

2019
November

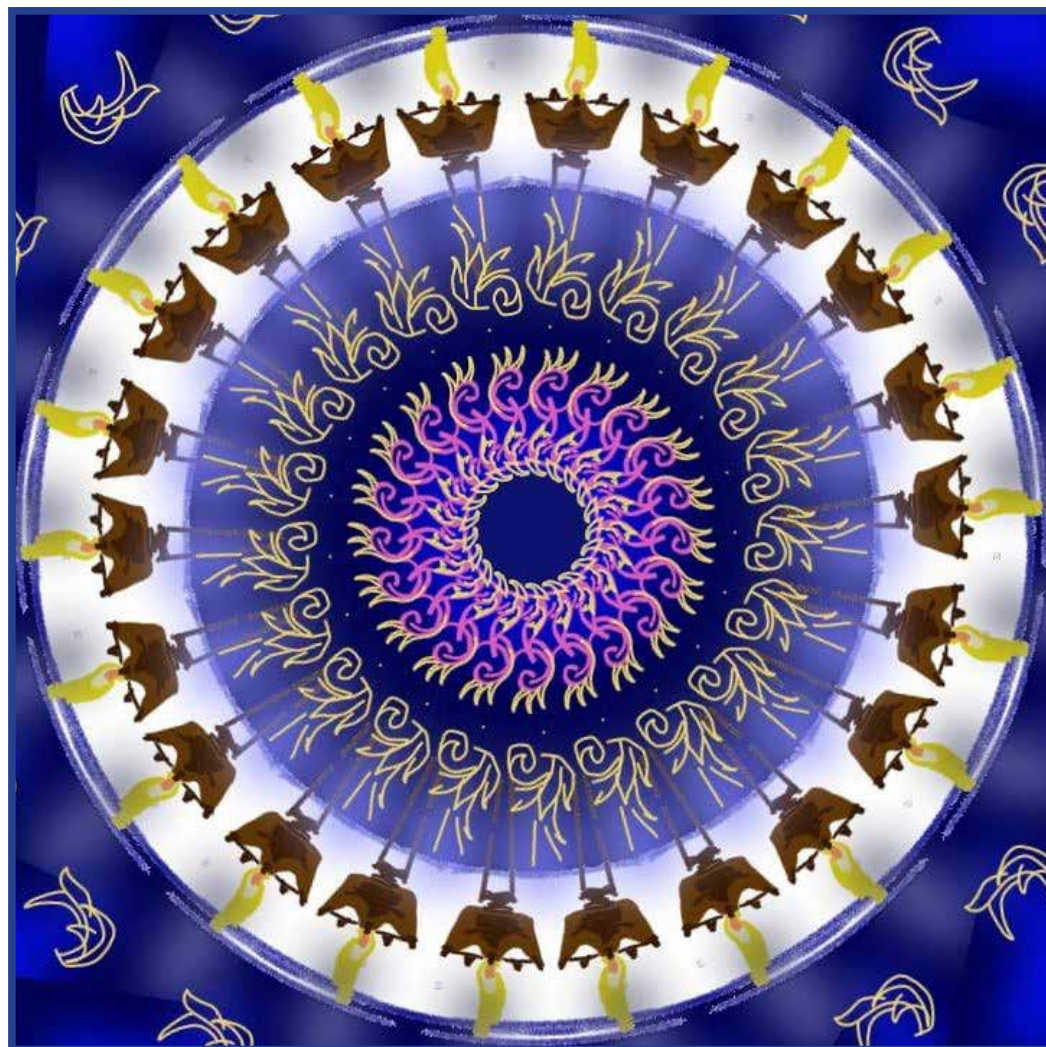
New Race

A Journal of Integral & Future Studies



Volume V
Issue 4

Spirituality at Work



Institute of Human Study

ISSN 2454-1176 (Online)

13. 12. 66

New Race

blessings
J.

NEW RACE is published by Chhalamayi Reddy on behalf of
Institute of Human Study, 2-2-4/1, O.U.Road, Hyderabad 500 044.

Founder Editor : (Late) Prof. V. MADHUSUDAN REDDY

Editor-in-Chief: DR. V. ANANDA REDDY

Assistant Editor: MR. KISHOLOY GUPTA
DR. NARENDRA JOSHI

Cover Design: DR. NARENDRA JOSHI

Email: newracejournal@gmail.com; Phone: 040 27098414

On the web: www.instituteofhumanstudy.org

ISSN No.: 2454-1176

NEW RACE

A Journal of Integral & Future Studies

November 2019

Volume V Issue 4

CONTENTS

From the Editor's Desk...

Nature's Law in Our Progress

Sri Aurobindo

2

Why is Individual Freedom so Essential for the Evolution of Humanity?

Arlene Mazak

3

Conceptualization of "Spirituality" in Management

Ashish Kumar Trivedi

6

Aspiration - The First Step towards Spirituality in Management

Sridarshan Kaudinya

11

Spirituality in Development

A Different Perspective from Spirituality in Management and Governance

Baburaj V Nair

14

Relevance of Sri Aurobindo in the Modern World

Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra

18

Spirituality and Management

Dhruv Kumar Sen

21

New Attitudes to Work

Valentina Beatriz

26

What would Lord Krishna share with Harvard Management Students?!

Ashok Kumar Bhatia

29

A Decentralized Self-Governing System Envisioned by Indian Genius

Narendra Madhav Joshi

32

An Overview of the Ingenious Model of Corporates and Trade Practices in Indian Culture

Sri Ashok Sinkar

36

Upcoming Events at SACAR

From the Editor's Desk...

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the New Race.

Inclusive society is a much-discussed topic. The Brexit in the UK, the Mexican immigrants in the US, Rohingyas in from Myanmar and the NRC in India are some of the international issues. There are also biases against gender, the poor and divergent political thoughts in our society. The articles in this edition are in some way connected to this central thought. It deals with Inclusivity in the light of Spiritual Oneness. Sri Aurobindo has emphasized in many of his essays about spiritual oneness for which there would have to be a total transformation in the human race based on spiritual awakening.

This edition of New Race presents a bouquet of ten articles from people across nations and from varied backgrounds. If there is an interfaith/ interspiritual minister from the USA; there is a film maker who is a practitioner of human unity from Chile, at Auroville. If there are management consultants from Norway, Dubai and Bangalore; there are scholars on Indian Culture from Mumbai. If there is a contributor from Bureau of Public Enterprises from a State in India; there are also educators from the USA and India. Most of the contributors to this edition, have in their own way, dealt with society based on inclusivity by spiritual awakening; be it a business organization, nation or the whole humanity at large.

This aspiration of a oneness in humanity is not new to humanity. However heartening it may be, we all know that creating such a society based on the ideal of human unity has yet to be realized in the society. The un-awakened soul of the human kind is misguiding and distorting the vision ahead.

But the New Race, like the light house in a storm, stands steadfast in its faith in Nature. It knows Nature has its own mysterious ways. Nature will definitely bring about harmony in unity amidst the present state of deafening cacophony. The array of diverse people contributing articles together in this issue of New Race, for the common cause of inclusivity, is itself a sign of Nature working towards oneness in humanity!

Islands of similar thinking communities are growing by the day across the globe. People are collecting together to march into hell, if they have to, for this heavenly cause. With technology peaking, the present is on its path in creating a synthesis of an inclusive new race, in the light of spiritual oneness.

A sudden turn can come, a road appear.
A greater Mind may see a greater Truth,
Or we may find when all the rest has failed
Hid in ourselves the key of perfect change. (Savitri: B-II, C-X)

With these words, we again invite you to a treat of such assorted articles.

Wishing you harmony in unity.

Kisholoy

Nature's Law in Our Progress

Sri Aurobindo

The social evolution of the human race is necessarily a development of the relations between three constant factors, individuals, communities of various sorts and mankind. Each seeks its own fulfilment and satisfaction, but each is compelled to develop them not independently but in relation to the others.



Man's communities are formed not so much by the instinctive herding together of a number of individuals of the same genus or species as by local association, community of interests and community of ideas; and these limits tend always to be overcome in the widening of human thoughts and sympathies brought about by the closer intermingling of races, nations, interests, ideas, cultures. Still, if overcome in their separatism, they are not abolished in their fact, because they repose on an essential principle of Nature, —diversity in unity. Therefore it would seem that the ideal or ultimate aim of Nature must be to develop the individual and all individuals to their full capacity, to develop the community and all communities to the full expression of that many-sided existence and potentiality which their differences were created to express, and to evolve the united life of mankind to its full common capacity and satisfaction, not by suppression of the fullness of life of the individual or the smaller commonalty, but by full advantage taken of the diversity which they develop. This would seem the soundest way to increase the total riches of mankind and throw them into a fund of common possession and enjoyment.

...Man's communities are formed not so much by the instinctive herding together of a number of individuals of the same genus or species as by local association, community of interests and community of ideas; and these limits tend always to be overcome in the widening of human thoughts and sympathies brought about by the closer intermingling of races, nations, interests, ideas, cultures. Still, if overcome in their separatism, they are not abolished in their fact, because they repose on an essential principle of Nature, —diversity in unity. Therefore it would seem that the ideal or ultimate aim of Nature must be to develop the individual and all individuals to their full capacity, to develop the community and all communities to the full expression of that many-sided existence and potentiality which their differences were created to express, and to evolve the united life of mankind to its full common capacity and satisfaction, not by suppression of the fullness of life of the individual or the smaller commonalty, but by full advantage taken of the diversity which they develop. This would seem the soundest way to increase the total riches of mankind and throw them into a fund of common possession and enjoyment.

(CWSA 25, *The Ideal of Human Unity*: 422)

Why is Individual Freedom so Essential for the Evolution of Humanity?

Arlene Mazak



I cannot speak about individual freedom in other societies or nations, because I have not had the experience of being a citizen anywhere else than the United States. I grew up in Bayonne, New Jersey, a town from where you could stand on its eastern shoreline and see in the distance an amazing sight. It was the Statue of Liberty standing majestically on tiny Ellis Island in the middle of New York harbor. An iconic image known throughout the world; this statue has represented the promise of a country where individual freedom is honoured as the basis for many human rights guaranteed by the founding fathers of the American Constitution.

I am sure there were exciting moments when, at the beginning of the twentieth century, each of my three immigrant grandparents caught sight of the Statue of Liberty after having travelled across most of Europe and across the Atlantic Ocean. Before airplanes existed, it must have been a long, gruelling trip, yet each of them was determined to pull up stakes because they had lost their freedom to determine the course of their own lives in Poland or in Slovakia. Basic freedoms were threatened when the Soviet Union encroached on the Slavic nations and attempted to dominate and govern them. Freedom meant so much to my grandparents that they left their native countries, their families and friends, and their jobs-- everything they had ever known. And they were not alone in this quest, as the Statue of Liberty has welcomed many thousands of weary immigrants from all over the world.

At that time, they were entering a country unlike any other, where immigrants were welcomed to become citizens and to join in the effort towards developing an ever more vibrant multicultural nation. Yes, that first generation of immigrants tended to settle into their own ethnic communities because they knew little if any English, but in towns like Bayonne, they were near large cities where they could make a working class living as they practiced

The secret of life is the harmony between human unity and its diversity in all its variations.

Sri Aurobindo envisioned that for a harmonious world union to happen it should be a federal, heterogenous association of nations. Every nation would then retain its dignity, sentiments and that its national aspirations would be increasingly recognized in practice as well as in principle.

speaking their new language. They not only were different in their languages and religions, but also in their cultural values and styles of communication, and in many of their arts and festivals. But now they had to create bridges to other immigrants with other worldviews so that they could cooperate together in multicultural teams at work, and to communicate their own special concerns to their city governments. All three of my immigrant grandparents eventually became American citizens. Although my American-born parents grew up bilingual, my brother and I never learned how to speak Polish or Slovak, because they all wanted us to be fully assimilated as American, with English as our native language.

Although the mingling of diverse immigrant communities has not always been easy in the U.S., it was held as an ideal by my family, with the intent of having their descendants contribute to an emerging American way of life. That was already enough of a life purpose for them. Yet today, immigrant communities have increasingly wanted to pass on their original languages to their descendants, and to always honour their own customs and festivals, remaining bilingual and bicultural. Assimilation seemed too bland and uniform by comparison.

Much of the challenge is in the business world, where companies create administrative positions dedicated to achieving greater “diversity and inclusion.” Companies have seen how diverse teams bring greater creativity to designing and carrying out their projects, and can also more easily join into international partnerships. However, the concept of unity in diversity being an essential step to the greater evolution of humanity has not yet dawned in the U.S. Auroville has been a unique experiment, and one that has had significant problems. In the U.S., unacknowledged prejudice has been a major shadow at every level of society. Not just cultural prejudice, but also racial prejudice and sexism. With the development of social justice movements, there is an increasing awareness that Americans can progressively move to greater freedom for all by unifying and supporting each other, and that would indeed be evolutionary.

In terms of Sri Aurobindo’s social stages, the diversity in the U.S. made it individualistic from its founding. Its global multiculturalism has brought many religions to its shores, but these have not been taught in its public-school system for fear of being accused of proselytizing and going against the Constitutional ideal of the separation of church and state. Many Americans practice their diverse religions in prayer communities, and have not yet discovered that spirituality is different from religion. Hence ignorance of another ethnic community’s religious beliefs can still potentially lead to anxiety, fear, and prejudice. Sometimes misunderstanding even generates hatred.

However, spiritual inquiry has grown in the last sixty years, and there are now quite a variety of spiritual communities, some of which are based on long established mystical paths, while others are based on modern ecumenical spirituality. There is even a new movement called interspirituality arising from the explorations of long-term spiritual seekers, like myself, who now identify with more than one spiritual tradition. Interspirituality arises from individual freedom and may well become more pervasive and help to overcome unnecessary

prejudices as common values are discovered. But so long as the dogma and judgmentalism of fundamentalist sects are strong in certain regions of the country, Americans will not be able to move towards the unity-in-diversity ideal that characterizes Sri Aurobindo's spiritual stage of social development.

...freedom is as necessary to life as law and regime; diversity is as necessary as unity to our true completeness."¹ Sri Aurobindo explained that an individual's inner freedom is essential for human unity and that laws should be framed keeping that in mind: "Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty."²

In Sri Aurobindo's teachings, the secret of life is the harmony between human unity and its diversity in all its variations. He said that the answer was in spiritual and psychological unity: "We shall find that a real spiritual and psychological unity can allow a free diversity and dispense with all but the minimum of uniformity which is sufficient to embody the community of nature and of essential principle."³

Sri Aurobindo envisioned that for a harmonious world union to happen it should be a federal, heterogenous association of nations. Every nation would then retain its dignity, sentiments and that its national aspirations would be increasingly recognized in practice as well as in principle. He cited examples of the Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and also the possibility of a United States of Europe (now formed and known as the European Union). The challenge was in creating a federal structure united into a natural psychological unit.

Sri Aurobindo's ideal for the creation of a heterogeneous nation includes these four principles:

A firm political unity secured by common interests;

A sound commercial interchange and mutual industrial helpfulness on healthy lines;

A new cultural relation of sections of humanity, in which they could exchange all that is great and valuable in either as equal members of one human household;

The building of a new, rich and various culture for the life of a nobler humanity.

References:

1, 2 & 3: *Sri Aurobindo*: CWSA: 25; Human Unity: Nature's Law in Our Progress; pages 423, 426 and 425.

About the Author

Dr. Arlene Mazak is an Indologist, Psychotherapist, Interfaith / Interspiritual Minister

Conceptualization of “Spirituality” in Management

Ashish Kumar Trivedi

If spirituality is regarded as the quest for self or the self-realization, there is no inevitability that such a quest or realization must stand in opposition to the profitable enterprise both at the individual and organization level.



A plethora of expressions are in vogue representing the theme of spirituality in management and the related or underlying themes. In order to be clear & unambiguous in explaining the context of spirituality in management, it is necessary to make the distinctions amongst the different expressions used in the domain. ‘Spirituality at Work’, ‘Value Based Management’, ‘Ethics in Management’ (at least where ethics is based on religious or spiritual sources) are some of the alternative expressions which at times refer to an overlapping area of activity. As we shall see, such other positions are tenable only when we regard ethics or values to be delinked with spirituality or self-enquiry. Also, it is important to understand the context, meaning and definition of the term spirituality, what it connotes in the prominent literature and what it might connote. It is pertinent to note that there can be a certain degree of commonness in the (use of) the expressions mentioned above particularly depending upon what they connote or refer to. Nevertheless, they cannot be presumptuously thought of as a homogeneous category. A particular reason for this stems from the fact that the domain of ethics, values and spirituality relate to the inner dimensions of human being. Even their extension to the organizational dynamics relies heavily on the inner aspects of individuality. Therefore, it is arguably sufficient to embark on deciphering of the meaning of spirituality and to refer to the meanings of the alternative expressions as and when they come by in the discussion.

Spirituality is variedly defined in different cultural contexts. Even in Indian culture, there are varying and inconsistent strands of thought which make it impossible to club them under a common definitional denomination. Whether it is conceptualization of the self or conceptualization of the ultimate reality around us that constitutes the subject matter of spirituality, is a profound question of interest to the one who looks to apply it to the management of any entity, enterprise or institution. Questions such as these have not been properly addressed within the management studies, at least. Even in philosophy these have been grouped under a broader category of applied philosophy without much practical formulations.

Pruzan (2011) lays the basis of spirituality in management on “an awareness that the underlying context for all purposeful organized activity is spiritual in nature and not just

utilitarian via the pursuit of material gain." Furthermore, Pruzan(2011) argues for the eastern perspective as a precondition for the successful development of leadership as found in the western world. The two notable issues which arise in this connection are the presumption that spirituality and materiality are two different dimensions of organizational activity and whether the one stands in antithesis to the other and the presumption of the exclusivity of the eastern privileges to spirituality. Without settling what is to be regarded as spiritual and what is not be regarded as spiritual, or in other words, what is to be regarded as material, no pass can be made into an insightful understanding of spirituality in organizational or individual contexts. Pruzan (2011) uses the term spirit to mean an entity which is the essence of one's being and one's core, true and permanent nature or identity as distinct from body and mind. Pruzan (2011) observes:

Spiritual refers to behavior that knowingly seeks such self-realization... Spirituality is simply the context for all religious belief. But it is more than that since a person can be spiritual- follow a spiritual path- without adhering to any particular religion. And a person who, as a matter of social convention, follows the rules and traditions of a particular religion can appear to be religious, without in fact being spiritual.

Workplace spirituality has been identified with meaning in work and sense of community. (Mirvis, 1997) Spiritual identity, Inner life, meaningful work and sense of community has been found to be constituents of spirituality at work. (Mitroff and Denton, 1999) (Ashmos and Dunchon, 2000) If the 'purpose' and 'meaning' is construed to be the cornerstone of spirituality, even existentialism has an important dialogue to offer. The Danish thinker Kierkegaard, a notable exponent of existentialist philosophy, embarked on the purpose and meaning of life in substantially important ways. The subsequent philosophers like Sartre, Camus, Heidegger, Marcel, Jaspers and Levinas have concerned themselves with the context of purpose and meaning in human life and as far as the rational deliberation over the meaning is concerned, they bear similarity with spiritual traditions in important ways. As far as the matter of Eastern spiritual traditions is concerned, it can well be established that the West has had important spiritual traditions which cannot undermined in terms of significance if not in number. Gurdjieff, Eckhart, Saint Francis, Plotinus, Pythagoras, Dionysius and a number of other mystics promulgated important spiritual streams and traditions in the west. Therefore, spirituality by no counts is an 'Eastern' prerogative neither is the 'meaning' a prerogative of spirituality.

Commenting on the dichotomy of spirituality and management, Chakraborty (2011) wittingly notes:

If thorns and roses can co-exist on the same stem, why not management and spirituality?

Again, the aforesaid precept has to do with the highly contentious definition of spirituality and the less contentious definition of management. If there is a dichotomy between the

spirituality and management, such a dichotomy has to do with the view we take of spirituality. Speaking of an important dimension of the definition of spirituality, Chakraborty (2011) notes:

As we briefly engage with such definitions, we must also carefully remember that spirit/spirituality, like love or fragrance, can be captured in human language only to the extent of suggestive metaphors and images.

Defining spirituality with indescribable nature of overtones takes one into a certain ambivalence and uncertainty. Implorations are made to subordinate the reasoning or mental faculties in the wake of spiritual experience or realization. (Chakraborty, 2011) The questions which mandate an honest enquiry into the issue are what the nature of such a spiritual knowledge is and how such knowledge makes any practical difference into the state of affairs. Regarding the first question, an important observation is brought into consideration that the problem of knowledge leads us into the subject-object dichotomy and to the possibility of knowing the object as object without losing subjectivity. (Joshi, 2012) The rationale provided on the basis of the inherent continuity in the macrocosm and microcosmic entities of the world like business, enterprises, societies, nations and individuals to usher the management from within is also open to philosophical scrutiny. (Chakraborty, 2011)

Several management thinkers in the past like Milton Friedman & Peter F. Drucker did consider profit-making to be the crucial element or sole responsibility of the business management. Such a contentious issue is also linked with definition & context of spirituality. Whether profitability in organizational and business management would always be commensurate with the spirituality or not is a complex issue and a multitude of explanations and positions are possible for the supposed antithesis. If spirituality is regarded as the quest for self or the self-realization, there is no inevitability that such a quest or realization must stand in opposition to the profitable enterprise both at the individual and organization level. Material prosperity does facilitate twofold tasks; firstly, it allows one to use materiality as an end to spirituality and secondly, it poses a test on the path of spiritual evolution in the form of temptation, the successful overcoming of which renders the seeker capable of spiritual wisdom. Also, at the philosophical level, it can be assumed that spirituality and materiality are not to be regarded as polar opposites rather as a matter of degree of internal orientation. Such a position lands spirituality and materiality into relative standpoints rather absolutes.

Another disambiguation needed to be analyzed is whether spirituality is a means or an end in itself in the context of organizational management. If certain organizational goals like profit or wealth maximization are given primacy at the expense of or over the fundamental individual aspirations reflected in spiritual orientation of the individual and the extensions and facilitations of it as a corporate agency, such an abrogation cannot make spirituality either a means or an end to corporate ends. In fact, individual aspirations for meaning and self-identity are so fundamental and pervading that they can hardly be overridden by the

corporate agency. It is more rational to reflect that spirituality would always subsume to be an end against any corporeal ends whether individual or organizational.

It seems an impossibility to delve on spirituality keeping the 'self' out of it. Spirituality cannot be a metaphysical schematization. There are a few important elements involved in it namely an inquiry into the self (the thinking agent), an actionable emulation to effect it (which makes it different from mere metaphysical speculation) and a conceptualization of self as an entity beyond being a mere thinking agent. An ancient Indian scriptural precept exhorts the seeker on the path of spirituality in the words- "Atmanam Viddhi" (Know the self) which bears semblance with the famous Socratic maxim 'Know Thyself'. Why is there so much of exhortation on knowing oneself or, in other words, why should the self be focal point of spirituality? A counter-viewpoint that an inquiry into the ultimate reality in any form must constitute to be spirituality, upon a deeper inquiry reduces itself to be irrevocably linked with the existence and conceptualization of self. In Sanskrit or Hindi language, the equivalent expression for spirituality is 'Adhyatma', invariably connoting a recess into the self. The Bhagwadgita offers crucial enlightening insight in this connection. The Bhagwadgita defines 'Adhyatma' as 'Swabhava' in the third verse of the eighth chapter. If Adhyatma is taken to uncontentiously mean 'Spirituality', and 'Swabhava' is construed to mean as 'a sense of self' or 'Self-Consciousness' or 'one's own nature', the definition of spirituality goes slightly unproblematic. In this context, it is pertinent to note the commentary offered by Sri Aurobindo (1977) and Acharya Abhinavagupta on the aforesaid third verse of the eighth chapter of the Bhagwadgita. Sri Aurobindo notes:

By adhyatma it means *swabhava*, the spiritual way and law of being of the soul in the supreme Nature.

In the translation done by Sharma (1983) of Acharya Abhinavagupta's commentary of the Bhagwadgita, comments on the aforesaid verse are as follows:

The *para brahman* is (so called) both on account of its (own) expansiveness and because it causes (things) to expand. Therefore, it is designated by the word adhyatma.

Sri Aurobindo refers to the eternal law of being and the way it exists in the supreme nature as constituent of spirituality according to the verse. Acharya Abhinavagupta brings connection of spirituality to the Supreme Being and its instrumentality in bringing about expansion in nature. The latter establishes an inseparable link between the Supreme Being and the self. This view furthers the position that spirituality includes in itself the existence of self and by implication it also has an inseparable identical link with expansiveness of everything in the world.

It can be stated in conclusion that the most tenable explanation of spirituality is to link it or to think of it in terms of the question of self rather a metaphysical theorizing about abstract conceptions. It is also notable that both Acharya Abhinavagupta and Sri Aurobindo were realized masters and the explanation offered by them of the term 'Adhyatma' in commentary on the Bhagwadgita is based on their supreme realization, the worldly formulation of which may inadequate to refer to that state of realization. If spirituality digresses into metaphysical

speculation or busies itself with other issues of societal or business manifestations at the expense of the original self-enquiry, the chances are that a mistaken notion of spirituality may further aggravate the state of affairs in management.

References:

1. Abhinavagupta, Acharya (1983), *Gitarthasangraha*, trans. Arvind Sharma, Leiden: E. J. Brill.
2. Ashmos, D.P. & Dunchon, D. (2000). Spirituality at work: A conceptualization and measure. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(2), 134-145.
3. Sri Aurobindo, (1977), *The message of the Gita*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, India.
4. Joshi, Kireet, (2012), *Problem of Knowledge*, Popular Media, Delhi, India.
5. Mirvis, P. H. (1997). 'Soul Work' in organizations. *Organization Science*, 8(2), 193-206.
6. Mitroff, I.I. & Denton, E.A. (1999). A study of spirituality in the workplace. *Sloan Management Review*, 40(4), 83-92.
7. Pruzan, Peter (2011). Spirituality as the context of leadership. In Laszlo Zsolnai (Ed.) *Spirituality and Ethics in Management* (pp. 3-22). Springer.
8. Chakraborty, S.K. (2011). Spirit-Centered, Rajarshi Leadership. In Laszlo Zsolnai (Ed.) *Spirituality and Ethics in Management* (pp. 23-40). Springer.

About the Author

Dr. Trivedi is a Research Assistant, at Bureau of Public Enterprises, Government of Uttar Pradesh

First be sure of the call and of thy soul's answer. For if the call is not true, not the touch of God's powers or the voice of his messengers, but the lure of thy ego, the end of thy endeavour will be a poor spiritual fiasco or else a deep disaster.

And if not the soul's fervour, but only the mind's assent or interest replies to the divine summons or only the lower life's desire clutches at some side attraction of the fruits of Yoga-power or Yoga-pleasure or only a transient emotion leaps like an unsteady flame moved by the intensity of the Voice or its sweetness or grandeur, then too there can be little surety for thee in the difficult path of Yoga.

The outer instruments of mortal man have no force to carry him through the severe arduous of this spiritual journey and Titanic inner battle or to meet its terrible or obstinate ordeals or nerve him to face and overcome its subtle and formidable dangers. Only his spirit's august and steadfast will and the quenchless fire of his soul's invincible ardour are sufficient for this difficult transformation and this high improbable endeavour.

(Sri Aurobindo, CWSA 12, *Essays Divine and Human*)

Aspiration - The First Step towards Spirituality in Management

Sridarshan Kaudinya

Aspiration is one of the definite ingredients of a true leader. In his inimitable story telling way, the author explains that to bring Spirituality into Management, organizations should ensure that Vision, Mission and Purpose spring from a sense of unselfish Aspiration.

Introduction

The All India Council for Technical Education has published the “AICTE Model Curriculum for Management Program - MBA & PGDM” in January 2018. This report has been prepared by a galaxy of reputed leaders in business and academia. It observes that the Business MBA “curriculum also doesn’t reflect Indian ethos and value system”.



The works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother declare that the essence of the Indian ethos is primarily Spiritual. Hence, promoting the Indian Ethos in Management would be nothing but promoting Spirituality in Management. Spirituality is a deep subject and may take more than one lifetime to understand and

integrate into one’s values and behavior. But one has to start somewhere. Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother point to Aspiration as the first step on the Spiritual Path.

What is Aspiration?

Aspiration in Management

In the Management Literature, an Organization’s Mission answers the question, ‘Why do we exist?’; Its Vision answers the question ‘What future do we want to create?’ and finally its Values answer the question ‘What is important to us?’. Hence, Organizational “Vision, Mission and Values” embody the Aspirations of an organization and its people, which in turn guide Management Strategy (Casadesus-Masanell, 2014).



Aspiration in Spirituality

Let the doors of aspiration swing open; bring here the aspirant gods.

Sri Aurobindo, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, P.316

Do you feel that your very *raison d’être* is the Divine and without it there is no meaning in your existence. If so, then only can it be said that you have a Call for the Path. That is the first thing necessary, - an aspiration for the Divine.

The Mother, *The Sunlit Path*, page 27

In the quotation above, the Mother says that ‘Aspiration’ is the first thing necessary for a call to and progress on the Spiritual Path. Aspiration was later chosen by the Mother as one of the twelve petals or powers in her symbol. The Mother has given the spiritual name Aspiration to the flower, which is known in India as Parijatha and in the West as Night Jasmine. The botanical name is *Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*. In order to understand what

aspiration is, the Indian tradition has many stories about the flower Parijatha. These stories are rich with meaning and we can all learn from them.

Satyabhama and Parijatha

Of all the wives of Sri Krishna, only two find mention in the *Vishnusahasranama*, - Rukmini and Satyabhama. Both these are believed to be manifestations of Mahalakshmi. Satyabhama is a manifestation of Mahalakshmi as Mother Earth. The day before Diwali is called Naraka Chaturdashi and is celebrated as the day on which Krishna killed the demon Narakasura. This demon was the son of Mother Earth and had the boon that only his mother can kill him. Hence when Krishna kills this demon, he takes his wife Satyabhama into battle with him as she is an incarnation of Mother Earth. After killing the demon, Krishna and Satyabhama go to Heaven and rest in Lord Indra's garden. Satyabhama likes the Parijatha tree, which is the wish-fulfilling tree, and she wants to take it to Earth with her. Indra and the gods oppose her and Krishna has to fight the gods to bring this Parijatha tree to Earth.

What this story means is that the earth consciousness represented by humanity, needs to be purified by transcending the lower-self made up of desires born of earth or the demon within each one of us. When this happens, a true and pure aspiration arises within us which rises straight to heaven. The Parijatha tree symbolizes this aspiration for the divine alone and is brought down to earth for the benefit of all humanity. This tree is planted in many gardens and the flowers are used for worship. It is believed that the persons who plants this tree in their garden do not get the fruits of their labor, as the Parijatha flowers fall in the neighbor's garden and even the beautiful fragrance of the night jasmine wafts outside the owner's house and into the neighborhood. This symbolizes the unselfish motive which is the true touchstone of the aspiration for the divine. Even the Gods have to fight for this rare ability of human beings for the unselfish adoration of and aspiration for the divine.

Parijatha Yoga in Jyotish

In Vedic Jyotish, Yoga means a particular combination of planets in the horoscope that gives a specific result. The Kalpadruma Parijatha yoga is a very rare yoga in Vedic Jyotish and is counted among the spiritual yogas. Most spiritual yogas such as Tapaswi yoga or Sannyasa yoga are Ascetic yogas and denote a withdrawal from life. But Parijatha Yoga is a strange yoga for two reasons. First, because although it is included among spiritual yogas, it fulfills life and is unlike other ascetic spiritual yogas as it does not give withdrawal from life. Second because it is believed to give material benefits to all those who come in contact with the person with this yoga. Hence although it is called Kalpadruma Parijatha Yoga or the Yoga of the wish fulfilling tree, the people with this yoga are not very materially successful in life as the benefits of the yoga accrue to those around them. However, as people with this yoga mature in life and overcome their selfish desires, the latter half of their life is fulfilled both materially and spiritually as they learn to give more of themselves freely and benefit humanity and those around them. Here again the parijatha yoga symbolizes an unselfish aspiration for the divine.

Sri Aurobindo's words on Aspiration

Sometimes we wish a thing very intensely and our wish is accomplished. The wish was in fact a prayer, and all sincere prayer receives its answer. It need not be consciously addressed to God, because prayer is not a form of words but an aspiration. If we aspire, we pray. But the aspiration must be absolutely unselfish, not alloyed by the thought of petty advantages or lower aims if it is to succeed. When we mingle self

with our aspirations, we weaken to that extent the strength of the prayer and the success is proportionately less.

(Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram*, March 18, 1908, SABCL1:764)

In the quotation above, we find Sri Aurobindo emphasizing the unselfish quality of Aspiration. Later in this article he further explains that unselfish Aspiration is one of the Leadership qualities necessary to Indians in the Independence movement.

The Mother's words on Aspiration

Aspiration is like an arrow, like this (gesture). So you aspire, want very earnestly to understand, know, enter into the truth. Yes? And then with that aspiration you do this (gesture). Your aspiration rises, rises, rises, rises straight up, very strong and then it strikes against a kind of... how to put it?...lid which is there, hard like iron and extremely thick, and it does not pass through. And then you say, "See, what's the use of aspiring? It brings nothing at all. I meet with something hard and cannot pass!" But you know about the drop of water which falls on the rock, it ends up by making a chasm: it cuts the rock from top to bottom. Your aspiration is a drop of water which, instead of falling, rises. So, by dint of rising, it beats, beats, beats, and one day it makes a hole, by dint of rising; and when it makes the hole suddenly it springs out from this lid and enters an immensity of light, and you say, "Ah, now I understand.

(CWM 7: 235)

In the quotation above the Mother exhorts disciples to persevere with their aspiration as it will prevail and eventually grant liberation one day.

Conclusion

In Management, one starts with a Vision, Mission and Purpose. To bring Spirituality into Management, organizations should ensure that Vision, Mission and Purpose spring from a sense of unselfish Aspiration.

References

1. All India Council for Technical Education, "AICTE Model Curriculum for Management Program - MBA & PGDM", January 2018. Available at https://www.aicte-india.org/sites/default/files/AICTE_MBA.pdf
2. Ramon Casadesus-Masanell, "Setting Aspirations, - Mission, Vision and Values" March 2014, Harvard Business School - Strategy Core Curriculum, Harvard Business Publishing
3. Sri Aurobindo, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.
4. Sri Aurobindo; SABCL, *Bande Mataram*, Volume 01, 'The Need Of The Moment'
5. The Mother, *Collected Works of the Mother Volume 7*
6. The Mother, *The Sunlit Path*.

About the Author

Dr. Sridarshan Koundinya, an Educator from Bangalore India

Spirituality in Development

A Different Perspective from Spirituality in Management and Governance

Baburaj V Nair

Spirituality is an ability to draw energy from within and build an appreciative culture around in a world of economy. An economy, which is built with the strength of a combined purpose of a corporate, team, and individuals, always sustains.



Spirituality¹ means “relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things”. Management “means controlling and ensuring that the existing process is managed”. It does not indicate sustainability or growth. Governance also does not indicate any progression – it is managing existing rules and regulations in a given context. It ensures that there are no harms caused for the entity – whether it is a corporate, family, or society.

The global economy is entering a protracted period of metamorphosis. Economic, social, and environmental pressures are converging at a time of growing global interdependence to create condition for an era of dramatic technological, corporate and market transformation.²

Therefore, I would like to reposition the above perspectives and bring “development” into the context than the words – “managing” and “governance”. “Development” brings a perspective of growth, challenging status-quo, and pro-activeness, as it is an on-going process for moving forward, and it is outcome focussed. The term ensures that the entity – in whatever form – is sustained when the context, in which it is set, moves forward.

Therefore, “Spirituality in Development” means *progression relating to or affecting the human spirit*. The moment we change these perspectives to “development” a whole lot of our hitherto perspectives shift. However, even this shift will be very difficult for us to assimilate, as the word, “management” is synonymous with everything *we feel we know*. (Refer: Table 1 below for differentiation)

Current affairs – to manage	Rules – to control	Futuristic. In finance, there is a fundamental concept – “On-going concern/firm”. Similarly, in development, a fundamental focus is “there exists a tomorrow”
Ensures the processes are adhered to	Ensures that the frame work is available to audit	Ensures the status-quo is challenged; and pro-active exploration is encouraged
Creativity is contextual	No creativity. Set standards/framework	Innovation is progressively contextual

Reactive to whatever is happening	Consistency	Pro-active and dynamic, and therefore, learnability quotient would be high.
Average Emotional Quotient	Lower Emotional Quotient	High Emotional and Social Quotient
Manipulative- Win-lose framework	Just adherence	Provides a scope to listen to others –more appreciation to multiple perspectives within a win-win framework
Today’s solution is tomorrows problem -short-term oriented	Focus is on observation of deviations and ensuring correction of these deviations	Long-term and focusses on Solutions for tomorrow.
Focus is on Objective of the roles – superfluous and reactive	Focus is on Scope and limitations	Focus is on over-arching -Purpose, People, and Relationship.

With the relative weakening of governments worldwide, business is increasingly expected to take the lead in delivering sustainable development. Though many business leaders welcome this emerging reality, satisfying the new responsibilities is likely to be impossible without levels of public commitment and support – and government intervention – that are not currently available. As the political leadership is decaying across the world, it will be increasingly clear that new forms of both corporate and global governance are needed. The world around us is changing: from traditional, mechanistic perspective of an organisation to solution-oriented business model to the current Co-opetition business model (See Table 2 below).

Table 2: Traditional to Solution and Co-opetition Model Business		
Take, Make and Waste	Focusses on outcome	Collective efficiency, learning and risk-taking, and the intersection of different knowledge sets.
Business relationships are ‘win-lose’	Capabilities are distributed, according to the ‘whole-in-parts’ concept.	Organizations that sell products that enhance the value of another firm’s products to customers.
Focusses on Reductionism.	Teams should be holistic and cross-functional	Firms join forces with competitors or organisations outside their direct industry where they share common interest.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised in functionally, favouring silo mentality 	“Value is delivered as a flow of services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stifled by the rules and procedures that organise the flow of processes between functions and other hierarchical layers. 	Focusses on providing a customised & upgradable solution	

In such a dynamic environment, the spiritual development of organisations and the individuals (leaders), who are running the organisations (or any other entity) is highly critical. In other words, it will be difficult to survive, if we do not spiritually oriented. i.e.

“relating to or *affecting* the people connected – i.e. self, team (inter and intra), organisation (within and external). It is presumed that competition helps to create industrial emulation, whereas it only leads to commercial emulation. Industrial emulation should produce the right quality of product with a focus on end users.³ Therefore, the purpose of existence of each one of us, within / between the group(s) in any entity must be redefined to awaken the “spirituality”. In the current business scenario, the people management practices are also getting impacted due to various shifts (Hierarchy to network; Increasing speed: fast eats slow (Invasion of smart tech); Globalization /Localization: World is more connected; “Creating fun” is serious business (gamification); From big bang change programs to small experiments; From intuitive HR to evidence /fact-based HR).

The dharma or philosophy taught in Vedas is of a two-fold nature, characterised by *pravrtti* (outward action), and *nivrtti* (inward contemplation), which are expected to ensure the true *abhyudaya* (socio-economic welfare) and *nihisreyasa* (spiritual freedom) of all beings. Focusing only on *pravrtti* or *nivrtti* does not help organisations to create balanced, sustainable growth. Such one-sided focus creates unwarranted social and economic pressure. Therefore, a combination of these two aspects are critical for development of an entity, in whatever context. Absence of these two aspects shall bring catastrophe in the world of economy – at family, organisational, and social levels. The ancient scriptures also indicate that doing what is assigned is *duty*, doing what is required by the situation is *contribution*, and doing what will help others to complete their work in a better way, without expectations is *service*. One of the major leadership qualities required for managing business in tomorrow’s world - *the ability to be Vulnerable* – cannot be achieved without being spiritual.

“Spirituality” is an ability to draw energy from within and build an appreciative culture around him/her to deliver best in a world of economy. The ability to accept our areas of weakness *without being weak inside is a process of nivrtti*. A “service oriented” approach in business can happen only through spirituality and re-focussing on “*ikigai*” (meaning to life /Purpose in Japanese language). Spirituality (as defined here) helps to bring synergy and synthesises all the process in an organisation for sustained growth. An economy, which is built with the strength of a combined purpose of a corporate, team, and individuals, always sustains.

End Notes:

1. Etymologically Spirituality means “the way you breath” or “the way you live”. (Latin *spiritus* “a breathing” hence “inspiration; breath of life,” Management” - 1590s) “the act of managing by direction or manipulation,” Sense of “act of man aging by physical manipulation” (670s). “Governing body, directors of an undertaking collectively” (1740s). Governance - late 14c., “act or manner of governing, “rule, administration; conduct”, “command”.
2. The Chrysalis Economy.
3. Few examples of application of the concept is given below for easy appreciation of the concept. The concept is already in practice.
 1. The arrangement between PSA Peugeot Citroën and Toyota to share components for a new city car—simultaneously sold as the Peugeot 107, the Toyota Aygo, and the Citroën C1,

2. Petrol pumps with Restaurants or Branded Sweat Shops or Medical Stores
3. In the electric car market, currently, each electric car brand across the globe has different chargers, power needs and plug types. In order to push the growth in the market, manufacturers are planning to collaborate and establish a standard charging technology, so customers would be able to use any charging station, making saving the environment much more convenient
4. The story of Apple and Tandy Corporation: Tandy was vertically integrated, controlled the whole value chain and discouraged any independent initiative outside of its control. It ultimately stifled its own ecosystem whereas Apple encouraged independent players to join its ecosystem and leveraged their innovations

Works Cited:

1. Udai Pareek, “*Organizational Behavioural Processes*”, Oxford University Press, 2011
2. Jack Welch, Suzy Welch “*Winning*”, Harper Collins Publishers, 2005
3. *Frederic Laloux’s Reinventing Organization*, Nelson Parker, 2014
4. John Elkington, “*The Chrysalis Economy: How citizen CEOs and corporations can fuse values and value creation*”, Capstone, 2001
5. James Redfield, “*The Celestine Prophecy*”, Bantam Books, 1994
6. Marcus Buckingham, Curt Coffman, “*First, Break All the rules: What the world’s greatest managers do differently*”
7. Swami Ranganathananda, “*The Charm and Power of the Gita*”, Advaita Ashrama, 2001
8. John Sculley With John A Byrne, “*Odyssey: Pepsi To Apple*”, Harper Collins, 1988
9. Gouranga P Chattopadhyay, “*Bhagavad Geeta: A Treatise on managing Critical decisions In work organisation, Society, Family*”, Eureka Publishers, Calcutta, 1997
10. Barry J. Nalebuff, Adam M. Brandenburger, “*Co-opetition: Competitive and cooperative business strategies for the digital economy in Strategy & Leadership*”, Vol. 25 No. 6, pp. 28-33.
11. Gary L. Neilson, Bruce A. Pasternack, and Karen E. Van Nuys, *The Passive-Aggressive Organization*, Harvard Business Review, October, 2005
12. Emma Seppala, *What Bosses Gain by Being Vulnerable*, Harvard Business Review, December 11, 2014

About the Author

Mr Bauraj V Nair is the Former Group CHRO, The Hindu Group of Publications, and currently Chief Mentor, P2B Consulting based out of Dubai /Cochin. www.linkedin.com/in/baburaj-nair-309a39a/

Relevance of Sri Aurobindo in the Modern World

Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra



The progress of human society concerned Sri Aurobindo as it concerned seers and thinkers across ages, including Socrates and Plato, Kautilya, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and Swami Vivekananda. To use the language of political science, Sri Aurobindo was concerned with the question – can the human individual rise above Hobbesian human nature? How can he rise? What are the challenges and prospects? His entire endeavor, as reflected in his writings, was directed to these penetrating and perennial questions. With a fervent hope and eternal optimism, Sri Aurobindo argued that such a transformation of human society is possible. However, this will only come to fruition through an inner engineering, not purely by external mechanisms. His is a call to look out from within, rather than to look in from without. He wrote, “...on inner values hangs the outer plan” (CWSA 1997, vols. 33 and 34, 186). He applied this principle to every aspect of human life. His integral approach did not leave any branch of human knowledge, human enterprise, untouched.

India with her repository of knowledge and wisdom can play a key role in the world as a spiritual ambassador. India as a guru can galvanize a process that can help transform human-to-human and state-to-state relations so that the relations are more harmonious and less conflictual.

It is useful to apply Sri Aurobindo’s spiritual philosophy to an analysis of the human needs approach. Maslow, the founder of human needs theory, argued that the physiological needs of the individual – such as the need for safety and security – must be met first before the individual can move onto the next rung of the needs ladder (Maslow 1943). This needs ladder moves up to self-actualization at the top. The individual who has fulfilled all his needs can climb to this step and, moved by some higher goals, attain an even greater fulfillment. Maslow’s theory of human needs evolved over time and he came to assert a level of need beyond self-actualization, which he called transcendence. Sri Aurobindo would argue that unless there is a deeper spiritual principle governing human life, there will be chaos, contradiction and violence. Prioritizing physiological needs over the need of a well-ordered life based on some deeper spiritual principle, would be like putting the cart before the horse.

In a scheme where the needs are not governed by a higher principle, there is the possibility that mechanisms like law and order would prove ineffective to control the chaos and clash of needs. This is what is happening in our age of modernization. Much of the socio-cultural chaos in present day society, much of the violence at the individual and collective levels, can be traced to the erroneous prioritizing of human needs.

Though Sri Aurobindo's primary area of activity was India, the global thinker in him was very much evident throughout his writings. He certainly saw a connection between the global and the local. He believed that India with its rich spiritual wealth could play an effective role in the world. Among Sri Aurobindo's five dreams, the fourth was that India with its repository of knowledge and wisdom can play a role in the world as a spiritual ambassador. India as a guru can galvanize a process that can help transform human-to-human and state-to-state relations so that the relations are more harmonious and less conflictual. Sri Aurobindo cast his vision in a larger framework of the ideal of human unity, in which humans and their culture flourish in an ambience of peaceful coexistence, each flourishing and complementing the other. Such a vision, he would argue, could gather shape only when individuals and their leaders transcend narrow boundaries of ego and its elements. The increasing acceptance of yoga in the world as a method of healing and as a method of peace, the recognition of it by the premier international body, the United Nations, in 2014, can be considered a fruition of Sri Aurobindo's fourth dream, at least partially. However, much remains to be seen and done. How far can such actions work to transform human relations, or will they merely become fads and money generating commercial ventures, as mushrooming of yoga studios indicate? Mere symbolism would certainly not be acceptable to Sri Aurobindo.

Though modern and innovative in his approach, Sri Aurobindo would not discard the wisdom that emerged in the past. He lamented that the modern individual is not aware of ancient wisdom and its treasures. He visualized a connection between the past, present and future through his integral vision, and argued that the past provides a rich source with which to connect and discover the self. He described the Veda as a record of "inner experience and the suggestions of the intuitive mind," which is beyond "mankind's ordinary perceptions and daily activities" (CWSA 1998, vol. 15, 10). Similarly, he described the Upanishads as the waning or lost knowledge recovered by Rishis through "meditation and spiritual experience" or recovery of the old truths in new forms by Rishis who used the Vedic Word as "a seed of thought and vision." For him, the Veda symbolizes, "the struggle between spiritual powers of Light and Darkness, Truth and Falsehood, Knowledge and Ignorance, Death and Immortality" (CWSA 1998, vol. 15, 10). He expressed dissatisfaction that the modern individual, busy with his mundane life and outward activities, has lost interest in this ancient wisdom. He lamented, "small is the chance that in an age which blinds our eyes with the transient glories of the outward life and deafens our ears with the victorious trumpets of a material and mechanical knowledge many shall cast more than the eye of an intellectual and imaginative curiosity on the passwords of their ancient discipline or seek to penetrate into the heart of their radiant mysteries" (CWSA 1998, vol. 15, 369). What Sri Aurobindo wrote about a century ago can be viewed in the context of developments in the 21st century world. In the race towards modernization, which is a controversial term as it means many

things to many people except the component of economic development, it appears that individuals are shunning their rich past and culture as if anything in the past is repugnant to their progress. India, the birthplace of Sri Aurobindo, is no exception to this trend. India's dominant intellectual class has apparently not grasped the depth of the ancient wisdom. They are, to use the Indian philosopher's words, blinded by 'transient glories of the outward life' and deafened by 'trumpets of a material and mechanical knowledge.' The results have been hazardous. Indian school curricula, whether at the elementary or secondary levels, provide scant focus on the ancient gems of Indian wisdom such as Vedanta or ancient Indian scholars like Kautilya. The young Indians of the 21st century, hence, are not aware of the rich past, and lack appreciation of the wisdom inherent in it.

The ideas and philosophy of Sri Aurobindo do not fare well in academic debates and discussions, and in policymaking. This is disturbing, keeping in view the nature and scope of his work. Interestingly, for the Indian philosopher, there is no discrepancy between being an academic scholar and a yogi, and an individual can be both simultaneously. Hence, it is important that in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy one finds an invocation to praxis, a praxis that demands transformation of the individual and society. Sri Aurobindo produced more than thirty volumes including classics like *The Life Divine*, *Synthesis of Yoga*, *Essays on the Gita*, *The Secret of the Veda*. His epic poem *Savitri* can be considered a practical project, in which he invites individuals to take part. The subtitle of this poem, 'a legend and a symbol,' makes it amply clear that it is not just a poem but also a symbol to explore higher realms of consciousness. In this longest poem ever written in English language, Sri Aurobindo builds upon a story from Mahabharata and turns it into a spiritual project. In the author's note to the poem he writes that the legend is not a mere allegory and "the characters are not just personified qualities, but incarnations or emanations of living and conscious Forces with whom we can enter into concrete touch and they take human bodies in order to help man and show him the way from his mortal state to a divine consciousness and immortal life" (CWSA 1997, vols. 33 and 34, author's note). The epic poem is a call to all those who follow the methods and beliefs of his spiritual philosophy to take this journey along with him. While most of the writings of Sri Aurobindo were completed in the second decade of the 20th century, the work on *Savitri* continued until he gave up his mortal body in 1950. Sri Aurobindo continued his epic poem as a yogic endeavor and as a demonstration of his spiritual philosophy. For him, yoga and philosophy are intertwined, and in order to understand his spiritual philosophy one must undertake the journey to fathom his yoga.

References

1. Maslow, A. H. 1943. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50: 370–96.
2. The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo (CWSA). Multiple Years, mentioned in the text. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram. They are available at <https://www.sriarobindoashram.org/sriarobindo/writings.php>

About the Author

Dr. Mahapatra is the Director, Mahatma Gandhi Center with Hindu University of America, USA

Spirituality and Management

Dhruv Kumar Sen

The leader who incorporates spirituality into his or her leadership will be one who causes others to seek out and understand their inner selves. It is the leader's role to be the "sarathi" in this evolution of consciousness, just as Krishna was to Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurushetra.



Business, today, is at cross roads. The bedrock of business has been “Capitalism” with free market forces playing a dominant role. The global financial crisis of 2007-08 and the numerous corporate scandals have eroded the confidence of common people towards the modern business enterprise. The gap between the haves and have-nots has widened hugely not only in society but is also reflected in the huge disparity between the salary and benefits enjoyed by the CEOs and those at Junior levels.

Business is wont to say that its purpose is to create profits and improve the bottom line or to use a corporate jargon enhance shareholder value. Profit is essential for survival but survival begs the question “survival for what”. Is it to earn more and pay fatter dividends and enrich oneself? The larger purpose seems to be missing in business in particular and if one is permitted to generalize in “institutions” per se.

It is no surprising that a study done by Harvard Business School in 2016 showed that half of America between the ages of 18 and 29 years rejected Capitalism. This was supported by a subsequent study conducted by Gallup in 2018.

The picture in India is no different. Newspapers are replete with scandals and rising bank frauds. Trust reposed on people in positions of power and authority is often betrayed. Where are the values and our heritage? It seems that a firewall exists between the traditional values and the values practiced in corporate world.

Business has conquered and vanquished external forces. It has found new markets and created a new order. Why is it that it is facing an existential crisis? The answer lies within; a journey which business is loath to undertake. What is true for man is also true for business. Ethics and morality have ceded ground to profit making and greed and when greed becomes the chief driver and motivator, it also becomes the chief destroyer and the cause of the environmental crisis.

The key issue for today's managers is not of task and structure which will bring about accuracy and excellence but of *spirit*. The overarching focus on profits and growth while ignoring the emotional and spiritual needs is reminiscent of the musk deer which runs throughout his whole life in madness searching externally for what is hidden within him. Clarity within provides the external solution is often missed. Internal clarity comes from a congruence of head and heart and a spirit permeating the system.

Let us take a hypothesis to illustrate this point.

Hypothesis: Does care and respect for others in work really pay off.

We use a management model which is an overlap of four independent agendas - Head, Heart, Body and Spirit.

Head agenda represents the intellect. In organizations, this is the area wherein managers will do trend analysis and analyse whether successful managers have been caring or not. They will use algorithms and statistical methods to drive their point. The problem is the human being –subject of the ‘care and concern’ or the provider is left out of the study.

The Heart agenda focuses on the feelings such as dignity, morale and trust. Relying exclusively on heart will not give a conclusive proof that caring for others is a measure of success. It would be construed as a nice to have but not conclusive enough.

The third agenda is the Body which is concerned about the wellness at work place. Care and concern if demonstrated would be manifested in the attention given by the manager towards the team’s health and this would be reflected in lower absenteeism and higher productivity. However, it still does not conclusively prove as ‘Care and Concern’ is not exclusive to preserving the body alone.

The fourth agenda namely, Spirit takes us beyond the other three. Questions like, “What is my purpose here?” “Who am I?” “Where is this leading the team?” “What about happiness?” become relevant in this agenda. When a Manager interacts with the team on purpose and meaning, the team feels connected by an invisible force and that is “Spirit”. This is a dimension of the universe unavailable to the senses. The dimension of ‘Care and Concern’ touches the whole being of the team member and the members would give their best to such a leader. We use many terms in management literature like change agent and transformational leader. History is replete with examples of leaders who have given nothing but blood, toil, tears and sweat; and people have gladly followed such leaders.

These are the leaders who give meaning and purpose to their followers and addresses the primary motivation of a human being which is to strive for a meaning in life.

As Nietzsche famously put it. “He who has a way to live for can bear almost how.”¹

The Why of life comes from Spirit and let us examine what is Spirit.

Spirit is beyond our physical body, beyond flesh, blood, bones, beyond five senses or, mind, feelings, passions and desires or our collective memories and innate tendencies. In one dictionary the spirit is explained as, that which is traditionally believed to be the vital principle or animating force within living beings. Thus, the spirit relates to the deeper sense, meaning, or significance of something.

A leader’s role is to show the way or be the cause for others to follow a certain course of action or line of thought. The leader influences followers to think or behave in some way. The person who incorporates spirituality into leadership, will be one who causes others to seek out and understand their inner selves. It is such a leader who fosters a sense of meaning and significance among the followers.

Spirituality in leadership is a holistic approach where the leader strives to encourage

a sense of interconnectedness among employees. The spiritual leader understands the importance of employees finding meaning in their work and demonstrates a genuine concern for the “whole” person, not just the employee. Spiritual leadership tries to assist others in finding meaning in their work by addressing fundamental questions such as:

Who are we as a work team, department, or organization?

Is our work worthy? What is our greater purpose?

What are our values and ethical principles?

What will be our legacy?

An example of Spiritual leadership is ‘Servant leadership’ which gained currency in the West. It is modelled on Christ washing the feet of his followers. Essentially it calls upon the leaders to serve the followers and, in this process, help them grow. Leader is not the one who leads from the front. A Servant Leader shares power, puts the needs of the employees first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible. Servant leadership inverts the norm, which puts the customer service associates as a main priority. Instead of the people working to serve the leader, the leader exists to serve the people. As stated by its founder, Robert K. Greenleaf, a Servant Leader should be focused on, “Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”² When leaders shift their mindset and serve first, they benefit as well as their employees in that their employees acquire personal growth, while the organization grows as well due to the employees growing commitment and engagement.

The author contends that the truth lies within and our own Vedanta philosophy and provides us a way out. It equips us with the knowledge to make the right choice and also provides us with the technique of action. A technique which we can apply anywhere and is thus universal in its appeal.

Vedanta is known as Sanatan Dharma, meaning Eternal principles. It gives us true insight into life and helps us to connect with our inner core which is divine in nature. Swami Rama Tirtha states : “Vedanta brings you a religion which is found on the streets, which is written upon the leaves, which is murmured in the brooks, whispered in the winds and throbbing in your veins and arteries, a religion which concerns your business and bosom , a religion which you have not to practice by going to a particular church, mosque or temple only , a religion which you have to practice and live in your everyday life about your hearth, in your drawing room ,everywhere you have to live that religion.”³ Vedanta systematically bridges the gulf between us and the Supreme Being as it says that the Godhead lies within us. It is the original nature. Our ignorance veils it and it is through Vedanta we can discover our true self. How? Vedanta enhances our consciousness by focussing on reflection and removing the veil of ignorance.

In this context, I would like to share there are four aphorisms or *mahavakayas* in Vedas which captures the essence of Vedanta.

1. Brahman is consciousness. Brahman denotes the supreme reality which does not change and pervades everywhere be it in the macrocosm or in the microcosm. Reality is thus consciousness.⁴
2. The second aphorism Ayam Atma Brahma means the self is Brahman which is pervading everywhere. So, every individual is the supreme consciousness.⁵

3. The third aphorism Tat tvam asi or That thou art says you are pure consciousness. Every individual is like a wave in an ocean and my reality is the infinite reality.⁶
4. The fourth aphorism Aham Brahma Asmi: I am Brahman i.e. my real self is God or the ultimate reality⁷

How do we manifest the aphorisms in our corporate life?

1. Detachment to the highs and lows:

An enlightened leader and a company whose ethos are founded on spiritualism will not swing from one extreme to the other. Pain and Pleasure or good times and bad times will be treated with equanimity. High rewards during good times, forgetting that the cycle will reverse soon, and pink slips during bad times will not be the norm. A good leader will also not focus on the individual per se but more on the process which is what the quality gurus also emphasise upon.

2. Service and selflessness:

The *raison d'être* of any organization will be service and not profit maximization. Profits will be ploughed back to serve the customer better. Service to customer will also include deeper level dialogue and treating him/her as an extension of the enterprise. Accordingly, greed which expresses through fleecing of the customer would not be the mantra. The organization would have a longer-term view of the relationship and the management mantras like *customer relationship management* will be embedded in this philosophy. The leader's role will be to inculcate long term thinking in his team.

3. Inclusivity:

If all are connected and we see Brahman in each of us, are the divides between man and woman or between religions or castes or ideologies have any meaning? The fragmentation and consequent polarisation which is the root cause of strife do not find a place when the bedrock of the organization is spiritualism. Such an organization will be truly non-discriminatory and a fair place to work and enjoy.

Leader's task in such an organization is primarily being a role model and help every individual to *Know thy self*. Thou art God. We all are manifestations of divinity and the walls which divide us are taking us further from our own self-realisation or self-actualisation as Maslow will put it.

A key requirement for this is to attain a higher level of consciousness. Sri Aurobindo explains that the human soul has to rise from the depths of ignorance which is inconscient. It is when the leader rises from the inconscient to a higher consciousness that a spiritual oneness will be realised. He explains:

It is only by the ascent and victory of the Soul here in the body that the disguises can fall away and the dynamics of the supreme Truth replace this tangled web of half-truth that becomes creative error, this emergent Knowledge that is converted by its plunge into the inconscience of Matter and its slow partial return towards itself into an effective Ignorance.⁸

I am also taking the liberty of borrowing the teachings of Sri Aurobindo where he describes the role of a teacher. I have interpreted this as the role of a leader.

The Teacher of the integral Yoga will follow as far as he may the method of the Teacher within us. He will lead the disciple through the nature of the disciple. Teaching,

example, influence, - these are the three instruments of the Guru. But the wise Teacher will not seek to impose himself or his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind; he will throw in only what is productive and sure as a seed which will grow under the divine fostering within. He will seek to awaken much more than to instruct; he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion. He will give a method as an aid, as a utilisable device, not as an imperative formula or a fixed routine. And he will be on his guard against any turning of the means into a limitation, against the mechanising of process. His whole business is to awaken the divine light and set working the divine force of which he himself is only a means and an aid, a body or a channel. ⁹

Thus, according to Sri Aurobindo, example is much more powerful than instruction. Here, we must remember that by 'example' he didn't refer to the instances of external acts or 'personal character'. It is the 'central fact of divine realization within' that would act as a stimulant to the aspiration in others. The very life of the Teacher in its entirety and all the actions associated with it will serve as an ideal example. However, 'influence' is much more important than example. Influence is not the external authority which an ordinary leader imposes upon his subordinates; on the contrary, it is the nearness of his soul to the soul of another.

It is a leader or a teacher's role to be the "sarathi" in this evolution of consciousness, just as Krishna was to Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurushetra.

References:

1. *Nietzsche: Twilight of the Idols, Maxims & Arrows*# 12
2. *Robert K. Greenleaf: The Servant as Leader*
3. Extract from Lecture delivered on January 26, 1903 in San Francisco, USA.
4. Aitareya Upanishad 3.3 of the Rig Veda
5. Mandukya Upanishad 1.2 of the Atharva Veda
6. Chandogya Upanishad 6.8.7 of the Sama Veda
7. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10 of the Yajur Veda
8. *Sri Aurobindo, The Synthesis of Yoga, Part One: The Yoga of Divine Works, Chapter 11, The Master of the Work, pp. 242-243*
9. *Sri Aurobindo, The Synthesis of Yoga - Part 1: The Yoga of Divine Works, SABCL Volume 20- Pages 47-62*

Bibliography:

1. Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga, Part One: The Yoga of Divine Works, Chapter 11, The Master of the Work, pp. 242-243*
2. The Key Role of the Supramental Consciousness In the Integral Yoga In "*The Synthesis of Yoga*"
3. The Great and Decisive Transition in the Yoga In "*The Synthesis of Yoga*"
4. The Higher and the Lower Hemisphere of Consciousness In "*The Synthesis of Yoga*"
5. "Vedanta Treatise The eternities" A Parthasarathy

About the Author

Mr Dhruv Kumar Sen contributor is a Management Consultant, based out of Bangalore, India

New Attitudes to Work

Valentina Beatriz

What is the essence of the work that we do? If the goal of our work is the Divine, we become more conscious. The environment becomes congenial and less rigid.

So, when there are work related differences of opinion, problems do not arise as all are trying to manifest the same divine creation within. She dreams of a powerful new combination of a beautiful higher aspiration uplifting consciousness along with professionally applied strategies....



I moved to Auroville in January 2018, and as a Newcomer I must admit I am still adapting to this very special place. While exploring different working places and activities, and trying to create a more conscious lifestyle, I find myself getting rid of many old conditionings in the way I used to conceive of work as the main activity and outer goal of my life. I'm welcoming and creating not only brand-new possibilities in this field, but also a very new concept of what work means.

When you are facing a new reality – specially one so unique as Auroville – you need to apply your discernment with caution to find the right balance between being humble and flexible enough to drop your preconceptions and surrender to the journey, but at the same time being courageous and sincere enough to stick to your truth and values, even when they may be in conflict with the reality that you perceive around you.

Being in some sort of in-between state (not feeling part of that “other society” anymore, but not yet being officially part of this one) can be tricky, but it can also be an advantage. I can observe and choose which things I want to put in practice, and which toxic ideas and behaviors must be transformed.

In terms of work, there are some beautiful new ways that Auroville has shown me for which I'm deeply grateful. For example, colleagues and co-workers will treat you in a much more human and equal way than in any other place. You are genuinely allowed to put your physical, mental and spiritual health first, and take the time you need to attend to other big priorities in your life, such as buying your basics, moving house, or even taking a retreat for a few weeks if you feel you need it.

It is a very flexible environment in terms of hours and timings, and you are allowed to design the schedule that meets your needs. You are also encouraged to do your best without being so attached to the final result. All this makes it a much more open, playful and conscious environment than the rigidity of the achievement-based mentality prevalent in my country of origin, Chile.

In fact, taking a full week off to attend a workshop that you are interested in would be totally unconceivable there and I'm sure in many other countries too. But not in Auroville, where the aim is far from the capitalist style of “taking as much as possible while paying the least”.

However, as I worked in different units and projects, I came to understand that achieving human unity in diversity requires a tremendous effort as it involves accepting all the differences, backgrounds, talents, styles and personalities for the sake of manifesting something together.

Yet, does that mean that everyone is equally qualified to make certain decisions or to hold certain roles, especially when some of them required professional knowledge? Maybe not.

I think that qualified professionals are needed in Auroville. Especially when we need to interact and communicate with the outer world with credibility. Professionals should provide useful methods, techniques and procedures to facilitate organisation and make processes more efficient. At the same time there is a danger of assuming that someone with a degree will do a better job than someone who doesn't have one.

After six years of studies, I can say that even if all the theory, practice and experience acquired in the journey has been quite useful, to be a good professional is not necessarily dependent upon having a diploma. There are many colleagues with the same diploma that I have that I wouldn't choose to work with. Not because they don't have certain skills but because their level of consciousness would make our collaboration very difficult and disharmonious.

At the same time, I've been amazed by many Aurovilians who, without any formal studies in their fields, have achieved amazing results. Driven by their passion and commitment, these people are embodying the idea that Auroville is a big university, and that nothing teaches you better than constant experience and discipline.

So, what is the real qualification needed to be part of the experiment of Auroville, if nobody really cares about your diploma, your country, or even your background? Maybe even more than professional experience, what is really required from everyone in Auroville is to remain present and sincere enough to channel something higher. It is an attitude which says, "Are you going to take it personally if we have some disagreement or are you going to prioritize the creation that we are manifesting together?"

We may have different opinions and be different on a human level, but in the spiritual level we are the same. The more I value and respect you, the more I value and respect myself. Maybe ego will always be there, but it is enough if you recognize that is not you and decide to remember the no-separation reality each time you feel triggered.

Embracing a more feminine way

We are coming from a world that addresses professionalism and work in a masculine way: as productivity and outcomes. I feel it is the time to embrace a more feminine way now. One that is not only focused on action, tasks, achievements, goals and results but more importantly, focused on fully embracing the joy of doing in the present moment. With patience, love and compassion.

Every time that work feels like a burden, it is because we have disconnected ourselves from the source and from this truth, so we need to help each other to remember so we can

become playful again. The way to measure success shouldn't be any longer how productive, efficient and profitable you are. This mindset can be replaced with how much you enjoy being in the present moment with whatever you are doing. We need to help each other more actively remember that there's a big natural satisfaction in sharing, not because "we have to" but because we genuinely feel there's no separation: "I don't want anything for myself that I don't want for you too."

Does that mean that we forget about productivity, that we don't aspire for good results anymore? No. The call is actually to integrate a new state. We are not machines serving anything outside ourselves but we are serving the divine within.

A new kind of discipline could emerge on the way: a strong commitment to stay present, to stay honest with your mission, to stay courageous enough to express yourself freely without the fear of being rejected and to set healthy boundaries with transparency.

Despite the fact the inner work that you do is not officially being taken into consideration as work in Auroville, this may be the very reason why we are all here: to transform the consciousness so deeply that the very concept of work will be pointless, because at the end we won't feel any separation between who we are inside and what we do outside; there will be just a constant flowing of bliss.

Finally, I dream of a powerful new combination, the beautiful higher aspiration of uplifting consciousness along with professionally applied strategies, because I feel there's a need to integrate both worlds. Once we do that, we can say that the 'Aurovilian Way' is an example of a new form of professionalism.

About the Author

Ms. Valentina is a filmmaker, photographer and dancer from Chile. She joined Auroville as a Newcomer in 2018 and has been directing and editing videos and documentaries for different units and projects.

** This article is courtesy Auroville Today.

*He works through the fierce vicissitudes of our lives,
He works through the hard breath of battle and toil,
He works through our sins and sorrows and our tears,
His knowledge overrules our nescience;*

Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book 1, Canto IV

What would Lord Krishna share with Harvard Management Students?!

Ashok Kumar Bhatia

Mr. Ashok writes as Krishna in first person, in poetry in the first phase of his article and in prose in the second.

He writes

“From aversion to love

‘Me and I’ to ‘We and Us’

I-am-the-Doer to humility”

Life is a unique opportunity to move up the ladder of spiritual evolution.



All of you are welcome to join me in this journey!
From depths of despondency to heights of committed action
Agitation to tranquility, peace and calm within
Negativity to positivity
An inward shuddering to steadfastness within
Sweating the small stuff to worrying over values and ethics;

From being stressed out to higher resilience
Fretting over past and future to living in the present
Controlled by ego and desires to living a life of true bliss
Lassoing the wild horse within known as the mind
Analysis paralysis to intuitive decision making
Clear focus on work but not to the rewards thereof;

From chaotic work to a balanced life
Myopic to a long-term view of things
Quarterly guidelines to value-based strategic goals
Generating surpluses to holding same in trust for stakeholders
Creating wealth and sharing some of it with society at large
Treating all with due respect and empathy;

From aversion to love
‘Me and I’ to ‘We and Us’
I-am-the-Doer to humility
Encouraging dissent and diversity
Communicating with clarity and beneficial motives
Standing up to what you are convinced is wrong;

From being selfish to selfless
Reactive to proactive
Passion to compassion
Anger and hatred to love
Arrogance to grace
Always maintaining an inner connection with your true Self;

From anxiety to poise
Fear to courage
Restless to peaceful
Resentful to forgiving
Imbalance to balance
Desire-laden to free of desires;

From gross to subtle
Being a hypocrite to being true to yourself
Keeping mum to openly defending the good
And destroying the bad
Attachment to detachment
Enjoying life to the hilt;

From expectation to acceptance
Passive resistance to vibrant surrender
Intellectualizing to wisdom
Ignorance to knowledge
Unaware to aware of your strengths and weaknesses
Managing affairs by loftier objectives;

With benign motives guiding your actions
Remain connected to me as a friend
And no harm shall ever come to you,
Challenges faced by me in my own life
Alone shaped my approach to problem solving,
I say this with all humility at my command.

Consider my own life

Born in a prison, I was separated from my parents within a few hours of my birth. For my own safety, I grew up in the loving care of my foster parents. When the call of duty came from the tyrant king of Mathura, my birth place, I left my adopted home and its soothing environment, including my beloved Radha, never to return.

When Kansa, the king who also happened to be my maternal uncle, was killed, I freed my parents and my maternal grandfather, all of whom had been wrongfully imprisoned by Kansa. My family had then expected me to take up the task of governing the kingdom, a suggestion I politely declined. My suggestion to handover the charge back to my imprisoned grandfather was accepted by the assembly.

Overthrowing a kingdom and assuming its charge was never my idea of fun in life. What appealed to me instead was to replace kings who had swerved from the path of righteousness by replacing them with any of their own worthy descendents. I wished to be free to pursue higher goals in my life. I overthrew a lot of unjust kingdoms later in my life, but I was always a king-maker, never a king myself.

When the mighty armies of the dead king's father in law kept attacking the kingdom of Mathura repeatedly, I decided to build a small kingdom of myself and my brother, far away, in the midst of the sea. Beating a strategic retreat was the best way to spare the trauma of the lay citizens of my homeland.

The grave injustice being meted out to my cousins, the Pandavas, by the ruling dispensation, comprising the Kauravas, made me side with the former. I realized they were

on the path of righteousness. They were being denied their rightful share in the kingdom. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to disarm them, either by killing them or by cheating them in a game of dice, thereby deferring their right to get their due share. Their wife was insulted in the royal court and an attempt was even made to disrobe her in the presence of all family seniors, who did not object.

If you face a formidable enemy who continues to be patently unjust to a fair-minded party, what are your options? You either go into oblivion of sorts, or you look him in the eye and challenge him in combat. Skeptics amongst you may label me a warmonger. Wars are disastrous and against basic human values. But the fact remains that even while knowing there was no hope for avoiding a war, I made a last-ditch attempt to reconcile the two factions. Not only was my offer rejected but even an attempt was made to arrest me, much against the standard norms.

And when the two armies were standing face to face, my friend Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers, who was always keen on waging a war, suddenly started having self doubts. That is how *Bhagavad Gita* came about.

What I conveyed to my friend Arjuna on a battlefield long time back can inspire you to face mighty challenges while running or managing a business.

From a despondent being, I could somehow succeed in persuading him to becoming a highly charged-up warrior, ready to fight for his rights.

I merely re-packaged the rich lessons of eternal wisdom embedded in Indian scriptures and presented a highly distilled version of the same for use of all of you.

If you wish to deliver miraculous results, keep your saw always sharpened, put in extraordinary effort and have unwavering faith. There is no other way to success.

How Faith and Devotion work

Bhagavad Gita has its origin in Indian Vedas and Upanishads, but the message it gives is universal in nature.

When its key message was composed, some 5,000 years back, the term religion, as we understand it today in a much narrower sense, did not exist. *Gita* is based on one following one's own Dharma, or the path of righteousness. In other words, it was a binary approach to living – one either followed Dharma, or one did not. Anything other was held to be Adharma, or the absence of righteousness. In short, this scripture expects everyone to have a valid code of conduct (*Gita* - Chapter 16).

Today, you have choices of so many religions, should you decide to go that way. But what I have conveyed is the way of leading a spiritual life, the cornerstones of which – human values, fairness, empathy, etc – are extolled by all the religions.

If religion today has the potential to create disharmony, spirituality is there to unite mankind in its search for true happiness.

About the Author

Mr. Bhatia is a senior management professional, an active author and speaker on such subjects as Management, Spirituality, Indian Scriptures, P G Wodehouse and Bollywood movies. He blogs at www.ashokbhatia.wordpress.com. The article above is a part of his upcoming book which tries to connect management practices and the key lessons of the *Bhagavad Gita*

The illustration is by Mr. Upendra Ratra, who lives and works in Pondicherry.

A Decentralized Self-Governing System Envisioned by Indian Genius

Narendra Madhav Joshi

One of the most ancient culture of the world, India, has much to offer to us today in terms of Management and Governance. Our Ancients have left systematic guidelines for us to follow. Sri Aurobindo re-emphasizes that India's past has been glorious and it is for us to learn from it and adapt the old spirit in the new form.



Introduction: The Issue which triggered the thoughts:

In the recent times there was an issue in metro city Mumbai when a state-owned corporate body was hell bent for a Metro train development project even if close to three thousand trees were to be cut on a sensitive forest area which is said to be lungs of the already polluted city. General people had divided and highly politicised opinions and a couple of NGOs working for sustainable development and environment were opposing cutting of trees for that project. The High court ruled in favour of tree cutting. Even before the petitioner could appeal to the Supreme court, the trees were cut in the middle of night and the place was cleared. The smaller, poor and tribal communities depending on that forest area and the bio system were disturbed critically by the whole issue. How could somebody sitting in the capital sign a paper and destroy their life? The answer was because he was the representative of the people. In what way? Because it is democracy and he was voted to power. But the vote share of his party was merely 25-30 % and it was because only 50% population voted and also because opposition could not gather much. So, as the saying goes, “The lesser of the evils won!!”

The role and limitation of a State authority, a sovereign, rights and responsibilities of population, were debated. The roles of corporate entity and especially the person leading it. A State head, environmental body, local municipality, block officers, forest authorities, activists along with the village level bodies were under scanner. Many involved became highly emotional and even violent in this process.

Similar things are happening all over India or all over the world. What happened to the communities in Amazon forest? What happened to original people in America or in European colonies? What is root of insurgency in Northeast India, in Naxal belts of India? The issues of local livelihood, protection of nature and pressure to develop the communities to catch up to the already ‘Developed’ western world is apparent in every corner of the world. The glaring gap between rich and the poor is same irrespective of Communist, Socialist or Capitalist model. The case is equally applicable to businesses and corporate entities, especially to large scale, multinational corporations.

However, the larger issue is whether such large state machineries and centralized rule are really the solution to such complex issues? Why do we say that there is democracy? –people’s rule? How are the respective heads and ministers or corporators, CEO’s and managers different from ancient centralised monarchs? Both have enjoyed vast influence and power over people about whom they were not even concerned. Both have taken decisions with least knowledge and insight. In both cases there were those who were irresponsible and unscrupulous to the core. Does such machinery really serve the population for better life or do we need a different model for governance, whether it be a business or a state or a nation?

What could be the solution to such rotten law and order machinery? What could be the alternate model of management and governance? Could the 5000 plus years consistently thriving culture of India throw some guiding light about it?

We believe that She can and She will.

With the intention to go deeper into this matter and find the alternate solution or model of governance and management studies on Sri Aurobindo’s thought were done. For that we took insights from *The Renaissance in India and other essays on Indian Culture* (earlier Foundations of Indian Culture,) by Sri Aurobindo, especially from chapters on Indian Polity.

All the bullet points are inspirations from this source to facilitate the understanding of the issue:

The main function of Head of the aggregate i.e. organization/ kingdom or corporate:

1. This implies the function of the political sovereign, the king, council and the other ruling members of the politic body, (or as in a corporate world, its top management, CEO, VP or Board of Directors) is
 - ◆ To serve and assist the maintenance of the sound law of life of the society / and of corporate
 - ◆ The sovereign was the guardian and administrator of the Dharma.

Here Dharma is much above duty and is linked to the ordained duty as per the rule of righteousness and adherence to values. They are do’s and don’ts that are self-imposed in alignment with the vision and mission, role, position and responsibility of the self, of the family and the group or clan and guild.

2. The function of the aggregate, *praja* or society or employees and customers is:
 - ◆ The right satisfaction of the vital, economic and other needs of the human being
 - ◆ Satisfaction of his hedonistic claim to pleasure and enjoyment,
 - ◆ However, to do so according to their right law and measure of satisfaction and subject and subordinated
 - ◆ And by adherence to the ethical, social and religious dharma.
3. How are the Dharma, duty, abiding values and do’s or don’ts decided for all the members and groups of the socio-political body or industry or organization?

It is decided by their:

- ◆ Innate nature, *Swabhava*
 - ◆ Position,
 - ◆ Relation-to the whole body
4. Following are duties of the sovereign to ensure this freedom within the bonds:
 - ◆ To assure all and facilitate as well as maintain the free and right exercise of each one’s duty or dharma,

- ◆ To facilitate freedom to their own natural and self-determined functioning within their own bounds,
- ◆ To restrain and control from any transgression, encroachment or deviation from their right working and true limits.

This is also the role of top management in an organization or corporate along with the help of regional or functional GMs or administrators, CMs and state assemblies or satraps.

5. What is over administering / over governing/ or over managing? Or what is not the role of a King, Sovereign or top Management?

The king or Chakravarty or head office or board or top management should not interfere with or encroach upon the free functioning of the smaller aggregates like:

- ◆ *Sreni*, guild, caste, religious community, village, township, region, ancillary units, regional offices as far as possible.
- ◆ This will continue till some need is pointed by them or emergency is seen or security is threatened or general customers or public or *praja* complains on serious basis.
- ◆ They will never muddle or interfere or drastically alter the organic customs and systems of the region or province or ancillaries
- ◆ Try to abrogate their rights, for these were inherent and organically evolved from the roots of that community or aggregate.

All this is because it is necessary to the sound exercise of the social Dharma.

6. All that the King or any such top authorities mentioned above are called upon to do:

- ◆ Coordinate the activities and outputs of each smaller unit or aggregate,
- ◆ Exercise a general and supreme control,
- ◆ Defend the life of the community against external attack or internal disruption,
- ◆ Repress crime and disorder,
- ◆ Assist, promote and regulate, in its larger lines the economic and industrial welfare,
- ◆ Oversee to the provision of facilities, and to use for these purposes the powers that passed

7. Governance /Management or Organizing is a very complex communal freedom and self-determination for:

- ◆ Own natural existence
- ◆ Autonomous administering its own life and business, but administering within its own proper limits,
- ◆ A natural demarcation of its field and limits from the others

And yet the whole connected to each and each to each other by well-understood relations:

- ◆ Each a partner with the others in the powers and duties and yet not interfering with their work, and not allowing any interference in executing its own laws and rules,
- ◆ Joining with the others in the discussion and the regulation of matters of a mutual or common interest,
- ◆ Represented in some way and to the degree of its importance in the general assemblies of the kingdom or empire.

8. The central authority are the linkages between city-based aggregates and village-based subunits. Any government, corporate or organization of a notable size has to deal with urban as well as village population and there has to be some linkage between these two.

- ◆ The *Paura* or metropolitan civic assembly takes care of city units and their management and governance.
- ◆ They sit constantly in the capital town of the kingdom or empire or the corporate entity.

- ◆ under the imperial system there are also many similar but lesser bodies in the chief towns of the provinces, one can say ward wise, suburban wise in the main urban body, also district wise repetition of this pattern.
- ◆ There can be cases where an assembly of urban aggregate is existing even though the city or UT are themselves capitals of independent kingdoms or nations.

The system in its ascending curve and success: At the height of its evolution and in the great days of Indian civilisation we find an admirable political system efficient in the highest degree and very perfectly combining communal self-government with stability and order.

- ◆ The State carried on its work administrative, judicial, financial and protective without destroying or encroaching on the rights and free activities of the people and its constituent bodies in the same departments.
- ◆ The royal courts in capital and country were the supreme judicial authority coordinating the administration of justice throughout the kingdom, but they did not unduly interfere with the judicial powers entrusted to their own courts by the village and urban communes and, even, the regal system associated with itself the guild, caste and family courts, working as an ample means of arbitration and only insisted on its own exclusive control of the more serious criminal offences.
- ◆ A similar respect was shown to the administrative and financial powers of the village and urban communes. The king's governors and officials in town and country existed side by side with the civic governors and officials and the communal heads and officers appointed by the people and its assemblies.
- ◆ The State did not interfere with the religious liberty or the established economic and social life of the nation it confined itself to the maintenance of social order and the provision of a needed supervision, support, coordination and facilities for the rich and powerful functioning of all the national activities.
- ◆ The State understood too always and magnificently fulfilled its opportunities as a source of splendid and munificent stimulation to the architecture, art, culture, scholarship, literature already created by the communal mind of India.
- ◆ In the person of the monarch it was the dignified and powerful head and in the system of his administration the supreme instrument—neither an arbitrary autocracy or bureaucracy, nor a machine oppressing or replacing life—of a great and stable civilisation and a free and living people.

This was the sense in which the earlier mind of India understood the problem. The administrative empire of later times accepted it only partially. The trend was, very slowly and almost subconsciously, to destroy, wear down and weaken the vigour of the subordinated autonomies. The consequence was that whenever the central authority was weak, the persistent principle of regional autonomy essential to the life of India reasserted itself to the detriment of the artificial unity.

Bibliography

1. *Sri Aurobindo*, The Renaissance in India and the other essays on Indian Culture
2. *D.B. Thengadi*, The Third Way
3. *Fritjof Capra*, The Turning Point

About the Author

Dr. Joshi is passionate about societal research oriented work for the future of the human race. He served as Principal in Agnel Technical College, Mumbai.

An Overview of the Ingenious Model of Corporates and Trade Practices in Indian Culture

Ashok Sinkar

Corporate activity in economic life was a factor in Indian society. The first stages of its development are found 800 B.C. There is ample views about the eligibility for entry into Sreni(guild).

In ancient Bharat, human culture and life developed and reached its zenith in terms of all-round development. The basic reason, I believe our ancestors thought about life in its entirety in a very disciplined and conscious manner. Thus, they never lost sight of the principles and things those were fundamental to enrichment of human life. On this backdrop here below is a quick introduction to one aspect of economic development those times. It is about Guild/ *Sreni*.



What is a *Sreni*/Guild -

Men following similar means of livelihood usually formed themselves into a corporation with definite rules to guide themselves. The particular term used to denote the corporation of tradesmen or mechanics is *Sreni*. This is defined as a corporation of people, belonging to the same or different caste, but following the same trade and industry. Ancient literature, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, as well as ancient inscriptions, contain frequent references to guilds.

It can be said that with confidence, that corporate activity in economic life was a factor in Indian society, probably from the later early Vedic, and in any case certainly from the later Vedic period. The first stages of its development are found 800 B.C.

The words 'Sresthin' or 'Gan' from Vedic period, according to some scholars, denote 'Headman of Guild/ *Sreni*' or Guild/ '*Sreni*' respectively.

Format of *Sreni*

Almost all businesses and industries and professions had formed their own Samghas. But their numbers may have been changing over time and place. In the Muga-pakkha Jataka, the king, is said to have assembled the four castes, the eighteen guilds, and his whole army.

If you peruse through ancient literature and inscriptions, you will notice the diversity and enormity of *Sreni*, as you see below as sample list: -

Workers in wood (carpenters, including builders of houses, ships and vehicles)	Workers in metal, including gold and silver	Workers fabricating hydraulic engines (<i>odayantrika</i>)
Workers in stone	Ivory workers	Leather workers
Bamboo workers (<i>vasakara</i>)	Braziers (<i>kasakara</i>)	Jewellers
Weavers	Potters	Painters
Oil millers (<i>Tilapisaka</i>)	Rush workers & basket makers	Dyers
Corn-dealers (<i>Dhamnika</i>)	Cultivators	Fisher folk
Forest police guarding caravans	Barbers & shampooers	Garland makers & flower sellers
Mariners	Herdsmen	Traders / caravan traders
Robbers and free boaters	Butchers	Money-lenders
Rope and mat-makers	Toddy-drawers	Tailors

It depicts, the multifarious functions of guilds in the economic, social and religious life of the people. Dr. Richard Fick observes that there was a clear difference, so far as, guild was concerned, between the traders and merchants on one side, and the artisans on the other.

Organisation of *Sreni* -

The people practising traditional business/industry/profession use to form *Samgha* of their respective business/industry/profession by choosing one among them as the Head/*Sresthin*. It also appears that in some *Srenis*; the selection/appointment of such Headman was also to be heredity. There is ample views and guidelines given by Gautama, Yajnavalkya, Manu, Narada, Brhaspati, Kautilya about the eligibility for entry into *Sreni* and qualifications for the position of its Headman, different kinds of *Sreni* and model rules. These *Srenis* had powers to make their own rules which were respected by Rulers of State. There are ample evidence to show these was democratic spirit behind all rules and organisation of *Sreni*.

Features -

The heredity of profession, the localization of the different branches of industry and the institution of *Jetthaka* (Alderman) appear to Dr. Richard Fick to be conclusive evidence for the existence of an organization that may be compared with guilds.

At times we find entire settlement, street or village used to be occupied by certain business/profession; for example, *Mahavaddhakigamo*, for instance, consisted of thousand families of dealers in wood, and the *Kammaragamo*, the same number of smiths' huts.

A carpenters' village near Varanasi had two groups of five hundred each, which had two master women as their Heads. It was also mentioned these groups migrated to an island. The women predominance and migration is noteworthy.

From the inscriptions found in Nashik, Junnar we find *Sreni* used to act as Bankers and Trustees.

Sreni and Rulers of State -

The authority of the guild was fully recognized, supported and safeguarded by the rulers. The king used to deliver judgements about *Srenis* only after understanding the

rules of Sreni and listening to Headman. The Headman of Sreni used to have rank at par with Head of army of elephant riders and cavalry. The special concessions/privileges used to be granted to professionals/businessmen who were members of *Sreni*; such as grant of land in village and such other amenities.

Classifications/Divisions-

According to modern economics, the *Srenis* can be divided into 5 categories.

1. Guilds which had the character of joint commercial undertaking (though not often permanent) with capital of their own and designated by the name *samgha*- masons or house-builders may be cited as examples.
2. Guilds of skilled workmen who were supplied materials by capitalists and who turned the raw materials into the fabrics required and were paid according to their out-turn.
3. Guilds of lower-class artisans, who could work independent of capitalistic connection and depended solely on cheap natural products and on their labour or skill, like potters, garland-makers and basket-makers.
4. Various grades of menials and low-class workmen like servants, scavengers, charioteers, barbers, washer men, cooks and agricultural labourers.
5. Men of various professions and occupations like physicians, nurses, musicians and scribes

Overall, all these *Srenis* contributed to the progress of the nation at that time. The whole account reviewed above makes it abundantly clear that the guilds made a great contribution to the social, economic and political development of the country through the corporate spirit inherent in them. The kind of relationship prevailing between *Srenis*/ Guilds and the Rulers, then is similar to commerce and industry and the Government of today's modern world. We also find the seeds of today's management techniques well embedded in constitution and operations of Guilds/*Srenis*. Thus we inherit great culture of ancient Bharat which we must study and understand from the original and reliable sources.

References:

1. Corporate Life in Ancient India by R.C. Majumdar, The Oriental Book Agency, Pune, 1922
2. Sarthvah by Dr. Moti Chandra, Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad, Patna, 1953 (Hindi)

About the Author

Mr. Sinkar is a scholar on Indian Culture

Upcoming Events at SACAR
Sri Aurobindo Centre for Advanced Research
Tentative Schedule
(December 2019 — April 2020)

December 2019

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 1. | Seminar on Management | 21 & 22 |
| 2. | Practicing Life-Skills in Day-to-day Living :
A Consciousness Approach | 26-29 |

January 2020

- | | | |
|----|--------------|----------|
| 1. | Marathi Camp | 22 to 29 |
|----|--------------|----------|

February 2020

- | | | |
|----|---------------|-----------|
| 1. | New Race | 1 |
| 2. | Marathi Camp | 11 to 17 |
| 3. | Darshan Talks | 18 and 19 |
| 4. | Darshan Talks | 22 and 23 |

March 2020

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Exhibition on “The Mother in Japan” | 1, 2 and 3 |
| 2. | ICPR Workshop | 17 to 23 |

April 2020

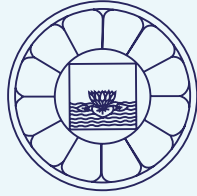
- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Workshop – “India on the March” | 20, 21 and 22 |
| 2. | India on March Journal Launch | 20 |
| 3. | Talks on “The Mother” Book Launch | 22 |

Institute of Human Study

2-2-4/1, O.U.Road, Hyderabad 500 044

Email: ihd_hyd@yahoo.com
newraceejournal@gmail.com

Donations to SACAR are tax exempt under 80G



His being, spread to embrace the universe,
United the within and the without
To make of life a cosmic harmony,
An empire of the immanent Divine.

Sri Aurobindo
Savitri: Book III Canto-3