy, geometry, mathematics, and medicine. Artistic, philosophical and religious impulses, central to the history of mankind, arose first in India.” (Kak, Prof. Dr. Subhash; Indian scientist and writer)

Greater India

“There is an obstinate prejudice thanks to which India is constantly represented as having lived, as it were, hermetically sealed up in its age-old civilization, apart from the rest of Asia. Nothing could be more exaggerated. During the first eight centuries of our era, so far as religion and art are concerned, central Asia was a sort of Indian colony. It is often forgotten that in the early Middle Ages there existed a ‘Greater India,’ a vast Indian empire. A man coming from the Ganges or the Deccan to Southeast Asia felt as much at home there as in his own native land. In those days the Indian Ocean really deserved its name.” (Grousset, Rene; French historian, 1885-1952)

“The Indian colonies which began to grow up all along the periphery of the motherland were essentially cultural and religious, rather than political or racial. Yet they were subject to strong Indian influences. These swept outward like tidal waves. They passed south to Sri Lanka and beyond to the remote islands of the Pacific. They inundated Burma, Malaya, Siam and Indo-China. They overwhelmed Nepal and Tibet. From Afghanistan, they passed along to central Asia and China. They lapped at the far shores of Korea and Japan. Indian religious ideas and literature, Indian conventions of art and architecture, Indian legal codes and social practices...all took root in these outer territories.” (Emerson-Sen, Gertrude; American historian, 1890-1982)

“The vast extent of Indian cultural influences, from Central Asia in the North to tropical Indonesia in the South, and from the Borderlands of Persia to China and Japan, has shown that ancient India was a radiating center of a civilization, which by its religious thought, its art and literature, was destined to leave its deep mark on the races

wholly diverse and scattered over the greater part of Asia.” (Stein, Prof. Sir Marc Aurel; Hungarian-British archaeologist, 1862-1943)

“To know Indian art in India alone, is to know but half its story. To apprehend it to the full, we must follow it in the wake of Buddhism, to central Asia, China, and Japan; we must watch its assuming new forms and breaking into new beauties as it spread over Tibet and Burma, and Siam; we must gaze in awe at the unexampled grandeur of its creations in Cambodia and Java.” (Marshall, Sir John Hubert; British Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India, 1876-1958)

“Each of the colonial cultures and art styles of Ceylon, Indonesia, and Further India, as well as that of Tibet, China, Korea and Japan, took over in a worthy way the Indian heritage, giving to it an original and happy local application. Out of various ethnological and biological requirements self-contained styles were formed that were the peers in originality, nobility and delicacy of the Indian. India remains ‘the creative hearth’: Indeed, whenever the incredible brightness of the spiritual, the balanced repose of the dynamic, or the brilliant power of the triumphantly omnipotent are made effectively manifestation in Oriental art, an Indian model is not far to seek.” (Zimmer, Heinrich; German indologist, 1890-1943)

“India conquered and dominated **China** culturally for two thousand years without ever having to send a single soldier across her border.” (Shih, Hu; Chinese philosopher and ambassador to the U.S., 1891-1962)

“The religion and culture of China are undoubtedly of Hindu origin. At one time in the single province of Loyang there were more than three thousand Indian monks and ten thousand Indian families to impress their national religion and art on Chinese soil.” (Okakura, Prof. Kakuzo; Japanese philosopher, 1862 -1913)

“The name China is of Hindu origin and comes to us from India.” (Smith, Vincent Arthur; British indologist and art historian, 1848-1920)

“Never before had China seen a religion so rich in imagery, so beautiful and captivating in ritualism and so bold in cosmological and metaphysical speculations. Like a poor beggar suddenly halting before a magnificent storehouse of precious stones of dazzling brilliancy and splendor, China was overwhelmed, baffled and overjoyed. She begged and borrowed freely from this munificent giver. The first borrowings were chiefly from the religious life of India, in which China’s indebtedness to India can never be fully told.” (Singhal, Prof. Damodar P.; Indian-Australian indologist)

“India was China’s teacher in religion and imaginative literature, and the world’s teacher in trigonometry, quadratic equations, grammar, phonetics, Arabian Nights, animal fables, chess, as well as in philosophy, and that she inspired Boccaccio, Goethe, Herder, Schopenhauer, Emerson, and probably also old Aesop.” “India produced too much religion and China too little. A trickle of Indian religious spirit overflowed to China and inundated the whole of Eastern Asia. It would seem logical and appropriate that any one suffering from a deficiency of the religious spirit should turn to India rather than to any other country in the world.” (Yutang, Lin; Chinese scholar and author, 1895-1976)

“India sent missionaries, China sending back pilgrims. It is a striking fact that in all relations between the two civilizations, the Chinese were always the recipient and the Indian the donor.” “Indian influence prevailed over the Chinese, and for evident reasons: an undoubted cultural superiority owing to much greater philosophic and religious insight, and also to a far more flexible script.” (Riencourt, Amaury de; French scholar and writer, 1918-2005)

“One is struck by the fundamental difference in the results achieved in the countries of the Far East, by the civilizing action of China and that of India. The reason of it lies in the radical difference in the methods of colonization, employed by the Chinese and by the Hindus. The Chinese proceeded with conquest and by annexation: the armies occupied the lands and the officials spread the Chinese civilization. The Hindu penetration and infiltration seem to have almost always been peaceful and unaccompanied by those destructions, which disgrace the Mongol cavalcade or the Spanish conquest of America. Far from being destroyed by the conquerors, the indigenous people have found in the Hindu society, transplanted and made supple, a frame, in which their own societies have been able to integrate and develop themselves. The exchange of ambassadors between the two shores of the Bay of Bengal was done on a footing of equality, whereas China always required of the ‘barbarians of the south’ the recognition of her suzerainty, which was expressed by the regular payment of tribute. The lands, militarily conquered by China, had to adopt or imitate her institutions, customs, religions, language and script. On the contrary, those, whom India peacefully conquered, by the

prestige of her culture, have preserved the essence of their individual characters and have developed them, each according to its own genius.” (Coedes, George; French historian, 1886 -1969)

“India is culturally, Mother of **Japan**. For centuries it has, in her own characteristic way, been exercising her influence on the thought and culture of Japan.” (Nakamura, Prof. Hajime; Japanese indologist, 1912-1999)

“The study of Japanese thought is the study of Indian thought.” (Suzuki, Prof. Daisetsu Teitaro; Japanese Buddhist and Zen scholar, 1870-1966)

“The brightest sun shining over Southeast Asia in the first centuries A.D. was Indian Civilization. Waves of Indian colonists, traders, soldiers, Brahmins and Buddhist beat upon one Southeast shore after another. Great military power based on superior technical knowledge, flourishing trade fostered by the remarkable increase in maritime exchanges between India and these areas, the vast cultural superiority of the Indians, everything conspired to heighten the impact of the Indian Civilization on the Southeast Asian. Passenger ships plied regularly between the Ganges, Ceylon and Malaya in the middle of the first millennium A.D. Indian settlers from Gujarat and Kalinga colonized Java, for instance, while others set out for Burma or Cambodia. Old Indian books – the Kathasagara, the Jatakas and others – refer to these wondrous regions that set the imagination of civilized Indians on fire, to Suvarnabhumi, the fabulous ‘Land of Gold.’ On the whole, the Indianization of Southeast Asia proceeded peacefully. Local chiefs and petty chieftains were admitted into the caste structure as Ksatriyas through a ritual known as vratyastoma, performed by an Indian Brahmin. All over Southeast Asia tremendous ruins are strewn, testifying to the immense influence of Indian Civilization.” (Riencourt, Amaury de; French scholar and writer, 1918-2005)

“It is impossible to believe that the Hindus, if they came only as merchants, however great their number, would have impressed themselves in such a way as to give to these islanders, the **Philippines**, the number and the kind of words, which they did give. These names of dignitaries, of caciques, of high functionaries of the court, of noble ladies, indicate that these high positions, with names of Sanskrit origin, were occupied at one time by men, who spoke that language. The words of similar origin, for objects of war, fortresses and battle songs, for designating objects of religious beliefs, for superstitions, emotions, feelings, industrial and farming activities, show us clearly that the warfare, religion, literature, industry and agriculture were at one time in the hands of the Hindus and that this race was effectively dominant in the Philippines.” (Tavera, Dr. Trinidad Hermenegildo Pardo de; Filipino physician and historian, 1857-1925)

“In the veins of every one of my people (**Indonesia**) flows the blood of Indian ancestors and the culture that we possess is steeped through and through with Indian influences. Two thousand years ago people from your country came to Jawadvipa and Suvarnadvipa in the spirit of brotherly love. They gave the initiative to found powerful kingdoms such as those of Sri Vijaya, Mataram and Majapahit.” (Sukarno, Suharto; first President of Indonesia, 1901-1970)

“When we refer to thousand year old ties which unite us (**Cambodia**) with India, it is not at all a hyperbole. In fact, it was about 2000 years ago that the first navigators, Indian merchants and Brahmins brought to our ancestors their gods, their techniques, their organization. Briefly India was for us what Greece was to Latin Orient.” (Sihanouk, Norodom; Head of State of Cambodia, 1922-2012)

“It is surprising to find, toward the end of the fifteenth century, in a world that we call ‘New’ the ancient institutions, the religious ideas, the forms of edifices which, in Asia appear to belong to the first dawn of civilization.” “If languages supply but feeble evidence of ancient communication between the two worlds, their communication is fully proved by the cosmogonies, the monuments, the hieroglyphical characters and the institutions of the people of **America** and Asia.” (Humboldt, Alexander von; German geographer and explorer, 1769-1859)

“The Peruvians (**Peru**) and their ancestors, the Indians, are in this point of view at once seen to be the same people.” (Pococke, Edward; English orientalist, 1604-1691)

“A proper examination of these monuments (temples in Palanque, **Mexico**) would disclose the fact that in their interior as well as their exterior form and obvious purposes, these buildings correspond with great exactness to those of Hindustan...” (Squier, Ephraim George; American archaeologist and consul-general, 1821-1888)

“It is also interesting to note that the **Mayan** calendar began with a date around 3112 B.C., very close to the Hindu traditional beginning of the Kali Yuga/Age viz., 3102 B.C. This period in India corresponds to the Indus valley or Harappan civilization which lasted for a few thousand years, at least up to the first millennium B.C., or even later.” (Sidharth, Prof. Burra G.; Indian astronomer)

Civilization

“Westerners have singularly narrowed the history of the world in grouping the little that they know about the expansion of the human race around the peoples of Israel, Greece and Rome. Thus have they ignored all those travelers and explorers who in their ships ploughed the China Sea and the Indian Ocean, or rode the immensities of Central Asia to the Persian Gulf. In truth the larger part of the globe, containing cultures different from those of the ancient Greeks and Romans but no less civilized, has remained unknown to those who wrote the history of their little world under the impression that they were writing world history.” (Cordier, Henri; French linguist and historian, 1849-1925)

“An enquiry into the state of civilization amongst the Hindus was important and necessary ... But unfortunately we have no settled idea of civilization and it is impossible that it can be otherwise until we have some fixed standard of comparison. It would almost appear that the history of mankind is not old enough to furnish a test by which every person would agree to abide. What ought to be the discriminative characteristic of a civilized people? If this is made to depend on the nature of the government it may change as the moon; being by turns more or less in a state of barbarity according to the alterations which the form of the community may assume. But even under those governments which were left to freedom and which were established for individual comfort and happiness, it would be very difficult to take them as standard for real civilization. What rank shall we assign in the scale to the Grecians who were in the practice of murdering their prisoners, in cold blood, and who could drag them from the altar and put them to death after a promise of mercy. Their history is filled with instances of their cruelty and falsehood. Neither is a pre-eminence in literature and science a safe test of a civilized people. In the ages of Bacon and Newton many innocent creatures were put to death for witchcraft. A belief in magic was general and Charles the I consulted astrologers. If we come down to our own times we shall see a great part of Europe living in a forced and artificial society and the governments every where resisting the progress of improvement. An abundance of errors and ignorance will be found to pervade every country. In this age all the enormities of the French Revolution and the unnatural state of society which it produced, would show that we are not yet perfectly reclaimed, from an inclination at least to licentious barbarism. I have sometimes thought that there is a natural tendency in every human being to a savage life, and that this is only prevented by constant coercion and the power of inflexible laws. If then the best tests we have of civilization are applied to the Hindus and if they are compared with other nations they should stand I think pretty high in the scale. They are perfectly acquainted with the arts of regular life, science has made a great progress amongst them and the moral virtues are not less respected than in any other country. ... It was extremely rare even in the 15th century for an English vessel to appear in the Mediterranean. In the 14th century we are informed that the manners even of the Italians were rude. The cloths of the men were of leather unlined and badly tanned. We are told by a Spaniard who came to London with Philip the 2nd that the English lived in houses made of sticks and dirt but they fared commonly as well as the king. Even the art of building with bricks was unknown in England until it came into general use in the time of Henry the 6th. The people were ill-lodged and not well clothed until the beginning of last century. In Scotland every thing was worse. In short the pride of Europe was quite barbarick until a very recent period and we must come down very low indeed before we can institute any comparison with Hindu manners.” (Walker, Col. Alexander; British explorer and author, 1764-1831)

“This multitude of men (the Indian nation) does not consist of an abject and barbarous populace, much less of gangs of savages; but 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.” (Burke, Edmund; British statesman, 1729-1797)

“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.” (Munro, Sir Thomas; British Governor of Madras, 1761-1827)

“India was one of the earliest of the great civilizations and it defined the goals of civilized life very differently from the West. The West raised individualism, materialism, rationality, [and] masculinity as its ideals. India’s great tradition insisted on non violence, renunciation, the inner life, [and] the female as pillars of civilization. And through all the triumphs and disasters of her history she hung on to that ideal, an eternal quest to identify humanity with the whole of creation, a unity in diversity ... History is full of empires of the sword but India alone created an empire of the spirit.” (Wood, Prof. Michael; British historian)

Democracy

“In all consultations and emergencies they take advice of the women.” (Al-Biruni /Alberuni; Persian scholar, 973-1048)

“I have always found, that the more of any class of people were assembled, the more likely I was to get just information: Not that all of them spoke, some one or two men generally answered my questions; but they did it without fear of reflexions from those who might otherwise have been absent; as every one, if he chose, had an opportunity of speaking. The Hindus of all descriptions, so far as I have observed, are indeed very desirous of having every kind of business discussed in public assemblies.” (Hamilton, Francis Buchanan; Scottish physician and geographer, 1762-1829)

“The village communities are little republics having nearly everything they can want within themselves and almost independent of any foreign nation. They seem to last where nothing lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down, revolution succeeds revolution, and Pathan, Moghuls, English are all masters in turn, but the village communities remain the same. This union of village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, is in a high degree conducive to their (Hindu) happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence.” (Metcalf, Sir Charles; British Governor-General of India, 1785 -1846)

“If I explain what happened in Burma, the history mutatis mutandis, of what occurred throughout India will be clear. In the first place, a ‘village’ does not mean only a collection of houses; it is a territorial unit of one to a hundred square miles. Originally, of course, there was in each unit one hamlet; but, as population grew, daughter hamlets were thrown off. They still, however, remained under the jurisdiction of the mother hamlet, and they all together formed the village. In each village there were a Headman and a Council of Elders. The headman was appointed or rather approved by the Burmese Government for life or good behaviour; the council was not recognised by law. Notwithstanding this, the council was the real power. It was not formally elected, it had no legal standing, but it was the real power. The headman was only its representative and not its master; he was but *primus inter pares*. This headmen and council ruled all village matters, They settled the house sites, the rights of way, the marriage of boys and girls, divorces, public manners; they put up much public works as were done, they divided the tax amongst the inhabitants according to their means, and were collectively responsible for the whole. There was hardly any appeal from their decision, but the power not being localised in an individual but in a council of all the elders, things went well. The village was a real living organism, within which people learned to act together, to bear and forbear; there were a local patriotism and a local pride. Within it lay the germ of unlimited progress. ... They all want to manage their affairs; they can do it far better than we can, and there is nothing they so much appreciate as being allowed to do so.” (Hall, Harold Fielding Patrick Hall; British judge and author, 1859-1917)

“It seems to be perfectly established both from its ancient history and its present state, that India was divided into a great many small governments. Every chief was called a Raja and exercised an independent jurisdiction. What must have been the effect of this multitude of authorities on the government and condition of the people? Was it calculated to produce in the rulers, a moderate or an arbitrary use of power? In this division into small societies, the communities are checks upon the princes, and the princes on each other. Would this tend to abate the violence of these petty sovereigns, as far as the property of their subjects was concerned, and would it render them less liable to encroach on their privileges. The division of a country into small governments, was favourable in Greece and Italy to the freedom and to the rights of the people. There seems to me one great reason why Europeans have as yet formed inadequate and imperfect notions, of the state of society and of civilization in India. They have mixed seldom with the people. They have hardly or ever enjoyed the conversation of the natives in the midst of their families, and in their private way of life. It is perhaps from the

general conversation of the people and their domestic habits, from which the most correct judgement can be formed of the state of their society.” (Walker, Col. Alexander; British explorer and author, 1764-1831)

“Such a development is hinted at in Kautilya: according to him, there were two kinds of **janapadas** (community, republic) – *ayudhiya-praya*, those made up mostly of soldiers, and *sreni-praya*, those comprising guilds of craftsmen, traders, and agriculturalists. As Panini’s most thorough modern student has put it, there was “a craze for constituting new republics” which “had reached its climax in the Vahika country and north-west India where clans constituting of as many as one hundred families only organized themselves as Ganas.” Furthermore, power in some republics was vested in a large number of individuals. In a well-known Jataka tale we are told that in the Licchavi capital of Vesali, there were 7707 kings (rajas), 7707 viceroys, 7707 generals, and 7707 treasurers.” (Muhlberger, Prof. Steven; Canadian historian)

“The state of Nysa was an oligarchy, governed by a Council of 300 aristocrats, while another was democratic, with an Assembly of 5,000 members. The Yaudheyas, the Malavas, and the Arjuneyas had democratic constitutions. It is interesting to study the working of the village-republics of which we have definite and widespread evidence.” (Sharma, Shripad Rama; Indian historian, 1879-?)

“And it may come as a surprise to many to learn that in the Assemblies of the Buddhists in India, 2,000 years and more ago, are to be found the rudiments of our Parliamentary practice of the present day. The dignity of the Assembly was preserved by the appointment of a special officer – the embryo of ‘Mr. Speaker’ in our House of Commons. A second officer was appointed whose duty it was to see that when necessary a quorum was secured – the prototype of the Parliamentary ‘Chief Whip’ in our own system. A member initiating business did so in the form of a ‘motion’ which was then open for discussion. In some cases this was done once only, in others three times, thus anticipating the practice of Parliament in requiring that a Bill be read a third time before it becomes a law. If discussion disclosed a difference of opinion, the matter was decided by a vote of the majority, the voting being a ballot.” (Dundas, Lawrence John Lumley; Viceroy of India, 1876-1961)

“In no country in the whole world has communal autonomy been so developed as in India.” (Barthelemy-Saint-Hilaire, Jules; French philosopher and statesman, 1805-1895)

“The fact is, not Europe but Asia seems to have been the cradle of political liberty, the cradle of democratic and republican government, in the world ... Research makes it clear that the democratic and republican institutions of Europe and America actually send their roots back to Asia, and especially to India. Republics actually existed in India at least as early as the days of the Buddha (6th century before Christ). The republican form of government in ancient India had a duration of at least a thousand years. We have records of no other country, ancient or modern, where republics have existed and continued for so long a period. Even more important than her republics has been the spirit of freedom and democracy which has manifested itself in many forms among the Indian people from the earliest ages. The Vedas show that the principle of representative government were held by the ancient Aryans 12-13 centuries before the Christian era.” (Sunderland, Jabez Thomas; American Unitarian minister, 1842-1936)

2.3 WEALTH

“The inhabitants of India, having abundant means of subsistence, are of unusual height and bulk of body. They are also found to be well skilled in the arts, as might be expected of men who inhale a pure air and drink the very finest water. And while the soil bears on its surface all kinds of fruits which are known to cultivation, it has also under ground numerous veins of all sorts of metals, for it contains much gold and silver, and copper and iron in no small quantity, and even tin and other metals, which are employed in making articles of use or ornaments, as well as the implements and accoutrements of war.” (Megasthenes; Greek historian and diplomat, c. 350-290 BCE)

“India is a very large country, and it is so extensive that other countries are not equal to a hundredth part of it. Notwithstanding its extensive area, it is populated in all places. It abounds in all quarters and every district with cities, towns, villages, caravanserais, forts, citadels, mosques, temples, monasteries, cells, magnificent buildings, delightful gardens, fine trees, pleasant green fields, running streams, and impetuous rivers. On all the public roads and streets strong bridges are made over every river and rill, and embankments are also raised. Lofty minarets are made at the distance of each kos to indicate the road, and at every two parasangs inns are built of strong masonry for travelers to dwell in and take rest. At each inn can be obtained every kind of food and drink, all sorts of medicine, and all kinds of necessary instruments and utensils. On all roads shadowy and fruitful trees are planted on both sides. Wells and tanks are dug which contain fresh and sweet water in abundance. The passengers go along the roads under the shadow of trees, amusing themselves, eating the fruits and drinking cold water, as if they were taking a walk among the beds of a garden. The merchants, tradesman and all travelers, without any fear of thieves and robbers, take their goods and loads safe to their distant destinations. The whole of this country is very fertile, and the products of Iran, Turan, and other climates are not equal to those of even one province of Hindustan. In this country there are also mines of diamonds, ruby, gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron. The soil is generally good, and so productive that in a year it yields two crops, and in some places more. All kinds of grain, the sustenance of human life, are brought forth in such quantities that it is beyond the power of pen to enumerate. ... A separate book would have to be written if a full detail were given of all the different kinds of fruits which are produced in spring and autumn, describing all their sweetness, fragrance, and flavour.” (unknown Muslim author c. 1600)

GDP in Millions of Dollars (Maddison, Prof. Angus; British economist, 1926-2010):

	Year	1000	1500	1600	1700
India		33.8	60.5	74.3	90.8
China		26.6	61.8	96.0	82.8
Western Europe		10.2	44.3	66.0	83.4
World Total		116.8	247.1	329.4	371.4

Agriculture

“Until lately I imagined the Drill plough to be a modern European invention; but a short time ago, riding over a field, I observed a Drill plough at work, very simple in its construction, which upon inquiry I find is in general use here, and has been so from time immemorial.” (Halcott, Captain Thomas, 1754-1826)

“The extent to which it has been carried throughout all the irrigated region of the Madras Presidency is truly extraordinary. An imperfect record of the number of tanks in 14 districts shows them to amount to no less than, 43,000 in repair, and 10,000 out of repair, or 53,000 in all. It would be a moderate estimate of the length of embankment for each to fix it at half a mile; and the number of masonry works, in sluices of irrigation, waste weirs, & e., would probably be not over-rated at an average of 6. These data, only assumed to give some definite idea of the extent of the system, would give close upon 30,000 miles of embankments (sufficient ‘to put a girdle round the globe’ not less than 6 feet thick) and 3,00,000 separate masonry works. The whole of this gigantic machinery of irrigation is of purely native origin, as it is a fact that not one new tank has ever been made by us, and the concurrent testimony of those best informed on the subject shows that a great many fine works of the kind have been allowed to fall into utter disrepair and uselessness.” (Smith, Richard Baird; British engineer officer in the East India Company, 1818-1861)

“The Grand Anicut, Kallanai, is the Oldest Dam in the World that is still in use today. It is located on the Cauvery River, 24 km from Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu. This masonry dam was built in the 2nd Century by Chola King Karikalan and is 1,082 feet long with a maximum height of 18 feet and is 40-60 feet wide. It was remodeled and fitted with sluice gates in 1899-1902. For nearly two millennia it has irrigated a million acres of land. India had more land under irrigation in ancient times than it does today.” (Hinduism Today, May/June 2000)

Textiles

“India is the original home of cotton. **Cotton** cloth was first seen in Europe when the soldiers of Alexander brought some of it back, as a curiosity, in the 4th century before Christ. All India was clothed with it then, as today; some of the ancient textiles being so delicate and beautiful as to give rise to the poetic description, ‘webs of the woven wind’.” (Scherer, James A.B.; American engineer, 1870-1944)

“The skill of the Indians in the production of delicate woven fabrics, in the mixing of colors, the working of metals and precious stones, the preparation of essences and in all manner of technical arts, has from early times enjoyed a world-wide celebrity.” (Weber, Albrecht Friedrich; German indologist and historian, 1825-1901)

“Muslins are made which sell at a hundred rupees a piece. The ingenuity of the Hindoos in this branch of manufacture is wonderful. Persons with whom I have conversed on this subject say, that at two places in Bengal, Sonarga and Vikrum-pooru, muslins are made by a few families so exceedingly fine, that four months are required to weave one piece, which sells at four or five hundred rupees. When this muslin is laid on the grass, and the dew has fallen upon it, it is no longer discernible.” (Ward, William; British missionary, 1769-1823)

“Textiles were woven with an artistry never since excelled; from the days of Caesar to our own the fabrics of India have been prized by all the world. From homespun khaddar to complex brocades flaming with gold, from picturesque pyjamas to the invisibly-seamed shawls of Kashmir, every garment woven in India has a beauty that comes only of a very ancient, and now almost instinctive art.” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

“One of India’s lasting contributions to Western life was the export of a thick cotton cloth known as ‘Dungaree’ which, in the sixteenth century was sold near the Dongarii Fort in Bombay. Portuguese and Genoan sailors used this durable blue broad cloth, dyed with indigo, for their bellbottom sailing pants. Thus, blue jeans, originating in India, were widely adopted by farmers, cowboys, working-class men, teen-agers, suburban moms; almost everyone in the West has at least one pair of blue jeans. They are the hallmark of American fashion and in vogue across the world.” (Infinity Foundation)

“A rage for Indian fabric swept across Britain, causing a serious drain of gold and silver from the West. “From the greatest gallants to the meanest Cook Maids, nothing was thought to fit to adorn their persons as the Fabric from India,” grumped an English politician in 1681. Despite stiff import duties, Indian textiles threatened England’s own manufacturers. “Europe bleedth to enrich Asia,” complained another 17th century Englishman. An act of Parliament in 1700 made it illegal to wear or use Indian fabrics in Great Britain, but clandestine trade flourished nonetheless.” (Time-Life Books – What Life Was Like in the Jewel of the Crown: British India AD 1600-1905)

“It would be a loss to the whole world if the Indian woman should cease to wear her native costume. India is practically the only civilized country where one can see on living models how woman can and should dress.” (Jung, Carl Gustav; Swiss psychotherapist, 1875-1961)

“Considering that it is the country historically credited with giving the world paisley, seersucker, calico, chintz, cashmere, crewel and the entire technique of printing on cloth, it is anybody’s guess why India barely registers on the global map of **fashion**.” (NY Times May 13 2003 – Fashion From India)

Industry

“Their (Indians) chemical skill is a fact more striking and more unexpected. They knew how to prepare sulphuric acid, nitric acid and muratic acid; the oxide of copper, iron, lead (of which they had both the red oxide and litharge), tin and zinc: the sulphuret of iron, copper, mercury, and antimony, and arsenic; the sulphate

of copper, zinc and iron; and carbonates of lead and iron.” (Elphinstone, Lord Mountstuart; Scottish statesman and historian, governor of Bombay, 1779-1859)

“The Hindus have the art of smelting **iron**, of welding it, and of making steel, and have had these arts from times immemorial.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

“**Damascus steel** was a type of steel used for manufacturing sword blades in the Near East made with **Wootz steel**. These swords are characterized by distinctive patterns of banding and mottling reminiscent of flowing water. Such blades were reputed to be tough, resistant to shattering and capable of being honed to a sharp, resilient edge. ... A research team in Germany published a report in 2006 revealing nanowires and carbon nanotubes in a blade forged from Damascus steel.” “Wootz steel is a crucible steel characterized by a pattern of bands, which are formed by sheets of micro carbides within a tempered martensite or pearlite matrix in higher carbon steel, or by ferrite and pearlite banding in lower carbon steels. It is the pioneering steel alloy matrix developed in Southern India in the 6th century BCE and exported globally.” (Wikipedia)

“The iron pillar of Delhi is a 7 m (23 ft) column in the Qutb complex at Mehrauli in Delhi. It is notable for the rust-resistant composition of the metals used in its construction. ... The pillar weighs over 6,000 kg (13,000 lb) and is thought to have originally been erected in what is now Udayagiri by one of the Gupta monarchs in approximately 402 CE, ...” (Wikipedia)

“**Rockets** appear to be of Indian invention, and had long been used in native armies when Europeans came first in contact with them.” “It is strange that they (rockets) should now be regarded in Europe as the most recent invention of artillery.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

Commerce

“The Hindus in their most ancient works of poetry are represented as a commercial people.” (Heeren, Arnold Hermann Ludwig; German historian, 1760-1842)

“It (India) exported its most valuable produce, its diamonds, its silks, and its costly manufactures. The country which abounded in those expensive luxuries, was naturally reputed to be the seat of immense riches, and every romantic tale of its felicity and glory was readily believed.” (Encyclopedia Britannica)

“Methods of production and of industrial and commercial organization could stand comparison with those in vogue in any other parts of the world. India had developed an indigenous banking system. Merchant capital had emerged with an elaborate network of agents, brokers and middlemen. Its bills of exchange were honored in all the major cities of Asia.” (Roberts, Paul William; Canadian writer)

Ships

“We now know that many ports on both Eastern and Western Coast had navigational and trade links with almost all Continents of the world. There are many natural and technological reasons for this. Apart from Mathematics and Astronomy, India had excellent manufacturing skills in textile, metal works and paints. India had abundant supply of Timber. Indian-built ships were superior as they were built of Teak which resists the effect of salt water and weather for a very long time.” (Mookerji, Dr. Radhakumud; Indian historian, 1884-1964)

“The nations of India build some ships larger than ours, capable of containing 2,000 butts, and with five sails and as many masts. The lower part is constructed with triple planks, in order to withstand the force of the tempests to which they are much exposed. But some ships are so built in compartments that should one part be shattered, the other portion remaining entire may accomplish the voyage.” (Conti, Nicolo de; Italian merchant and explorer, 1395-1469)

“Indian vessels are so admirably adapted to the purpose for which they are required that, notwithstanding their superior science, Europeans were unable, during an intercourse with India for two centuries, to suggest or to bring into successful practice one improvement.” (Malcolm, Sir John; British statesman and historian, 1769-1833)

“In ancient times, the Indians excelled in the art of constructing vessels, and the present Hindus can in this respect still offer models to Europe – so much so that the English, attentive to everything which relates to naval

architecture, have borrowed from the Hindus many improvement which they have adopted with success to their own shipping. ... The Indian vessels unite elegance and utility and are models of patience and fine workmanship.” (Solvyns, Francois Balazar; French maritime painter and author, 1760-1824)

“Ships that could cross the Indian Ocean were able to cross the Pacific too. Moreover, these ships were really large. The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea mentions the large ships of Southern India which engaged in trade with the countries of the East. A Chinese source of the third century A.D. describes vessels from Southern Asia which were 150 feet in length, and had four masts and were able to carry six to seven hundred men and one thousand metric tons of merchandise when the Buddhist Pilgrim Fahien returned from Sri Lanka to China, in 414 A.D.” (Heine-Geldern, Dr. Robert Baron von; Austrian historian and anthropologist, 1885-1968)

“India’s naval dockyards, which belonged to the state, were famous throughout history. The sailors were paid by the state, and the admiral of the fleet hired the ships and crew to tradesmen for transporting goods and passengers. When the British annexed the country much later on, they utilized the Indian dockyards – which were much better organized than those in the West – to build most of the ships for the British navy, for as long as ships were made of wood.” (Danielou, Alain; French ethnomusicologist, head of the UNESCO Institute for Comparative Musicology, 1907-1994)

“In the medieval period, Arab sailors purchased their boats in India. The Portuguese also continued to get their boats from India, and not from Europe. Shipbuilding and exporting was a major Indian industry, until the British banned it.” (History of Indian Science & Technology)

“Many English merchants and others have their ships and vessels yearly built (at Madapollum). Here is the best and well grown timber in sufficient plenty, the best iron upon the coast, any sort of ironwork is ingeniously performed by the natives, as spikes, bolts, anchors, and the like. Very expert master-builders there are several here, they build very well, and launch with as much discretion as I have seen in any part of the world. They have an excellent way of making shrouds, stays, or any other rigging for ships.” (Bowrey, Thomas; British merchant sailor, ?-1713)

“It is calculated that every ship in the Navy of Great Britain is renewed every twelve years. It is well known that teakwood built ships last fifty years and upwards. Many ships Bombay-built after running fourteen or fifteen years have been brought into the Navy and were considered as stronger as ever.” (Walker, Col. Alexander; British explorer and author, 1764-1831)

Navigation

“The Hindus navigated the ocean as early as the age of Manu’s code because we read in it of men well acquainted with sea voyages.” (Elphinstone, Lord Mountstuart; Scottish statesman and historian, governor of Bombay, 1779-1859)

“At the mouths of the Indus dwell a seafaring people, active, ingenious, and enterprising as when, ages subsequent to this great movement. ... These people coast along the shores of Mekran, traverse the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and again adhering to the sea-board of Oman, Hadramant, and Yeman (the Eastern Arabia), they sail up the Red Sea; and again ascending mighty stream that fertilizes a land of wonders, found the kingdom of Egypt, Nubia and Abyssinia. These are the same stock that, centuries subsequently to this colonization, spread the blessings of civilization over Hellas and her islands.” (Pococke, Edward; English orientalist, 1604-1691)

“When the Chinese Buddhist scholar Fa-hsien (Faxian) returned from India, his ship carried a crew of more than two hundred persons and did not sail along the coasts but directly across the ocean. Such ships were larger than those Columbus used to negotiate the Atlantic a thousand years later. ... A Chinese chronicler mentions ships of Southern Asia (India) that could carry as many as one thousand persons, and were manned mainly by Malayan crews. They used western winds and currents in the North Pacific to reach California, sailed south along the coast, and then returned to Asia with the help of the trade winds, taking a more southerly route, without however, touching the Polynesian islands.” (The Civilizations of Ancient America: The Selected Papers of the XXIXth International Congress of Americanists)

“Those who believe the ancient peoples of Asia were incapable of crossing the ocean have completely lost sight of what the literary sources tell us concerning their ships and their navigation. Many of the peoples of Southeastern Asia had adopted Indian Hindu-Buddhist civilizations. The influences of the Hindu-Buddhist culture of Southeast Asia in Mexico and particularly, among the Maya, are incredibly strong, and they have

already disturbed some Americanists who don't like to see them but cannot deny them." (Heine-Geldern, Dr. Robert Baron von; Austrian historian and anthropologist, 1885-1968)

“The Europeans are apt to imagine that before the great Greek thinkers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, there was a crude confusion of thought, a sort of chaos without form and void. Such a view becomes almost a provincialism when we realize that systems of thought which influenced countless millions of human beings had been elaborated by people who never heard the names of the Greek thinkers.” (Radhakrishnan, Sir Sarvepalli; Indian Prof. at Oxford University and President of India, 1888-1975)

“I will omit all discussion of the science of the Hindus, a people not the same as Syrians, their subtle discoveries in the science of astronomy, discoveries more ingenious than those of the Greeks and the Babylonians; their valuable method of calculation; their computing that surpasses description. I wish only to say that this computation is done by means of nine signs. If those who believe because they speak Greek, that they have reached the limits of science should know these things, they would be convinced that there are also others who know something.” (Sebokht, Severus; Syrian scholar and bishop, c. 575-666)

“The land where books were first written and from where wisdom and knowledge sprang is India.” (Ali, c. 594-661)

“The Hindus are superior to all other nations in intelligence and thoughtfulness. They are more exact in astronomy and astrology than any other people. The Siddhanta is a good proof of their intellectual powers; by this book the Greeks and Persians have also profited. In medicine their opinion ranks first.” (Ya’qubi, Ahmad ibn; Muslim geographer and historian, ?-897)

“The Hindus excel in astrology, mathematics, medicine and in various other sciences. They have developed to a perfection arts like sculpture, painting, and architecture. They have collections of poetry, philosophy, literature and science of morals. From India we received the book called Kalilah wa Dimnah. These people have judgment and are brave. They possess the virtues of cleanliness and purity. Contemplation has originated with them.” (Al-Jahiz; Muslim historian, 776-868)

“The Indians among all nations, through many centuries and since antiquity, have been the source of wisdom, fairness and moderation. They are creators of sublime thoughts, universal apologies, rare inventions and remarkable concepts.” “To their credit, the Indians have made great strides in the study of numbers and of geometry. They have acquired immense information and reached the zenith in their knowledge of the movements of the stars (astronomy) and the secrets of the skies (astrology) as well as other mathematical studies. After all that, they have surpassed all the other peoples in their knowledge of medical science and the strengths of various drugs, the characteristics of compounds and the peculiarities of substances [chemistry].” (Al-Andalusi, Said; Muslim historian and judge, 1029-1070)

“Many of the advances in the sciences that we consider today to have been made in Europe were in fact made in India centuries ago.” (Duff, Sir Mont Stuart Elphinstone Grant; British historian and Governor of Madras, 1829-1906)

“Hindus had made considerable advances in astronomy, algebra, arithmetic, botany and medicine, not to mention their superiority in grammar, long before some of these sciences were cultivated by the most ancient nations of Europe.” (Monier-Williams, Sir Monier; British indologist and head of the Oxford’s Boden Chair, 1819-1899)

“If [Indian] teachers were not so ignorant, as a rule, of their own culture, they would have no difficulty in showing their students that the much vaunted ‘scientific temper’ is nothing new to India.” (Danino, Michel; French-Indian historian)

Education

“In the mean time, while the burthens were getting in order, I entertain’d myself in the Porch of the Temple, beholding little boys learning Arithmetick after a strange manner, which I will here relate. They were four, and having all taken the same lesson from the Master, in order to get that same by heart and repeat likewise their former lessons and not forget them, one of them singing musically with a certain continu’d tone, (which hath the force of making deep impression in the memory) recited part of the lesson; as, for example, “One by its self makes one”; and whilst he was thus speaking he writ down the same number, not with any kind of Pen, nor on

Paper, but (not to spend Paper in vain) with his finger on the ground, the pavement being for that purpose strew'd all over with very fine sand; after the first had writ what he sung, all the rest sung and writ down the same thing together. Then the first boy sung and writ down another part of the lesson, ... which all the rest repeated in the same manner, and so forward in order. When the pavement was full of figures they put them out with the hand, and, if need were, strew'd it with new sand from a little heap' which they had before them wherewith to write further. And thus they did as long as the exercise continu'd; in which manner likewise, they told me, they learnt to read and write without spoiling Paper, Pens, or Ink, which certainly is a pretty way. I ask'd them, if they happen'd to forget, or be mistaken in any part of the lesson, who corrected and taught them? they being all Scholars without the assistance of any Master; they answer'd me and said true, that it was not possible for all four of them to forget, or mistake in the same part, and that thus they exercis'd together, to the end that if one happen'd to be out the others might correct him. Indeed a pretty, easie and secure way of learning." (Della Valle, Pietro; Italian musicologist and traveller, 1586-1652)

"Although there are no schools or colleges supported by public contribution, I ought not to omit that amongst Brahmins, instruction is in many places gratuitously afforded and the poorer class obtains all their education in this way. At the age of from 10 to 16 years, if he has not the means of obtaining instruction otherwise, a young Brahmin leaves his home, and proceeds to the residence of a man of his own caste who is willing to afford instruction without recompense to all those resorting to him for the purpose. They do not, however, derive subsistence from him for as he is generally poor himself, his means could not of course give support to others, and even if he has the means his giving food and clothing to his pupils would attract so many as to defeat that object itself which is professed. The Board would naturally enquire how these children who are so destitute as not to be able to procure instruction in their own villages, could subsist in those to which they are strangers, and to which they travel from 10 to 100 miles, with no intention of returning for several years. They are supported entirely by charity, daily repeated, not received from the instructor for the reasons above mentioned, but from the inhabitants of the villages generally. They receive some portion of alms daily at the door of every Brahmin in the village, and this is conceded to them with a cheerfulness which considering the object in view must be esteemed as a most honourable trait in the native character, and its unobtrusiveness ought to enhance the value of it. We are undoubtedly indebted to this benevolent custom for the general spread of education amongst a class of persons whose poverty would otherwise be an insurmountable obstacle to advancement in knowledge, and it will be easily inferred that it requires only the liberal and fostering care of Government to bring it to perfection." (The collector of Cuddapah 1825)

"These sciences are privately taught to some scholars or disciples generally by the Brahmins learned in them, without payment of any fee, or reward, and that they, the Brahmins who teach are generally maintained by means of maunium land which have been granted to their ancestors by the ancient Zamindars of the Zillah, and by the former Government on different accounts, but there appears no instance in which native Governments have granted allowances in money and land merely for the maintenance of the teachers for giving instruction in the above sciences. By the information which has been got together on the subject, it appears that there are 171 places where theology, laws and astronomy, etc. are taught privately, and the number of disciples in them is 939. The readers of these sciences cannot generally get teachers in their respective villages and are therefore obliged to go to others. In which case if the reader belongs to a family that can afford to support him he gets what is required for his expenses from his home and which is estimated at three rupees per month, but which is only sufficient to supply him with his victuals; and if on the other hand, his family is in too indigent circumstances to make such allowance, the student procures his daily subsistence from the houses in the village where taught which willingly furnish such by turns. Should people be desirous of studying deeper in theology, etc. than is taught in these parts, they travel to Benares, Navadweepum, etc. where they remain for years to take instruction under the learned pundits of those places." (The collector of Guntoor 1823)

"Every village had its schoolmaster, supported out of the public funds; in Bengal alone, before the coming of the British, there were some 80,000 native schools – one to every four hundred population. Instruction was given to him in the 'Five Shastras' or sciences: grammar, arts and crafts, medicine, logic and philosophy. Finally the child was sent out into the world with the wise admonition that education came only one-fourth from the teacher, one-fourth from private study, one-fourth from one's fellows, and one-fourth from life." (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

"The **Monitorial System** was an education method that became popular on a global scale during the early 19th century. This method was also known as 'mutual instruction' or the 'Bell-Lancaster method' after the British educators Dr Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster who both independently developed it. The method was based

on the abler pupils being used as 'helpers' to the teacher, passing on the information they had learned to other students." (Wikipedia) Bell and Lancaster came into contact with this system in India.

Dharampal (The Beautiful Tree) has effectively debunked the myth that Dalits had no place in the indigenous system of education. Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, ordered a mammoth survey in June 1822, whereby the district collectors furnished the caste-wise division of students in four categories, viz., Brahmins, Vysyas (Vaishyas), Shoodras (Shudras) and other castes (broadly the modern scheduled castes). ... Thus, in Vizagapatam, Brahmins and Vaishyas together accounted for 47% of the students, Shudras comprised 21% and the other castes (scheduled) were 20%; the remaining 12% were Muslims. In Tinnevely, Brahmins were 21.8% of the total number of students, Shudras were 31.2% and other castes 38.4% (by no means a low figure). In South Arcot, Shudras and other castes together comprised more than 84% of the students!

Institutions

(1) **Cāraka** – 'wandering' scholars in search for education and competition

(2) **Guru-Kula** – 'teacher's family', village school: The Vedic educational system was based on small domestic schools run by a teacher who admitted resident pupils.

(3) **Āshrama** – the 'hermitage' of a famous teacher: 49 **Gotras** (families of teachers) are especially famous, like Shaunaka at Naimisha, Bharadvāja at Prayāga, Vyāsa at Bhadrivishāla, Atri at Citrakūta, Jamadagni, Gautama, Vishvāmītra, Vasishtha, Kashyapa and Agastya.

(4) **Colleges** – either brahminical (**Matha**) or buddhist (**Vihāra**): The Matha is a federal type of education, where distant centers of culture and religion are affiliated to a central and common seat of authority at a headquarter.

(5) **Universities**: Famous universities with each about 10,000 students: **Takshashilā /Taxila** (with Pānini, Cāraka and Cānakya), Vārānasī /Benares, Vikramashīla and Nalanda.

"From the Guru the student would pass, about the age of sixteen, to one of the great universities that were the glory of ancient and medieval India. Benares, Taxila, Vidarbha, Ajanta, Ujjain or Nalanda. Benares was the stronghold of learning in Buddha's days. Taxila was known at the time of Alexander's invasion, was known to all of Asia as the leading seat of Hindu scholarship, renowned above all for its medical school; Ujjain was held in high repute for astronomy, Ajanta for the teaching of art. The facade of one of the ruined buildings at Ajanta suggests the magnificence of these old universities." (Havell, Dr. Ernest Binfield; principal to the Madras College of Art, 1861-1934)

"The day is not sufficient for asking and answering profound questions. From morning till night they engage in discussion; the old and the young mutually help one another." (Tsang, Hieun /Xuanzang; Chinese scholar and pilgrim to India, 602-664)

"Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveler, stayed (in the 7th century) five years at Nalanda University, where more than seven thousand monks lived. He mentions a very considerable literature in Sanskrit and other works on history, statistics and geography, none of which have survived. He also writes of officials whose job it was to write records of all important events. At Nalanda, studies included the Vedas, the Upanishads, cosmology (Sankhya), realist or scientific philosophy (Vaisheshika), logic (Nyaya), to which great importance was attached, and Jain and Buddhist philosophy. Studies also included grammar, mechanics, medicine, and physics. Medicine was highly effective, and surgery was quite developed. The pharmacopoeia was enormous, and astronomy was very advanced. The earth's diameter had been calculated very precisely. In physics, Brahmagupta had discovered the law of gravity." (Danielou, Alain; French ethnomusicologist, head of the UNESCO Institute for Comparative Musicology, 1907-1994)

"The Mohammedans destroyed nearly all the monasteries, Buddhist or Hindu, in northern India. Nalanda was burned to the ground in 1197 and all its monks were slaughtered; we can never estimate the abundant life of ancient India from what these fanatics spared." (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

(6) **Parishad** – assembly, conference

"Attached to the university was a kind of post-graduate department, a group of learned Brahmins known collectively as a Parishad. A Parishad seems usually to have consisted of ten men; four 'walking encyclopedias' each of whom had learnt all the four Vedas by heart, three who had specialized in one of the Sūtras, and

representative of the three orders of Brahmācārī, Grihastha and Vānaprastha – student, householder and hermit. The Parishad gave decisions on disputed points of religion of learning. I-Tsing reports that at the end of their course of studies, ‘to try the sharpness of their wit’ some men ‘proceed to the king’s court to lay down before it the sharp weapon of their abilities: there they present their schemes and show their talent, seeking to be appointed in the practical government...’ (Sengupta, Padmini; Indian author of *Everyday Life in Ancient India*)

(7) **National Gatherings** promoted by kings: The first mentioned (in Brihad-Āranyaka-Upanishad) is that of Janaka Videha. Their best discussions are recorded in the Upanishads.

Mathematics & Astronomy

“Geometric algebra existed in India before the classical period in Greece.” (Seidenberg, Abraham; American mathematician, 1916-1988)

“We owe a lot to Indians who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made.” (Einstein, Albert; German-born theoretical physicist, 1879-1955)

“It is India that gave us the ingenious method of expressing all numbers by ten symbols, each receiving a value of position as well as an absolute value, a profound and important idea which appears so simple to us now that we ignore its true merit. But its very simplicity, the great ease which it has lent to all computations, puts our arithmetic in the first rank of useful inventions, and we shall appreciate the grandeur of this achievement the more when we remember that it escaped the genius of Archimedes and Appollonius, two of the greatest men produced by antiquity.” (Laplace, Pierre-Simon de; French mathematician and philosopher, 1749-1827)

“The real inventors of [the numeral system], which is no less important than such feats as the mastery of fire, the development of agriculture, or the invention of the wheel, writing or the steam engine, were the mathematicians and astronomers of Indian civilization: scholars who, unlike the Greeks, were concerned with practical applications and who were motivated by a kind of passion for both numbers and numerical calculations.” (Ifrah, Georges; French historian)

“Al-Khwarizmi wrote numerous books that played important roles in arithmetic and algebra. In his work, *De numero indorum* (Concerning the Hindu Art of Reckoning), it was based presumably on an Arabic translation of Brahmagupta where he gave a full account of the Hindu numerals which was the first to expound the system with its digits 0,1,2,3,...,9 and decimal place value which was a fairly recent arrival from India. Because of this book with the Latin translations made a false inquiry that our system of numeration is Arabic in origin. The new notation came to be known as that of al-Khwarizmi, or more carelessly, algorismi; ultimately the scheme of numeration making use of the Hindu numerals came to be called simply algorism or algorithm, a word that, originally derived from the name al-Khwarizmi, now means, more generally, any peculiar rule of procedure or operation.” (Sachau, Carl Eduard; German orientalist, 1845-1930)

“Two aspects of the ‘Pythagoras’ theorem are described in the Vedic literature. One aspect is purely algebraic that presents numbers a , b , c for which the sum of the squares of the first two equals the square of the third. The second is the geometric, according to which the sum of the areas of two square areas of different size is equal to another square. The Babylonians knew the algebraic aspect of this theorem as early as 1700 BCE, but they did not seem to know the geometric aspect. The Shatapatha Brahmana, which precedes the age of Pythagoras, knows both aspects. Therefore, the Indians could not have learnt it from the Old-Babylonians or the Greeks, who claim to have rediscovered the result only with Pythagoras. India is thus the cradle of the knowledge of geometry and mathematics.” (Seidenberg, Abraham; American mathematician, 1916-1988)

“Nearly all the philosophical and mathematical doctrines attributed to Pythagoras are derived from India.” (Schroeder, 1851-1920)

“The motion of the stars calculated by the Hindus before some 4500 years vary not even a single minute from the tables of Cassine and Meyer (used in the 19th century). The Indian tables give the same annual variation of the moon as the discovered by Tycho Brahe – a variation unknown to the school of Alexandria and also to the Arabs who followed the calculations of the school... The Hindu systems of astronomy are by far the oldest and that from which the Egyptians, Greek, Romans and – even the Jews derived from the Hindus their knowledge.” (Bailly, Jean-Sylvaine; French astronomer, 1736-1793)

Architecture (Vāstu)

“Our people, when they see them (Indian buildings), wonder at them and are unable to describe them, much less to construct anything like them.” (Al-Biruni /Alberuni; Persian scholar, 973-1048)

“Hindus build like Titans, and finish like jewelers.” (Heber, Reginald; English bishop and traveller, 1783-1826)

Ramsetu: “Coral reefs are formed only on hard surfaces. But during the study we found that the formation at Adam’s Bridge is nothing but boulders of coral reefs. When we drilled for investigation, we found that there was loose sand two to three meters below the reefs. Hard rocks were found several meters below the sand. Such a natural formation is impossible. Unless somebody has transported them and dumped them there, those reefs could not have come there. Some boulders were so light that they could float on water. Apparently, whoever has done it, has identified light (but strong) boulders to make it easy for transportation. Since they are strong, they can withstand a lot of weight. It should be preserved as a national monument.” (Badrinarayan, Dr. S.; former director of the Geological Survey of India)

“Indian inspiration provided the religion and the philosophy, the artistic forms and the technique with which **Angkor [Wat]** was built.” (Riencourt, Amaury de; French scholar and writer, 1918-2005)

“Let it be said immediately that Angkor, as it stands, ranks as chief wonder of the world to-day, one of the summits to which human genius has aspired in stone, infinitely more impressive, lovely and, as well, romantic, than anything that can be seen in China...” (Sitwell, Sir Francis Osbert Sacheverell; English politician and writer, 1892-1969)

“The facade of the temple proper is five times as wide as the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris. The central tower is more than two hundred feet high. The construction of the pyramids of Egypt was a task of minor importance compared with the building of Angkor vat. For the works of Ghizeh it was necessary to haul the stone only across the valley of the Nile from the quarries beyond the present city of Cairo. Some of the rock used in Angkor vat is believed to have come from points more than forty miles distant, part of it by water, much of it overland on rollers. And there is no group of structures in Egypt, not excepting even Karnak, as intricately carved as this.” (Commaillie, Jean; French artist and first conservative of Angkor, 1868-1916)

Taj Mahal Tourist information: Shah Jahan’s reign was a golden period in which there was peace and plenty. He patronized literature and commissioned many buildings. The most famous one is the Taj Mahal (built 1632-1653), which he devoted to his favorite wife Mumtaz. Twenty thousand labourers worked for 22 years at a cost of millions of rupees. Shah Jahan had to spend his last eight years of life as a prisoner of his own son Aurangzeb in the Red Fort in Agra, peering at a tiny mirror glass in the wall, which reflected the Taj Mahal, and sighing in the name of Mumtaz. The story of Taj Mahal is a love story not found in papers but stands in the structural form.

Incongruities: (1) The Taj Mahal has pleasure pavillions – superfluous for a mere mausoleum. A few yards away from the ‘mosque’ is the Nakkhar Khana alias Drum House – a necessity only in a Hindu temple or palace. Between the ‘mosque’ and the drum house is a multistoried octagonal traditional treasury well. At the south east corner of the Taj is an ancient royal cattle house. The entire Taj complex comprises of 400 to 500 rooms. (2) The Taj Mahal has identical entrance arches on all four sides. This is a typical Hindu building style known as Chaturmukhi, i.e., four faced. The Taj Mahal dome bears a lotus cap. Havell points out, that the ground plan of the ancient Hindu Chandi Seva Temple in Java is identical with that of the Taj. The Taj Mahal entrance faces south – had the Taj been an Islamic building it should have faced the west. The central shaft of the trident pinnacle over the dome depicts a Kalash (sacred pot) holding two bent mango leaves and a coconut – a sacred Hindu motif. (3) Had the Taj originated as a tomb, shoes need not have to be removed because shoes are a necessity in a cemetery.

Facts: (1) Shah Jahan had a harem of 5,000 women and an incestuous relationship with his daughter Jahanara, which he justified by saying, “a gardner has every right to taste the fruit he has planted.” (2) Mumtaz died in Burhanpur which is about 600 miles from Agra and her grave there is still intact. (3) Shah Jahan was so miserly that he forced labourers to work without pay, even on minor projects. (4) Neither the period of construction, the cost, nor the architect are recorded in Shah Jahan’s court papers. (5) Shah Jahan’s own court chronicle, the *Badshahnama*, admits (Vol 1, Page 403) that a grand mansion of unique splendor, capped with a dome (*Imaarat-a-Alishan wa Gumbaze*) was taken from the Jaipur Maharaja Jaisingh for Mumtaz’s burial, and that the building was known as Raja Mansingh’s palace. (6) Shah Jahan was held prisoner in the basement of the Fort – he could not see the Taj.

Medicine

“Now we are beginning to find out that the Hindu Sashttras also contain a Sanitary Code no less correct in principle, and that the great law-giver, Manu, was one of the greatest sanitary reformers the world has ever seen!” (Russell, Oliver; British Governor of Madras, 1869-1935)

The Hindus were the first nation to establish hospitals, and for centuries they were the only people in the world who maintained them. “Hither come all poor and helpless patients suffering from all kinds of infirmities. They are well taken care of, and a doctor attends them; food and medicine being supplied according to their wants. Thus they are made quite comfortable, and when they are well, they may go away.” (Faxian /Fa-hien /Fa-hsien; Chinese Buddhist monk, 337- c. 422, speaking of a hospital he visited in Pataliputra)

“The earliest hospital in Europe is said to have been opened in the tenth century.” (Smith, Vincent Arthur; British indologist and art historian, 1848-1920)

“If you want success in your practice, wealth and fame, and heaven after your death, you must pray every day on rising and going to bed for the welfare of all beings and you must strive with all your soul for the health of the sick. You must not betray your patients, even at the cost of your own life. You must not get drunk, or commit evil, or have evil companions. You must be pleasant, of speech and thoughtful, always striving to improve your knowledge.” (Cāraka’s advice to his students)

Āyurveda texts: **Cāraka-Samhitā** (1500 BCE, by Caraka), **Sushruta-Samhitā** (on surgery, by Sushruta), *Ashtānga-Hridayam* (by Vāgbhatta), *Bhāva-prakāsha* (medicinal formulas), *Mādhava-Nidāna* (diagnosis), *Shārngadhara-Samhitā* (pharmacy)

“Infinite advantage may be derived by Europeans from the various medical books in Sanskrit, which contain the names and descriptions of Indian plants and minerals, with their uses, discovered by experience, in curing disorders.” (Jones, Sir William; British judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, 1746-1794)

“Their use of these medicines seems to have been very bold. They were the first nation who employed minerals internally, and they not only gave mercury in that manner but arsenic and arsenious acid, which were remedies in intermittents. They have long used cinnabar for fumigations, by which they produced a speedy and safe salivation. They have long practiced inoculation.” (Elphinstone, Lord Mountstuart; Scottish statesman and historian, governor of Bombay, 1779-1859)

“The Ancients attained a thoroughly a proficiency in medicine and surgery as any people whose acquaintance are recorded. This might be expected, because their patient attention and natural shrewdness would render them excellent observers, whilst the extent and fertility of their native country would furnish them with many valuable drugs and medicaments. Their diagnosis is said, in consequence, to define and distinguish symptoms with accuracy, and their *Materia Medica* is most voluminous.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

“Indian medicine dealt with the whole area of the science. It described the structure of the body, its organs, ligaments, muscles, vessels, and tissues. The *materia medica* of the Hindus embraces a vast collection of drugs belonging to the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdom, many of which have been adopted by the European physicians. Their pharmacy contained ingenious processes of preparation, with elaborate directions for the administration and classification of medicines. Much attention was devoted to hygiene, to the regimen of the body, and to diet. The surgery of the ancient Indian physicians appears to have been bold and skilful. They conducted amputations, arresting the bleeding by pressure, a cup-shaped bandage, and boiling oil. They practiced lithotomy; performed operations in the abdomen and uterus; cured hernia, fistula, piles; set broken

bones and dislocations; and were dexterous in the extraction of foreign substances from the body. A special branch of surgery was devoted to rhinoplasty, or operations for improving deformed ears and noses, and forming new ones. They devoted great care to the making of surgical instruments, and to the training of students by means of operations performed on wax spread out on a board, or on the tissues and cells of the vegetable kingdom, and upon dead animals. Considerable advances were also made in veterinary science, and monographs exist on the diseases of horses and elephants.” (Hunter, Sir William Wilson; Scottish historian, 1840-1900)

Surgery

“They cut for the stone, couched for the cataract, and extracted the fetus from the womb, and in their early works enumerate not less than 127 sorts of surgical instruments!” (Elphinstone, Lord Mountstuart; Scottish statesman and historian, governor of Bombay, 1779-1859)

“For above twelve months, he was wholly without a nose; when he had a new one put on, by a Mahratta surgeon, a Kumar, near Poona. This operation is not uncommon in India, and has been practised from time immemorial. Two of the medical gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Cruso, and Mr. James Findlay, of Bombay, has seen it performed as follows: A thin plate of wax is fitted to the stump of the nose, so as to make a nose of good appearance; it is then flattened, and laid on the forehead. A line is drawn round the wax, which is then of no further use; and the operator then dissects off as much skin as it covered, leaving undivided a small slip between the eyes, This slip preserves the circulation, till an union has taken place between the new and old parts. The cicatrix of the stump of the nose is next pared off; and, immediately behind this raw part, an incision is made through the skin, which passes round both alae, and goes along the upper lip. The skin is now brought down from the forehead; and, being twisted half round, its edge is inserted into this incision; so that a nose is formed with a double hold, above, and with its alae and septum below, fixed in the incision. A little Terra Japonica is softened with water, and, being spread on slips of cloth, five or six of these are placed over each other, to secure the joining. No other dressing than this cement is used for four days; it is then removed, and cloths, dipped in ghee (a kind of butter), are supplied. The connecting slip of skin is divided about the twenty-fifth day; when a little more dissecting is necessary to improve the appearance of the new nose. For five or six days after the operation, the patient is made to lie on his back; and, on the tenth day, bits of soft cloth are put into the nostrils, to keep them sufficiently open. This operation is always successful. The artificial nose is secure, and looks nearly as well as the natural one; nor is the scar on the forehead very observable, after a length of time.” (from a periodical publication 1794)

Inoculation

Inoculation against smallpox apparently came from India. English physician Edward Jenner (1749-1823) is credited with discovering **vaccination** 1796.

“On perusing lately some tracts upon the subject of inoculation, I determined to put together a few notes relative to the manner of inoculation, practised, time out of mind by the Bramins of Indostan; to this I was chiefly instigated, by considering the great benefit that may arise to mankind from a knowledge of this foreign method, which so remarkably tends to support the practice now generally followed with such marvellous success.” “Inoculation is performed in Indostan by a particular tribe of Bramins, who are delegated annually for this service from the different Colleges of Bindoobund, Eleabas, Benares, & c. over all the distant provinces: dividing themselves into small parties, of three or four each, they plan their traveling circuits in such wise as to arrive at the places of the operation consists only in abstaining for a month from fish, milk, and ghee (a kind of butter made generally of buffalo’s milk). When the Bramins begin to inoculate, they pass from house to house and operate at the door, refusing to inoculate any who have not, on a strict scrutiny, duly observed the preparatory course enjoined them. It is no uncommon thing for them to ask the parents how many pocks they choose their children should have.” “When the before recited treatment of the inoculated is strictly followed, it is next to a miracle to hear, that one in a million fails of receiving the infection, or of one that miscarries under it. Since, therefore, this practice of the East has been followed without variation, and with uniform success from the remotest unknown times, it is but justice to conclude, it must have been originally founded on the basis of

rational principle and experiment.” (Holwell, John Zephaniah; British surgeon and Governor of Bengal, 1711-1798)

“Inoculation for the small pox seems to have been known among the Hindoos from time immemorial. The method of introducing the virus is made by incision just above the wrist, in the right arm of the male, and the left of the female. At the time of inoculation, and during the progress of the disease, the parents daily employ a brahmin to worship Sheetala, the goddess who presides over the disease.” (Ward, William; British missionary, 1769-1823)

“Vaccination, unknown to Europe before the eighteenth century, was known in India as early as 550 A.D. if we may judge from a text attributed to Dhanwantari, one of the earliest Hindu physicians. “Take the fluid of the pock on the udder of the cow ... upon the point of a lancer, and lance with it the arms between the shoulders and elbows until the blood appears; then, mixing the fluid with the blood, the fever of the small-pox will be produced.”” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

Hinduism gave rise to a culture rich in color and imagination in the fields of Arts and Crafts, like lexicography (Kosha), meters (Chandas), song (Gita), instrumental music (Vādyā), gestures (Mudrā), dance (Nritya), drama (Nātya), painting (Ālekhya), floor design (Rangoli), body painting (Mehendi), dressing (Nepathya), applying ornaments (Bhūshana), application of aromatics (Sugandha), preparing food (Bhakshya), mystical diagrams (Yantra), martial arts (Kalaripayat), etc.

“Before Indian art, as before every phase of Indian civilization, we stand in humble wonder at its age and its continuity. From the time of Mohenjodaro to the present, through the vicissitudes of five thousand years, India has been creating its peculiar type of beauty in a hundred arts. The record is broken and incomplete, not because India ever rested, but because war and the idol-smashing ecstasies of Moslems destroyed uncounted masterpieces of building and statuary, and poverty neglected the preservation of others. Probably no other nation known to us has ever had so exuberant a variety of arts.” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

“English decorative art in our day has borrowed largely from Indian forms and patterns. The exquisite scrolls on the rock temples at Karli and Ajanta, the delicate marble tracery and flat wood-carving of Western India, the harmonious blending of forms and colors in the fabrics of Kashmir, have contributed to the restoration of tastes in England. Indian art-work, when faithful to native designs, still obtains the highest honors at the international exhibitions of Europe.” (Hunter, Sir William Wilson; Scottish historian, 1840-1900)

“The best Indian Sculpture touched a deeper note of feeling and finer sentiments than the best Greek. There is in this art a depth and spirituality which never entered into the soul of Greece.” “Among Rembrandt’s pen and ink studies collected in the British Museum, the Louvre, and elsewhere, a number have been identified as copies or adaptations of India miniatures, and it has been shown that from them chiefly, Rembrandt derived the Oriental atmosphere for his Biblical subjects!” “In the early centuries of the Christian era, and from this Indian source, came the inspiration of the great school of Chinese painting, which from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries stood first in the whole world. ... The influence of India’s artistic culture can be clearly traced, not only in Byzantine Art, but in the Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages. Europe is very apt to dwell upon the influence of Western Art and Culture upon Asiatic thought, religion and culture upon the Art and Civilization of Europe is rarely appraised at its proper value. ... From the seaports of her Western and Eastern coasts, India at this time sent streams of colonists, missionaries and craftsmen all over Southern Asia, Ceylon, Siam and far-distant Cambodia. Through China and Korea, Indian Art entered Japan about the middle of the sixth century. About A.D. 603 Indian colonists from Gujarat brought Indian Art into Java, and at Borobudur, in the 8th and 9th centuries Indian Sculpture achieved its greatest triumphs. Some day when European Art criticism has widened its present narrow horizon, and learnt the foolishness of using the art standards of Greece and Italy as a tape wherewith to measure and appraise the communings of Asia with the Universal and the Infinite, it will grant the nameless sculptors of India an honorable place among the greatest artists the world have ever known.” (Havell, Dr. Ernest Binfield; principal to the Madras College of Art, 1861-1934)

“That which has reached us from the discoveries of their clear thinking and the marvels of their inventions is the (game) of chess [Caturanga]. The Indians have, in the construction of its cells, its double numbers, its symbols and secrets, reached the forefront of knowledge. They have extracted its mysteries from supernatural forces. While the game is being played and its pieces are being maneuvered, there appear the beauty of structure and the greatness of harmony. It demonstrates the manifestation of high intentions and noble deeds, as it provides various forms of warnings from enemies and points out ruses as well as ways to avoid dangers. And in this, there is considerable gain and useful profit.” (Al-Andalusi, Said; Muslim historian and judge, 1029-1070)

Several games owe their origins in India, like Snakes & Ladders (Mokshapat) and Cross and circle game (Pachisi, similar to Chaupar).

Music

“Some of the Greeks attribute to that country (India) the invention of nearly all the science of music.” (Strabo; Greek scholar, 63 BCE-24 AD)

“What has reached us from the work of the Indians in music is the book that contains the fundamentals of modes and the basics in the construction of melodies.” (Al-Andalusi, Said; Muslim historian and judge, 1029-1070)

“Indian music, the fire that burns heart and soul, is superior to the music of any other country.” (Khusrow, Amir; Indian scholar and musician, 1234-1325)

“O holy land (India), I salute thee, thou source of all music, thou voice of the heart.” (Herder, Johann Gottfried von; German philosopher and poet, 1744-1803)

“Despite predisposition in India’s favor, I have to acknowledge that Indian music took me by surprise. I knew neither its nature nor its richness, but here, if anywhere, I found vindication of my conviction that India was the original source.” “We would find all, or most, strands (raga) beginning in India; for only in India have all possible modes been investigated, tabulated, and each assigned a particular place and purpose. Of these many hundreds, some found their way to Greece; others were adopted by nomadic tribes such as the Gypsies; others became the mainstay of Arabic music. Indian classical music, compared with our Western music, is like a pure crystal. It forms a complete perfected world of its own, which any admixture could only debase. It has, quite logically and rightly, rejected those innovations which have led the development of Western music into the multiple channels which have enabled our art to absorb every influence under the sun. Freedom of development in Indian music is accorded the performer, the individual, who, within fixed limits, is free to improvise without any restraint imposed externally by other voices, whether concordance or discordant – but not to the basic style, which exclude polyphony and modulation.” (Menuhin, Sir Yehudi; Russian-born American violinist, 1916-1999)

“A regular system of notation was worked out before the age of Panini, and seven notes were designated by their initial letters [now Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni]. This notation passed from the Brahmins through the Persians to Arabia [as do, re, ma, fa, so, le, ci], and was thence introduced into European music by Guido d’Arezzo at the beginning of the eleventh century [as do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti].” “Not content with the tones and semi-tones, the Indian musicians employed a more minute sub-division, together with a number of sonal modifications which the Western ear neither recognizes or enjoys. Thus, they divide the octave into 22 sub-tones instead of 12 semi-tones of the European scales. The Indian musician declines altogether to be judged by the new simple Hindu airs which the English ear can appreciate.” (Hunter, Sir William Wilson; Scottish historian, 1840-1900)

“Jazz musicians like to think of themselves as masters of rhythm (and in comparison to European music they are in the forefront) but ... how crude and primitive the conventional jazz musician’s grasp of rhythm is in comparison with Indian music. ... And jazz musicians who desire to really acquire a grasp of rhythm should, if at all possible, study Indian music.” (Ellis, Don /Donald Johnson; American musician and composer, 1934-1978)

“The Hindu music will provide Western musicians with fresh resources of expression and with colors hitherto unknown to the palate of the musicians.” (Bourgalt-Ducoudray, Prof. Louis-Albert; French pianist and musicologist, 1840-1910)

“It is impossible to divorce Indian music from the whole structure of Indian culture and philosophy with which it is interwoven in a number of ways from the earliest times of which we have records.” (Bake, Dr. Arnold Adriaan; Dutch sanskritist and musicologist, 1899-1963)

“Nada Brahma is a primal word in Indian spirituality, a primal word that also refers to India’s great classical music. Nada is a Sanskrit word meaning ‘sound.’ The term nadi is also used to mean ‘stream of consciousness,’ a meaning that goes back 4,000 years to the oldest of India’s four sacred Vedic scriptures, the Rig Veda. Thus the relationship between sound and consciousness has long been documented in language.” (Berendt, Joachim-Ernst; German music journalist and author, 1922-2000)

“Our tradition teaches us that sound is God – Nada Brahma. That is, music of sound and the musical experience are steps to the realization of the self. We view music as a kind of spiritual discipline that raises one’s inner being to divine peacefulness and bliss. We are taught that one of the fundamental goals a Hindu works toward in his lifetime is a knowledge of the true meaning of the universe – its unchanging, eternal essence – and this is realized first by a complete knowledge of one’s self and one’s own nature. The highest aim of our music is to reveal the essence of the universe it reflects, and the ragas are among the means by which this essence can be apprehended. Thus, through music, one can reach God.” (Shankar, Ravi; Indian musician and composer, 1920-2012)

Literature

“Here is the actual source of all languages, all the thoughts and poems of the human spirit; everything, everything without exception comes from India.” (Schlegel, Friedrich von; German poet and indologist, 1772-1829)

“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.” (Hastings, Lord Warren; Governor-General of British India, 1754-1826)

“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.” (Taylor, William Cooke; British scholar, 1800-1849)

“I feel no hesitation in saying that there are words and phrases occurring in the Samhitas of the Vedas, in the Brahmanas and in the Sutra works, which leave no doubt as to the use of the written characters in ancient India. It may be confidently asserted that the systematic treatises in prose which abounded at and long before Panini could never have been composed without the help of writing. We know for certain that with the exception of the hymns of the Rig Veda, most of the Vedic works are in prose, and it is difficult to understand how they could possibly have been composed without having recourse to some artificial means.” (Varma, Shyamji Krishna; Indian lawyer and journalist, 1857-1930)

“It is remarkable that the Ramayana story is by no means confined to India. Its fragrance has travelled across the whole of south and south-east Asia. The magnificent temple of Angkor Vat in Cambodia, the world’s largest place of religious worship, displays on its walls magnificent sculptures telling the whole Ramayana and Mahabharata stories. In Indonesia, the Ramlila is performed with a grace and sensitivity far superior to our somewhat rowdy Ramlilas and, significantly, almost entirely by Muslim artists. The ruling dynasty in Thailand is known as the Ram Dynasty, and there is a shrine named Ayodhya in that country. Such examples can be multiplied.” (Singh, Dr. Karan; Indian politician and writer)

Fable

“Fables constitutes with the Hindus practical ethics – the science of Niti or Polity – the system of rules necessary for the good government of society in all matters not of a religious nature – the reciprocal duties of the members of an organized body either in their private or public relations. Hence it is specially intended for the education of princes, and proposes to instruct them in those obligations which are common to them and their subjects, and those which are appropriate to their princely office; not only in regard to those over whom they rule, but in respect to other princes, under the contingencies of peace and war.” “The Fables of the Hindus are a sort of machinery to which there is no parallel in the fabling literature of Greece and Rome.” “In a manuscript of the Parable of Sendeban (Sindbad), which existed in the British Museum, it is repeatedly asserted in an anonymous Latin notes that the work was translated out of the Indian language into Persian and Arabic, and from one of them into Hebrew.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

“The fables of animals, familiar to the Western world from the time of Aesop downwards, had their original home in India. The relation between the fox and the lion in the Greek versions had no reality in nature, but it was based upon the actual relation between the lion and his followers, the jackal, in the Sanskrit stories. Panchatantra was translated into the ancient Persian in the 6th century A.D. from that rendering all the subsequent versions in Asia Minor and Europe have been derived. The most ancient animal fables of India are at the present day the nursery stories of England and America. This graceful Hindu imagination delighted also in fairy tales, and the Sanskrit compositions of this class are the original source of many of the fairy stories of

Persia, Arabia and Christendom.” (Hunter, Sir William Wilson; Scottish historian, 1840-1900)

“We have to admit that the beast-fable did not begin with him (Aesop), or in Greece at all. We have, in fact, to go East and to look to India and burrow in the ‘tale of tales’ of Hitopadesa to get an idea how old the antiquity of the fable actually is. When one remembers also that many of the stories in the Arabian Nights, including that of the famous Sindbad the Sailor, are of Hindu origin, it is not easy to accept the view that such tales are not of native Indian growth.” (Rhys, Ernest; Welsh-English writer, 1859-1946)

“It may also be a complete revelation to find that the fabulous Hindu mind is responsible for the genre of animal fables and many stories of the Arabian Nights type, in which Buddhist and non-Buddhist literature abounds.” “India is the home of fables – one must say that the Hindu mind is fabulous. The genius for creating fables seems inexhaustible in Indian literature.” (Yutang, Lin; Chinese scholar and author, 1895-1976)

“Practically the entire fairy-lore of the Occident is derived from India. No one disputes this assertion today, but no one as yet can give a completely clear account of the ways and means by which its journey was accomplished.” (Gomperz, Theodor; Austrian scholar and philosopher, 1832-1912)

“Numerous European fairy stories, to be found in Grimm or Hans Andersen, including the magic mirror, the seven-leagued boots, Jack and the beanstalk, and the purse of Fortunatus, have been traced to Indian sources.” “Many of them are to be found in the Gesta Romanorum, the Decameron, and the Merchant of Venice, is found in the romance of Barlaam and Josaphat, which is too clearly the story of Buddha, who was changed into a Christian garb, and later canonized as a Christian saint as St. Josephat! And everyone of course knows the story of the Milkmaid who dreamt of her wedding and overthrew the milk pail, now to be recognized in its original form as the story of the Brahmin’s Dream, included in the selections from the Panchatantra.” (Rawlinson, Sir Henry Creswicke; British politician and orientalist, 1810-1895)

“It is not necessary that I shall say whence I have taken the subjects of these new fables. I shall only say, from a sense of gratitude that I owe the largest portion of them to Pilpay the Indian sage.” (La Fontaine, Jean de; French poet, 1621-1695)

Sanskrit

“Sanskrit means ‘complete’, ‘perfect’ and ‘definitive’. In fact, this language is extremely elaborate, almost artificial, and is capable of describing multiple levels of meditation, states of consciousness and psychic, spiritual and even intellectual processes. As for vocabulary, its richness is considerable and highly diversified. Sanskrit has for centuries lent itself admirably to the diverse rules of prosody and versification. Thus we can see why poetry has played such a preponderant role in all of Indian culture and Sanskrit literature.” (Ifrah, Georges; French historian)

“The characters, in which the languages of India were originally written, are called Nagari, from Nagara, a city with the word Deva sometimes prefixed, because they are believed to have been taught by the Divinity himself, who prescribed the artificial order of them in a voice from heaven.” (Jones, Sir William; British judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, 1746-1794)

“Sanskrit is constructed like geometry and follows a rigorous logic. It is theoretically possible to explain the meaning of the words according to the combined sense of the relative letters, syllables and roots. Sanskrit has no meanings by connotations and consequently does not age.” (Danielou, Alain; French ethnomusicologist, head of the UNESCO Institute for Comparative Musicology, 1907-1994)

“In India’s long history, Sanskrit has been the greatest integrating force, the source of cultural continuum, the medium of literary creativity, the voice of the sages and the languages of the most sublime thoughts and the profoundest of the philosophies of life. Sanskrit had its impact in many countries outside. It became the language of the learned even in the South-East Asia and to some extent parts of Central Asia. Most interestingly, many of the ancient Sanskrit plays that exist were found not in India but in Turfan on the edge of the Great Gobi desert in China.” (Swamy, Dr. Subramanian; Indian economist and politician)

“It took only 200 years for us to Christianise the whole of Africa, but even after 400 years India eludes us, I have come to realize that it is Sanskrit which has enabled India to do so. And to break it I have decided to learn Sanskrit.” (Müller, Friedrich Max; German-born orientalist, 1823-1900)

“The **Pānini** grammar reflects the wondrous capacity of the human brain, which till today no other country has

been able to produce except India.” (Monier-Williams, Sir Monier; British indologist and head of the Oxford's Boden Chair, 1819-1899)

“The grammar of Panini 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. By employing an algebraic terminology it attains a sharp succinctness unrivalled in brevity, but at times enigmatical. It arranges, in logical harmony, the whole phenomena which the Sanskrit language presents, and stands forth as one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry. So elaborate is the structure, that doubts have arisen whether its complex rules of formation and phonetic change, its polysyllabic derivatives, its ten conjugations with their multiform aorists and long array of tenses, could ever have been the spoken language of a people.” (Hunter, Sir William Wilson; Scottish historian, 1840-1900)

“The great grammarian Panini is now being called the first software man, without the hardware. And the focus is on the roughly 4,000 rules of Sanskrit grammar that he evolved. Rules that are so scientific and logical in manner that they closely resemble structures used by computer scientists throughout the world.” (Swamy, Dr. Subramanian; Indian economist and politician)

“Language is the distillation of hundreds, if not thousands of years of experience of a collective. ... So when the language disappears you're really throwing away that whole library of knowledge.” (Nez, Rachel; Navajo speaker)

“A dead language, you say! Impossible to revive? But that's what they argued about Hebrew. And did not the Jewish people, when they got back their land in 1948, revive their 'dead' language, so that it is spoken today by all Jewish people and has become alive again? The same thing ought to be done with Sanskrit. Let the scholars begin now to revive and modernize the Sanskrit language, it would be a sure sign of the dawning of the Renaissance of India. In a few years it should be taught as the second language in schools throughout the country, with the regional language as the first and English as the third. Then will India again have its own unifying language.” (Gautier, Francois; French journalist based in India)

In London, a school has made Sanskrit compulsory subject for its junior division because it helps students grasp math, science and other languages better. “This is the most perfect and logical language in the world, the only one that is not named after the people who speak it. Indeed the word itself means 'perfected language.’” (Warwick Jessup, Head Sanskrit department) “The Devanagiri script and spoken Sanskrit are two of the best ways for a child to overcome stiffness of fingers and the tongue. Today's European languages do not use many parts of the tongue and mouth while speaking or many finger movements while writing, whereas Sanskrit helps immensely to develop cerebral dexterity through its phonetics.” (Moss – London School Makes Sanskrit Compulsory)

Arian Invasion Theory (AIT)

“The affinities of the Sanskrit language prove a common origin of the now widely scattered nations amongst whose dialects they are traceable, and render it unquestionable that they must all have spread from some central spot in that part of the globe first inhabited by mankind according to the inspired record.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

Some linguists further argued that since the Indo-European group of languages shows most varieties in Europe, their mother language, some 'proto-Sanskrit', must have originated in Europe. In the Vedas, which are the oldest surviving Sanskrit scriptures, the kings describe themselves as Ārya. Therefore, European scholars constructed, that both Sanskrit and Āryas must have come from Europe. Around 1,500 BCE they were thought to have invaded India, carrying with them Sanskrit and the Vedas. Because European thought was racist, the 'Aryans' were surely those fair skinned people in Northern India. They must have subjugated the darker race, driving them to Southern India, or making them outcaste slaves.

Arian Invasion Theory (AIT) was useful for British rule: (1) It stamped the higher casts of India, who were involved in the independence movement, as Aryan foreigners, just like themselves. And: “We have as much right to be in India as anyone there, except perhaps for the Depressed Classes, who are the native stock.” (Churchill, Sir Winston Churchill; British Prime Minister, 1874-1965) (2) It made lower casts and tribals (now labeled Adivasi or 'aboriginals') feel underprivileged in 'their ancestor's' land – in spite the fact that most tribes speak foreign languages. (3) It divided Southern and Northern Indians. For example, in 1833 the British

labelled the Sinhala community as ‘Sinhalese race’ (Buddhist ‘Aryan’) and Tamils as ‘Tamil race’ (Hindu ‘Non-Aryan’). Thus two people started despising and killing each other. (4) It alienated many people from their own ancient Sanskrit culture. Especially Sanskrit should be deleted from the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution because it is a foreign language brought by the Aryans.

But: (1) Until the mid-19th century, no Indian had ever heard of Aryan invaders. (2) “The Vedic Aryans had no colour prejudice. How could they have? The Vedic Aryans were not of one colour. Their complexion varied; some were of copper complexion, some white and some black.” (Ambedkar, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji; Indian politician and architect of the Constitution of India, 1891-1956) (3) The Sarasvati, a river glorified in the Vedas, was recently identified as a riverbed, which had dried up 2,000 BCE, long before the supposed arrival of those Aryans. (4) The Indus Valley Script has been deciphered!

“Your Excellency, We are honoured to submit to you a paper providing evidence that a riddle, after a century of attempts, has finally found its solution. We mean the decipherment of the primeval Indus Valley Script. Competent scholars, since decades, have tried more and more decidedly, to find in Indus Script texts an Old Dravidian language, in vain. Now we are able to demonstrate beyond all doubt: the script is almost entirely phonetic, the basis is syllables, and the language is plain Sanskrit, to some extent close to proto-Aryan. The many hundreds of millions of citizens of India of Indo-Aryan descent may henceforth correctly maintain that, paleographically proved, their forefathers had, in times when Sumer, Ancient Egypt and China tentatively initiated civilization, in full splendour raised a high level one based on the most accurate phonetic writing early mankind ever had. It was a culture of a Hinduistic character that prevailed for a millenium and which covered an immense area of the Indian Subcontinent. It survived in the Hinduism of our day. Since the Indus Civilization strongly stimulated the rise of other civilizations of the globe, we consider it, as far as we are concerned, a modest token of an immense debt of gratitude to hand faithfully over to you, Representative of India in Germany, the enclosed pages.” (Schildmann, Dr. Kurt; German linguist, 1909-2005, letter to Kishan S. Rana, Ambassador of India in Germany, 1994)

“The study of comparative philosophy tends to show that Sanskrit is the mother of all Indo-European languages. From the Sanskrit were derived the original roots and the essentially necessary words which form the basis of all these languages.” (Jones, Sir William; British judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, 1746-1794)

A list of English words with Sanskrit roots: am, anchor, angle, animal, anonymous, ape, axis, axle, baking, barbarian, be, bearing, becoming, being, bi-, bond, borne, bound, broad, brother, brow, burden, cancer, candle, cane, car, chariot, chin, circle, coal, cock, coming, conch, corner, corpse, cow, creating, creator, data, date, December, dental, dexterous, divine, domain, domicile, domination, donation, donor, door, doubt, dough, dual, dust, dys-, eat, eight, end, far, father, flower, foam, foot, fore, four, free, fume, gait, gene, generation, genius, gnostic, going, goose, grasp, grave, grip, heart, him, hit, human, hunter, im-, in-, institute, interior, internal, is, it, jackal, jaggery, jungle, juvenile, knee, knowledge, lemon, light, living, location, long, looking, love, lying, mace, man, mate, maternal, mead, meaning, measure, medium, memory, mental, mentor, merging, meter, mid-, middle, mild, mind, mixed, month, moon, mortal, mosquito, mother, mouse, mouth, much, murder, musk, my, myth, nail, naked, name, navel, navigation, nether, new, night, nine, no, none, nose, not, noun, November, now, obtained, October, off, opal, orange, out, over, owl, ox, path, peda, pedis, pepper, per, peri-, position, pre-, previous, pro-, progeny, proto-, quadruped, quarter, radiant, radius, red, regal, regard, regency, regent, regimen, region, reign, remembering, rice, rotation, royal, rule, sacrament, saint, same, seat, self, September, serpent, serving, seven, shed, sinew, sister, sitting, situation, six, smile, some, son, standing, star, state, station, staying, steadiness, stem, stern, still, stop, stream, strew, strewing, stump, sub-, sugar, sum, super, sur-, sweat, sweet, tame, ten, they, thou, three, thunder, tooth, tree, true, tumult, twelve, twenty, two, -ty, udder, un-, under, untill, uterus, valor, victory, vocabulary, vocal, voice, wear, white, wid, will, wind, wish, wit, wolf, worm, yester, yoke, young, youth, zero.

Ignoring the influence of India and Sanskrit, a fancied language is presently being promoted, spoken by a fancied people, anywhere outside India, without any evidence: “**Proto-Indo-European** (PIE) is the linguistic reconstruction of the common ancestor of the Indo-European languages. It was spoken by the Proto-Indo-Europeans. PIE was the first proposed proto-language to be widely accepted by linguists. Far more work has gone into reconstructing it than any other proto-language and it is by far the best understood of all proto-languages of its age. ... There is no written evidence of Proto-Indo-European.” (Wikipedia)

“For most Westerners ‘histories of philosophy’ begin with the Greeks and end with the Americans, and convey not the least suggestion that anyone outside of the West ever had a philosophical idea. A glance at the curricula of most our colleges and universities would seem to indicate that the one principle on which they are planned might be phrased: nothing east of Suez! To one who has had a taste of the riches which Indian thought and Indian literature can contribute to our intellectual life and our spiritual experience, this deprivation which we Westerners inflict upon ourselves and upon our young people seems pitiful in the extreme.” (Pratt, James Bissett; American author, 1875-1944)

“Most European and American authors of books about religion and metaphysics write as though nobody had ever thought about these subjects except the Jews, Greeks, Christians of Mediterranean Basin and western Europe. Like any other form of imperialism, theological imperialism is the threat to world peace.” (Huxley, Aldous; English novelist and philosopher, 1894-1963)

“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 are 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 change.” “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.’” (Hopkins, Prof. Edward Washburn; American sanskritist, 1857-1932)

“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, severely grand, as deeply conceived as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God.” (Schlegel, Friedrich von; German poet and indologist, 1772-1829)

“Hinduism, without doubt the most denigrated and misunderstood of the major world religions, if it is recognized as a world religion at all. It is common to look down on Hinduism as primitive and those who call themselves Hindus, as backward or obsolete. Instead of looking at Hinduism in terms of its profound philosophies and deep mysticism, it is associated with idolatry, caste and various social evils, as if there was nothing more to it. Many of them complain about the primitive idol worship in Hindu religion. After all, Hindu gods like Hanuman and Ganesha have animal face and forms. Such people are offended to see an animal face on God, though they eat animals, and their God with his wrath often has traits that would be regarded as tyrannical or egoistic in a person.” (Frawley, David; American Indologist)

“I am a Hindu, which to me means the inheritor of the oldest and the highest spiritual culture known to human history.” (Goel, Sita Ram; scholar and publisher, 1921-2003)

“India is not only the Italy of Asia, it is not only the land of romance of art and beauty, it is in religion earth’s central shrine. India is religion.” (Cramb, John Adam; Scottish historian, 1862-1913)

“If India is to die, religion will be wiped off the face of the earth.” (Vivekananda, Indian philosopher, 1863-1902)

“In India, our religions will never at any time take root; the ancient wisdom of the human race will not be supplanted by the events in Galilee. On the contrary, Indian wisdom flows back to Europe, and will produce a fundamental change in our knowledge and thought.” (Schopenhauer, Arthur; German philosopher and writer, 1788-1860)

“The kings of Magadha and Malwa exchanged ambassadors with Greece. A Maurya ruler invited one of the Greek Sophists to join his court, and one of the greatest of the Indo-Greek kings became famous as the dialogue partner of the great Buddhist sage Nagasena, while in the opposite direction, Buddhist missionaries are known to have settled in Alexandria, and other cities in the Ancient West. It is evident then, that Indian thought was present in the fashionable intellectual circuit of ancient Athens, and there is every reason to suppose that Indian religious and philosophical ideas exercised some influence on early and classical Greek philosophy. Both Greeks and Romans habitually tried to understand the religions of India by trying to fit them as far as possible into Greco-Roman categories. Deities in particular were spoken of, not in Indian but in Greek terms and called by Greek names. Thus Shiva, was identified as ‘Dionysos,’ Krsna (or perhaps Indra) as ‘Heracles.’ The great Indian epics were compared to those of Homer. Doctrinally, the Indian concept of transmigration had its counterpart

in the metempsychosis taught by Pythagoras and Plato; nor was Indian asceticism altogether foreign to a people who remembered Diogenes and his followers.” (Klostermaier, Prof. Klaus Konrad; German indologist)

“The curious may find matter for reflection in these coincidences in the lives of Buddha and Christ. But those trained in European culture find it somewhat irksome, if not distasteful, to admit the debt of Christian religion to non-Christian sources, especially Hindu and Buddhist.” (Radhakrishnan, Sir Sarvepalli; Indian Prof. at Oxford University and President of India, 1888-1975)

“In these cases our natural inclination would be to suppose that the Buddhist stories borrowed from our Christian sources and not vice versa. But here the conscience of the scholar comes in. Some of these stories are found in the Hinayana Buddhist Canon and date, therefore, before the Christian era.” (Müller, Friedrich Max; German-born orientalist, 1823-1900)

Realization

“Hindu religion does not consist in struggles and attempts to believe a certain doctrine or dogma, but in realizing, not in believing, but in being and becoming.” (Vivekanada, 1863-1902)

“Hindu tradition is based on the experience of sages, sane men and women who observed the world and explored consciousness. Its approach is scientific: the Vedic truths are verifiable, universal and repeatable, not dependent on the views of privileged individuals (‘prophets’) but apaurusheya, ‘impersonal’.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

“Religious faith in the case of the Hindus has never been allowed to run counter to scientific laws, moreover the former is never made a condition for the knowledge they teach, but they are always scrupulously careful to take into consideration the possibility that by reason both the agnostic and atheist may attain truth in their own way. Such tolerance may be surprising to religious believers in the West, but it is an integral part of Vedantic belief.” (Rolland, Romain; French novelist and Nobel laureate, 1866-1944)

“In India, religion is hardly a dogma, but a working hypothesis of human conduct, adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life. A dogma might continue to be believed in, isolated from life, but a working hypothesis of human conduct must work and conform to life, or it obstructs life. The very *raison d’être* of such a hypothesis is its workableness, its conformity to life, and its capacity to adapt itself to changing conditions. So long as it can do so it serves its purpose and performs its allotted function. When it goes off at a tangent from the curve of life, loses contact with social needs, and the distance between it and life grows, it loses all its vitality and significance.” (Havell, Dr. Ernest Binfield; principal to the Madras College of Art, 1861-1934)

“Any sensible man is unknowingly a Hindu and ... the only hope for man lies in the abolition of the erratic, dogmatic, unphilosophical creeds people today call religions.” (Danielou, Alain; French ethnomusicologist, head of the UNESCO Institute for Comparative Musicology, 1907-1994)

“The older I get, the more Hindu I become.” (Naipaul, Sir Vidyadhar Surajprasad; Trinidad-born British Nobel laureate)

Open Source

“The key point of differentiation between Hinduism and these other faiths is not polytheism vs. monotheism. The key differentiation is that Hinduism is Open Source and most other faiths are Closed Source.” (Swamigal, Chandrashekarendra Saraswati; Indian sage of Kanchi, 1894-1994)

“The doctrines of Hinduism were never reduced to a set of formal creeds and Hindu religion has always been willing to receive new experiences and to incorporate new knowledge. Believing that man’s knowledge and understanding of reality evolves, the Hindu sage has been in a position to accept, even to welcome, new religious conceptions. As compared to the persecution and intolerance which have so continuously accompanied the practice of religion in the West ...” (Joad, Cyril Edwin Mitchinson; English philosopher and author, 1891-1953)

“In India there has been intellectual and spiritual freedom – the most valuable of all. This is evidenced by the

great variety of religious and philosophical opinion in this country, Rationalism, Theism, Atheism and so forth, and the existence of a large number of varying religious communities. The history of Europe on the contrary is marked by intolerance and abominable persecution. The 'liberty loving nations of the West' have been in the past greatly, and still are to some extent, behind India in the matter of intellectual and religious freedom." (Woodroffe, Sir John; British Chief Justice of India, 1865-1936)

"In the history of the world, Hinduism is the only religion that exhibits a complete independence and freedom of the human mind, its full confidence in its own powers. Hinduism is freedom, especially the freedom in thinking about God." (Radhakrishnan, Sir Sarvepalli; Indian Prof. at Oxford University and President of India, 1888-1975)

"Hinduism gives its followers complete freedom. It does not insist on any particular discipline or prayer. Religion has to release us from bondage. The only imperative commandment it can have is to ask us to purify ourselves. Hinduism has emphasized the need for inner purity." (Bhave, Vinayak Narahari 'Vinoba'; Indian social reformer, 1895-1982)

"At the utmost they fight with words, but they will never stake their soul or body or their property on religious controversy." (Al-Biruni /Alberuni; Persian scholar, 973-1048)

"The aggressive and quite illogical idea of a single religion for all mankind, a religion universal by the very force of its narrowness, one set of dogmas, one cult, one system of ceremonies, one ecclesiastical ordinance, one array of prohibitions and injunctions which all minds must accept on peril of persecution by men and spiritual rejection or eternal punishment by God, that grotesque creation of human unreason which has been the parent of so much intolerance, cruelty and obscurantism and aggressive fanaticism, has never been able to take firm hold of the Indian mentality." (Aurobindo, Sri; Indian philosopher, 1872-1950)

"Christianity has it that, if a man does not follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, he shall be condemned to hell. Islam says the same about those who do not follow the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed. We must not be angry with the adherents of either religion on that score. Let us take it that Christians and Muslims alike believe that followers of other religions do not have the same sense of fulfillment as they have. So let us presume that it is with good intentions that they want to bring others into their fold (Christianity or Islam as the case may be) out of a desire to help them. The question arises as to whether God is so merciless as to keep dispatching people for ages together to the hell from which there is no escape. Were he compassionate would he not have sent, during all this time, a messenger of his or a teacher to show humanity the way to liberation? Why should we worship a God who has no mercy? Or for that matter, why should there be any religion at all? " (Swamikal, Chandrashekarendra Saraswati; Indian sage of Kanchi, 1894-1994)

"Hinduism was organized for peaceful and harmonious co-existence, not for continued confrontation with external enemies in the shape of unbelievers. It is no accident of history that though Hinduism knew internal feuds like any social polity, it never crossed its borders to wage wars against people simply because they worshipped different Gods." (Swarup, Ram Agarwal; Indian thinker, 1920-1998)

"In India, religious leaders have never exercised any control over the political authority. The ancient Indian constitutional law, the Rajadharma, did not recognise the authority of religious leaders to interfere with the political power of the king. Religious leaders had a purely advisory role, tendering opinion when it was sought or suo motu on matters of public interest. There used to be a process of consultation, not of confrontation. This is why no Hindu king has ever persecuted anyone on the ground of religion. Thus, it is clear that in the Indian context, secularism meant respect for all religions as distinct from mere tolerance of other religions. This respect is part and parcel of Hinduism, to which theocracy is unknown. In fact, they cannot co-exist any more than light and darkness." (Jois, Justice Manadagadde Rama; Indian Chief Justice)

"Three groups of people left their homelands due to religious persecution in the land of their birth – the Jews, the Parsis and the Syrian-Christians. It is only in a Hindu land that the Jews were never persecuted." (McKinnon Secondary College)

"When in the fourth century the Sasanid Emperor of Persia began a cruel persecution of the Christians, a number of them with Bishops and Clergy fled to the more tolerant Hindu princes of Western coast of India." (Fortescue, Dr. Adrian; English scholar and Roman Catholic priest, 1874-1923)

According to Christian leaders in India, the apostle Thomas came to India in 52 AD, founded the Syrian Christian Church, and was killed by fanatical Brahmins in 72 AD. But according to the Vatican's records Thomas never came to India; he died in Spain.

Diversity

“Hinduism cannot be called a philosophy, nor is it a well defined religion. It is, rather, a large and complex socio-religious organism consisting of innumerable sects, cults, and philosophical systems and involving various rituals, ceremonies and spiritual disciplines, as well as the worship of countless gods, and goddesses. The many facets of this complex, and yet persistent and powerful spiritual tradition mirror the geographical, racial, linguistic and cultural complexities of India’s vast subcontinent.” (Capra, Fritjof; Austrian-born physicist and ecologist)

“India has all along been trying experiments in evolving a social unity within which all the different peoples could be held together, while fully enjoying the freedom of maintaining their differences. The tie has been as loose as possible, yet as close as circumstances permitted. This has produced something like a United States of a social federation, whose common name is Hinduism.” (Tagore, Rabindranath; Indian poet and Nobel laureate, 1861-1941)

“The people (of Calicut) are infidels consequently I consider myself in an enemy’s country, as the Mohammadans consider everyone who has not received the Qu’ran. Yet I admit that I meet with perfect toleration, and even favor; we have two mosques and are allowed to pray in public.” (Razzaq, Abdul; Persian scholar and ambassador, 1413-1482)

“Indian history has been distinguished throughout by a tendency towards toleration. Other peoples’ faith have been preserved, other people’s customs respected; and not only preserved and respected, but assimilated. Such toleration is a very rare thing in the history of mankind, as rare as it is invaluable. Throughout the whole course of Indian history, the characteristic Indian endeavor has been to look for the common element in apparently different things, the single reality that underlies the apparently many appearances. It is interesting then, to note this same insistence upon unity, the same endeavor to unite many into one as exhibited by the very early lawgivers and administrators of India. At the very beginning of Indian history, we find men trying to reconcile the conflicting ideas held by different people with regard to the right way of living together in society and the right way of conceiving God.” “Whatever the reason, it is a fact that India’s special gift to mankind has been the ability and willingness of Indians to effect a synthesis of many different elements both of thoughts and peoples, to create in short, unity out of diversity.” (Joad, Cyril Edwin Mitchinson; English philosopher and author, 1891-1953)

“Many countries lost all memory of their past but India has been able to preserve it though in a form badly damaged. Thus India has come to preserve spiritual traditions which many ancient cultures and countries have lost. Today Hinduism represents not only India but the ancient wisdom of humanity and therefore in a most vital way that humanity itself. In Hinduism many ancient countries can still rediscover their religious past, their old Gods and their old spiritual traditions.” (Swarup, Ram Agarwal; Indian thinker, 1920-1998)

Tenets

“Hinduism teaches that we are not simply our bodies, but are immortal souls (Ātmā) and that these are of the same substance as God (Brahma). Souls are reborn in new bodies after the old one dies and, according to the law of Karma, people’s thoughts, words and deeds determine the nature of their future lives. One who lives perfectly will not be reborn at all but will be liberated from the material world and reunited with Brahman.” (Encyclopedia of World History 1999)

To help realizing one’s divine nature, the sages of ancient India elaborated the above principles in a vast Sanskrit literature of Purānas, Itihāsas, Upanishads, etc. They established festivals (Utsava), temples (Mandira) and pilgrimages (Tirtha). They discerned different ways of meditation (Yoga). And they devised methods of cultural reformations (Samskāra) – functions within the family that impress moral standards and self-control in different stages of life, like the beginning of education (Vidyārambha), spiritual initiation (Upanayana) and marriage (Vivāha).

In this way Hinduism has brought forth diverse traditions, like Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Although their members will rather deny their affiliation to Hinduism, mostly they still follow

common principles: In one way or another they worship the divine (Brahma), and are aware of the soul (Ātmā), morals (Dharma), universal justice (Karma), rebirth (Samsāra), and liberation (Moksha). The differences are in the disciplic succession (Paramparā), philosophical standards (Pramāna), festivals (Utsava), and methods of religious practice (Sādhana), reformation (Samskāra), initiation (Dīkshā), worship (Pūjā), and meditation (Dhyāna).

“India is a country where saints and sages appeared at different times, succeeding one after another, in order to enlighten the people.” (Tsang, Hieun /Xuanzang; Chinese scholar and pilgrim to India, 602-664)

Veda

“After gradual research I have come to the conclusion that long before all heavenly books, God had revealed to the Hindus, through the Rishis of yore, of whom Brahma (Brahmā) was the Chief, His four books of knowledge, the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda.” (Dara Shikoh, Prince Muhammad; eldest son of Moghul Emperor Shah Jahan, 1615-1659)

“They are the oldest extant philosophy and psychology of our race; the surprisingly subtle and patient effort of man to understand the mind and the world, and their relation. The **Upanishads** are as old as Homer, and as modern as Kant.” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

“In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. They are destined sooner or later to become the faith of the people.” (Schopenhauer, Arthur; German philosopher and writer, 1788-1860)

“The Vedanta and the Sankhya hold the key to the laws of mind and thought process which are co-related to the Quantum Field, i.e. the operation and distribution of particles at atomic and molecular levels.” (Josephson, Prof. Brian David; Welsh physicist and Nobel laureate)

Bhagavad-Gītā

“The Grand Personality that towers over Kurukshetra and enunciates the body of doctrines which all India knew ... combines within himself the divinity of the Indian Shiva, the virility of the Greek Heracles, the simplicity of the Judian Christ, the tenderness of the Buddha, the calm, austerity and learning of any teacher of the Upanishads.” (Noble, Margaret Elizabeth /Sister Nivedita; Scots-Irish social worker, 1867-1911)

“I hesitate not to pronounce the Gita a performance of great originality, of sublimity of conception, reasoning and diction almost unequalled; and a single exception, amongst all the known religions of mankind ...” (Hastings, Lord Warren; Governor-General of British India, 1754-1826)

“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.” (Humboldt, Wilhelm von; German minister of education and linguist, 1767-1835)

“I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad-Gita. It was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us.” (Emerson, Ralph Waldo; American philosopher, 1803-1882)

“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; ... ” (Thoreau, Henry David; American philosopher and writer, 1817-1862)

“The Bhagavad-Gita is the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution of endowing value to mankind. The Gita is one of the clearest and most comprehensive summaries of the spiritual thoughts ever to have been made.” (Huxley, Aldous; English novelist and philosopher, 1894-1963)

“I read more of the Bhagavad Gita and felt how surpassingly fine were the sentiments. These, or selections from this book should be included in a Bible for Mankind. I think them superior to any of the other Oriental scriptures, the best of all reading for wise men.” “Best of books – containing a wisdom blander and far more sane than that of the Hebrews, whether in the mind of Moses or of Him of Nazareth. Were I a preacher, I would

venture sometimes to take from its texts the motto and moral of my discourse. It would be healthful and invigorating to breathe some of this mountain air into the lungs of Christendom.” (Alcott, Amos Bronson; American philosopher and writer, 1799-1888)

The Supreme

“In the family of religions, Hinduism is the wise old all-knowing mother. Its sacred books, the Vedas, claim, ‘Truth is one, but sages call it by different names.’ If only Islam, and all the rest of the monotheistic ‘book’ religions, had learned that lesson, all the horror of history’s religious wars could have been avoided. Which other religion has its God say, as Krishna does in the Bhagavad Gita, ‘All paths lead to me.’” (Zaehner, Robert Charles; British historian of religion, 1913-1974)

“The Hindu believe in one God, conceived as the universal soul or Paramatma, the absolute and eternal, beyond the categories of thought and expression, and embracing the entire universe. The text – there is only One, the learned speak of it in many ways. Though the Paramatma is impersonal or without qualities in itself in relation to the world expressed in terms of the relative, it is personal and man’s mind conceives it as having qualities and form. This leads to the doctrine of Ishta Devata, or God, as conceived according to one’s preference, as father, mother, guru, lover or even friend. The One Supreme thus assumes for the devotee the qualities and form in which he likes to worship. Many who worship the Supreme as Krishna think of him as a playful child, others as the great guru. In the same way, God is conceived by others as the Divine Mother. It is this doctrine of Ishta Devata, the freedom given to every one to worship God with the attributes of his own choice, never however forgetting that the Supreme has no qualities, that has led to the misconception that Hinduism is polytheistic. In a sense, it is true that there can be as many forms of Godhead in Hinduism as there are believers, for each one can conceive God only as the limitations of his own mind permit him.” (Panikkar, Sardar Kavalam Madhava; Indian historian and ambassador, 1896-1963)

“How artistic, that there should be room for such variety – how rich the texture is, and how much more interesting than if the Almighty had decreed one antiseptically safe, exclusive, orthodox way. Although he is Unity, God finds, it seems, his recreation in variety! But beyond these differences, the same goal beckons.” (Smith, Huston; American religion scholar, 1919-2016)

The 1996 Britannica Book of the Year asserts that of the Hindus, 70% are Vaishnavas (worshippers of that Supreme in the form of Vishnu or His Avatāras, like Krishna and Rāma) and 25% are Shaivites (worshippers of that Supreme Person in the form of Shiva).

“I always felt at home with Krishna. You see it was already a part of me. I think it’s something that’s been with me from my previous birth. ... I’d rather be one of the devotees of God than one of the straight, so-called sane or normal people who just don’t understand that man is a spiritual being, that he has a soul.” (Harrison, George; former Beatle, 1943-2001)

“No religion, perhaps, lays as much emphasis on environmental ethics as does Hinduism. It believes in ecological responsibility and says like Native Americans that the Earth is our mother. It champions protection of animals, which it considers also have souls, and promotes vegetarianism. It has a strong tradition of non-violence or ahimsa. It believes that God is present in all nature, in all creatures, and in every human being regardless of their faith or lack of it.” (Frawley, David; American Indologist)

“India includes so much because her soul being infinite excludes nothing. It goes without saying that the universe that India saw emerging from the infinite was stupendous. While the West was still thinking, perhaps, of 6,000 years old universe – India was already envisioning ages and eons and galaxies as numerous as the sands of the Ganges. The Universe so vast that modern astronomy slips into its folds without a ripple.” (Smith, Huston; American religion scholar, 1919-2016)

“The Hindu mind has a vision of eternity and infinity. It is aware of the vast cycles of creation and destruction that govern the many universes and innumerable creatures within them.” (Frawley, David; American Indologist)

“The idea of a periodically expanding and contracting universe, which involves a scale of time and space of vast proportions; has arisen not only in modern cosmology, but also in ancient Indian mythology. Experiencing the universe as an organic and rhythmically moving cosmos, the Hindus were able to develop evolutionary cosmologies which come very close to our modern scientific models. The Hindu sages were not afraid to identify this rhythmic divine play with the evolution of the cosmos as a whole. They pictured the universe as periodically expanding and contracting and gave the name kalpa to the unimaginable time span between the beginning and the end of one creation. The scale of this ancient myth is indeed staggering; it has taken the human mind more than two thousand years to come up again with a similar concept.” (Capra, Fritjof; Austrian-born physicist and ecologist)

Nature (Prakriti)

“I suspect that general relativity and quantum theory are two complimentary aspects of a deeper theory that will involve a kind of cosmic consciousness. The cosmic consciousness or the Mahat of India’s Samkhya Philosophy is the basis of entire creation.” (Sarfatti, Jack; American theoretical physicist)

“The Hindu revelation, which proclaims the slow and gradual formation of worlds, is of all revelations the only one whose ideas are in complete harmony with modern science. ” (Jacolliot, Louis Francois; French judge in India and writer, 1837-1890)

“The various theories of creation, arrangement and development were each elaborated, and the views of the modern physiologists at the present day are a return with new light to the evolution theory of Kapila, whose Sankhya system is the oldest of the Darsanas.” (Hunter, Sir William Wilson; Scottish historian, 1840-1900)

“A millennium before Europeans were willing to divest themselves of the Biblical idea that the world was a few thousand years old, the Mayans were thinking of millions and the Hindus billions.” “The Hindu religion is the only one of the world’s great faiths dedicated to the idea that the Cosmos itself undergoes an immense, indeed an infinite, number of deaths and rebirths. It is the only religion in which the time scales correspond to those of modern scientific cosmology.” (Sagan, Dr. Carl; American astrophysicist and author, 1934-1996)

3761 BCE is the year of world creation in the Jewish religious calendar. 4004 BCE is Archbishop Usher’s (17th century) supposed date of the creation of the world, based on genealogies in the Old Testament.

“A stone was found there in the temple of the great Buddha, on which an inscription was written purporting that the temple had been founded fifty thousand years ago. The Sultan was surprised at the ignorance of these people, because those who believe in the true faith represent that only seven thousand years have elapsed since the creation of the world.” (Muslim Chronicle)

Soul

“I may mention here another fundamental error of Christianity, an error which cannot be explained away, and the mischievous consequences of which are obvious every day: I mean the unnatural distinction Christianity makes between man and the animal world to which he really belongs. It sets up man as all-important, and looks upon animals as merely things. Brahmanism and Buddhism, on the other hand, true to the facts, recognize in a positive way that man is related generally to the whole of nature, and specially and principally to animal nature;

and in their systems man is always represented by the theory of metempsychosis and otherwise, as closely connected with the animal world. The important part played by animals all through Buddhism and Brahmanism, compared with the total disregard of them in Judaism and Christianity, puts an end to any question as to which system is nearer perfection, however much we in Europe may have become accustomed to the absurdity of the claim. Christianity contains, in fact, a great and essential imperfection in limiting its precepts to man, and in refusing rights to the entire animal world...”

“Were an Asiatic to ask me for a definition of Europe, I should be forced to answer him: It is that part of the world which is haunted by the incredible delusion that man was created out of nothing, and that his present birth is his first entrance into life.” (Schopenhauer, Arthur; German philosopher and writer, 1788-1860)

“Zen is the Japanese equivalent of Sanskrit Dhyana (meditation) or Ch’an and is the name given to the sect founded in China by Bodhidharma.” (Elliot, Sir Charles; British linguist, botanist and diplomat, 1862-1931)

“If the attainment of the middle path consisted in a mere surrender to instinct, as the bewailers of ‘naturalism’ suppose, the profoundest philosophical speculation that the human mind has ever known would have no *raison d’être*. But, as we study the philosophy of the Upanishads, the impression grows on us that the attainment of this path is not exactly the simplest of tasks. Our Western superciliousness in the face of these Indian insights is a mark of our barbarian nature, which has not the remotest inkling of their extraordinary depth and astonishing psychological accuracy. We are still so uneducated that we actually need laws from without, and a task-master or Father above, to show us what is good and the right thing to do. And because we are still such barbarians, any trust in human nature seems to us a dangerous and unethical naturalism. Why is this? Because under the barbarian’s thin veneer of culture the wild beast lurks in readiness, amply justifying his fear. But the beast is not tamed by locking it up in cage. There is no morality without freedom. When the barbarian lets loose the beast within him, that is not freedom but bondage. Barbarism must first be vanquished before freedom can be won. This happens, in principle, when the basic root and driving force of morality are felt by the individual as constituents of his own nature and not as external restrictions.” (Jung, Carl Gustav; Swiss psychotherapist, 1875-1961)

“The Hindu creed is monotheistic and of very high ethical value; and when I look back on my life in India and the thousands of good friends I have left there among all classes of the native community, when I remember those honorable, industrious, orderly, law-abiding, sober, manly men, I look over England and wonder whether there is anything in Christianity which can give a higher ethical creed than that which is now professed by the large majority of the people of India. I do not see it in London society, I do not see it in the slums of the East End, I do not see it on the London Stock Exchange. I think that the morality of India will compare very favorably with the morality of any country in Western Europe.” (Griffin, Sir Lepel Henry; British diplomat and writer, 1840-1908)

“Whenever I look around me, in the vast region of Hindoo Mythology, I discover piety in the garb of allegory: and I see Morality, at every turn, blended with every tale; and, as far as I can rely on my own judgment, it appears the most complete and ample system of Moral Allegory that the world has ever produced.” (Stuart, Charles; Irish-born British Army General in India, 1758-1828)

“The first limb of Yoga is Yama (prohibitions), and Ahimsā is its first item. Without Ahimsā the other limbs of Yoga are, as it were, not performed. Abstinence from injury means not causing pain to any living creature at any time. The Yamas and Niyamas that follow have their origin in it. They are meant to achieve it. They are taught with the object of teaching it. They are taken up with the object of rendering the light of its appearance purer. And so it has been said: As the Brāhmana goes on undertaking many of a vow of restraint and observance, he goes on turning away from the sins committed on account of forgetfulness, and having their origin in injury caused to others; and by so doing he goes on rendering the Ahimsā itself purer and purer.” (Yoga-Sūtra-Bhāshya 2.30)

“Others, the most ignoble and largest of all, though they kill not, nevertheless eat, all sorts of Animals good for food, except Cows; to kill and eat which all in general abhor, saying that the Cow is their Mother, for the Milke she gives and the Oxen she breeds, which plough the Earth and do a thousand other services ...” (Della Valle, Pietro; Italian musicologist and traveller, 1586-1652)

“Cow-protection is an article of faith in Hinduism. Apart from its religious sanctity, it is an ennobling creed. Cow protection is the dearest possession of the Hindu heart. It is the one concrete belief common to all Hindus. No one who does not believe in cow-protection can possibly be called a Hindu. It is a noble belief. ... For me the cow is the personification of innocence. Cow protection means the protection of the weak and helpless.” (Gandhi, Mohandas; Indian politician, 1869-1948)

From about 1750 onwards a very large number of cows were daily slaughtered by the British for their army and civilian personnel in India. The Muslim community was encouraged by the British to take up the slaughter of cattle, as the large number of slaughterhouses set up by the British required professional butchers. In 1880-1894 there was a movement against cow killing in which many prominent Muslims actively participated, because a majority of Muslims in India did not eat the flesh of cow. “I doubt whether, since the Mutiny, any movement containing in it a greater amount of potential mischief has engaged the attention of the Government of India.” (Viceroy Lansdowne) “Though the Muhammadan’s cow killing is made the pretext for the agitation, it is, in fact, directed against us, who kill far more cows for our army, etc., than the Muhammadans.” (Queen Victoria)

The British tried their best, and largely succeeded in projecting this movement as a conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

“The British Origin of Cow-Slaughter in India (Dharampal 2002) – besides providing historical evidence about the genesis of mass cow-slaughter under British auspices, presents extensive documentary material about one of the most significant resistance movements in India against kine-killing by the British during the years 1880-1894. By highlighting the support given by some prominent Muslims during phases of this mass protest as well as by emphasising the crucial fact that it was the British and not the Muslims who were the main consumers of beef, Dharampal is able to dispel one of the deep-seated myths perpetuated in the interest of reinforcing divisive colonial strategies.” (Wikipedia)

“They (Indians) are remarkably brave, and superior in war to all Asiatics; they are remarkable for integrity; they are so reasonable as seldom to have recourse to law suits, and so honest as to require neither locks to their doors nor writings to bind their agreements. They are in the highest degree truthful.” (Arrian, Lucius Flavius; Greek historian and military commander, c. 87-150)

“After reading and considering the works of Babhravya and other ancient authors, and thinking over the meaning of the rules given by them, this treatise (Kāma-Sūtra) was composed, according to the precepts of the sacred law, for the benefit of the world, by Vatsyayana, while leading the life of a religious student at Benares, and wholly engaged in the contemplation of the Deity. This work is not to be used merely as an instrument for satisfying our desires. A person acquainted with the true principles of this science, who preserves his virtue (Dharma), wealth (Artha) and pleasure (Kāma), and who has regard to the customs of the people, is sure to obtain the mastery over his senses. In short, an intelligent and knowing person attending to dharma and artha and also to kāma, without becoming the slave of his passions, will obtain success in everything that he may do.” (Vatsyayana; Indian philosopher, 2nd century)

“A surprising spirit of cleanliness is to be observed among the Hindoos; the streets of their villages are commonly swept and watered, and sand is frequently strewed before the doors of the houses. The simplicity, and perfectly modest character, of the Hindoo women, cannot but arrest the attention of a stranger. With downcast eye, and equal step, they proceed along, and scarcely turn to the right or to the left to observe a foreigner as he passes, however new or singular his appearance. The men are no less remarkable for their hospitality, and are constantly attentive to accommodate the traveller in his wants.” (Hodges, William; British painter and traveller, 1744-1797)

“The law of Karma postulates that in this world there are no rewards or punishments; it is simply a case of inevitable consequences. As you sow, so shall you reap. Sometimes others reap what you have sown. There is an interlinking and inter-connection all round and at every level, in time and in space. No one lives, or can possibly live, in isolation. The past is linked to the future, the world to the next, men to their fellow-men, thoughts to actions, actions to reactions, the living spirits to the departed ones. The law of karma governs all.” (Palkhivala, Nanabhoy /Nani Ardeshir; Indian lawyer and Ambassador to the USA, 1920-2002)

“I am no Hindu, but I hold the doctrine of the Hindus concerning a future state to be incomparably more rational, more pious, and more likely to deter men from vice, than the horrid opinions, inculcated on punishments without end.” (Jones, Sir William; British judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, 1746-1794)

Slavery

India was admired for being prosperous without slavery: “As for good works and sins, they all agree with the Doctrine of Morality and the universal consent of Mankind, that there are differences of Virtue and Vice in all the world. They hold not onely Adultery, but even simple Fornication, a great sin; nor do they account it lawful, as the Mahometans do, to have commerce with female slaves, or with others besides their own Wives. Yea, slaves of either sex they no-wise admit, but hold it a sin; making use of free persons for their service, and paying them wages, as we do in Europe. Which likewise was their ancient custom, as appears by Strabo, who cites Megasthenes and other Authors of those times for it.” (Della Valle, Pietro; Italian musicologist and traveller, 1586-1652)

Duty

“Since its origin, Hindu society has been built on rational bases by sages who sought to comprehend man’s nature and role in creation as a whole. They organized the society in such a way as to facilitate the development of each human being, taking into account his inner nature and the reasons for his existence, since for the Hindus the world is not merely the result of a series of chances but the realization of a divine plan in which all aspects are interconnected. Thus, Hindu society is the result of an attempt to situate man in the plan of creation.” “The Hindus assert that their social formula meets the requirements of man’s individual and collective nature. The fact that the Hindu civilization has been able to survive over thousands of years, despite disorders caused by invasions, schisms, and internal wars, and has been capable of constant renewal, as demonstrated by one brilliant period after another, merits all our attention in the study of a social system whose longevity is unique in history.” (Danielou, Alain; French ethnomusicologist, head of the UNESCO Institute for Comparative Musicology, 1907-1994)

“The Hindu civilization has survived the Egyptian, the Assyrian and the Babylonian. The Christian is but two thousand years old. The Islamic is but of yesteryear. Great as both these are they are still in my humble opinion in the making. Christian Europe is not at all Christian, but is groping, and so in my opinion is Islam still groping for its great secret, and there is today a competition, healthy as also extremely unhealthy and ugly, between these three great religions. As years go by, the conviction is daily growing upon me that Varna is the law of man’s being and therefore as necessary for Christianity and Islam, as it has been necessary for Hinduism and has been its saving.” (Gandhi, Mohandas; Indian politician, 1869-1948)

“It would lead to a greater respect for India’s culture, and indeed a better understanding of it, if it were recognized that the caste system has never been totally static, that it is adapting itself to today’s changing circumstances and that it has positive as well as negative aspects. The caste system provides security and a community for millions of Indians. It gives them an identity that neither Western Science nor Western thought has yet provided, because caste is not just a matter of being a Brahmin or a Harijan: it is also a kinship system. The system provides a wider support group than a family: a group which has a social life in which all its members participate.” (Inden, Prof. Ronald B.; American historian)

“The caste system provides for relatively greater stability and dignity to the individuals than they would have as atomized individuals. This in part explains why the Indian poor retain a strong sense of self-respect. It is that self-respect which the thoughtless insistence on egalitarianism destroys.” (Kishwar, Prof. Madhu Purnima; Indian academic and writer)

“Caste has created and maintained an infinite capacity for toleration and assimilation. Caste made it possible for the Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Huns, Malays, Christians, Jews and Parsees to be slowly fitted into Hindu society and made it, with the least conflict, into the most diverse community of races in the world. It is this marvelous diversity of man in India which has made that country both a museum and a laboratory for the study of man. For this reason the most profound lessons in the study of society have come from India.” (Darlington, Prof. Cyril Dean; English biologist and geneticist, 1903-1981)

As a political category, caste is a British invention. The British introduced the category of caste for purposes of counting population in the census that began in 1871. In a similar fashion, the counting of people by tribal identity in Africa led to tribalism. Sikhism was defined as a separate religion by the British, and it became so.

“In modern popularizing writings, one often reads that ‘egalitarian’ Buddhism was essentially a ‘protest movement’ against the Brahminical caste system. ... But neither the Buddha himself, nor any pre-modern Buddhist teacher after him has combated the caste system. Buddhism’s non-interest in social reform is also demonstrated by its career outside India. After centuries of profound impact of Buddhism, Tibetan society was in such a state that the Chinese Communists could claim in 1950 that 95% of the Tibetans were living in slavery; ... the fact remains that Buddhism had not rendered Tibet’s traditional feudalism any more egalitarian than it had been in the pre-Buddhist past. Outside India, a number of independent sources confirm that Buddhist monasteries employed slaves.” (Zürcher, Prof. Erik; Dutch sinologist, 1928-2008)

“The Buddha never said: ‘Down with the Brahmins! Break Brahmin tyranny!’ On the contrary, he taught about how to be a true Brahmin, as against having the outer attributes but not the inner qualities of the Brahmin. Many of his disciples were Brahmins. The myth of Buddhist social revolution against Brahmin tyranny can be disproven on many counts with the Buddha’s own words.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

Teacher (Brāhmana)

“Under the Hindu dominion, the ranks and professions of men were classed into 36 castes, and the individuals of each were obliged to learn and follow the profession of his ancestors. By this establishment, each individual of a caste had the means of support in his profession. These castes were under the direction of their Pundits and the Panchayats, or General Assembly of the caste, and used to examine the conduct of the members of their society, and the consequence of their censure was sometimes a total exclusion of the guilty individual from the community. No Brahmin was supported by the public who was unlearned or who did not contribute his assistance in forming the minds of the lower classes, and teach them morality, and the duties enjoined by laws. Under such an establishment for the instruction of the lower classes it was not difficult to form an efficient Police. But the cruel reverse, which the invasion of the unprincipled and bigoted Musalmans introduced, may account for the wide torrent of corruption that has overflowed this country. They considered the conquered Hindus as infidels, and treated them with unrelenting persecution and cruelty. They thought that every insult and injury upon them were acts pleasing to God and the Prophet. Their destructive bigotry attacked the books and learning of the Hindus, and the Brahmins, persecuted with incessant atrocities, ceased to exercise their functions. ... Their learning fell into neglect, and in course of time the Brahmins came to want that instruction themselves which it was their duty to afford to others. Missing in all the selfish squabble of common life, they gradually lost, by their own example, in the eyes of the Hindus, that respect which was so necessary to give force and energy to instruction.” (Papers Relating to East India Company Affairs 1813)

“More persons in India become every year Brahmanists than all the converts to all the other religions in India put together. ... These teachers address themselves to every one without distinction of caste or of creed ...” (Lyll, Sir Alfred Comyn; British civil servant and historian, 1835-1911)

“The Brahmans are always ready to receive all who will submit to them. The process of manufacturing Rajputs (Kshatriya) from ambitious aborigines (tribals) goes on before our eyes.” (Campbell, Sir John; British army officer in India, 1802-1878)

“But how to convert them? One would persecute resistance and opposition. How to respond to indifference? The attitude of these heathens towards Christianity, it is this: indifference.” (Balagangadhara, Prof. S. N.; Indian philosopher)

“The British were not wrong in their distrust of educated Brahmins (Brāhmana) in whom they saw a potential threat to their supremacy in India. For instance, in 1879 the Collector of Tanjore in a communication to Sir James Caird, member of the Famine Commission, stated that ‘there was no class (except Brahmins) which was so hostile to the English.’ The predominance of the Brahmins in the freedom movement confirmed the worst British suspicions of the community. Innumerable reports of the period commented on Brahmin participation at all levels of the nationalist movement. In the words of an observer, ‘If any community could claim credit for driving the British out of the country, it was the Brahmin community. Seventy per cent of those who were felled by British bullets were Brahmins.’ ... In the attempt to rewrite Indian history, Brahmins began to be portrayed as oppressors and tyrants who willfully kept down the rest of the populace. ... As a result of their machinations non-Brahmins turned on the Brahmins with a ferocity that has few parallels in Indian history. This was all the more surprising in that for centuries Brahmins and non-Brahmins had been active partners and collaborators in the task of political and social management.” (Jain, Meenakshi; Indian historian)

“When India was invaded by foreign powers, the Brahmins proved to be a great obstacle, particularly against religious conversion. Muslim rulers made special efforts to convert or even kill Brahmins. They destroyed Hindu temples in order to deprive the Brahmins, who were mainly temple priests, of their influence and their income. The British rulers of colonial India targeted the Brahmins and dismantled the traditional educational system that the Brahmins upheld. ... Somehow this oppressed group has been stereotyped as the ruling oppressors! As Brahmins are vilified as the oppressive ruling elite one would expect that the Brahmins routinely ruled the country. Not only was this not true in the period of foreign rule, it wasn't true in the period of classical India either. In this regard it is important to look at the social role traditionally held by Brahmins. In traditional India Brahmins served as the priestly class, providing teachers of all types as well performing religious sacraments and temple worship. The traditional Brahmin was given to a life of poverty, social service, and spiritual practice. Brahmin families usually gave one of their sons to become a monk and led lives of religious austerity. The Brahmins therefore had neither economic nor political advantage. Their status was on a religious and intellectual level. They were praised as religious leaders, not as a political or economic elite. ... The

Brahmins as the priestly class did not control the military or economy of the country except when individual Brahmins stepped beyond the traditional limits of their class, which was rare.” (Frawley, David; American Indologist)

“The Brahmins attached to knowledge and learning is what has helped the Indian civilization endure and allowed the arts to flourish. If comparisons have to be made, it may be said that the endurance of the Brahmins in India has kept her elite intact, whereas in neighboring China the anti-intellectualism of communist peasants has completely wiped out the intelligentsia of that country. The Brahmins kept knowledge and art alive in India, preserving not only their savant but also their popular forms. The Brahmin elite is perhaps egoistical and domineering, nonetheless it has preserved a sense of dignity and beauty that has disappeared from China where all that remains is vulgarity and crass ignorance.” (Sorman, Prof. Guy; French economist)

Protector (Kshatriya)

“For the accomodation of these travellers principally, the Chetrum (Kshetra) have been established, and to each of them pagodas, choultries, and schools are annexed. I will now explain to you the nature and extent of the charities dispensed by them. All travellers from the Bramin (Brāhmana) to the Pariar inclusive, pilgrims of every description including jogues (Yogīs), jungums (ascetics?), ateets (Atithi) and byragies (Vairāgī) are fed with boiled rice. Those who do not choose to eat the boiled rice receive it unboiled with spices &c. These distributions continue till midnight when a bell is rung and proclamation made requiring all those who have not been fed to appear and take the rice prepared for them. The travellers who may be unable to proceed in their journey are fed as long as they remain at the Chetrum. In each chetrum a teacher to each of the four vedums (Veda) is appointed, and a school-master and doctors, skillful in the care of diseases, swellings, and the poison of reptiles; all the orphans of strangers who may come to the chetrum are placed under the care of the school-master. They are also fed three times a day, and once in four days they are annointed with oil. They receive medicine when they require it; cloths also are given to them and the utmost attention paid to them. They are instructed in the sciences to which they may express a preference, and after having obtained a competent knowledge of them the expences of their marriage are defrayed. Travellers who fall sick at the chetrum or before their arrival, receive medicine, and the diet proper for them, and are attended with respect and kindness untill their recovery. The obsequies of those who die during their residence at the chetrum are performed according to the rites of their cast. Milk is provided for infants; pregnant women are entertained with kindness, and if they happen to be delivered at the chetrum, their expenses are defrayed, medicines are given to them and they are permitted to remain in the chetrum three months after their delivery. Those who apply to the chetrum and state their inability to defray the expence of receiving the Braminical thread, of their marriage, or of the performance of the ceremonies, subsequent to their father’s death, receive a sum of money proportionate to the occasion. As the lands annexed to the chetrum is in general very poor, it happens frequently from a deficiency of rain, that they do not produce sufficient for the expences. When this is the case my anxiety to prevent any diminution of these excellent charities, which I consider as the most honourable appendage of my dignity, has always induced me to send to them from the circuar both grain and money sufficient to make up the deficiency. ... The superintendence of them has always descended from the older to the younger queen. It has remained in the hands of the senior until her death and then descended to the wife of the reigning Rajah. I have a perfect confidence that this custom of my ancestors will not be deviated from, and that I shall not suffer the disgrace of seeing it abolished in my reign.” (A letter from His Excellency Serfojee Rajah of Tanjore to the British Government, 1801)

“Whereas among other nations it is usual, in the contests of war, to ravage the soil and thus to reduce it to an uncultivated waste, among the Indians, on the contrary, by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even when battle is raging in their neighborhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger, for the combatants on either side in waging the conflict make carnage of each other, but allow those engaged in husbandry to remain quite unmolested. Besides, they never ravage an enemy’s land with fire, nor cut down its trees.” (Megasthenes; Greek historian and diplomat, c. 350-290 BCE)

“The Hindu laws of war are very chivalrous and humane, and prohibit the slaying of the unarmed, of women, of the old, and of the conquered.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

Government

“In India the nation at large has generally used passive resistance in all departments of life. We cease to cooperate with our rulers when they displease us.” (Gandhi, Mohandas; Indian politician, 1869-1948)

“Whenever this traditional pattern of relationship [between ruler and ruled] was disturbed by an autocratic ruler, the people were entitled to offer resistance in the customary manner, that is, by peaceful non-cooperation and civil disobedience. It also appears that in the event of such action, the response of the ruling authority was not to treat it as unlawful defiance, rebellion or disloyalty that had to be put down at any cost before the issue in dispute could be taken up, but as rightful action that called for speedy negotiated settlement.” (Naryayan, Jayaprakash; Indian politician, 1902-1979)

Women

“And it may be confidently asserted that in no nation of antiquity were women held in so much esteem as amongst the Hindus.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

“India of the Vedas entertained a respect for women amounting to worship; a fact which we seem little to suspect in Europe when we accuse the extreme East of having denied the dignity of woman, and of having only made her an instrument of pleasure and of passive obedience.” “What! Here is a civilization, which you cannot deny to be older than your own, which places the woman on a level with the man and gives her an equal place in the family and in society.” (Jacolliot, Louis Francois; French judge in India and writer, 1837-1890)

“Indian wives often possess greater influence than wives of Europeans. He is not a true Hindu who does not regard a woman’s body as sacred as the temple of God. He is an outcast who touches a woman’s body with irreverence, hatred or anger.” (Monier-Williams, Sir Monier; British indologist and head of the Oxford’s Boden Chair, 1819-1899)

“The doctrines of the Hindoo religion have been singularly careful to protect the female sex and infants from violence; and its is unlawful to put a woman to death for any offense whatever.” (Peggs, James; English missionary in India, 1793-1850)

Marriage

“They have peculiar months; in which only they allow the consummation of marriages. In these months what with illuminations, singers, dancr and horrid musick, one would imagine the days and nights reversed for they never begin the entertainment before it is dark, nor conclude them while that favours the demonstration of their fireworks. All this time, the bride and bridegroom richly dres’d, are well mounted on horse back or carried in pallankeens (like a couch, in which there is a mattress and pillows) upon four or six men’s shoulders thro the town, accompanied by the relations and friends of both families, preceded by the dancing girls, musicians, singers, with great number of massals or links attending them. Previous to this, there are machines of fire erected over against all their friends houses to whom they intend to pay respect, where always they stop, and are entertained by the dancers. And during the exhibition of the fireworks, throughout the whole procession the bride and bridegroom are incessantly employed throwing flowers at one another, of which the servants carry basketsful for that purpose. Though these ceremonies are not finished in less than six or eight days, yet in regard to their entertainments they never exceed a low sweetmeats and butlenuts, which they use as Europeans do tobacco, but the former is a fine aromatick and in every respect much preferable, at the same time promiscuously sprinkling rose-water and other perfumes amongst their guests. You would be surprised to think how great a sum the expence of one of their better sort of marriages will amount to. I saw one my last voyage at Bengall, which I was well informed could not cost less than ten or twelve thousand pounds sterling, and one since I have been in Bombay that amounted to about one third of that sum.” (Knox, Alex; ?; written 1753)

“Those races (the Indian viewed from a moral aspect) are perhaps the most remarkable people in the world. They breathe an atmosphere of moral purity, which cannot but excite admiration, and this is especially the case with the pioneer classes, who, notwithstanding the privations of their humble lot, appear to be happy and contented. Domestic felicity appears to be the rule among the Natives, and this is the more strange when the

customs of marriage are taken into account, parents arranging all such matters. Many Indian households afford examples of the married state in its highest degree of perfection.” (Young, James; British officer, 1782-1848)

“As I observed before, their marriages are all conducted by the parents during the parties infancy, the expence of this ceremony, which is considerable according to the ranks of the persons married, is always from the bridegroom’s family, nor is it customary to give any fortunes with their daughters, because it should not be said they were obliged to buy them husbands, for this custom it seems they despise the Europeans very much.” (Knox, Alex; ?; written 1753)

Then why Dahej is widely practiced in India? Its name points to the Arabic root Jahez and a custom to arrange marriages purely with profit in mind. Others have observed that the present dowry practice in India can be traced only to the 19th century.

“The concept of stri dhan in which gifts – usually jewelry, including often a quarter pound of gold – was given to the bride by her family, in order to secure some personal wealth for her when she married. This jewelry remained her personal property throughout the marriage, providing some security in case of her husband’s death or other calamity. However, in approximately the 19th century, under the British rule, the loving practice of stri dhan was joined by the very much different concept of dowry. Dowry became first an expected, then a demanded, offering given by the bride’s family to the groom’s family at the time of marriage. Whereas stri dhan is considered the property only of the woman, passed matrilineally, dowry is not. ... In the pre-colonial period, dowry was an institution managed by women, for women, to enable them to establish their status and have recourse in an emergency. As a consequence of the massive economic and societal upheaval brought on by British rule, womens’ entitlements to the precious resources obtained from land were erased and their control of the system diminished, ultimately resulting in a devaluing of their very lives.” (Srinivasan, Rajeev; Indian-born American engineer and manager)

“Atrocity literature played its part in downgrading women’s right, too. Veena Oldenburg’s seminal book, Dowry Murder, gives details on how the British encouraged the Indians to dish out cases of atrocities that could then be blamed on the native cultures. They systematically compiled these anecdotes, mostly unsubstantiated and often exaggerated and one-sided. This became a justification to enact laws that downgraded the rights of common citizens. The book shows how the dowry extortions that have become so common in middle-class today, were actually started when women’s traditional property rights were taken away by the British through convoluted logic.” (Malhotra, Rajiv; Indian scientist and writer)

Hermit

“Spiritual life in India has solitary meditation as one of its essential stages. It has been the cherished ambition and pursuit of the lonely ascetic. It is assumed that those who are distracted by the cares and encumbered by the possessions of the world find it hard to secure their spiritual ends. Those emancipated from these are free to devote themselves to the highest aim. When once the end is reached, the Indian sannyasi travels at pleasure and has no fixed residence or occupation. The first Christians were homeless wanderers. The mendicant rather than the resident community of monks has been the Indian ideal. Monasteries are more temporary rest-houses or centres of learning than permanent habitations. The Hindu system of ashramas according to which every one of the twice-born towards the close of his life must renounce the world and adopt the homeless life and the ascetic’s garb has had great influence on the Indian mind. Though in intention, certain classes were not eligible to become monks, in practice monks were recruited from all castes. The Jain and the Buddhist orders though based on the ancient Hindu custom have become more centralised and co-ordinated.” (Radhakrishnan, Sir Sarvepalli; Indian Prof. at Oxford University and President of India, 1888-1975)

“There are two divisions of philosophers, the Brahmanas (Brāhmana) and the Samanas (Shramana). The Brahmanas form the leading sect, and succeed by right of birth to this kind of divine wisdom as to a priesthood. They are not subjected to the authority of the king, and pay no tribute. They subsist on fruits, cow milk and wild rice. To taste anything else, or so much as to touch animal food, is held to be the height of impurity and impiety. They inculcate the duty of worshipping the deity with pious reverence. ... The whole day and greater part of the night they set apart for hymns and prayers to the gods. Each of them has a hut of his own in which he passes as much time as possible in solitude. The Samanas, on the other hand, are collected from the whole society, and when any one is to be enrolled in their order, he presents himself before the magistrates of the city or of the village to which he happens to belong, and there resigns all his possessions and his other means. The

superfluous parts of his person are then shaved off, and he puts on the mendicants robe and goes away to join the mendicants, taking no concern either for his wife or his children, if he has any, and thinks of them no more. The king takes charge of his children and supplies their wants, while his relatives provide for his wife. ... They and the Brahmanas are held in such high honor by the other Indians that even the king himself will visit them and solicit their prayers.” (Porphyrios; Greek philosopher and writer, c. 233- c. 301)

Death

“Both classes [of philosophers] take such a view of death that they endure life unwillingly, as being a hard duty exacted by nature, and accelerate the release of their souls from their bodies; and frequently, when their health is good and no evil forces them, they take their leave of life. They let their intention to do so be known to their friends beforehand, but no one offers to prevent them; on the contrary, all deem them happy, and charge them with messages to their dead relatives, so firm and true is the belief in their own minds, and in the minds of many others, that souls after death have intercourse with each other. When they have heard the commissions entrusted to them, they commit their body to the flames with a view to sever the soul from the body in completest purity, and then they die amid hymns resounding their praises, for their most attached friends dismiss them to death with less reluctance than it gives us to part with our fellow-citizens who set out on a distant journey. They weep, but it is for themselves, because they must continue to live, and those whose death they have witnessed they deem happy in their attainment of immortality. And neither among those Samanas nor among the Brahmanas whom I have already mentioned, has any sophist come forward, as have so many among the Greeks, to perplex with doubts by asking where would we be if every one should copy their example.” (Porphyrios; Greek philosopher and writer, c. 233- c. 301)

Sati-Daha

Satī was the young wife of Shiva who burned herself to give up the body given by her father, when her husband was insulted by her father. To follow the dead husband into the puneral fire as ‘Sati’ was a great ideal, practiced by some exalted women among the nobility, and remained an exception.

“As we return’d home at night we met a Woman in the City of Ikkeri, who, her husband being dead, was resolv’d to burn herself, as it is the custom with many Indian Women. She rode on Horse-back about the City with face uncovered, holding a Looking-glass in one hand and a Lemon in the other, I know not for what purpose; and beholding herself in the Glass, with a lamentable tone sufficiently pittiful to hear, went along I know not whither, speaking, or singing, certain words, which I understood not; but they told me they were a kind of Farewell to the World and herself; and indeed, being uttered with that passionateness which the Case requir’d and might produce they mov’d pity in all that heard them, even in us who understood not the Language. She was follow’d by many other women and Men on foot, who, perhaps, were her Relations; they carry’d a great Umbrella over her, as all Persons of quality in India are wont to have, thereby to keep off the Sun, whose heat is hurtful and troublesome. Before her certain Drums were sounded, whose noise she never ceas’d to accompany with her sad Ditties, or Songs; yet with a calm and constant Countenance, without tears, evidencing more grief for her Husband’s death than her own, and more desire to go to him in the other world than regret for her own departure out of this: a Custom, indeed, cruel and barbarous, but, withall, of great generosity and virtue in such Women and therefore worthy of no small praise. They said she was to pass in this manner about the City I know not how many dayes, at the end of which she was to go out of the City and be burnt, with more company and solemnity. If I can know when it will be I will not fail to go to see her and by my presence honor her Funeral with that compassionate affection which so great Conjugal Fidelity and Love seem to me to deserve. November the sixteenth. I was told that the aforementioned Woman, who had resolv’d to burn her self for her Husband’s death, was to dye this Evening. But upon further enquiry at the Woman’s House I understood that it would not be till after a few dayes more, and there I saw her sitting in a Court, or Yard, and other persons beating Drums about her. She was cloth’d all in white and deck’d with many Neck-laces, Bracelets and other ornaments of Gold; on her Head she had a Garland of Flowers, spreading forth like the rayes of the Sun; in brief she was wholly in a Nuptial Dress and held a Lemon in her hand, which is the usual Ceremony. She seem’d to be pleasant enough, talking and laughing in conversation, as a Bride would do in our Countries. She and those with her took notice of my standing there to behold her, and, conjecturing by my foreign Habit who I was, some

of them came towards me. I told them by an Interpreter that I was a Person of a very remote Country, where we had heard by Fame that some Women in India love their Husbands so vehemently as when they dye to resolve to dye with them; and that now, having intelligence that this Woman was such a one, I was come to see her, that so I might relate in my own Country that I had seen such a thing with my own Eyes. These people were well pleas'd with my coming, and she her self, having heard what I said, rose up from her seat and came to speak to me. We discours'd together, standing, for a good while. She told me that her name was Giaccama, of the Race Terlenga, that her Husband was a Drummer; whence I wonder'd the more; seeing that Heroical Actions, as this undoubtedly ought to be judg'd, are very rare in people of low quality. That it was about nineteen dayes since her Husband's death, that he had left two other Wives elder then she, whom he had married before her, (both which were present at this discourse) yet neither of them was willing to dye, but alledg'd for excuse that they had many Children. This argument gave me occasion to ask Giaccama, (who shew'd me a little Son of her own, about six or seven years old, besides a little Daughter she had) how she could perswade her self to leave her own little Children; and I told her, that she ought likewise to live rather than to abandon them at that age. She answer'd me that she left them well recommended to the care of an Uncle of hers there present, who also talk'd with us very cheerfully, as if rejoycing that his Kins-woman should do such an action; and that her Husband's other two remaining Wives would also take care of them. I insisted much upon the tender age of her Children, to avert her from her purpose by moving her to compassion for them, well knowing that no argument is more prevalent with Mothers than their Love and Affection towards their Children. But all my speaking was in vain, and she still answer'd me to all my Reasons, with a Countenance not onely undismay'd and constant, but even cheerful, and spoke in such a manner as shew'd that she had not the least fear of death. She told me also, upon my asking her, that she did this of her own accord, was at her own liberty and not forc'd nor perswaded by any one. Whereupon, I inquiring whether force were at any time us'd in this matter, they told me that ordinarily it was not, but onely sometimes amongst Persons of quality, when some Widow was left young, handsome, and so in danger of marrying again (which amongst them is very ignominious), or committing a worse fault; in such Cases the Friends of the deceas'd Husband were very strict, and would constrain her to burn her self even against her own will, for preventing the disorders possible to happen in case she should live (a barbarous, indeed, and too cruel Law); but that neither force nor persuasion was used to Giaccama, and that she did it of her own free will; in which, as a magnanimous action, (as indeed it was) and amongst them of great honor, both her Relations and herself much glory'd. I ask'd concerning the Ornaments and Flowers she wore, and they told me that such was the Custom, in token of the Masti's joy (they call the Woman, who intends to burn her self for the death of her Husband, Masti) in that she was very shortly to go to him and therefore had reason to rejoyce; whereas such Widows as will not dye remain in continual sadness and lamentations, shave their Heads and live in perpetual mourning for the death of their Husbands. As last Giaccama caus'd one to tell me that she accounted my coming to see her a great fortune, and held her self much honour'd, as well by my visit and presence as by the Fame which I should carry of her to my own Country; and that before she dy'd she would come to visit me at my House, and also to ask me, as their custom is, that I would favour her with some thing by way of Alms towards the buying of fewel for the fire wherewith she was to be burnt. I answer'd her that I should esteem her visit and very willingly give her something; not for wood and fire wherein to burn her self, (for her death much displeas'd me, and I would gladly have disswad'd her from it, if I could) but to do something else therewith that her self most lik'd; and I promis'd her that, so far as my weak pen could contribute, her Name should remain immortal in the World. Thus I took leave of her, more sad for her death than she was, cursing the custom of India which is so unmerciful to Woman. Giaccama was a Woman of about thirty years of age, of a Complexion very brown for an Indian and almost black, but of a good aspect, tall of stature, well shap'd and proportion'd. My Muse could not forbear from chanting her in a Sonnet which I made upon her death, and reserve among my Poetical Papers." (Della Valle, Pietro; Italian musicologist and traveller, 1586-1652)

"As they have so steadfast a belief in transmigration and their women not being permitted to marry a second husband, even the first should die in her nonage. I say from the consideration and hardships upon the tender sex, we may be enabled in some measure to account for the great fortitude and unmatched resolution of the wives burning with the bodies of their dead husbands, which instead of being obliged to, by the laws of their country, as some people have suggested, great entreaties and arguments one generally made use of, to break their resolution, but seldom to any purpose. It is certain that after they have determined to burn and the Brahmins have performed the ceremonies for that occasion, should they then attempt to retract, their friends and relations would assist to throw them into the flames. Sometimes since a young creature at Bengall embraced this resolution, she was known by many of the European ladies there, who kindly visited her, in her distress, and endeavored to move her desperate design by the most influencing reasons they could offer, as she had two very fine children, they represented to her the hardships and difficulties they would be liable to, when destitute of

both parents, nor were her own relations and those of her husband less assiduous with their persuasions; however nothing could stagger her fixed determination. The day she was to burn being arrived many gentlemen attended her to the pile with several Bramins &c. The Bramins after praying with her for a considerable time, annointed her head and hair, all the while muttering some unintelligible sentences; afterwards they walked round the pile with her three times, constantly singing out their prayers. Having thus ended the ceremony, she takes off her bracelets, earrings &c and distributes them amongst her relations who attend her. Then embracing them she took her leave very pleasantly and retired to the middle of the pile, where her dead husband lay, and having placed herself at his feet, the Bramin gave a lighted match into her hand. With joy in her countenance she received it and said “this night I shall enjoy my husband’s company in another form”, then immediately set fire to the pile, but observing that she done it on the leeward side, she turned round and lighted it in several places to windward. The gentlemen’s curiosity led them as near to the pile as the flames would admit them, yet they never heard her utter the least moan. The laws of the country do not oblige the women to this cruel custom yet in private it is certainly encouraged among them, for it is a great honour to the whole family, and the children of the woman who burns are always much regarded and very well matched.” (Knox, Alex; ?; written 1753)

During Moslem rule, Hindu women captured in war were forced to become sex slaves of those who just killed their husbands. Royal ladies were a great gift. “First of all daughters of Hindu kings captured during the course of the year come and sing and dance. Thereafter they are bestowed upon Amirs and important foreigners. After this daughters of other Hindus dance and sing. ... Sultan gives them to brothers, sons of high officials etc. The third day also Sultan distributes girls to generals and his relatives.”* Many Hindu women preferred death to dishonour. In 1568, 8,000 women immolated themselves during Akbar’s capture of Chittorgarh. This type of mass immolation became known as Jauhar.

During the British occupation, under the pressure of extreme poverty – the rapacity of the British led to famines, e.g., the famine 1769-70 claimed the lives of one third of the population of Bengal – a widow returning to her father’s house was often considered a burden. At times this lead to forced Sati-Daha, which is not justifiable at any level. The British painted a picture that Sati-Daha was practiced universally, and with tremendous propaganda, it was brought up to the world as a great evil of the Hindu religion. Thus they justified their occupation of India and the piety of their own religion. After independence the Sati-Daha custom had diminished, mainly due to the work of several great Hindu leaders and also because the economical situation improved. In the last 60 years there have been about 50 cases.

“Perhaps the most important point to which Raja Ram Mohan Roy awakened was the absence of all Vedic sanction for the self-immolation of widows (Suttee). It was principally his vehement denunciation of this practice, and the agitation against it set on foot by him, which ultimately led to the abolition of Sati throughout British India in 1819.” (Monier-Williams, Sir Monier; British indologist and head of the Oxford’s Boden Chair, 1819-1899)

“Defining Hindu practices through a discussion of sati is no more accurate than defining Christianity by delving at length into the ‘Burning Times’ in Medieval Europe when as many as nine million women, and even children, were burned at the stake as witches through the encouragement and official approval of the Christian Church. The burning of women does not define Christianity any more than the burning of widows defines Hinduism – both are long discarded practices of the past.” (Rosser, Yvette Claire; American scholar and writer)

Darius (c. 550-486 BCE), the king of Persia, conquered Sind and part of Punjab.

Alexander (356-323 BCE) entered India in 326 BCE through modern Pakistan. In a letter to Aristotle he mentions “the terrific flashes of flame which he beheld showered on his army in India.” “Rockets appear to be of Indian invention, and had long been used in native armies when Europeans came first in contact with them.” (Wilson, Prof. Horace Hayman; British surgeon and orientalist, 1786-1860)

“This last combat with Porus took off the edge of the Macedonians’ courage and stayed their further progress in India. ... Alexander not only offered Porus to govern his own kingdom as satrap (subordinate ruler) under himself but gave him also the additional territory of various independent tribes whom he had subdued.” (Plutarch; Greek historian, c. 46-120)

Puru (‘Porus’), the ruler of a small district between the Jhelum and the Chenab, emerged from the war with his territory doubled and his gold stock augmented.

In 180 BCE the Indo-Greeks under Milinda (Menander) invaded, from 100 to 400 AD the Indo-Scythian Shakas and Kushans and from the 5th through 9th century Persian Sasanians and Hephthalites (White Hunas). All of them quickly became mainstream Hindu rulers. Things changed with the rise of Islam.

“I have been commanded by Allah to fight the unbelievers until they believe in Allah and His prophet and follow the laws of Islam. It is only then that the safety of their lives and property may be guaranteed.” “It is not for any prophet to have prisoners, until he makes wide slaughter in land.” “Two groups of my Ummah Allah has protected from the hellfire – a group that will conquer India and a group that will be with Isa ibnu Maryam (Jesus, son of Mary).” (Muhammad; founder of Islam, c. 570-632)

“My principal object in coming to Hindustan, and in undergoing all this toil and hardship, has been to accomplish two things. The first was to war with the infidels, the enemies of the Muhammadan religion; and by this religious warfare to acquire some claim to reward in the life to come. The other was a worldly object; that the army of Islam might gain something by plundering the wealth and valuables of the infidels: plunder in war is as lawful as their mothers’ milk to Musulmans who war for their faith, and the consuming of that which is lawful is a means of grace.” (Timur, Amir /Timur-i-lang /Tamerlane; Turco-Mongol conquerer, 1336-1405)

“Mahmud (Ghaznavi) utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, and performed those wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions, and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people.” “Their scattered remains cherish, of course, the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims. This is the reason, too, why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places, which our hand cannot yet reach.” (Al-Biruni /Alberuni; Persian scholar, 973-1048)

“Muslim invaders did record with glee their genocide on Hindus, because they felt all along that they were doing their duty; that killing, plundering, enslaving and razing temples was the work of God ...” (Gautier, Francois; French journalist based in India)

“Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.” (Pascal, Blaise; French mathematician and writer, 1623-1662)

“The destruction or disfigurement of the ancient temples and idols, a lamentable, mischievous and barbarous act still bear witness to the monotheistic fury ... carried on from Mahmud, the Gahaznevid of cursed memory, down to Aurengzeb, the fratricide, whom the Portuguese ... have zealously imitated by destruction of temples and the auto dafe of the Inquisition of Goa ... For the sake of truth, I must add that the fanatical enormities perpetrated in the name of religion are only to be put down to the adherents of monotheistic creeds. ... We hear nothing of the kind in the case of the Hindoos and Buddhists.” (Schopenhauer, Arthur; German philosopher and writer, 1788-1860)

Genocide & Slavery

“The massacres perpetuated by Muslims in India are unparalleled in history, bigger than the Holocaust of the Jews by the Nazis; or the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks; more extensive even than the slaughter of the

South American native populations by the invading Spanish and Portuguese.” (Gautier, Francois; French journalist based in India)

“The Musulman prisoners should be separated and saved, but the infidels should all be despatched to hell with the proselytising sword.”* “He (Mahmud bin Qasim in Sindh) caused every Kaffir (unbeliever) from the age of seventeen and upwards to be put to death; the young women and children of both sexes were retained in bondage.”* “The Brahmins and other higher men were slain, and their women and children were carried away captive and all the treasure which was found was divided amongst the army.”*

“The booty amounted in gold and silver, rubies and pearls nearly to three hundred thousand dirhams, and the number of prisoners may be conceived from the fact that each was sold for two to ten dirhams. These were afterwards taken to Ghazni and merchants came from distant cities to purchase them, so that the countries of Mawaraun-Nahr, Iraq and Khurasan were filled with them, and the fair and the dark, the rich and the poor, were commingled in one common slavery.” “The Turks, whenever they please, can seize, buy or sell any Hindu.” (Khusrow, Amir; Indian scholar and musician, 1234-1325)

“The Sultan (Mohammed bin Tughlaq, 1325-51) never ceases to show the greatest zeal in making wars upon the infidel. ... Every day thousands of slaves are sold at a very low price, so great is the number of prisoners.” (Shahabuddin al-Umri)

“It is very important to remember also that from motives of self-interest, and not from any respect for art, these ferocious invaders, who massacred wholesale men, women, and children of the general population, usually spared the artisans and craftsmen, and thus preserved for their own uses the art-traditions of the countries they ravaged and desolated. Skilled craftsmen were always the prizes of war, and when an uncivilized race like the Mongols triumphed over a highly cultivated one the craftsmen of the defeated became the teachers of the victors; this transplantation into a new soil brought new vigor into art, and was the beginning of great developments. When Timur the ancestor of the Indian Moghul dynasty, withdrew his hordes from northern India in 1398, after ravaging it with fire and sword, he took back with him as captives all the masons who had built that famous mosque of Ferozabad, in order that they might build one like it at Samarkhand. This Indian art fulfilled once more its civilizing mission.” (Havell, Dr. Ernest Binfield; principal to the Madras College of Art, 1861-1934)

The biggest slaughters took place during the raids of Mahmud Ghaznavi (c. 1000 AD) and during the actual conquest of India (c. 1200-1500). Once Muslim power was established, Muslim rulers sought to exploit and humiliate rather than kill the Hindus.

“Hindus are like the mud; if silver is demanded from them, they must with the greatest humility offer gold. If a Mohamman desires to spit into a Hindu’s mouth, the Hindu should open it wide for the purpose. God created the Hindus to be slaves of the Mohamman. The Prophet hath ordained that, if the Hindus do not accept Islam, they should be imprisoned, tortured, finally put to death, and their property confiscated.” (A Qasi advising Alaudin Khilji)

A Bloody Story

“In Latin America, the 500th anniversary of Columbus’ arrival has sparked some serious reconsideration both within and outside the Church, about the role of Christianity in the wholesale destruction of all the cultures without exception in the entire New World. But in India, we find the unbelievable situation, that not only Muslim historians and public figures refuse to face the truth about Muslim history: neutral secular historians are also covering up and denying the crimes which Islam has systematically committed, and even many Hindus are denying the crimes committed against their own society.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

“The Islamic conquest of India is probably the bloodiest story in history. It is a discouraging tale, for its evident moral is that civilization is a precious good, whose delicate complex of order and freedom, culture and peace, can at any moment be overthrown by barbarians invading from without or multiplying within.” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

“I think when you see so many Hindu temples of the tenth century or earlier time disfigured, defaced, you know that they were not just defaced for fun: that something terrible happened. I feel that the civilization of that closed world was mortally wounded by those invasions. And I would like people, as it were, to be more reverential towards the past, to try to understand it; to preserve it; instead of living in its ruins. The Old World

is destroyed. That has to be understood. The ancient Hindu India was destroyed.” (Naipaul, Sir Vidyadhar Surajprasad; Trinidad-born British Nobel laureate)

“Why are there absolutely no Buddhist temples left in Afghanistan, in Turkestan? Nor Hindu or Zoroastrian or Manichaen temples, for that matter? Secularist scholars do not seem to know that the Buddhist monasteries and universities were destroyed and exterminated to the last, in India just as well as in Central Asia, by none other than the Muslim armies. So, the answer is that, while, Buddhism had been partly reabsorbed into Hinduism, and had partly continued as a separate tradition under Hindu dynasties, the Muslim conquerors finished it off totally.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

“We should face facts: Islamic rule in India was at least as catastrophic as the later Christian rule. The Christians created massive poverty in what was a most prosperous country; the Muslims created a terrorized civilization out of what was the most creative culture that ever existed.” (Naipaul, Sir Vidyadhar Surajprasad; Trinidad-born British Nobel laureate)

“The discerning reader would be savvy enough to realize that the objective of Leftist scholarship is to prove, despite all available evidence, that the Islamic invasion was really India's age of enlightenment. Hence the denigration of the Vedic Age and the stubborn insistence that the Aryans were not indigenous people. This is why Bipan Chandra protests if medieval Muslim rulers are described as ‘foreign.’ Objecting to the ‘artificial glorification of all and sundry who fought against Sultanate and Mughal rulers,’ he derides glorification of ancient India as ‘undue national pride’ (which) has its own negative aspects.” (Jain, Sandhya; Indian journalist)

“There can be no doubt that the fall of Buddhism in India was due to the invasions of the Musalmans. Islam came out as the enemy of the ‘But.’ The word ‘But’ as everybody knows, is an Arabic word and means an idol. Thus the origin of the word indicates that in the Moslem mind idol worship had come to be identified with the Religion of the Buddha. To the Muslims, they were one and the same thing. The mission to break the idols thus became the mission to destroy Buddhism. Islam destroyed Buddhism not only in India but wherever it went. Before Islam came into being, Buddhism was the religion of Bactria, Parthia, Afghanistan, Gandhar, and Chinese Turkestan, as it was of the whole of Asia...” “But today the fashion is to ascribe the extinction of Buddhism to the persecution of Buddhists by Hindus, to the destruction of their temples by the Hindus. One point is that the Marxist historians who have been perpetrating this falsehood have not been able to produce even an iota of evidence to substantiate the concoction.” (Shourie, Arun; Indian economist and writer)

“The myth of Brahmin oppression, the myth of Buddhism as a social reform movement, the myth of the Buddhist-Brahmin power struggle, the myth of the economical motives for the Muslim conquests and destruction, the myth of the non-existence of an indigenous and nation-wide Hindu culture, the myth of the social reforms brought by Islam, the myth of Hindu-Muslim amity ... Why are there absolutely no Buddhist temples left in Afghanistan, in Turkestan? Nor Hindu or Zoroastrian or Manichaen temples, for that matter? Secularist scholars do not seem to know that the Buddhist monasteries and universities were destroyed and exterminated to the last, in India just as well as in Central Asia, by none other than the Muslim armies. So, the answer is that, while Buddhism had been partly reabsorbed into Hinduism, and had partly continued as a separate tradition under Hindu dynasties, the Muslim conquerors finished it off totally.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

“The real harm done to Hinduism and Hindu society is not the loss of stone structure, which are but the outermost layer of the real harm done to Hindu society. There has been a loss of vast territories – they may be claimed back, but that would hardly be any less superficial. Far more fundamental is the moral damage that has been done: the loss of self confidence, the unprecedented and harsh enmity within Hindu society (internal enmity and bitterness typically occurs in powerless groups), the boot-licking attitude among the Hindu intelligentsia, the negative self-image. The moral damage again is partly due to a loss of knowledge and memory: the Hindu educational system has been destroyed, and the Hindus are helpless in the face of concerted efforts to disinform them and destroy their soul.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

Arabs (636-850)

(1) In 711, Muhammad bin Qasim took Debal, in 712 Alor and in 713 Multan. “Six thousand warriors were put to death, and all their relations and dependents were taken as slaves.”*

Turks (963-1290)

(2) In 963, Alptigin established a kingdom at Ghazni. His successor, Subuktigin, conquered Kabul.

(3) "Mahmud (Ghaznavi) was a man of great abilities, and is renowned as one of the greatest champions of Islam. ... His influence upon Islam soon became widely known, for he converted as many as a thousand idol temples into mosques."*

In 1001, he took Bhatiya, in 1008, Nagarkot (Kangra), in 1011, Thanesar. "The blood of the infidels flowed so copiously, that the stream was discoloured, notwithstanding its purity, and people were unable to drink it. Had not night come on and concealed the traces of their flight, many more of the enemy would have been slain. The victory was gained by God's grace, who has established Islam forever as the best of religions, notwithstanding that idolaters revolt against it. The Sultan returned with plunder which it is impossible to recount. Praise be to God, the protector of the world, for the honour he bestows upon Islam and Musulmans!"* "On this occasion, the Muhammadan army brought to Ghaznin 200,000 captives, so that the capital appeared like an Indian city, for every soldier of the army had several slaves and slave girls."*

In 1013, Mahmud took Nandana. "The Sultan returned in the rear of immense booty, and slaves were so plentiful that they became very cheap and men of respectability in their native land were degraded by becoming slaves of common shopkeepers. But this is the goodness of Allah, who bestows honour on his own religion and degrades infidelity."*

(4) In 1018, Mahmud crossed the Yamuna. At the fort of Mahavan "nearly fifty thousand men were killed and drowned, and became the prey of beasts and crocodiles. Kulchand, taking his dagger, slew his wife, and then drove it into his own body."* Mathura was the next victim. "It is the birth-place of Krishn Basdeo (Krishna Vasudeva), whom the Hindus venerate as an incarnation of God."* "He saw there a building of exquisite structure, which the inhabitants said had been built, not by men, but by Genii (jinns or spirits). ... In the middle of the city there was a temple larger and firmer than the rest, which can neither be described nor painted. The Sultan thus wrote respecting it: 'If any should wish to construct a building equal to this, he would not be able to do it without expending an hundred thousand thousand red dinars, and it would occupy two hundred years, even though the most experienced and able workmen were employed.' Among the idols there were five made of red gold, each five yards high, fixed in the air without support. ... The Sultan gave orders that all the temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire, and leveled with the ground."* "The Sultan advanced to the fortifications of Kanauj, which consisted of seven distinct forts, washed by the Ganges, which flowed under them like the ocean. In Kanauj, there were nearly ten thousand temples ... Many of the inhabitants of the place fled and were scattered abroad like so many wretched widows and orphans, from the fear which oppressed them, in consequence of witnessing the fate of their deaf and dumb idols. Many of them thus effected their escape, and those who did not flee were put to death."* "He then went to Munj, known as the fort of Brahmans, the inhabitants of which were independent as headstrong camels. They prepared to offer opposition, like evil demons and obstinate Satans, and when they found they could not withstand the Musulmans, and that their blood would be shed, they took to flight, throwing themselves down from the apertures and the lofty and broad battlements, but most of them were killed in this attempt."*

(5) In 1026, Mahmud took Somanath. "According to the belief of the Hindus, all the other idols in India held the position of attendants and deputies of Somnat. Every night this idol was washed with 'fresh' water brought from the Ganges, although that river must be more than two hundred parasangs distant."* "Among the wonders of that place was the temple in which was placed the idol called Somnat. This idol was in the middle of the temple without anything to support it from below, or to suspend it from above. It was held in the highest honour among the Hindus, and whoever beheld it floating in the air was struck with amazement, whether he was a Musulman or an infidel."* "Two thousand Brahmans were always occupied in prayer round about the temple."* "There were three hundred barbers appointed to shave the heads of the pilgrims. There were also three hundred musicians and five hundred dancing-girls attached to it; and it was customary even for the kings and rajas of India to send their daughters for the service of the temple."* "The Musalmans planted their ladders against the walls and gained the summit; then they proclaimed their success with their religious war-cry, and exhibited the prowess of Islam. Then followed a fearful slaughter, and matters wore a serious aspect. ... Next morning, early, the Muhammadans renewed the battle, and made greater havoc among the Hindus till they drove them from the town to the house of their idol, Somnat. A dreadful slaughter followed at the gate of the temple. Band after band of the defenders entered the temple to Somnat, and with their hands clasped round

their necks, wept and passionately entreated him. Then again they issued forth to fight until they were slain, and but few were left alive. These took to the sea in boats to make their escape, but the Muslims overtook them, and some were killed and some were drowned.”* “Fifty thousand infidels were killed round about the temple. ... The sum which the treasury of the Sultan Mahmud obtained from the idol temple of Somnat was more than twenty thousand thousand dinars, inasmuch as those pillars were all adorned with precious jewels. Sultan Mahmud, after this glorious victory, reduced a fort in which the governor of Nahrawala had taken refuge.”*

(6) In 1175-76, Muhammad Ghori conquered Sindh.

(7) In 1193, Muhammad Bakhtyar Khilji, destroyed the university towns of Nalanda and Odantpuri in Bihar. “Most of the inhabitants of the place were Brahmans with shaven heads (Buddhists). They were put to death. Large numbers of books were found there, and when the Muhammadans saw them they called for some persons to explain their contents, but all the men had been killed.”*

(8) In 1194, Qutb-ud-din Aibak destroyed 27 Hindu temples at Delhi and built the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque. He “adorned it with the stones and gold obtained from the temples which had been demolished by elephants.”* Then he took Benares. “In Benares which is the centre of the country of Hind, they destroyed one thousand temples and raised mosques on their foundations.”* He suppressed a Hindu revolt at Kol (Aligarh). “Those of the horizon who were wise and acute were converted to Islam, but those who stood by their ancestral faith were slain with the sword.”*

(9) In 1234, Shamsuddin Iltutmish invaded Malwa. “There was a temple there which was three hundred years in building. It was about one hundred and five gaz high. He demolished it. From thence he proceeded to Ujjain, where there was a temple of Mahakal, which he destroyed, as well as the image of Bikaramajit, who was king of Ujjain, and reigned 1316 years before this time. The Hindu era dates from his reign.”*

(10) In 1247, “Ulugh Khan represented to his Majesty, in the month of Sha’ban, that the opportunity was favourable for making an expedition into Hindustan. The Mawas and Ranas had not been pinched for several years, but some coercion might now be exercised on them, by which spoil would fall into the hands of the soldiers of Islam, and wealth would be gained to strengthen the hands of the State in resisting the Mughals. ... A full poetical account of this campaign, in which the several victories are recounted, has been composed; the book is called Nasiri nama.”* In 1254 the successor Balban lead an expedition across the Ganges. “In two days after leaving Delhi, he arrived in the midst of the territory of Katihar and put to death every male, even those of eight years of age, and bound the women.”* In 1257 “Ulugh Khan ravaged the whole of the hills with the sword ... So many of the rebellious Hindus were killed that the numbers cannot be computed or described.”* In 1260 “the new year opened auspiciously. On the 16th Ramazan Ulugh Khan was sent into the hills of Delhi, to chastise the rebel inhabitants of Mewat.”* “A silver tanka was offered for every head, and two tankas for every man brought in alive. ... Their feats will remain recorded in history. ... After a stay of two days in the capital the Court went forth again to Hauz-rani on a mission of revenge. The elephants were prepared and the Turks made ready their trenchant swords. By royal command many of the rebels were cast under the feet of elephants, and the fierce Turks cut the bodies of the Hindus in two. About a hundred met their death at the hands of the flayers, being skinned from head to foot; their skins were all stuffed with straw, and some of them were hung over every gate of the city. The plain of Hauz-rani and the gates of Delhi remembered no punishment like this, nor had anyone ever heard such a tale of horror.”* Again “he hastened towards the hills ... and captured them all, to the number of twelve thousand – men, women, and children – whom he put to the sword. All their valleys and strongholds were overrun and cleared, and great booty captured. Thanks be to God for this victory of Islam!”*

Afghans (1290-1526)

(11) In 1298 Alaudin Khilji took Surat. His general took Kambayat. “The Muhammadan forces began to kill and slaughter on the right and on the left unmercifully, throughout the impure land, for the sake of Islam, and blood flowed in torrents. ... In short, the Muhammadan army brought the country to utter ruin, destroyed the lives of the inhabitants, plundered the cities and captured their offspring, so that many temples were deserted, and the idols were broken and trodden under foot. ... Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds. Amen!”* Malwa 1305: “The tongue of the sword of the Khalifa of the time, which is the tongue of the flame of Islam, has imparted light to the entire darkness of Hindustan by the illumination of its guidance. ... Several capitals of the gods of the Hindus, in which Satanism has prevailed since the time of the Jinns, have been demolished.”*

(12) In 1308-1312 his general went to the south. "Everywhere the accursed tree, that produced no religion, was found and torn up by the roots, and the people who were destroyed were like trunks, carried along in the torrent of the Jihun, or like straw tossed up and down in a whirlwind, and carried forward. ... Thence they departed for Birdhul, and committed massacre and devastation all around it."* The golden temple of Barmatpur: "Its roofs and walls were inlaid with sparkling rubies and emeralds, and after gazing at them, red and yellow spots came before the spectator's eye. ... The heads of the idol-worshippers came dancing from their necks. The golden bricks rolled down and brought with them the plaster of sandalwood; the yellow gold became red with blood, and the white sandal turned scarlet. The foundations of the temple, which were mines of gold, were dug up, and its jeweled walls, which were mines of precious stones, pulled down."* Sri Rangam: 12,000 Brahmins were killed in a day.

(13) In 1325-1351 Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq extended the kingdom into Central Asia. In Delhi: "After Hindus paid the toleration tax (zar-i zimmiya) and poll-tax (jizya) they were foolish enough to build their temples. ... Under divine guidance I destroyed these temples and I killed the leaders of these infidelity and others I subjected to stripes and chastisement."* "A report was brought to the Sultan that there was in Delhi an old Brahman who persisted in publicly performing the worship of idols in his house and that people of the city, both Muslims and Hindus used to resort to his house to worship the idol. The Brahman had constructed a wooden tablet which was covered within and without with paintings of demons and other objects. An order was accordingly given to the Brahman and he was brought before the Sultan. The true faith was declared to the Brahman and the right course pointed out, but he refused to accept it. A pile was risen on which the Kaffir (unbeliever) with his hands and legs tied was thrown into and the wooden tablet on the top. The pile was lit at two places, his head and his feet. The fire first reached him in the feet and drew from him a cry and then fire completely enveloped him. Behold the Sultan for his strict adherence to law and rectitude."*

(14) In 1360 Firuz Shah Tughlaq destroyed the temple of Jagannath Puri. "Allah who is the only true God and has no other emanation, endowed the king of Islam with the strength to destroy this ancient shrine on the eastern sea-coast and to plunge it into the sea, and after its destruction he ordered the image of Jagannath to be perforated, and disgraced it by casting it down on the ground."* Then he went to an island where "nearly 100,000 men of Jainagar had taken refuge with their women, children, kinsmen and relations." The soldiers turned "the island into a basin of blood by the massacre of the unbelievers."* At Nagarkot (Kangra) he "broke the idols of Jvalamukhi, mixed their fragments with the flesh of cows and hung them in nosebags round the necks of Brahmins. He sent the principal idol as trophy to Medina."*

(15) Sikandar Lodi moved his capital from Delhi to Agra. "In his time, Hindu temples were razed to the ground, and neither name nor vestige of them was allowed to remain. In the city of Mathura, if a Hindu wished to have his head or beard shaved, there was not a barber that dared to comply."* "It is said that one day a Brahman declared in the presence of several Muhammadans that the religion of Islam was true, but that his own religion was also true. When this declaration reached the ear of the Doctors, they reported it to the Sultan (Sikandar Lodi) and as he was remarkably fond of religious and legal questions and theological controversies, he summoned the learned from various quarters, and invited their opinion on what the Brahman had asserted. The learned gave it unanimously as their opinion that he should be imprisoned, and that he should then be desired to embrace Islam, and if he should reject it, that he should be slain. Accordingly, when the Brahman was desired to embrace the Muhammadan religion, he refused to do so, and he was put to death. Many other similar instances of his zeal for religion occurred during his reign."*

(16) In 1565, Sultan Ahmed Shah I Wali conquered Vijayanagara. Its capital Hampi was destroyed and every man, woman and child killed. "The river which ran near the field was dyed red with their blood. It is computed that 1,00,000 infidels were slain during the pursuit."* Whenever the number of slain reached 20,000 the Sultan halted for three days and celebrated the killings of infidels (in such large numbers).

Mongols (1398-99)

(17) In 1398, Timur invaded India. He ordered "to kill all the men, to make prisoners of women and children, and to plunder and lay waste to all their property."* He took Bhatnir. "In a short space of time all the people in the fort were put to the sword, and in the course of one hour the heads of 10,000 infidels were cut off."* "On the great day of battle (with the Tughlaq army) these 100,000 prisoners could not be left with the baggage, and that it would be entirely opposed to the rules of war to set these idolators and enemies of Islam at liberty."* "No

other course remained but that of making them all food for the sword.”* “I (Timur) proclaimed throughout the camp that every man who had infidel prisoners should put them to death, and whoever neglected to do so should himself be executed and his property given to the informer. When this order became known to the ghazis of Islam, they drew their swords and put their prisoners to death. One hundred thousand infidels, impious idolators, were on that day slain. Maulana Nasiruddin Umar, a counsellor and man of learning, who, in all his life, had never killed a sparrow, now, in execution of my order, slew with his sword fifteen idolatrous Hindus, who were his captives.”*

Timur took Delhi and learnt that a “great number of Hindus with their wives and children, and goods and valuables, had come into the city from all the country round.”* “Many of them drew their swords and resisted. The flames of strife were thus lighted and spread through the whole city from Jahanpanah and Siri to Old Delhi, burning up all it reached. The Hindus set fire to their houses with their own hands, burned their wives and children in them and rushed into the fight and were killed. On that day, Thursday, and all the night of Friday, nearly 15,000 Turks were engaged in slaying, plundering and destroying. When morning broke on Friday, all my army went off to the city and thought of nothing but killing, plundering and making prisoners. The following day, Saturday the 17th, all passed in the same way, and the spoil was so great that each man secured from fifty to a hundred prisoners, men, women, and children. ... The khutba of my sovereignty, which is an assurance of safety and protection, had been read in the city. It was therefore my earnest wish that no evil might happen to the people of the place. But it was ordained by God that the city should be ruined. He therefore inspired the infidel inhabitants with a spirit of resistance, so that they brought on themselves that fate which was inevitable.”* “High towers were built with the heads of the Hindus, and their bodies became the food of ravenous beasts and birds.”* Timur then went to Ferozabad and to the Siwalik hills. “The demon-like Hindus were lurking in places of ambush, and attacked my soldiers, but these retaliated with showers of arrows, and falling upon them with the sword forced their way into the valley. Then they closed with them, and fighting most bravely they slaughtered the enemy with sword, knife, and dagger. ... When morning came I ordered all the plunder that had fallen into the hands of my men to be collected, for I understood that some had obtained much and others little, and I had it all fairly divided. ... No one of them had less than one or two hundred cows, and ten or twenty slaves – the other plunder exceeded all calculation. ... A party of the Hindus fled towards the mountain, and I taking a body of soldiers pursued them up that lofty mountain, and put them to the sword. After mounting to the summit I halted. Finding the spot verdant and the air pleasant, I sat myself down and watched the fighting and the valiant deeds my men were performing.”*

Mughals /Moguls (1526-1857)

(18) Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty: “In AH 934 I attacked Chanderi and by the grace of Allah captured it in a few hours. ... We got the infidels slaughtered and the place which had been daru’l-harb for years was made into a daru’l-islam.”* He wrote poetry: “For the sake of Islam I became a wanderer / I battled infidels and Hindus / I determined to become a martyr / Thank God I became a Ghazi (killer of non-Muslims).”

“[Babur was]... one of the most cultured and delightful persons one could meet. There was no sectarianism in him, no religious bigotry, and he did not destroy as his ancestors used to.” (Nehru, Jawaharlal; Indian politician, 1889-1964)

(19) In 1567/8, Akbar took Chitor and ordered the massacre of 30,000 of the local peasants. “When the Emperor started to effect the conquest of Chitor, he vowed that if he were successful, he would make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Khwaja Mu’inu-d din Chishti, which is at Ajmir. In performance of this vow, he set off for Ajmir, and walked all the way on foot. On Sunday, the 7th Ramazan, he reached Ajmir. He performed all the observances of the pilgrimage, and made the poor and needy glad with his alms and offerings.”*

(20) In 1669, Aurangzeb ordered all provinces to destroy the Hindu schools and temples. “Hasan Ali Khan came and said that 172 temples in the area had been destroyed. ... His majesty went to Chittor, and 63 temples were destroyed. ... Abu Tarab, appointed to destroy the idol-temples of Amber, reported that 66 temples had been razed to the ground.”* “News came to court that in accordance with the Emperor’s command his officers had demolished the temple of Vishvanath at Banaras.”* He destroyed more than 10,000 temples.

“Aurangzeb had a veritable genius for picking out provocative sites [for building mosques]. ... Aurangzeb and Philip II of Spain are a pair.” (Toynbee, Arnold Joseph; British historian, 1889-1975)

Persians (1739)

(21) “Nadir Shah, of Iran attacked Delhi in 1739 and for a week his soldiers massacred everybody, ransacked everything and razed the entire countryside, so that the survivors would have nothing to eat. He went back to Iran taking with him precious furniture, works of art, horses, the Kohinoor diamond, the famous Peacock throne and 150 million rupees in gold.” (Danielou, Alain; French ethnomusicologist, head of the UNESCO Institute for Comparative Musicology, 1907-1994)

“On the morning of the 11th an order went forth from the Persian Emperor for the slaughter of the inhabitants. The result may be imagined; one moment seemed to have sufficed for universal destruction. The Chandni Chauk, the fruit market, the Daribah bazaar, and the buildings around the Masjid-i Jama were set fire to and reduced to ashes. The inhabitants, one and all, were slaughtered. Here and there some opposition was offered, but in most places people were butchered unresistingly.”* “His Majesty (Muhammad Shah) bestowed on Nadir Shah, with his own munificent hand, as a parting present, the Peacock throne ...”* The Peacock throne was the costliest single treasure made in the last 1,000 years – 1150 kg of gold and 26,733 precious stones (230 kg), including the famous Kohinoor (186 carats).

Goa Inquisition (1560-1812)

“They (Indians) are liars and cheats to the very backbone.” “The Indians being black themselves, consider their own color the best.” “They believe that their gods are black. On this account the great majority of their idols are as black as black can be, and moreover are generally so rubbed over with oil as to smell detestably, and seem to be as dirty as they are ugly and horrible to look at.” “I order everywhere the temples to be pulled down and idols broken. I know not how to describe in words the joy I feel before the spectacle of pulling down and destroying the idols.” (Xavier, Saint Francis; Roman Catholic missionary, 1506-1552)

(22) Xavier wrote to Rome to install inquisition in Goa, which lasted from 1560 to 1812 (in Europe it ended by 1774). “On seeing the monster everyone fled and disappeared, Moguls, Arabs, Persians, Armenians, and Jews. The Indians even, more tolerant and pacific, were astounded to see the God of Christianity more cruel than that of Mohammed, deserted the territory of the Portuguese.” (eye-witness)

The British (1750-1947)

(23) About 1750, the British East India Company was in power in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the east coast. The Company defeated Tipu Sultan of Mysore in 1792, Nepal in 1816, the Marathas in 1819, Sindh in 1843, Punjab in 1849 and Burma in 1886.

The British taxes were so high that most people took to farming. By 1871, 80% of the area was engaged in agriculture (compared to 50% before).

“They (Indians) are weary of us. ... We have impoverished the ports and wounded all their trades. ... I know these people are best treated with the sword in one hand and caduceus in the other.” (Roe, Sir Thomas; English diplomat, c. 1581-1644)

“The police are empowered to enter houses night or day and, on their accusation of there being a measure of earth salt in it, the owner of the house may be fined 15 rupees, or imprisoned for a month. If the villagers send their cattle to graze anywhere where there is a natural salt on the ground, the owner is fined or imprisoned and the salt is thrown in heaps and burned. The cattle are dying for want of it, and the people are suffering seriously....In the Deccan, its pressure is more galling, because natural salt lies on the ground and people are starved of it as it were in sight of plenty. In several villages which I passed the ryots told me that they had been reduced to driving their cattle by night to the places where salt is found, that they may lick it by stealth.” (Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen; English poet and writer, 1840-1922)

“Another cause of India’s impoverishment is the destruction of her manufactures, as the result of British rule. When the British first appeared on the scene, India was one of the richest countries of the world; indeed it was her great riches that attracted the British to her shores. ... The source of her wealth was largely her splendid manufactures. Her cotton goods, silk goods, shawls, muslins of Dacca, brocades of Ahmedabad, rugs, pottery of

Scind, jewelry, metal work, lapidary work, were famed not only all over Asia but in all the leading markets of Northern Africa and of Europe. What has become of those manufactures? For the most part they are gone, destroyed. Hundreds of villages and towns of India in which they were carried on are now largely or wholly depopulated, and millions of the people who were supported by them have been scattered and driven back on the land, to share the already too scanty living of the poor ryot. What is the explanation? Great Britain wanted India's markets. She could not find entrance for British manufactures so long as India was supplied with manufactures of her own. So those of India must be sacrificed. England had all power in her hands, and so she proceeded to pass tariff and excise laws that ruined the manufactures of India and secured the market for her own goods. India would have protected herself if she had been able, by enacting tariff laws favorable to Indian interests, but she had no power, she was at the mercy of her conqueror." (Sunderland, Jabez Thomas; American Unitarian minister, 1842-1936)

"The gold and precious jewels now being unearthed from underground chambers of the Padmanabha Temple have conservatively been estimated at around Rs one lakh crore; their antique value will take much more time to evaluate. The temple is privately owned by the royal family of Travancore, just one of the small Princely states of India. ... So when small princely states like Travancore had so much of wealth, how much would the British looted from all other princely states, and the regions they governed directly under what they called British India? If we assume that on an average, 1/10th of this treasure (10,000 crore) was possessed by each of the 500 small princely states, it comes around 500 x 10,000 crore = 50,00,000 crore. This is just as per current market value of the valuables; the antique value is unlimited. The temple jewels fall under the category of antiques, and hence the values are far, far higher." (Senthil – Padmanabha Temple treasure and British loot)

"Should the people of India, Greece, Egypt and Africa, and Native American peoples succeed in getting American and European museums and libraries to return all objects which constitute the tangible roots of ancient civilisations, and thousands of years of history pre-dating the cults of Jesus and Mohammed, then the Louvre, British Museum, Smithsonian, Vatican and the Kunsthistorisches Museum to mention just five, would be emptied of all their prized possessions. European and American museums and libraries are no more than fortified thieves' dens and state-sponsored and supported safe havens for Abrahamic plunder; they house the spoils of Christian war and genocide against African peoples, against the nations of now extinct and almost extinct Native American peoples, colonial loot from Asia, and from archaeological and anthropological pseudo-science expeditions, which European marauders undertook across continents." (Rajan, Radha; Indian political analyst)

"The church decreed that ownership of a piece of land must go to the first Christian to spot it. (Hence, the claim that Columbus 'discovered' America, or that Vasco da Gama 'discovered' India). The people already living on the land did not matter, and the church encouraged their killing on a mass scale, where possible, as actually happened on three continents. This doctrine was made into a law by the US supreme court, and that is where the current US law on land-ownership vis-a-vis the 'Red Indians' stands." (Raju, Dr. Chandra Kant; Indian scientist and writer)

"The conquered in their view, had ultimately to disappear, if not wholly physically, at least as a culture and civilization. In Australia, and New Zealand practically all the local inhabitants were wiped out soon enough; in North America near complete elimination happened, over 300-400 years, and in Ireland only partially. The indigenous population of the Americas had been estimated at 112 to 140 millions in 1492. In India a large number perished by British brutality and deliberate creation of famines, violation of persons bodies and dignity; in Palnad in Andhra, half of the population was said to be have perished every ten years, during several decades after the subjugation of the areas by Britain. It seems as if the intellectuals and leaders of Britain hated India, and felt outraged that in spite of all their brutalities, smashing of Indian institutions, high extortions, and tortures, man made famines and expropriation of Indian resources to the British state, and thus the all round breakdown of Indian society, the Indians on the whole, could not be wiped out that easily." (Dharampal; Indian historian, 1922-2006)

"Neither truth, nor honesty, honor, gratitude, nor charity, is to be found in the breast of a Hindoo." (Buchanan, Rev. Claudius; Scottish missionary, 1766-1815)

"I wish I were commander-in-chief in India. I would do my utmost to exterminate the Race." (Dickens, Charles John Huffam; English writer, 1812-1870)

"God made Europe in His own image and now the rest of mankind will be made in the image of Europe." (Husserl, Prof. Edmund; German philosopher, 1859-1938)

“I hate Indians. They are beastly people with a beastly religion.” (Churchill, Sir Winston Churchill; British Prime Minister, 1874-1965)

“There cannot, however, remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindustan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before. They destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry, and by leveling all that was great and elevated in the native society. The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that destruction.” (Marx, Karl; German philosopher and revolutionary, 1818-1883)

“The chronic want of food and water, the lack of sanitation and medical help, the neglect of means of communication, the poverty of educational provision, the all pervading spirit of depression that I have myself seen to prevail after over a hundred years of British rule make me despair of its beneficence.” (Tagore, Rabindranath; Indian poet and Nobel laureate, 1861-1941)

“The British did not manage India. They colonized India and did what it took to extract and exploit India’s resources. Colonizers do that and when they have extracted and exploited as much as they can, they leave. The British left. ... Whatever ‘development’ the British did was to ensure that they could effectively exploit the country. They ‘built’ railroads so that they could move stuff (cotton to the British mills, for example) and for administering the large population they built a rudimentary telecommunications system. They ‘built’ an education system that was just about adequate to churn out clerks that were needed for office work. They needed mid-level management (there were only so many Englishmen for the job) and so they created the Indian Civil Services. If I was the colonizer, I would do precisely what the British did. It is rational and sensible thing to do for a colonizer. What the British also did – and very effectively at that – is to create an education system that churns out people who have no idea of how rapacious the British were.” (Dey, Atanu; Indian-American economist)

“The British conquest of India was the invasion and destruction of a high civilization by a trading company utterly without scruple or principle, careless of art and greedy of gain, over-running with fire and sword a country temporarily disordered and helpless, bribing and murdering, annexing and stealing and beginning that career of illegal and ‘legal’ plunder which has now gone on ruthlessly. ... It was a simple matter for a group of English buccaneers, armed with the latest European artillery and morals, to defeat the bows and arrows, the elephants and primitive musketry of the rajahs, and bringing one Hindu province after another under the control of the British East India Company.” (Durant, Will; American historian and philosopher, 1885-1981)

“The wartime Bengal Famine has become a ‘forgotten holocaust’ and has been effectively deleted from our history books, from school and university curricula and from general public perception. ... Churchill’s six-volume History of the Second World War fails to mention the cataclysm that was responsible for about 90% of total British Empire casualties in that conflict, but makes the extraordinary obverse claim: ‘No great portion of the world population was so effectively protected from the horrors and perils of the World War as were the people of Hindustan. They were carried through the struggle on the shoulders of our small island.’” (Polya, Gideon; Australian scientist and writer)

“Places like India and Bengal (Bangladesh) which were highly advanced industrial societies by the mid-1700’s but all of the industries which were superior to their counterparts in Britain were deliberately undermined or simply forced out of existence by the British colonisers. India and Bangladesh became extremely poor, feudal agricultural countries supplying Britain with raw materials and as a captive market for British goods.” (Chomsky, Noam; American linguist and historian)

Conversion

“Anyone who attempted to construe a personal view of God which conflicted with Church dogma must be burned without pity.” (Innocent III, Pope, 1116-1216)

“The clergy converted the simple teachings of Jesus into an engine for enslaving mankind and adulterated by artificial constructions into a contrivance to filch wealth and power themselves ... these clergy, in fact, constitute the real Anti-Christ.” “Were the Pope, or his allies, to send in mission to us some thousands of Jesuit priests to convert us to their orthodoxy, I suspect that we should deem and treat it as a national aggression on our peace and faith.” (Jefferson, Thomas; American President, 1743-1826)

“I am surrounded by priests who repeat incessantly that their kingdom is not of this world, and yet they lay their hands on everything they can get.” (Napoleon Bonaparte; French emperor, 1769-1821)

“When the missionaries arrived, the Africans had the land and the missionaries had the Bible. They taught us to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened them, they had the land and we had the Bible.” (Kenyatta, Jomo; first President of Kenya, 1897-1978)

“What a splendid instrument for spreading Christianity and civilization among the savage races of Africa!” (Stanley, Sir Henry Morton; Welsh-American explorer, 1841-1904, when inspecting the original maxim gun)

“Ours is a terrible religion. The fleets of the world could swim in spacious comfort in the innocent blood it has spilt.” (Twain, Mark; American writer, 1835-1910)

“We who have come from the East have sat here day after day and have been told in a patronizing way that we ought to accept Christianity because Christian nations are the most prosperous. We look about us and we see England the most prosperous Christian nation in the world, with her foot upon the neck of 250,000,000 Asiatics. We look back into history and see that the prosperity of Christian Europe begins with Spain. Spain’s prosperity began with the invasion of Mexico. Christianity wins its prosperity by cutting the throats of its fellow men. At such a price the Hindoo will not have prosperity.” (Vivekananda, 1863-1902)

“The word should be passed all along the line that India is to be won for Christ, and that the greatest movement ever attempted in the history of Christianity is now at hand. Nothing in all modern history, nothing since the day of Pentecost, has been equal to the present opportunity.” (Thoburn, James Mills; American bishop and missionary, 1836-1922)

“When the walls of the mighty fortress of Brahmanism are encircled, undermined and finally stormed by the soldiers of the cross, the victory of Christianity must be signal and complete.” “Special object of his (Boden’s) munificent bequest was to promote the translation of the scriptures into Sanskrit; so as to enable his countrymen to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India to the Christian Religion.” (Monier-Williams, Sir Monier; British indologist and head of the Oxford’s Boden Chair, 1819-1899)

“This edition of mine and the translation of the Veda will hereafter tell to a great extent ... the fate of India, and on the growth of millions of souls in that country. It is the root of their religion, and to show them what the root is, I feel sure, the only way of uprooting all that has sprung from it during the last 3000 years.” “The ancient religion of India is totally doomed and if Christianity doesn’t step in whose fault will it be.” “The rotten tree for some time had artificial supports ... but if the English man comes to see that the tree must fall ... he will mind no sacrifice either of blood or of land ... I would like to lay down my life, or at least lend my hand to bring about this struggle.” (Müller, Friedrich Max; German-born orientalist, 1823-1900)

“The object of all missionary labor should not be primarily the civilization, but the evangelization of the heathen. Schools may be regarded as converting agencies and their value estimated by the number who are led to renounce idolatry and make an open profession to Christianity.” (South Indian Missionary Conference 1858)

“The Hindu and the missionary conceptions of toleration are poles apart. The missionary is bent upon destroying heathendom; there probably could not be found a Hindu desirous of destroying Christianity. For the Hindu, religious formulas are not absolute truth, but truth is a mythical and allegorical form; how is that which is infinite be compressed into the tiny vessel of a single dogma? A missionary after a painfully intense discussion once exclaimed to me, ‘The light that is in you is darkness.’ Of course, I never dreamed of thinking that of him. For him, light had to be filtered through a glass of a familiar color before it could be recognized as light. The most subtle and in a certain sense, I suppose, effective proselytizing agency in India is the Mission School. When adult conversion was found to proceed slowly, it was decided to reach the children; hence the education bribe. The magic word itself stills opposition and enquiry; everyone is convinced that India needs educating. The education is undertaken with an ulterior motive, that of conversion.” (Coomaraswamy, Ananda Kentish; Ceylonese historian and philosopher, 1877-1947)

“‘Miracle boxes’ are put in local churches: The gullible villager writes out a request – a loan, a pucca house, fees for the son’s schooling, and a few weeks later, the miracle happens. And the whole family converts, making others in the village follow suit. Is this ethical? No country in the world would allow this.” (Gautier, Francois; French journalist based in India)

“Conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realization, is the crying need of the times. That however is never what is meant by proselytizing. To those who would convert India (Hindus), might it not be said: Physician heal thyself.” “Don’t attempt to propagate your faith; just live it.” “Our innermost prayer should be

that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, a Christian a better Christian.” (Gandhi, Mohandas; Indian politician, 1869-1948)

“It is a remarkable fact that the outstanding Christians in India are the first generation... We had thought that the third and fourth generation would be much more outstanding... The reasons why the first generation people were wonderful was because they brought over their Hindu culture, and they were at home in their own categories. They had their roots in the cultural past: therefore they were natural. The second generation were taken out, and became neither good Europeans nor good Indians. The second and third generation Christians are neither this nor that. In that period, the Indian Christian had lost his soul.” (Hocking, Prof. William Ernest; American philosopher, 1873-1966)

“The British were more cunning at the game than the Portuguese, careful to show respect for Indian religions. Yet they sneered at the pagans behind their back, educated the Indian elite in British-run schools, or at Eton and Cambridge – which, if it did not guarantee conversion to Christianity, resulted in lapsed Hinduism, agnosticism, or an intellectual humanism. In India, Anglo indoctrination produced a generation of ‘brown sahibs’ who looked down on the religion of the masses, the opium of the people. Such is the power of colonization that a whole generation must pass before the paralyzing spell wears off.” (Roberts, Paul William; Canadian writer)

“From the Indian natives, reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta, under English superintendence, a fresh class is springing up, endowed with the requirements for government and imbued with European science.” (Marx, Karl; German philosopher and revolutionary, 1818-1883)

“A single generation of English education suffices to break the threads of tradition and create a nondescript and superficial being deprived of all roots – an intellectual pariah who does not belong to the East or the West, to the past or the future. Of all Indian problems the educational is the most difficult and the most tragic.” (Coomaraswamy, Ananda Kentish; Ceylonese historian and philosopher, 1877-1947)

“A German or French or English child will be taught something of Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, because they are regarded as the root of European culture and somehow present in European consciousness today. ... But Indian Epics a hundred times richer and vaster in human experience, a thousand time more present in Indian consciousness will not taught to an Indian child.” (Danino, Michel; French-Indian historian)

“Our school books talk about Socrates, Plato and Aristotle – and rightly so – but they don’t mention Yajnavalkya, Panini and Patanjali, which is a grave omission. Our grand boulevards in Delhi and other cities are named after Copernicus, Kepler and Newton, but there are no memorials to Aryabhata, Bhaskara, Madhava and Nilakantha!” “For at least 50 years, Indian intellectual life was stifled by a Stalinist attitude. And before that, for two centuries, colonialist historians appropriated Indian past for their own purposes. What they left for us was a mutilated version of our past. We are barely emerging from that hell.” (Kak, Prof. Dr. Subhash; Indian scientist and writer)

For example, even though the Mughal rule from Akbar to Aurangzeb is about 150 years, which is much shorter than the 350 year rule of the Vijayanagaram Empire, the history books of today hardly take notice of the latter. In fact the territory under Krishna Devaraya’s rule was much larger than Akbar’s, and yet it is the latter who is called ‘the Great’. Such a version suited the British rules who had sought to create a legitimacy for their presence in India.

“The struggle of Hindu society is not primarily with the Muslim community. The most important opponents of Hindu society today are not the Islamic communal leaders, but the interiorized colonial rulers of India, the alienated English-educated and mostly Left-leaning elite that noisily advertises its ‘secularism.’ It is these people who impose anti-Hindu policies on Hindu society, and who keep Hinduism down and prevent it from proudly raising its head after a thousand years of oppression.” (Elst, Dr. Koenraad Elst; Dutch historian)

“Colonialism nearly killed India’s capacity to know its past; globalization threatens to destroy its will.” (Pollock, Prof. Sheldon I.; American sanskritist and historian)

“The Portuguese, Dutch and English have been for a long time year after year, shipping home the treasures of India in their big vessels. We Germans have been all along left to watch it. Germany would do likewise, but hers would be treasures of spiritual knowledge.” (Heine, Heinrich; German poet, 1797-1856)

“Land of ancient India! Cradle of Humanity. Hail! Hail revered motherland whom centuries of brutal invasions have not yet buried under the dust of oblivion. Hail, Fatherland of faith, of love, of poetry and of science, may

we hail a revival of thy past in our Western future.” (Jaccoliot, Louis Francois; French judge in India and writer, 1837-1890)

“A time must come when the Indian mind will shake off the darkness that has fallen upon it, cease to think or hold opinions at second and third hand and reassert its right to judge and enquire in a perfect freedom into the meaning of its scriptures.” (Aurobindo, Sri; Indian philosopher, 1872-1950)

“So now we turn to India. This spiritual gift, that makes a man human, is still alive in Indian souls. Go on giving the world Indian examples of it. Nothing else can do so much to help mankind to save itself from destruction.”

“It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a Western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in self-destruction of the human race. At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation is the ancient Hindu way. Here we have the attitude and spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together in to a single family.” (Toynbee, Arnold Joseph; British historian, 1889-1975)

“What is happening in India is a new historical awakening. ... Indian intellectuals, who want to be secure in their liberal beliefs, may not understand what is going on. But every other Indian knows precisely what is happening: deep down he knows that a larger response is emerging even if at times this response appears in his eyes to be threatening.” (Naipaul, Sir Vidyadhar Surajprasad; Trinidad-born British Nobel laureate)