

The Resurgent India

A Monthly National Review

June 2016



“Let us all work for the Greatness of India.”

– The Mother

Year 7

Issue 3

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SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

Common name: Indian blanket, Blanket flower, Fire-wheels

Year 7

Issue 3

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A Declaration

We do not fight against any creed, any religion.

We do not fight against any form of government.

We do not fight against any social class.

We do not fight against any nation or civilisation.

We are fighting division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood.

We are endeavouring to establish upon earth union, knowledge, consciousness, Truth, and we fight whatever opposes the advent of this new creation of Light, Peace, Truth and Love.

- The Mother

(Collected works of the Mother 13, p. 124-25)

NAMAMI GANGE: PART I

INTRODUCTION: MAJOR ISSUES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

देवि सुरेश्वरि भगवति गङ्गे त्रिभुवनतारिणि तरलतरङ्गे ।
शङ्करमौलिविहारिणि विमले मम मतिरास्तां तव पदकमले ॥ १ ॥

Devi sureshvari bhagavati gaṅge tribhuvanatāriṇi taralatarāṅge ।
śaṅkarmaulivihāriṇi vimale mama matirāstāṁ tava padakamale ॥ 1 ॥

O Goddess Ganga! You are the divine river from heaven, you are the saviour of all the three worlds, you are pure and restless, you adorn Lord Shiva's head. O Mother! may my mind always rest at your lotus feet.

(Source: Sri Ganga Stotram)

"Gita and Ganga constitute the essence of Hinduism; one its theory and the other its practice." – Swami Vivekananda

"The fool, dwelling on the bank of the Ganga, digs a well for water!" Such are we! Living in the midst of God – we must go and make images. – Swami Vivekananda

"The Ganga, especially, is the river of India, beloved of her people, round which are intertwined her memories, her hopes and fears, her songs of triumph, her victories and her defeats. She has been a symbol of India's age-long culture and civilization, ever changing, ever flowing, and yet ever the same Ganga." – Jawaharlal Nehru.

"I am convinced that everything has come down to us from the banks of the Ganga – astronomy, astrology, spiritualism, etc. It is very important to note that some 2500 years ago at the least Pythagoras went from Samos to the Ganga to learn geometry." – Francis M. Voltaire

"If Ganga lives, India lives. If Ganga dies, India dies." – Dr. Vandana Shiva

"The land where the Ganges does not flow is likened in a hymn

to the sky without the sun, a home without a lamp, a Brahmin without the Veda.” – Jean Tavernier (Travels in India)

Our scriptures – even those, such as the Puranas, which evoke emotions towards the Divine by narrating His glories on the earth – have always begun with, and in their major part, espoused a living description of the earth – the mountains, the rivers, the continents – we inhabit. For us, the land of Bharatvarsha manifests, in form, the Transcendent, not only in its Avatars, it's Rishis and its people, but also in the mighty Himalaya, which became the land for the union between the Divine and His Shakti, and its majestic rivers.

The flow of river Ganga from Lord Shiva to pervade the Three Worlds is not simply a religious narrative, but a manifestation of the Power and the Grace that went into the making of the living reality that is Bharat – the country, the 'karmabhumi' which is God's laboratory destined to unite the Heaven and the Earth, the Spirit and the Matter, and to lead the world. Ganga is the lifeline of the Indian civilisation.

At a time when the humanity – ensnared by the traps of elevating Science to its own material godhead – is hurtling towards an inevitable disaster of its own making, **the solution can be found only if India takes the lead, by revering once again the Supreme Shakti that guides Nature's works. The secret is there in our own scriptures, and yet we opaquely insist on regarding Nature from the point of view of Western materialism. We apply same scientific and governance 'techniques' to find a solution to the ecological disaster staring us in face. The result is that we are making things go from bad to worse.**

What solution can we give to the world, if we cannot save our own lifeline, the Ganga? 'Namami Gange' has a meaning behind it – a meaning that pervades both the religious and the material. This cannot be foolishly sacrificed by our illusions. Yet this is what has been, and is still, happening. Our failure to grasp the importance of Ganga will lead to a slow decay of the Indian nation.

THE GANGA MISSION

The 'Clean Ganga Mission', also called the 'Namami Gange' has

been among the major issues taken up by the Modi government since it assumed office, and especially by Modi himself. When Modi prioritized Varanasi and thundered out the importance of revamping the Ganga, he connected to the emotions of majority of India's rural and semi-urban population.

However, currently, the Namami Gange is facing pressures for revival after nearly two years of not being able to deliver the desired outcomes. While well-intentioned, **the project is coming into conflict with a number of other 'clean energy' initiatives, such as construction of hydroelectric power plants and dams, which will impede the flow of the river. It is also getting stuck because of bureaucratic hurdles and false technical solutions put forward by the bureaucracy.**

CLEANING THE GANGA: INEFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS, MISPLACED PRIORITIES

Ganga runs for about 2500 km across five states and provides livelihood to almost 13 million people in India.¹ The Ganga is also under threat from climate change. Due to global warming, the Gangotri glacier has been receding since 1780, with the UN 2007 Climate Change Report suggested that the glacial flow may completely stop by 2030, at which point the Ganga would be reduced to a seasonal river during the monsoon.²

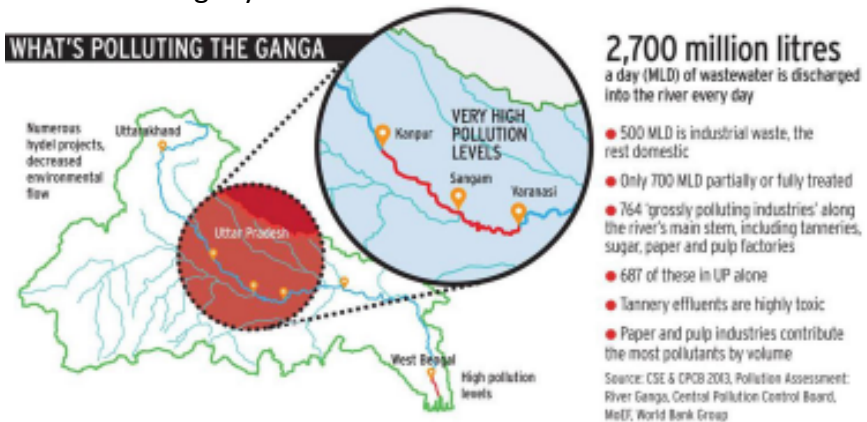
There are currently two main issues facing the rejuvenation of Ganga – pollution or cleaning up the river, and, more importantly, ensuring that the flow of the river is not hampered by constructions of dams, barrages, interlinking rivers and other such ideas.

The Clean Ganga Mission has broad aims spanning:

- Cleaning the river by tackling urban and industrial pollution.
- Reviving 'aviral dhara' or continuous flow of water along stretches that have dried up over the years, covering the 'minimum environmental flow'.
- Revamping river ecology, including ensuring the habitation for dolphins, gharials and other prized fish species.

- Making it an important inland waterway.

In terms of pollution facing the Ganga, from its journey from Gaumukh to the Bay of Bengal, **the most polluting stretch is the 750 km falling in Uttar Pradesh between Kannauj and Varanasi**. The state houses about 667 of the total 764 'grossly polluting industries' that contaminate Ganga, out of which 442 are tanneries.³ The amount of waste that flows into Ganga spans the 500 MLD (Million Litres a Day) of industrial waste and about 2200 MLD of domestic waste coming out of the 50 major cities lying along Ganga's main stem, in the absence of proper industrial pollution treatment systems and domestic sewage systems.⁴



The process of cleaning up the Ganga began in 1985 with the launch of the Ganga Action Plan – I. In 1993, it was revamped as Ganga Action Plan – II, and included Ganga's tributaries – the Yamuna, Gomti, Damodar and Mahanadi. In 2009, Ganga was declared a National River and the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) was set up, while in 2010, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) was established with the aim of ensuring that no untreated domestic sewage or industrial effluent would enter the river after 2020.

All of these plans and policies have focused on establishing infrastructural fanfare and spending money, while the implementation, on ground, was corrupt and lethargic. They

established hundreds of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), which, unfortunately, continue to operate below capacity or lie dysfunctional, since, till date, only about 700 MLD of the total 2700 MLD of wastewater entering Ganga is treated, even as the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) has also focused on establishing STPs.⁵ Even after the NGBRA was established by the previous UPA-II government, its meeting was held only three times in five years.

The NDA government which came to power in 2014 took a clean break from these piecemeal initiatives, by taking a major policy leap in sanctioning the Namami Gange project, with a total of 20,000 crores INR of funds allocated till 2019, and also set up state-level units to monitor the progress in the five states through which the Ganga flows.

Time-frame	Fund allocation	Thrust areas	Activities	Implementation
Launched in 2014, it has 3 goals: • Short term (3 years). • Medium term (5 years). • Long term (10 years or more)	20,000 crores for five years till 2019.	• Maintenance of flow. • Riverfront development. • Capacity building. • Research and monitoring. • Biodiversity conservation. • Communications and public outreach.	• Revamping of existing STPs, and building new ones. • Sanitation cover for gram Panchayats. • Model cremation ghats. • Support system for planning and monitoring. • Maintenance of river flow. • Forestation, with native medicinal and plant species, near riverside. • Zero liquid discharge technology to recycle the wastewater. • Building 100 new crematoriums in cities and revamping old ones.	Establishment of the State Project Monitoring Groups (SPMGs) in five states. SPMGs report to the NMCG, which will release the funds to the SPMGs. These will release it to the executing agencies and monitor their progress.

However, the progress on the ground is next to nothing. **The solutions being adopted either reek of similar bureaucratic thinking that has historically pervaded this mission, or, are new variations of already-tried methods. Most importantly, what the current approach does not recognize is that ensuring the ‘aviral dhara’ or continuous**

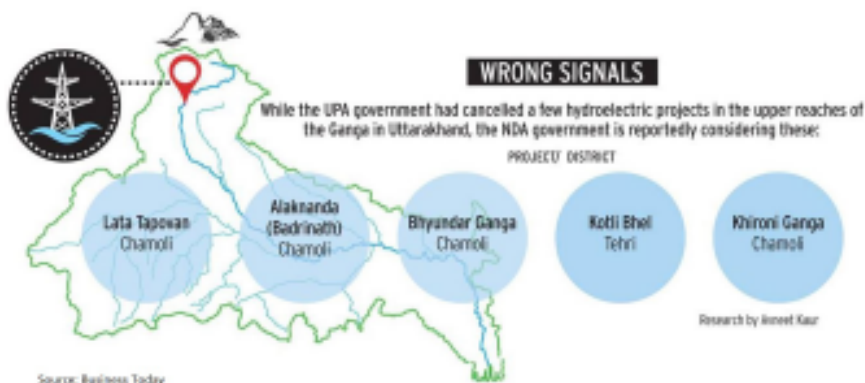
flow of the river is more vital to the survival of Ganga than simply cleaning up the riverfront or outer development. Yet, several of the government projects clash directly with this aim.

The Aviral Dhara concept led to the declaration of the 132 km stretch between Gaumukh and Uttarkashi as an ecologically sensitive zone where no commercial activity would be allowed, during the tenure of the UPA government. But the government stepped in too late. **While environmentalists believe that at least 32 per cent of the original waters of a river constitute minimum environmental flow – and that over 50 per cent is desirable – the Ganga’s minimum flow is barely around 5 per cent.**⁶ Moreover, holding the river water in reservoir – the blocking of the river starts at the Maneri Bhali 1 project on Bhagirathi – and allowing only a minimum amount of flow has curbed the migration of several prized fish species, thereby reducing their numbers.

Some of the measures being considered by the government – such as the establishment of hydroelectric projects as a source of clean energy – are counterproductive to the local ecosystem of Uttarakhand. Moreover, with the government seeking to meet its ‘Electricity for all’ project deadline of 2022, it might give preference to establishing more power projects rather than restoring Ganga’s flow. In 2013, the Supreme Court had passed an order saying that no new hydroelectric projects will be established in the para-glacial region of Gangotri. But this was reversed in 2015, after a meeting of the PMO, which cleared six fresh projects, while the Uttarakhand government has identified another 450 potential projects, with 76 such projects already active in the para-glacial region, thereby leaving little scope for water flow.⁷

Maintaining the river flow or aviral dhara is the urgent need of the hour and the key to ensuring that there is, subsequently, cleanliness in the river. The latter is a civic issue, the former is key to the survival of the country’s life. An NGO, Yamnuna Jiye Abhiyaan, claims to have spent 30 years cleaning the Ganga and 20 years with Yamuna, and the river went from bad to worse. For, the mistake

was in believing that simply focusing on cleanliness or fixing the sewage system would restore the river's health, without doing anything about factors such as dwindling flow, artificial barriers, loss of catchment vegetation, encroachments on its flood plains, massive extraction of sand from its banks, and power projects.



MAIN ISSUES AND ACTION

The major problem with cleaning the Ganga lies in the excessive reliance on bureaucratic jargon and prescriptions – for which all governments, however well-intentioned, are culpable – since the bureaucratic mindset is just to use up or eat the funds indiscriminately if they are available, augmenting both outright monetary corruption and an illusion of work being done. For instance, every year dead bodies are thrown in the Ganga, despite a UP High Court order prohibiting such dumping and the UP government providing a grant of Rs 1,600 for the cremation of every unidentified body. This is because the electric crematoriums rarely function due to corruption, as contractors cut off power, supply of firewood, with buying wood proving too expensive for many people. Sometimes, the police also dumps bodies into the river to pocket the grant.*

* To deal with pollution generated from the cremation of dead bodies, the government is planning to set up at least 100 modern, renovated crematoriums by November 2016. 32,000 human corpses are cremated in Varanasi each year with up to 300 tonnes of half-burnt human flesh released into the Ganges.

This kind of an unchecked mindset, combined with the present generation's disregard for the cultural value of Ganga and its vital role in sustaining this country, results in corruption and inefficiency on ground. For, no one person can be held accountable for the river degradation, while no one has interest in committing to the river cleaning because everyone will benefit from the outcome. It is a typical selfish, logical thinking which characterizes this generation, while excessive reliance on techniques of project management keeps giving us false assurances that we are doing something.

That is why, despite the numerous ministries, departments, bodies, courts and NGOs fighting for the cause of Ganga, nothing much has been done to revamp the river. The corporate houses in the country have shown no interest in funding the project under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In fact, among all projects of the Modi government, the Swachh Bharat and Namami Gange have received least amount of funding from private companies in the year 2014-15.

The government action, so far, has spanned regulatory action against polluting industries, heavy monetary investment in the mission (of nearly 3 billion USD over a period of five years, combined with ambitious targets) and looking towards past national and international river rejuvenation projects to get the Ganga mission on track.

Many NGOs have decried the technocratic solutions – such as the IIT report on the Ganga River Basin Management Plan, and the recent draft plan, in December 2015, released by the Central Pollution Control Board which is based on a segmented approach to clean Ganga, establishing a differentiated approach for each area – which advocate building more mindless infrastructure and technology. Instead, one of the leading advocates on Ganga – the Ganga Mahasabha led by Swami Jitentanand – has been rooting for punitive solutions that can implement strict action, such as a National River Conservation Act and the setting up of a National River Protection Force, apart from demarcating land on either bank of the Ganga that would belong to the river and be unavailable for construction.⁸

Although, even with the right laws, implementation would be tough, given that water is a state subject.

In terms of current action on ground, the following action has been taken:

First, the government has acknowledged corruption as a problem, tightening rules, improving enforcement and closing down more than 100 leather tanneries – a significant step, given that about 200 tanneries had been operating in Kanpur without licenses.⁹ In the past, the companies never took seriously the need to curb liquid effluent discharge, set up common effluent treatment plants and install new technologies. But now, every tannery had to install its own effluent treatment and chromium recovery plants.

Second, in terms of international missions, the government has enlisted the help of Germany, taking lessons from Rhine rejuvenation. The Rhine is Europe's longest river, rising in Switzerland, passing through Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France and Holland, and emptying in the North Sea. In 1986, the river became massively polluted in the aftermath of a chemical reaction at the Sandoz chemical plant in Basel and was revamped as a result of the intensive steps undertaken by the International Commission for the Protection of Rhine.

In terms of national missions, the government is also taking lessons from past Ganga missions. Even though the Ganga Action Plan that began in 1985 also set up Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) with a capacity of treating about 1000 million litres of sewage per day, it was a failure because of lack of cooperation and maintenance by states and municipal authorities. These erstwhile plants exist today too but are either functioning below capacity or not functioning at all. Due to procrastination in land acquisition, adverse weather conditions, court cases and want of funds, many sewage treatment plants sanctioned between 2008 and 2010, are yet to take off.¹⁰

Excessive reliance on the treatment of sewage has done us no good. Even though, as acknowledged by all, a major roadblock is the

issue of sewage discharge into the river. Yet, nothing concrete has been done so far to manage the massive waste disposal from all the cities located alongside the banks of the river. This is despite the fact that a significant amount of funding from the scheme is going into the construction of sewage treatment plants at the urban centres along the river-side – a move that might prove to be detrimental to river conservation as it is related to urban waste management.

Today, the government is relying on corporates to do urban sewage management work more efficiently, in terms of capacity-utilisation and maintenance of STPs. Since they will be required to maintain the plants for a period of 15 years at the very least, the government will only provide the initial funding for infrastructure, while the rest of the costs and profit will be utilised through annuities over the 15-year period. How far this incentive system will work is yet to be seen. Besides the reluctance of Indian companies to contribute meaningfully to the mission, the step constitutes only a very minuscule part of the deeper, mammoth challenge facing us.

But urban sewage is only one form of pollution. The major problem of rural sewage remains unaddressed. With about 1650 Gram Panchayats dotting the banks of Ganga and majority of rural population defecating in the open, the government has a task on its hand to ensure the proper treatment of rural sewage. Only a third of the total area of Varanasi is actually connected to a sewer. Rest of the waste goes directly into the river.

In terms of more productive solutions to deal with rural sewage, the government plans to test biological methods, by adopting a model tried by a local spiritual leader, Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal, in cleaning the Kali Bein rivulet in Punjab in 2007. The steps involved segregating solid and liquid waste, composting solid waste, treatment of waste water through oxidation ponds or lagoons that break the organic matter in the waste for decomposition by bacteria and allow the growth of algae in the pond, and then the use of treated water for irrigation. The practice of this has infused a sense of common participation and ownership of the rivulet, over the years.

Third, in terms of immediate action, the government plans to award contracts cleaning solid waste from the surface of Ganga, across the five Ganga basin states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal, aiming to begin the cleaning process by the end of June 2016. However, floating solid waste removal is the easiest process, resulting in only a visual make-over and is only supplementary to the process of treating water polluted by rural, urban and industrial sewage and effluent inflow.

Finally, another solution being floated by the government is that of interlinking of rivers – a move that could prove detrimental to Ganga rejuvenation. It cannot work unless the rivers have sufficient flow. The step could obstruct the natural ecology of rivers. Dams would not help to add river flows in the Ganga basin – which is topographically flat. These dams could also threaten the forests of the Himalayas and impact the functioning of the monsoon system and lead to serious climate change concerns.

Already, the construction of hydropower projects, – around 450 such projects in Uttarakhand have affected the flow of 53% of Bhagirathi – the ongoing tunnelling and mining in the Himalayas, and the government’s plans of interlinking rivers is spelling an increasing water disaster for the country.

SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

Solutions to clean Ganga will not be realized if we approach the issue technocratically. As Rakesh Jaiswal, a Kanpur activist agitating against the pollution from leather tanneries, pointed out in an interview, “We have the science and technology, the talents, the manpower: everything is there. What is missing is honesty and dedication.”¹¹

During the colonial period, the British rulers allowed, in 1916, a historic agreement, at the insistence of Madan Mohan Malaviya, while they were building the first Ganga canal, by which all Ganga projects planned upstream of Haridwar would have to seek the consent of the Hindu community first.¹² However, even as this captures the true

value of Ganga, this rarely happens, with even the current government not going all the way in focusing on Ganga.

But in post-Independence democratic India, where elections rule the roost, revamping the Ganga has become a political project. The idea of cleaning the Ganga first came during the 1972 'First Earth Summit' at Stockholm, when PM Indira Gandhi was shown how the Stockholm River was decontaminated. It was later taken up by Rajiv Gandhi and found prominent resonance in Congress' election manifesto. The two UPA regimes followed up the project and did some piecemeal action, and now, the NDA government has taken up this issue prominently. But, though well-intentioned, they are falling into the same trap by not setting their priorities right and taking radical action.

In other words, it is the corruption and the inability of the government to enforce laws, and above all, of a sense of alienation of the new generation from the emotive and spiritual value of their national, cultural symbols. That is why despite the numerous efforts to revive Ganga, since the time of Rajiv Gandhi, there has been a progressive decline of the river. The present leadership, while definitely building on the technical know-how of previous government and of the international community, has made nationalism the overarching framework of the mission.

At the announcement of the mission in 2014, Modi declared, "Ma Ganga has called me...She has decided some responsibilities for me. Ma Ganga is screaming for help, she is saying I hope one of my sons gets me out of this filth...It is possible it has been decided by God for me to serve Ma Ganga."¹³

The message correctly captures the immediate necessity of Ganga rejuvenation, and should not be allowed to fall into false solutions, corruption and lethargy. The living reality of Ganga captures the growth and sustenance of Indian civilisation and nation. They are the one and the same life.

To be continued...

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INDIA'S ECONOMY DURING THE BRITISH RULE (4)

A. THE DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT REVENUE AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF INDIA

"If we turn from the sources of wealth to its distribution, and to the financial arrangements of India, the same melancholy picture is presented to us. The total revenues of India during the last ten years of the Queen's reign – 1891-92 to 1900-1 – came to 647 million sterling. The annual average is thus under 65 millions, including receipts from railways, irrigation works, and all other sources. The expenditure in England during these ten years was 159 millions, giving an annual average of nearly 16 million sterling. One-fourth, therefore, of all the revenues derived in India, is annually remitted to England as Home Charges. And if we add to this the portion of their salaries which European officers employed in India annually remit to England, the total annual drain out of the Indian Revenues to England considerably exceeds 20 millions. **The richest country on earth stoops to levy this annual contribution from the poorest. Those who earn £42 per head ask for 10s. per head from a nation earning £2 per head.** And this 10s. per head which the British people draw from India impoverishes Indians, and therefore impoverishes British trade with India. The contribution does not benefit British commerce and trade, while it drains the life-blood of India in a continuous, ceaseless flow.

For when taxes are raised and spent in a country, the money circulates among the people, fructifies trades, industries, and agriculture, and in one shape or another reaches the mass of the people. But **when the taxes raised in a country are remitted out of it, the money is lost to the country for ever;** it does not stimulate her trades or industries, or reach the people in any form. Over 20 million sterling are annually drained from the revenues of India; and it would be a miracle if such a process, continued through long decades, did not impoverish even the richest nation upon earth.

The total Land Revenue of India was 17.5 millions in 1900-01.

The total of Home Charges in the same year came to 17 millions. It will be seen, therefore, that an amount equivalent to all that is raised from the soil, in all the Provinces of India, is annually remitted out of the country as Home Charges. An additional sum of several million is sent in the form of private remittances by European officers, drawing their salaries from Indian Revenues; and this remittance increases as the employment of European officers increases in India.

The 17 millions remitted as Home Charges are spent in England (1) as interest payable on the Indian Debt; (2) interest on railways; and (3) as Civil and Military Charges. A small portion, about a million, covers the cost of military and other stores supplied to India.

A very popular error prevails in this country that the whole Indian Debt represents British capital sunk in the development of India. It is shown in the body of this volume that this is not the genesis of the Public Debt of India. When the East India Company ceased to be rulers of India in 1858, they had piled up an Indian Debt of 70 millions. They had in the meantime drawn a tribute from India, financially an unjust tribute, exceeding 150 millions, not calculating interest. **They had also charged India with the cost of Afghan wars, Chinese wars, and other wars outside India.** Equitably, therefore, India owed nothing at the close of the Company's rule; her Public Debt was a myth; there was a considerable balance of over 100 millions in her favor out of the money that had been drawn from her.

Within the first eighteen years of the Administration of the Crown the Public Debt of India was doubled. It amounted to about 140 millions in 1877, when the Queen became the Empress of India. This was largely owing to the cost of the Mutiny wars, over 40 million sterling, which was thrown on the revenues of India. And India was made to pay a large contribution to the cost of the Abyssinian War of 1867.

Between 1877 and 1900, the Public Debt rose from 139 millions to 224 millions. This was largely due to the construction of railways by Guaranteed Companies or by the State, beyond the pressing needs

of India and beyond her resources. It was also largely due to the Afghan Wars of 1878 and 1897. The history of the Indian Debt is a distressing record of financial unwisdom and injustice; and every impartial reader can reckon for himself how much of this Indian Debt is morally due from India.

The last items of the Home Charges are the Civil and Military Charges. This needs a revision. If Great Britain and India are both gainers by the building up of the British Indian Empire, it is not fair or equitable that India alone should pay all the cost of the maintenance of that superb edifice. It is not fair that all the expenses incurred in England, down to the maintenance of the India Office and the wages of the charwoman employed to clean the rooms at Whitehall, should be charged to India. Over forty years ago one of the greatest of Indian administrators suggested an equitable compromise. In a work on *Our Financial Relations with India*, published in 1859, Sir George Wingate suggested that India should pay all the expenses of Civil and Military Administration incurred in India, while Great Britain should meet the expenses incurred in England, as she did for her Colonies. Is it too late to make some such equitable adjustment today? India's total Civil and military Charges, incurred in England, come to 6 million – a sum which would be considerably reduced if it came from the British taxpayer. Is it too much to expect that Great Britain might share this burden, while India paid all the Civil and Military charges incurred in India?

These are the plain facts of the economic situation in India. **Given these conditions, any fertile, industrious, peaceful country in the world would be what India is today. If manufactures were crippled, agriculture overtaxed, and a third of the revenue remitted out of the country, any nation on earth would suffer from permanent poverty and recurring famines.** Economic laws are the same in Asia as in Europe. If India is poor today, it is through the operation of economic causes. If India were prosperous under these circumstances, it would be an economic miracle. Science knows no miracles. Economic laws are constant and unvarying in their operation.”¹

B. INDIA AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 20TH CENTURY – SOME IMPORTANT STATISTICAL DATA AND INFORMATION

“The area and population of India, according to the Census of 1901, are shown in the following tables.

British India

Provinces	Area in Sq. miles	Population
1. Ajmer-Merwara	2,711	476,912
2. Andamans and Nicobars	3,188	24,649
3. Assam	56,243	6,126,343
4. Baluchistan	45,804	308,246
5. Bengal	151,185	74,744,866
6. Berar and Central Provinces	104,169	12,630,662
7. Bombay (including Aden)	123,064	18,559,561
8. Burma	236,738	10,490,624
9. Coorg	1,582	180,607
10. Madras	141,726	38,209,436
11. N.W. Frontier Province	16,466	2,125,480
12. Punjab	97,209	20,330,339
13. Agra and Oudh	107,164	47,691,782
14. Total	1,087,249	231,899,507

Native States of India

State and Agencies	Area in Sq. miles	Population
1. Baluchistan Agency	86,511	502,500
2. Baroda State	8,099	1,952,692
3. Bengal States	38,652	3,748,544
4. Bombay States	65,761	6,908,648
5. Central India Agency	78,772	8,628,781

6. Central Province States	29,435	1,996,383
7. Hyderabad State	82,698	11,141,142
8. Kashmir State	80,900	2,905,578
9. Madras States	9,969	4,188,086
10. Mysore State	29,444	5,539,399
11. Punjab States	36,532	4,424,398
12. Rajputana Agency	127,541	9,723,301
13. Agra and Oudh States	5,079	802,097
Total	679,393	62,461,594

Revenues and Expenditure:- The gross revenues of British India in 1901-02 amounted to £76,344,526. Deducting Railway and Irrigation Receipts, the net revenues of British India were £53,580,985, or in round numbers 53.5 million sterling. The population of British India being under 232 millions, the taxation per head of population is very nearly 4s. 8d. per head.

The income of the people of India, per head, was estimated by Lord Cromer and Sir David Barbour in 1882 to be 27 rupees. Their present income is estimated by Lord Curzon at 30 rupees. Exception has been taken to both these estimates as being too high; but we shall accept them for our present calculation. Thirty rupees are equivalent to 40 shillings; and the economic condition of the country can be judged from the fact that the average income of the people of all classes, including the richest, is 40 shillings a year against £42 a year in the United Kingdom. A tax of 4s.8d. on 40 shillings is a tax of 2s.4d. on the pound. This is a crushing burden on a nation which earns very little more than its food.

In the United Kingdom, with its heavy taxation of £144,000,000 (excluding the cost of the late war), the incidence of the tax per head of a population of 42 million is less than £3. 10s. The proportion of this tax on the earnings of each individual inhabitant (£42) is only 1s.8d. in the pound. The Indian taxpayer, who earns little more than his food, is taxed 40 percent more than the taxpayer of Great Britain and Ireland.

The total expenditure for 1901-02 charged against Revenue was £71,394,282. Deducting Railway and Irrigation expenses, the nett expenditure was £49,650,229. Out of this total the Civil Departments and charges, in India and in England, cost £15,286, 181; and the Army services cost £1 5,763,931.

Home Charges:- Returning once more to the Gross Expenditure of £71,394,282, we find that, out of this total, a sum of £17,368,655 was spent in England as Home Charges – not including the pay of European officers in India, saved and remitted to England. The Home Charges may be conveniently divided into the following heads:–

1. Interest on Debt and Management of Debt	3,052,410
2. Cost of Mail Service, Telegraph Lines, charged to India	227,288
3. Railways, State and Guaranteed (Interest and Annuities)	6,416,373
4. Public Works (Absentee Allowances)	51,214
5. Marine Charges (including H.M. Ships in Indian Seas)	173,502
6. Military Charges (including Pensions)	2,945,614
7. Civil Charges (including Secretary of State's Establishment Cooper's Hill College, Pensions)	2,435,370
8. Stores (including those for Defense Works)	2,057,934
Total	17,368,655

The largest items are Interest on Debt, Railways, and Civil and Military Charges. How the Indian debt was first created by the East India Company by an unjust demand of Tribute, and how it was increased by charging to India the cost of the Afghan and Chinese Wars, the Mutiny Wars, and the Abyssinian and Soudan Wars, has been shown in previous chapters. To what extent this debt is justly and morally due from India, and how far it is entitled to an Imperial

Guarantee which would reduce the Interest, are questions which we do not wish to discuss here.

For half a century the Indian railways did not pay, but were nevertheless continuously extended. The working expenses, the interest on capital spent, and the profits guaranteed to private companies, exceeded the earnings by over 50 million sterling – a clear loss to the Indian taxpayer. In recent years the lines have paid; but how long this state of things will continue we do not know. And it is an additional loss to India that the interest on capital and the annuities are withdrawn from the earnings of the lines in India, and paid in England to the extent of 64 million a year. The money does not flow back to India, is not spent among the people of India, and cannot in any way fructify the trades and industries of India.

Lastly, the Civil and Military charges include payments to the Imperial Exchequer, salaries of the Secretary of State's establishment, and also pensions of retired civil and military officers. The people of India can justly call upon their British fellow-subjects to bear a portion of the cost of an empire beneficial alike to England and to India. It is a mean policy to make India alone pay for a concern from which India alone is not the gainer, and a readjustment of the Civil and Military Charges, on the lines indicated by Sir George Wingate more than forty years ago, is urgently needed.

Wages and Prices:– The average monthly wages of able bodied agricultural laborers in different parts of India during the last half of 1902 are shown below from official figures.

Province	District	Monthly Wages
Bengal	Patna	6s.8d to 8s
	Backergunj	0s.8d
Agra and Oudh	Cawnpur	5s to 6s.8d
	Fyzabad	2s.6d to 5s.4d
Punjab	Delhi	10s.8d
Bombay	Ahmadabad	9s.4d

Madras	Bellary	6s.4d
	Salem	4s.8d
Central Provinces	Jabalpur	5s.4d
	Raipur	5s.4d

Leaving out exceptionally rich districts like Backergunj, Delhi, and Ahmadabad, and exceptionally poor districts like Fyzabad, the wages of the able-bodied agricultural laborer range from 4s. 8d. to 6s. 8d. a month. Except in very rich districts, therefore, the agricultural labourer does not get even 3d. a day; his average earnings scarcely come to 2.5d. per day. Some deduction should be made from this, as he does not get employment all through the year; and 2d. a day therefore is more than he hopes to get throughout the year. The appalling poverty and joylessness of his life under such conditions cannot be easily pictured. His hut is seldom rethatched, and affords little shelter from cold and rain, his wife is clothed in rags; his little children go without clothing. Of furniture he has none; an old blanket is quite a luxury in the cold weather; and if his children can tend cattle, or his wife can do some work to eke out his income, he considers himself happy. It is literally a fact, and not a figure of speech, that agricultural laborers and their families in India generally suffer from insufficient food from year's end to year's end. They are brought up from childhood on less nourishment than is required even in the tropics, and grow up to be a nation weak in physique, stunted in growth, easy victims to disease, plague or famine.

Agriculturists who have lands are better off. They are better housed, better clothed, and have more sufficient food. But a severe Land Tax or rent takes away much from their earnings, and falls on the laboring classes also. For where the cultivator is lightly taxed, and has more to spare, he employs more labor, and labor is better paid. In Backergunj, where the land is lightly rented and the cultivator is prosperous, the laborer employed by him gets 10s. 8d. a month. In Salem, where the land is heavily taxed, and the cultivator is poor, the laborer he employs earns 4s. 8d. a month. It is this fact which appeals strongly to the Indian economist familiar with the circumstances of

his fellow-villagers; it is this fact which is ignored by the Settlement Officer when he enhances the Land Tax. A moderate Land Tax relieves the landless village laborer as much as the cultivator; a heavy Land Tax presses ultimately on the landless labourer, deprives him of work, reduces his wages, and renders him an easy victim to the first onset of famines. We have in these pages again and again urged a limitation of the Land Tax within moderate and definite limits, because a moderate and definite Land Tax is calculated to improve the condition of the entire village population of British India – all the 200 millions who own lands and who labour on lands. And the Native States of India would soon follow the lead of the British Government in this matter, as they do in other details of administration.

The official compilation from which we have taken the above figures does not furnish us with the wages of unskilled labour in towns. Speaking from our own knowledge, we should say that in large towns like Calcutta and Bombay, an able-bodied unskilled labourer earns 4d. a day, or 10s. a month. A skilled labourer, like a common mason, carpenter, or blacksmith, earns 20s. to 30s. a month in towns.

The price of rice exported from Calcutta in January 1903 was about 4s. 8d. the maund, a maund being 82 lbs. The price of Delhi wheat of good quality was 40s. the candy. But in most Provinces of India, the labourers live on inferior food – Bajra and Jowar, and other coarse grains.

Foreign Trade:– The total imports of merchandise and treasure into India during 1901-02 (excluding Government stores and treasure) was £67,412,798; and the total exports from India during that year was £88,618,297, showing a balance against India of over 21 million sterling. The United Kingdom sent goods to the value of 43 million, or two-thirds of India's total imports. Austria sent 2.5 millions, Germany 2 millions Belgium 2 millions, Russia 2 millions, and Australia 2.5 millions. France imported into India goods worth over £900,000 and the United States nearly £800,000. Of India's total imports; no less than 22 millions were of cotton yarn and manufactures, largely from Lancashire. The next largest items are,

sugar, nearly 4 millions; iron and steel over 3 millions; machinery and mill work 2 millions; and mineral oils 2.5 millions.

Of the exports from India, the United Kingdom took 23 millions, or one-fourth of India's total exports. Germany took 6.75 millions, France 6 millions, Belgium 3 millions, Austria 1.5 millions, Italy 2 millions, the United States 5.5 millions, Egypt 3.5 millions, China 11.75 millions, the Straits Settlements 7 millions, and Japan 4.5 millions. The largest exports were, rice and wheat, 11.5 millions, raw cotton 9.5 millions; cotton yarn and manufactures 8 millions; hides 5.5 millions; jute and jute manufactures 13.5 millions; seeds 11 millions; opium 5.5 millions; and tea 5.5 millions sterling.

Economic Condition of the People:– There was a pressing and influential demand in England for an inquiry into the economic condition of the people of India after the recent famines; but the Secretary of State resisted the demand and refused the inquiry. The latest inquiry of the nature was made fifteen years ago by Lord Dufferin's Government in 1888, but the results were never published, and were regarded as confidential. This concealment of facts does not appear to us to be a wise action; the alarming poverty and resourcelessness of the people of India are not a secret, and an evil is not remedied by being hidden from the eye. Large portions of the confidential reports of 1888 have, however, already been placed before the public: and there can be no harm, therefore, in referring to them briefly in the present chapter.

In the Province of Bombay it is denied that the greater portion of the population lives on insufficient food. But there are 'depressed classes' all over the Province, and some of them live below the poor standard of the Indian workman's life and earnings. In the Ratnagiri District, with its miserable soil and heavy payments for land, 'there was hardly a season in which this population did not endure without a murmur the hardships of a Deccan famine.' Land is less fertile in the Deccan than in Gujarat, and 'authorities are unanimous that many cultivators fail to get a year's supply from their land.' In the Karnatic also, 'the reporting authorities agree that there is a large number of

cultivators who do not get a full year's supply from their lands.' Even in the favored division of Gujarat, the cultivator gets only a six or nine months' supply from his field, and most of it goes to the money-lender as soon as the harvest is reaped. And 'some of the numerous deaths assigned to fever are caused by bad or insufficient clothing, food, and housing.'

In the Punjab the condition of the agriculturists and laborers is no better. In Delhi Division 'the diet is of a distinctly inferior class, even judged by the comparatively low standard of the country.' In Gurgaon District the standard of living is perilously low, herbs and berries are consumed for want of better food, and short food is the cause of migration. The extra Assistant Commissioner of Ferozepur reports that men in many villages do not get food for two meals in twenty-four hours. The Assistant Commissioner of Lahore reports that a considerable number of the people are underfed. Two Mahomedan officers of Rawalpindi Division tell us a still sadder story. One of them maintains that 10 percent of the Hindu and 20 percent of the Mahomedan population are weak and unhealthy from insufficient food; the other says that a great portion of the lower class of agriculturists belong to this category. 'The people of Hill Tracts in Hazara,' says Colonel Waterfield, C.S.I. 'whether agricultural or grazing, may, I think, generally be called a poor, ill-grown, and underfed-looking race.'

In the Central Provinces, we are told that, in Sagor, Ilamoh, Narsinghpur, Hoshangabad, Nimar, and Nagpur Districts, 'three-quarters of the tenants are reported to be in debt, and from the details which are given, it is evident that the position of a large proportion of them is one of hopeless insolvency.'

Province of Agra and Oudh:— The reports of this Province are more ample and more explicit. The Collector of Etawa writes: 'The landless laborer's condition must still be regarded as by no means all that could be desired. The united earnings of a man, his wife, and two children, cannot be put at more than 3 rupees (4s.) a month. When prices of food grains are low or moderate, work regular, and

the health of the household good, this income will enable the family to have one fairly good meal a day, to keep a thatched roof over their heads, and to buy cheap clothing, and occasionally a thin blanket.'

The Collector of Banda writes: 'A very large number of the lower classes of the population clearly demonstrate by the poorness of their physique that they are habitually half-starved, or have been in early years exposed to the severities and trials of a famine. And it will be remembered that if any young creature be starved while growing, no amount of subsequent fattening will make up for the injury to growth.'

The Collector of Ghazipur writes: 'As a rule, a very large proportion of the agriculturists in a village are in debt.'

The Commissioner of Fyzabad quotes Mr. Bennett's statement that, 'It is not till he has gone into these subjects in detail that a man can fully appreciate how terribly thin the line is which divides large masses of people from absolute nakedness and starvation.' And the Commissioner adds: 'I believe this remark is true of every district of Oudh, the difference between them consisting in the greater or smaller extent of the always large proportion which is permanently in this depressed and dangerous condition.'

The same Commissioner wrote in the Pioneer that, 'It has been calculated that about 60 percent of the entire native population are sunk in such abject poverty that, unless the small earnings of child-labor are added to the small general stock by which the family is kept alive, some members of the family would starve.' As regards the impression that the greater portion of the people of India suffered from a daily insufficiency of food, he writes: 'The impression is perfectly true as regards a varying, but always considerable part of the year, in the greater part of India.'

'Hunger,' writes the Deputy Commissioner of Rai Bareili, 'as already remarked, is very much a matter of habit; and people who have felt the pinch of famine as nearly all the poorer households must have felt it – get into the way of eating less than wealthier families.'"²

C. SOME STATISTICAL INFORMATION REVEALING THE EXTENT OF THE BRITISH EXPLOITATION OF INDIA AND THE GROWTH OF BRITAIN AT THE EXPENSE OF INDIA

The British Empire will be judged by history as the most oppressive, repressive and cruel institutions in the modern times. The Empire took out all the prosperity out of the country. The manufactures lost their industries, the cultivators were grounded down by a heavy and variable taxation, the revenues of the country were to large extent diverted to England and that the man made famines swept away millions of population. The figure in the following table clearly shows the extent of British exploitation of India and the growth of Britain at the expense of India.

India's and United Kingdom's GDP from 0-1998 A.D. (million 1990 international \$)

	0	1000	1500	1600	1700	1820	1870	1913	1950	1973	1998
United Kingdom			2,815	6,007	10,709	36,232	100,179	224,628	547,850	675,941	1,108,568
India	33,750	33,750	60,500	74,250	80,750	111,417	134,882	204,241	222,222	494,832	1,702,712

Share of India's and United Kingdom GDP, 0-1998 A.D.(per cent of world total)

	0	1000	1500	1600	1700	1820	1870	1913	1950	1973	1998
United Kingdom			1.1	1.8	2.9	5.2	9.1	8.3	6.5	4.2	3.3
India	32.9	28.9	24.5	22.6	24.4	16.0	12.3	7.6	4.2	3.1	5.0

United Kingdom and India's per Capita, 0-1998 A.D. (1990 international \$)

	0	1000	1500	1600	1700	1820	1870	1913	1950	1973	1998
United Kingdom			714	974	1,250	1,707	3,191	4,921	6,907	12,022	18,714
India	450	450	550	550	550	533	533	673	619	853	1,746

Source: Angus Maddison, The World Economy: Historical Statistics, pp. 261-65 and 115, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2003

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THE GREATNESS OF INDIA AND ITS CULTURE (19)

3. THE ANCIENT INDIAN SPIRIT, ITS FOUR POWERS AND THE SECRET OF ITS GREATNESS – THE ARYAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

III. THE ARYAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

“What was the secret of that gigantic intellectuality, spirituality and superhuman moral force which we see pulsating in the Ramayana and Mahabharata, in the ancient philosophy, in the supreme poetry, art, sculpture and architecture of India? What was at the basis of the incomparable public works and engineering achievements, the opulent and exquisite industries, the great triumphs of science, scholarship, jurisprudence, logic, metaphysics, the unique social structure? What supported the heroism and self-abandonment of the Kshatriya, the Sikh and the Rajput, the unconquerable national vitality and endurance? What was it that stood behind that civilisation second to none in the massiveness of its outlines or the perfection of its details? Without a great and unique discipline involving a perfect education of soul and mind, a result so immense and persistent would have been impossible. It would be an error to look for the secret of Aryan success in the details of the instruction given in the old ashrams and universities so far as they have come down to us. We must know what was the principle and basis on which the details were founded. We shall find the secret of their success in a profound knowledge of human psychology and its subtle application to the methods of intellectual training and instruction.”¹

A. *The Basis – the Discipline of Brahmacharya*

“At the basis of the old Aryan system was the all-important discipline of Brahmacharya. The first necessity for the building up of a great intellectual superstructure is to provide a foundation strong enough to bear it. Those systems of education which start from an insufficient knowledge of man, think they have provided a satisfactory

foundation when they have supplied the student with a large or well-selected mass of information on the various subjects which comprise the best part of human culture at the time. The school gives the materials, it is for the student to use them, – this is the formula. But the error here is fundamental. Information cannot be the foundation of intelligence, it can only be part of the material out of which the knower builds knowledge, the starting-point, the nucleus of fresh discovery and enlarged creation. **An education that confines itself to imparting knowledge, is no education.** The various faculties of memory, judgment, imagination, perception, reasoning, which build the edifice of thought and knowledge for the knower, must not only be equipped with their fit and sufficient tools and materials, but trained to bring fresh materials and use more skilfully those of which they are in possession. And the foundation of the structure they have to build, can only be the provision of a fund of force and energy sufficient to bear the demands of a continually growing activity of the memory, judgment and creative power. Where is that energy to be found?

The ancient Aryans knew that man was not separate from the universe, but only a homogeneous part of it, as a wave is part of the ocean. An infinite energy, Prakriti, Maya or Shakti, pervades the world, pours itself into every name and form, and the clod, the plant, the insect, the animal, the man are, in their phenomenal existence, merely more or less efficient *dhāras* of this Energy. We are each of us a dynamo into which waves of that energy have been generated and stored, and are being perpetually conserved, used up and replenished. The same force which moves in the star and the planet, moves in us, and all our thought and action are merely its play and born of the complexity of its functionings. There are processes by which man can increase his capacity as an *dhāra*. There are other processes by which he can clear of obstructions the channel of communication between himself and the universal energy and bring greater and greater stores of it pouring into his soul and brain and body. This continual improvement of the *dhāra* and increase in quantity and complexity of action of the informing energy, is the whole aim of evolution. When that energy is the highest in kind and the fullest in

amount of which the human *dhara* is capable, and the *dhara* itself is trained utterly to bear the inrush and play of the energy, then is a man *siddha*, the fulfilled or perfect man, his evolution is over and he has completed in the individual that utmost development which the mass of humanity is labouring towards through the ages.

If this theory be correct, the energy at the basis of the operation of intelligence must be in ourselves and it must be capable of greater expansion and richer use to an extent practically unlimited. And this also must be a sound principle, that the more we can increase and enrich the energy, the greater will be the potential range, power and activity of the functions of our mind and the consequent vigour of our intellectuality and the greatness of our achievement. This was the first principle on which the ancient Aryans based their education and one of the chief processes which they used for the increased storage of energy, was the practice of Brahmacharya.”²

B. The Process – the Conversion of the Retas into Ojas

“THE PRACTICE of Brahmacharya is the first and most necessary condition of increasing the force within and turning it to such uses as may benefit the possessor or mankind. All human energy has a physical basis. The mistake made by European materialism is to suppose the basis to be everything and confuse it with the source. The source of life and energy is not material but spiritual, but the basis, the foundation on which the life and energy stand and work, is physical. The ancient Hindus clearly recognised this distinction between *akra* and *prati*, the north pole and the south pole of being. Earth or gross matter is the *prati*, Brahman or spirit is the *akra*. To raise up the physical to the spiritual is Brahmacharya, for by the meeting of the two the energy which starts from one and produces the other is enhanced and fulfils itself.

This is the metaphysical theory. The application depends on a right understanding of the physical and psychological conformation of the human receptacle of energy. The fundamental physical unit is the *retas*, in which the *tejas*, the heat and light and electricity in a

man, is involved and hidden. All energy is latent in the *retas*. This energy may be either expended physically or conserved. **All passion, lust, desire wastes the energy by pouring it, either in the gross form or a sublimated subtler form, out of the body. Immorality in act throws it out in the gross form; immorality of thought in the subtle form. In either case there is waste, and unchastity is of the mind and speech as well as of the body. On the other hand, all self-control conserves the energy in the *retas*, and conservation always brings with it increase.** But the needs of the physical body are limited and the excess of energy must create a surplus which has to turn itself to some use other than the physical. According to the ancient theory *retas* is *jala* or water, full of light and heat and electricity, in one word, of *tejas*. The excess of the *retas* turns first into heat or *tapas* which stimulates the whole system, and it is for this reason that all forms of self-control and austerity are called *tapas* or *tapasya*, because they generate the heat or stimulus which is a source of powerful action and success; secondly, it turns to *tejas* proper, light, the energy which is at the source of all knowledge; thirdly, it turns to *vidyut* or electricity, which is at the basis of all forceful action whether intellectual or physical. In the *vidyut* again is involved the *ojas*, or *prāṇākti*, the primal energy which proceeds from ether. The *retas* refining from *jala* to *tapas*, *tejas* and *vidyut* and from *vidyut* to *ojas*, fills the system with physical strength, energy and brain-power and in its last form of *ojas* rises to the brain and informs it with that primal energy which is the most refined form of matter and nearest to spirit. It is *ojas* that creates a spiritual force or *śrīya*, by which a man attains to spiritual knowledge, spiritual love and faith, spiritual strength. It follows that **the more we can by Brahmacharya increase the store of *tapas*, *tejas*, *vidyut* and *ojas*, the more we shall fill ourselves with utter energy for the works of the body, heart, mind and spirit.**"³

C. The Three Gunas and the Development of Sattva

"This view of the human soul was not the whole of the

knowledge on which ancient Hinduism based its educational discipline. In addition it had the view that all knowledge is within and has to be evoked by education rather than instilled from outside. The constitution of man consists of three principles of nature *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, the comprehensive, active and passive elements of universal action, which, in one of their thousand fold aspects, manifest as knowledge, passion and ignorance. *Tamas* is a constitutional dullness or passivity which obscures the knowledge within and creates ignorance, mental inertia, slowness, forgetfulness, disinclination to study, inability to grasp and distinguish. *Rajas* is an undisciplined activity which obscures knowledge by passion, attachment, prejudice, predilection and wrong ideas. *Sattva* is an illumination which reveals the hidden knowledge and brings it to the surface where the observation can grasp and the memory record it. This conception of the constitution of the knowing faculty made the removal of *tamas*, the disciplining of *rajas* and the awakening of *sattva* the main problem of the teacher. He had to train the student to be receptive of illumination from within. The disciplining of *rajas* was effected by a strict moral discipline which induced a calm, clear, receptive state of mind free from intellectual self-will and pride and the obscuration of passion, – the famous discipline of the *brahmacharin* which was the foundation of Aryan culture and Aryan morals; and the interference of wrong ideas was sought to be removed by strict mental submission to the teacher during the receptive period, when the body of ascertained knowledge or right ideas already in man's possession was explained to him and committed to memory. The removal of *tamas* was effected by the discipline of moral purity, which awakened the energy of *tejas* and electricity in the system and by the power of *tapasya* trained it to be a reservoir of mental force and clarity. The awakening of illumination was actively effected by the triple method of repetition, meditation and discussion. *Āvṛtti* or repetition was meant to fill the recording part of the mind with the *śabda* or word, so that the *artha* or meaning might of itself rise from within. Needless to say, a mechanical repetition was not likely to produce this effect. There must be that clear still receptivity and that waiting upon the

word or thing with the contemplative part of the mind which is what the ancient Indians meant by *dhyāna* or meditation. All of us have felt, when studying a language, difficulties which seemed insoluble while grappling with a text, suddenly melt away and a clear understanding arise without assistance from book or teacher after putting away the book from our mind for a brief period. Many of us have experienced also, the strangeness of taking up a language or subject, after a brief discontinuance, to find that we understand it much better than when we took it up, know the meanings of words we had never met with before and can explain sentences which, before we discontinued the study, would have baffled our understanding. This is because the *jñātā* or knower within has had his attention called to the subject and has been busy in the interval drawing upon the source of knowledge within in connection with it. This experience is only possible to those whose sattwic or illuminative element has been powerfully aroused or consciously or unconsciously trained to action by the habit of intellectual clarity and deep study. The highest reach of the sattwic development is when one can dispense often or habitually with outside aids, the teacher or the text book, grammar and dictionary and learn a subject largely or wholly from within. But this is only possible to the Yogin by a successful prosecution of the discipline of Yoga.”⁴

D. The Achievements of the Aryan System

“WE HAVE stated, as succinctly as is consistent with clearness, the main psychological principles on which the ancient Indians based their scheme of education. By the training of Brahmacharya they placed all the energy of which the system was capable and which could be spared from bodily functions, at the service of the brain. In this way they not only strengthened the *medhā* or grasping power, the *dhī* or subtlety and swiftness of thought conception, the memory and the creative intellectual force, making the triple force of memory, invention, judgment comprehensive and analytic, but they greatly enlarged the range, no less than the intensity, of the absorbing, storing

and generative mental activities. Hence those astonishing feats of memory, various comprehension and versatility of creative work of which only a few extraordinary intellects have been capable in Occidental history, but which in ancient India were common and usual. Mr. Gladstone was considered to be the possessor of an astonishing memory because he could repeat the whole of Homer's Iliad, beginning from any passage suggested to him and flowing on as long as required; but to a Brahmin of the old times this would have been a proof of a capacity neither unusual nor astonishing, but rather, petty and limited. The many-sidedness of an Eratosthenes or the range of a Herbert Spencer have created in Europe admiring or astonished comment; but the universality of the ordinary curriculum in ancient India was for every student and not for the exceptional few, and it implied, not a tasting of many subjects after the modern plan, but the thorough mastery of all. The original achievement of a Kalidasa accomplishing the highest in every line of poetic creation is so incredible to the European mind that it has been sought to cleave that mighty master of harmonies into a committee of three. Yet it is paralleled by the accomplishment in philosophy of Shankara in a short life of thirty-two years and dwarfed by the universal mastery of all possible spiritual knowledge and experience of Sri Ramakrishna in our own era. These instances are not so common as the others, because pure creative genius is not common; but in Europe they are, with a single modern exception, non-existent. The highest creative intellects in Europe have achieved sovereignty by limitation, by striving to excel only in one field of a single intellectual province or at most in two; when they have been versatile it has been by sacrificing height to breadth. But in India it is the greatest who have been the most versatile and passed from one field of achievement to another without sacrificing an inch of their height or an iota of their creative intensity, easily, unfalteringly, with an assured mastery. This easy and unfailing illumination crowning the unfailing energy created by Brahmacharya was due to the discipline which developed *sattva* or inner illumination. This illumination makes the acquisition of knowledge and all other

intellectual operations easy, spontaneous, swift, decisive and comparatively unfatiguing to body or brain. In these two things lies the secret of Aryan intellectual achievement. Brahmacharya and sattwic development created the brain of India: it was perfected by Yoga.”⁵

References:

1. **Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo**, Vol.1, p.369, *Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry*
2. *Ibid.*, pp.369-71
3. *Ibid.*, pp.372-73
4. *Ibid.*, pp.373-75
5. *Ibid.*, pp.376-77

BANDE MATARAM

“... supreme service of Bankim to his nation was that he gave us the vision of our Mother. ... It is not till the motherland reveals herself to the eye of the mind as something more than a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, it is not till she takes shape as a great Divine and Maternal Power in a form of beauty that can dominate the mind and seize the heart that ... the patriotism that works miracles and saves a doomed nation is born.

It was thirty-two years ago that Bankim wrote his great song and few listened; but in a sudden moment of awakening from long delusions the people of Bengal looked round for the truth and in a fated moment somebody sang *Bande Mataram*. The *mantra* had been given and in a single day a whole people had been converted to the religion of patriotism. The Mother had revealed herself.”

– Sri Aurobindo

(Bande Mataram, April 16, 1907)