

The Resurgent India

A Monthly National Review

April 2023



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

– The Mother

Year 14

Issue 1

The Resurgent India English monthly published and printed by Smt. Suman Sharma on behalf of The Resurgent India Trust Published at C/o J. N. Socketed Cement Pipes Pvt. Ltd., Village Bhamraula Post Bagwara, Kichha Road, Rudrapur (U.S Nagar)
email: sadlecjnn@gmail.com, info@resurgentindia.org, URL : www.resurgentindia.org

Printed at : Priyanka Printing Press, Hotel Krish Building, Janta Inter College Road, Udham Nagar, Rudrapur, Uttarakhand

Editor : Ms. Garima Sharma, B-45, Batra Colony, Village Bharatpur, P.O. Kaushal Ganj, Bilaspur Distt. Rampur (U.P)

THE RESURGENT INDIA

A Monthly National Review

March 2023



SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

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

Year 14

Issue 1

CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS	6
Developments in Russia and Ukraine	6
Science and Technology Update	8
Rise of Ultraconservative Islam in Indonesia.....	9
Civil Strife in Sudan.....	10
Legal Wrangle Over Same-Sex Marriages	12
The Greatness of India and Its Culture (37)	16
7. Indian Religion – The Sanatana Dharma.....	16
I. Hinduism – the Sanatana Dharma	16
II. The Three Fundamentals of Hinduism	19
III. Hinduism – the Future World Religion	22
A. The Superficial or Narrow Hinduism	22
B. The True or Wider Hinduism	23
IV. Hinduism – the Religion of Vedanta.....	24

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, Vol. 13, pp. 124-25)

HIGHLIGHTS

DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Even as the war between Russia and Ukraine rages on, the likelihood of a Ukrainian counter-attack in the first week of May is now certain, and it is also clear – from Russian evacuations near Kherson – that Russia is dreading it. This is notwithstanding Russia's dismissal of leaked Pentagon documents which, among other aspects, highlighted Ukraine's rigorous level of preparedness for its summer counter-offensive. As it is, Russia is trying to hold onto Bakhmut at a great cost to itself and will not be able to sustain its occupation much longer. The inability of Russia to sustain the war effort is visible in its plans to impose a mobilization tax on the profits earned by its big corporates.

Internally, Russia continues to be riven by discord. It is widely believed that beyond the numerical approval ratings for the regime within Russia – which are just an eyewash – the reality is that massive civil discontent is widely prevalent across Russia. This civil discontent can, it is widely believed, snowball into an open civil strife in the times to come. Discontent is perceived across two lines viz. between people who are beneficiaries of the war and those are at the losing end because of it, and, between Russian centre and the regions. The former will become more visible as Russia struggles to fund its military effort at an increasing pace at the cost of other economic sectors which may require finances and directly affect the people. The latter is already much more pronounced.

Recent reports from North Caucasus reveal how secessionist, anti-Moscow sentiment is once again on the rise

in the region, directly connected to Russia's war in Ukraine which has shown Russia in a poor light and reinforced the idea that it is not, after all, invincible. Weapons have started flooding the region (as seen through the unearthing of underground arms depots), even as there has been a drawing down of Russian forces in the region to beef up the military numbers for the war with Ukraine.

On the diplomatic front, central and eastern Europe is actively developing avenues to find alternatives to reliance on Russia in any form, especially where it concerns their energy security. In recent times, Poland and Czechia have signed two agreements on natural gas projects viz. an interconnector gas pipeline ("Stork II") between the two countries, and Czech investment in an LNG import terminal in Poland. In particular, Poland is rapidly consolidating itself as a bulwark against Russia, having emerged as the latter's key nemesis. Not only has Poland been expanding gas pipelines with its various other neighbouring countries (such as Lithuania and Slovakia) since 2022 but has also dramatically increased its defence spending as a percentage of GDP, compared to other NATO countries. This year, Poland's defence spending is expected to double to almost 4% of its GDP.

Outside of Europe, Russia is struggling to hold onto its power through its now-common modus operandi viz. by spreading disinformation campaigns and through cyber-attacks. This is visible in Russian efforts in Latin America where it seems to have cultivated positive relationships with communist dictatorships like Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. In Venezuela, the government has expanded military and intelligence cooperation with Russia, with Wagner Group now being deployed in there. In Nicaragua, the Ortega regime, with Russian

assistance, is building a comprehensive dictatorship, taking Russian aid in cyber-intelligence, setting up a cadre of pro-Russian intelligence officers and allowing Russian forces to be stationed there. In Cuba, the emulation of Russia has reached the levels of Castro regime, with both sides discussing economic plans for Cuba.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

New developments in the field of science and technology have become an almost daily feature. And amongst these new developments, Artificial Intelligence (AI) – that seamless and apparently endless field of possibilities – has appeared as a regular frontier, as the interactions between humans and AI increase and become more commonplace. The advances in this field are occurring in leaps and bounds, with endless possibilities and potentialities opening before mankind.

From the use of AI in warfare and national security to its mainstreaming into the details of human lives, the field has grown rapidly in the last few years. Presently, the field is riven by debate over the impact AI is having on our daily lives. This is especially so about generative language AI software such as Chat GPT, and, its successor, Auto GPT. While Chat GPT is causing a disruption across all sectors, including areas of intellectual and creative activity like education, research, law etc., another such AI-powered software, Auto GPT, can perform daily tasks and multiple functions for users, from giving ideas to managing business accounts to new creative functions. The development of such AI-enabled applications and the swiftness with which they are becoming a part of daily lives of people have raised concerns about whether such AI will replace humans entirely in the near and far future.

At the present moment, AI is assisting us, but it is no longer difficult to envisage a future where the human and AI realms become indistinguishable; for instance, through insertion of chips inside human bodies or through potential technologies like mind-scanning. The possibilities are endless. Already, the technology to integrate AI and brain-scans in order to enable machines to read minds is officially here. The claim is that it can help people who cannot speak to communicate. However, at the same time, this technology has also raised concerns that no mental privacy will be left. Mind reading will now be enabled through simple, commonplace MRI and brain scans.

The ability of AI to bring massive, disruptive changes to human lives is now unfolding to such an extent that many AI creators and founders have cautioned against the rapid rise of AI and its dangerous consequences. However, the march that has begun is unlikely to slow down.

RISE OF ULTRACONSERVATIVE ISLAM IN INDONESIA

A new trend is visible in Indonesian Islam in the form of the rise of an ultraconservative Islamic radical movement known as Hijrah. This new brand of Islam, powered by radical Wahhabi roots, mobilizes modern audience through conservatism. It appeals to a new generation of youth through social media, seeking to either convert them to Islam or re-orient their moderate beliefs in a new, hardline direction. It has mainly spread, in recent times, through the power of the Internet and social media, and especially via celebrities.

The fast spread of this new form of Islam has been viewed as a threat and a concern by the Indonesian authorities, who

fear that its popularity will make Indonesia a much more radicalized country, diluting its earlier brand of secularism and moderate Islam. Already the movement has gathered millions of followers and is getting strong. It led a movement against building of Christian churches. The emergence of this movement has happened alongside the rise of other radical groups in Indonesia, such as Hizbut Tahrir and the Islamic Defenders Front, which have called for a Muslim caliphate in Indonesia, and were banned by the government.

The development brings to the forefront how Islamic religious hardliners are using the power of technology to spread themselves. The fact that it is having an impact on the youth is particularly concerning. The trend also reflects Islamization happening across Indo-Pacific countries, which stands in contrast to the attempts to dilute Islamic extremism in Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia.

CIVIL STRIFE IN SUDAN

The crisis in Sudan has rapidly transformed from being a power struggle between two rival domestic factions to a full-blown civil strife situation. The present situation is the result of an aborted transition to democracy in the country in 2019 after the fall of the 30-year dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir. In the aftermath of the fall of the dictatorship in 2019, a coalition government of leaders of Sudanese army and paramilitary forces (viz. the Rapid Support Forces or RSF) was formed, in order to ease the country into a democratic transition. The army is led by al-Burhan and the paramilitary forces are led by Md. Hamdan Dagolo, also called Hemeti. However, this transition never came to be.

The present crisis is the result of personal political rivalry between the two factions over who will take control of the country, made worse by the complicity of other regional powers to dictate the political equations in resource-rich Sudan. While the complicity of other countries is not very visible, yet skeletons have rolled out of the closet in recent days, with the involvement of Russia's private militia, the Wagner Group, coming to light, for exploiting resource-rich Sudan and funneling the earnings to carry on the war in Ukraine, and of Egypt supporting the Sudanese army led by al-Burhan. Egypt's involvement came to light after its soldiers in Sudan were declared as being taken hostage by Hemeti's RSF.

Egypt's main insecurity stemmed from the following factors:

First was the fact that Russia's Wagner's support to RSF – a paramilitary force outside of conventional/national military leadership – might give a foreign power (Russia) a foothold in Sudan, right in Egypt's backyard. The deal between Wagner and RSF involved Wagner's presence and military access to Port Sudan.

Second, Egypt also is seen as wanting to establish its own military presence in Sudan – for which it had already stationed its forces long before the present conflict erupted – and solicit Sudan's support in its dispute with Ethiopia over the latter's construction of a dam that might block the flow of Nile river.

Besides Egypt, the stakes of other regional powers continue to be minimal as of now. UAE and Saudi Arabia initially had close ties with Hemeti's RSF and the latter's soldiers were even sent to Yemen to fight alongside Saudi-UAE coalition. However, in recent years, with UAE and Saudi Arabia attempting to moderate their interventionism across the Middle-east, the

two regional powers have tried to strike a balanced relationship between both Hemeti and al-Burhan. The present civil strife, if it snowballs into a full-blown civil war, will not permit such delicate balancing to sustain for much longer, thereby forcing the regional powers as well as, perhaps, the West to intervene to force a resolution. For, instability in Sudan will directly threaten Saudi Arabia (which shares a long coastal border with the country) and cause regional instability as well.

LEGAL WRANGLE OVER SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

The debates over gender identities, homosexuality and same sex marriages appear to have reached a peak in the present times. Barely five years ago, India was debating whether homosexuality should be decriminalized. Having achieved its decriminalization, the debate has now moved to the rights of the homosexual people, in particular the demand for legalizing same sex marriages. This is not surprising and such demands were bound to follow decriminalization. However, what is surprising is how precariously close we are to destabilizing and uprooting our entire cultural edifice, sacrificing it at the altar of Western fads.

Despite the fact that no political party has lent support to this cause, religious groups spanning Hinduism, Christianity and Islam have staunchly opposed it, and the government has taken a firm line against legalization of same sex marriages, the homosexual community has found an ally in the country's Supreme Court. It appears that the present Chief Justice of India has placed this issue on a priority, ignoring thousands of other serious issues which may merit judicial scrutiny.

As a result, the Supreme Court is presently holding regular – near daily hearings – on this matter, on the basis of petitions filed in November 2022. These petitions challenged the constitutionality of the Special Marriages Act (1954) on the ground that it only recognizes marriages between male and female only, thereby discriminating against same-sex couples by denying them matrimonial benefits such as adoption, surrogacy, employment and retirement benefits. They further took the reference of the past judgements that decriminalized homosexuality (NALSA judgement of 2014, and, Navtej Singh Johar judgement of 2018) and argued that disallowing legal recognition of same sex marriages is against the Fundamental Rights of equality, freedom of expression and living with dignity.

The Supreme Court bench decided that, for now, it will limit itself to examining the validity of the Special Marriages Act (1954) and not touch upon any of the religious personal laws. The manner in which the Court hearings have proceeded has come as a jolt to the nation. The statements being made by the judges, especially the CJI, border on absurd intellectuality. For instance, on the first day of hearing, in response to the argument of the government that marriage, under Special Marriages Act (1954), was one between a biological man and a biological woman, the CJI was quick to declare that man and woman cannot be defined on the basis of biology and that their meaning went beyond the possession of mere reproductive organs.

In the Court, the government side has emphasized on the facts that:

First, the State has compelling interest to regulate the

institution of marriage, as it is not only between two individuals, but also has wider social impacts, related to childcare, alimony and a host of other legal rights. In India, marriages between heterosexual couples have been recognized for thousands of years. Legalization of same sex marriages, it was argued, would destroy the very basis of the State and subvert the cultural principles on which the society has been based.

Legalization of such marriages would mean that homosexual couples would not only claim a host of civil and economic rights, they would also be able to adopt children, who would not only become unwilling victims of such an enterprise without their consent, but this will further perpetuate such culture in society. Furthermore, legalizing same sex marriages would complicate a host of other laws, such as those related to divorce, rape etc. where gender binary is in-built.

The government further quoted a 2010 decision of the European Court of Human Rights on the same issue which said that states cannot be compelled to accept same sex marriages and that each country has different, deep-rooted social and cultural conditions which must be addressed by national law.

Second, the government Solicitor General also argued that laws could not be changed without achieving social acceptance and, therefore, Parliament was the institution which reflected the will of the people and was eligible to make changes to laws. The government further argued that if the Supreme Court tried to amend or re-write the Special Marriages Act (1954) by itself, it would violate the separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary and, therefore, violate the basic structure of the Constitution. Therefore, such issues should be left to Parliament.

Besides these broad arguments, many other arguments have taken place on both sides inside the Courtroom. The government has even given a concession of sorts by agreeing to form a committee, chaired by a cabinet minister, to investigate the grievances of this community. Even this has been mocked by the opposing side as merely an administrative measure without the guarantee of a legal right. The hearings are set to continue in the days and weeks to come. They have brought home to us the destruction that can potentially be wrought on Indian society if same sex marriages were indeed legalized.

What these hearings have done is to lay open before us the extent to which our society has been crippled due to our collective incapacity to stand up for ourselves. More than a century ago, Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda spoke about the Aryan spirit and spiritual heritage of which we are the inheritors. Swami Vivekananda had also said that our surest route to self-destruction would be to abandon our spirituality to go after the materialistic civilization of the West. The fad for marriage equality is one such instance.

In a materialistic society whose principle is the endless satisfaction of desires and their justification, the scope for ever increasing perversion and twisted processes is, no matter how surprising, only to be expected. It is one of the first psychological instincts of the Western mind that as long as a desire can be reasonably couched and justified, it has to be satisfied and acted upon. In India, the impulse had been the opposite. But the onslaught of Western education and liberalization has perverted our psychology as well, and the present debate is a symptom of such a malaise.

THE GREATNESS OF INDIA AND ITS CULTURE (37)

(Continued from the September 2019 Issue)

7. INDIAN RELIGION – THE SANATANA DHARMA

“There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the sanatana dharma, the eternal religion.”¹

The eternal religion is to realise God in our inner life and our outer existence, in society no less than in the individual. It is the basis, permanent and always inherent in India, of the shifting mutable and multiform thing we call Hinduism.

I. Hinduism – the Sanatana Dharma

“...the foundations of Hinduism are truth and manhood, esha dharmah sanatanah. Hinduism is no sect or dogmatic creed, no bundle of formulas, no set of social rules, but a mighty, eternal and universal truth. It has learned the secret of preparing man’s soul for the divine consummation of identity with the infinite existence of God; rules of life and formulas of belief are only sacred and useful when they help that great preparation.”²

“The religious culture which now goes by the name of Hinduism not only fulfilled this purpose, but, unlike certain credal religions, it knew its purpose. **It gave itself no name, because it set itself no sectarian limits; it claimed no**

universal **adhesion**, **asserted** **no** **sole** **infallible** **dogma**, **set** **up** **no** **single** **narrow** **path** **or** **gate** **of** **salvation**; **it** **was** **less** **a** **creed** **or** **cult** **than** **a** **continuously** **enlarging** **tradition** **of** **the** **Godward** **endeavour** **of** **the** **human** **spirit**. **An** **immense** **many-sided** **many-staged** **provision** **for** **a** **spiritual** **self-building** **and** **self-finding**, **it** **had** **some** **right** **to** **speak** **of** **itself** **by** **the** **only** **name** **it** **knew**, **the** **eternal** **religion**, *sanātana dharma*. It is only if we have a just and right appreciation of this sense and spirit of Indian religion that we can come to an understanding of the true sense and spirit of Indian culture.

Now just here is the first baffling difficulty over which the European mind stumbles; for it finds itself unable to make out what Hindu religion is. Where, it asks, is its soul? where is its mind and fixed thought? where is the form of its body? How can there be a religion which has no rigid dogmas demanding belief on pain of eternal damnation, no theological postulates, even no fixed theology, no credo distinguishing it from antagonistic or rival religions? How can there be a religion which has no papal head, no governing ecclesiastic body, no church, chapel or congregational system, no binding religious form of any kind obligatory on all its adherents, no one administration and discipline? For the Hindu priests are mere ceremonial officiants without any ecclesiastical authority or disciplinary powers and the Pundits are mere interpreters of the Shastra, not the lawgivers of the religion or its rulers. How again can Hinduism be called a religion when it admits all beliefs, allowing even a kind of high-reaching atheism and agnosticism and permits all possible spiritual experiences, all kinds of religious adventures?"³

“Indian religion founded itself on the conception of a timeless, nameless and formless Supreme, but it did not feel called upon, like the narrower and more ignorant monotheisms of the younger races, to deny or abolish all intermediary forms and names and powers and personalities of the Eternal and Infinite. A colourless monism or a pale vague transcendental Theism was not its beginning, its middle and its end. The one Godhead is worshipped as the All, for all in the universe is he or made out of his being or his nature. But Indian religion is not therefore pantheism; for beyond this universality it recognises the supracosmic Eternal. Indian polytheism is not the popular polytheism of ancient Europe; for here the worshipper of many gods still knows that all his divinities are forms, names, personalities and powers of the One; his gods proceed from the one Purusha, his goddesses are energies of the one divine Force. Those ways of Indian cult which most resemble a popular form of Theism, are still something more; for they do not exclude, but admit the many aspects of God. Indian image-worship is not the idolatry of a barbaric or undeveloped mind; for even the most ignorant know that the image is a symbol and support and can throw it away when its use is over. The later religious forms which most felt the impress of the Islamic idea, like Nanak’s worship of the timeless One, Akala, and the reforming creeds of today, born under the influence of the West, yet draw away from the limitations of Western or Semitic monotheism. Irresistibly they turn from these infantile conceptions towards the fathomless truth of Vedanta. The divine Personality of God and his human relations with man are strongly stressed by Vaishnavism and Shaivism as the most dynamic Truth; but that is not the

whole of these religions, and this divine Personality is not the limited magnified-human personal God of the West. **Indian religion cannot be described by any of the definitions known to the occidental intelligence. In its totality it has been a free and tolerant synthesis of all spiritual worship and experience. Observing the one Truth from all its many sides, it shut out none. It gave itself no specific name and bound itself by no limiting distinction.** Allowing separative designations for its constituting cults and divisions, it remained itself nameless, formless, universal, infinite, like the Brahman of its agelong seeking. Although strikingly distinguished from other creeds by its traditional scriptures, cults and symbols, it is not in its essential character a credal religion at all but a vast and many-sided, an always unifying and always progressive and self-enlarging system of spiritual culture.*”⁴

II. The Three Fundamentals of Hinduism

“...if we are asked, “But after all what is Hinduism, what does it teach, what does it practise, what are its common factors?” we can answer that **Indian religion is founded upon three basic ideas or rather three fundamentals of a highest and widest spiritual experience. First comes the idea of the One Existence of the Veda to whom sages give different names,** the One without a

* The only religion that India has apparently rejected in the end, is Buddhism; but in fact this appearance is a historical error. Buddhism lost its separative force, because its spiritual substance, as opposed to its credal parts, was absorbed by the religious mind of Hindu India. Even so, it survived in the North and was exterminated not by Shankaracharya or another, but by the invading force of Islam.

second of the Upanishads who is all that is and beyond all that is, the Permanent of the Buddhists, the Absolute of the Illusionists, the supreme God or Purusha of the Theists who holds in his power the soul and Nature, – in a word the Eternal, the Infinite. This is the first common foundation; but it can be and is expressed in an endless variety of formulas by the human intelligence. To discover and closely approach and enter into whatever kind or degree of unity with this Permanent, this Infinite, this Eternal, is the highest height and last effort of its spiritual experience. That is the first universal *credo* of the religious mind of India.

Admit in whatever formula this foundation, follow this great spiritual aim by one of the thousand paths recognised in India or even any new path which branches off from them and you are at the core of the religion. For **its second basic idea is the manifold way of man's approach to the Eternal and Infinite. The Infinite is full of many infinities and each of these infinities is itself the very Eternal. And here in the limitations of the cosmos God manifests himself and fulfils himself in the world in many ways, but each is the way of the Eternal.** For in each finite we can discover and through all things as his forms and symbols we can approach the Infinite; all cosmic powers are manifestations, all forces are forces of the One. The gods behind the workings of Nature are to be seen and adored as powers, names and personalities of the one Godhead. An infinite Conscious-Force, executive Energy, Will or Law, Maya, Prakriti, Shakti or Karma, is behind all happenings, whether to us they seem good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable, fortunate or adverse. The Infinite creates and is Brahma; it preserves and is Vishnu; it destroys or

takes to itself and is Rudra or Shiva. The supreme Energy beneficent in upholding and protection is or else formulates itself as the Mother of the worlds, Luxmi or Durga. Or beneficent even in the mask of destruction, it is Chandi or it is Kali, the dark Mother. The One Godhead manifests himself in the form of his qualities in various names and godheads. The God of divine love of the Vaishnava, the God of divine power of the Shakta appear as two different godheads; but in truth they are the one infinite Deity in different figures.* One may approach the Supreme through any of these names and forms, with knowledge or in ignorance; for through them and beyond them we can proceed at last to the supreme experience.

One thing however has to be noted that while many modernised Indian religionists tend, by way of an intellectual compromise with modern materialistic rationalism, to explain away these things as symbols, the ancient Indian religious mentality saw them not only as symbols but as world-realities, – even if to the Illusionist realities only of the world of Maya. For between the highest unimaginable Existence and our material way of being the spiritual and psychic knowledge of India did not fix a gulf as between two unrelated opposites. It was aware of other psychological planes of consciousness and experience and the truths of these supraphysical planes were no less real to it than the outward truths of the material universe. Man approaches God at first according to his

* This explanation of Indian polytheism is not a modern invention created to meet Western reproaches; it is to be found explicitly stated in the Gita; it is, still earlier, the sense of the Upanishads; it was clearly stated in so many words in the first ancient days by the “primitive” poets (in truth the profound mystics) of the Veda.

psychological nature and his capacity for deeper experience, *svabhāva*, *adhikāra*. The level of Truth, the plane of consciousness he can reach is determined by his inner evolutionary stage. Thence comes the variety of religious cult, but its data are not imaginary structures, inventions of priests or poets, but truths of a supraphysical existence intermediate between the consciousness of the physical world and the ineffable superconscience of the Absolute.

The third idea of strongest consequence at the base of Indian religion is the most dynamic for the inner spiritual life. It is that while the Supreme or the Divine can be approached through a universal consciousness and by piercing through all inner and outer Nature, **That or He can be met by each individual soul in itself, in its own spiritual part, because there is something in it that is intimately one or at least intimately related with the one divine Existence.** The essence of Indian religion is to aim at so growing and so living that we can grow out of the Ignorance which veils this self-knowledge from our mind and life and become aware of the Divinity within us. These three things put together are the whole of Hindu religion, its essential sense and, if any credo is needed, its credo.”⁵

III. Hinduism – the Future World Religion

A. The Superficial or Narrow Hinduism

“...the Indian governs his life not by the Shashtra but by custom and the opinion of the nearest Brahmin. In practice this resolves itself into certain observances and social customs of which he understands neither the spiritual

meaning nor the practical utility. To venerate the Scriptures without knowing them and to obey custom in their place; to reverence all Brahmins whether they are venerable or despicable; to eat nothing cooked by a social inferior; to marry one's daughter before puberty and one's son as soon as possible after it; to keep women ignorant and domestically useful; to bathe scrupulously and go through certain fixed ablutions; to eat on the floor and not at a table; to do one's devotions twice a day without understanding them; to observe a host of meaningless minutiae in one's daily conduct; to keep the Hindu holidays, when an image is set up, worshipped and thrown away, – this in India is the minimum of religion. This is glorified as Hinduism and the Sanatana Dharma. If, in addition, a man has emotional or ecstatic piety, he is a Bhakta; if he can talk fluently about the Veda, Upanishads, Darshanas & Puranas, he is a Jnani. If he puts on a yellow robe and does nothing, he is a tyagi or sannyasin. The latter is liberated from the ordinary dharma, but only if he does nothing but beg and vegetate.”⁶

B. The True or Wider Hinduism

“The inner principle of Hinduism, the most tolerant and receptive of religious systems, is not sharply exclusive like the religious spirit of Christianity or Islam; as far as that could be without loss of its own powerful idiosyncrasy and law of being, it has been synthetic, acquisitive, inclusive. Always it has taken in from every side and trusted to the power of assimilation that burns in its spiritual heart and in the white heat of its flaming centre to turn even the most unpromising material into forms for its spirit.”⁷

“The world moves through an indispensable interregnum

of free thought and materialism to a new synthesis of religious thought and experience, a new religious world-life free from intolerance, yet full of faith and fervour, accepting all forms of religion because it has an unshakable faith in the One. The religion which embraces Science and faith, Theism, Christianity, Mahomedanism and Buddhism and yet is none of these, is that to which the World-Spirit moves. In our own, which is the most sceptical and the most believing of all, the most sceptical because it has questioned and experimented the most, the most believing because it has the deepest experience and the most varied and positive spiritual knowledge, – that wider Hinduism which is not a dogma or combination of dogmas but a law of life, which is not a social framework but the spirit of a past and future social evolution, which rejects nothing but insists on testing and experiencing everything and when tested and experienced turning it to the soul's uses, in this Hinduism we find the basis of the future world-religion. **This sanatana dharma has many scriptures, Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darshana, Purana, Tantra, nor could it reject the Bible or the Koran; but its real, most authoritative scripture is in the heart in which the Eternal has His dwelling.** It is in our inner spiritual experiences that we shall find the proof and source of the world's Scriptures, the law of knowledge, love and conduct, the basis and inspiration of Karmayoga.”⁸

IV. Hinduism – the Religion of Vedanta

“If it were asked by anyone what is this multitudinous, shifting, expanding, apparently amorphous or at all events multimorphous sea of religious thought, feeling, philosophy,

spiritual experience we call Hinduism, what it is characteristically and essentially, we might answer in one word, the religion of Vedanta. And if it were asked what are the Hindus with their unique and persistent difference from all other races, we might again answer, the children of Vedanta. For at the root of all that we Hindus have done, thought and said through these thousands of years of our race-history, behind all we are and seek to be, there lies concealed, the fount of our philosophies, the bedrock of our religions, the kernel of our thought, the explanation of our ethics and society, the summary of our civilisation, the rivet of our nationality, this one marvellous inheritance of ours, the Vedanta. Nor is it only to Hindu streams that this great source has given of its life-giving waters. Buddhism, the teacher of one third of humanity, drank from its inspiration. Christianity, the offspring of Buddhism, derived its ethics and esoteric teaching at second-hand from the same source. Through Persia Vedanta put its stamp on Judaism, through Judaism, Christianity and Sufism on Islam, through Buddha on Confucianism..."⁹

"Vedanta's final & single answer to all the questions of philosophy is contained in a single mighty & ever-memorable phrase, So 'ham. I am He or more explicitly or to the question of the inquirer अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, I am Brahman. Cutting through all tremors & hesitations, scorning all doubt or reserve it announces with a hardy & daring incisiveness the complete identity of man & God. This is its gospel that the individual Self who seems so limited, thwarted, befouled, shamed & obscured with the bonds & shackles, the mud & stains of earthly life and the pure, perfect and illimitable Being who possesses & supports all existence, to Whom this vast and

majestic Universe is but an inconsiderable corner of His mind and infinite Time cannot end and infinite Space cannot confine and the infinite net of cause and effect is powerless to trammel are equal, are of one nature, power, splendour, bliss, are One. It seems the very madness of megalomania, the very delirium of egoism. And yet if it be true?

And it is true. Reason can come to no other conclusion, Yoga ends in no less an experience, the voices of a hundred holy witnesses who have seen God face to face, bring to us no less wonderful a message.”¹⁰

“Everything begins with vibration or movement, the original *klobha* or disturbance. If there is no movement of the conscious being, it can only know its own pure static existence. Without vibration* or movement of being in consciousness there can be no act of knowledge and therefore no sense; without vibration or movement of being in force there can be no object of sense. Movement of conscious being as knowledge becoming sensible of itself as movement of force, in other words the knowledge separating itself from its own working to watch that and take it into itself again by feeling, – this is the basis of universal Sanjnana. This is true both of our internal and external operations. I become anger by a vibration of conscious force acting as nervous emotion and I feel the anger that I have become by another movement of conscious force acting as light of knowledge. I am conscious of my body because I have myself become the body; that same

*The term is used not because it is entirely adequate or accurate, no physical term can be, but because it is most suggestive of the original outgoing of consciousness to seek itself.

force of conscious being which has made this form of itself, this presentation of its workings, knows it in that form, in that presentation. **I can know nothing except what I myself am; if I know others, it is because they also are myself, because my self has assumed these apparently alien presentations as well as that which is nearest to my own mental centre. All sensation, all action of sense is thus the same in essence whether external or internal, physical or psychical.**"¹¹

"A religion.. which claims to be eternal, must not be content with satisfying the heart and imagination, it must answer to the satisfaction of the intellect the questions with which philosophy is preoccupied. A philosophy which professes to explain the world-problem once for all, must not be satisfied with logical consistency and comprehensiveness; it must like Science base its conclusions not merely on speculative logic, but on actual observation and its truths must always be capable of verification by experiment so that they may be not merely conceivable truth but ascertained truth; it must like religion seize on the heart & imagination and without sacrificing intellectual convincingness, comprehensiveness & accuracy impregnate with itself the springs of human activity; and it must have the power of bringing the human self into direct touch with the Eternal. The Vedantic religion claims to be the eternal religion because it satisfies all these demands. It is intellectually comprehensive in its explanation of all the problems that perplex the human mind; it brings the contradictions of the world into harmony by a single luminous law of being; it has developed in Yoga a process of spiritual experience by which its assertions can be tested

and confirmed; the law of being it has discovered seizes not only on the intellect but on the deepest emotions of man and calls into activity his highest ethical instincts; and its whole aim and end is to bring the individual self into a perfect and intimate union with the Eternal.”¹²” (The Greatness of India and Its Culture in the Words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, The Resurgent India Trust, 2016, pp. 314-324)

References:

- 1 CWSA 8: 24
- 2 CWSA 7: 928
- 3 CWSA 20: 179-80
- 4 CWSA 20: 192-93
- 5 CWSA 20: 193-95
- 6 CWSA 1: 492
- 7 CWSA 20: 133-34
- 8 CWSA 8: 26
- 9 CWSA 18: 413
- 10 CWSA 18: 337
- 11 CWSA 18: 58
- 12 CWSA 18: 412

Hinduism

“If anyone thinks that we are merely intellectual beings, he is not a Hindu. Hinduism leaves the glorification of intellectuality to those who have never seen God. She is commissioned by Him to speak only of His greatness and majesty and she has so spoken for thousands of years. When we first received a European education, we allowed ourselves to be misled by the light of science. Science is a light within a limited room, not the sun which illumines the world. The Apra Vidya is the sum of science but there is a higher Vidya, a mightier knowledge. When we are under the influence of the lower knowledge, we imagine that we are doing everything and try to reason out the situation we find ourselves in, as if our intellect were sovereign and omnipotent. But this is an attitude of delusion and Maya. Whoever has once felt the glory of God within him can never again believe that the intellect is supreme. There is a higher voice, there is a more unfailing oracle. It is in the heart where God resides. He works through the brain, but the brain is only one of His instruments. Whatever the brain may plan, the heart knows first and whoever can go beyond the brain to the heart, will hear the voice of the Eternal.”

– Sri Aurobindo
(CWSA 7: 891-92)