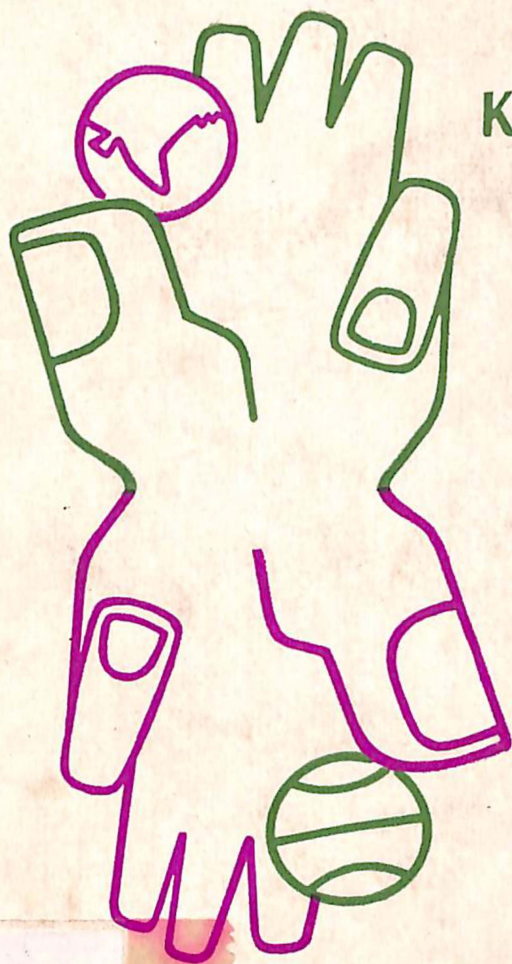


MODERN INDIA AND WORLD FELLOWSHIP

K.K.DATTA



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Dr. K. K. Datta is an eminent historian of our time and he is now the Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University. He was invited to deliver the KAMALA Lectures of the University of Calcutta in 1969.

In the Kamala Lectures published in this volume Dr. Datta has tried to present an account of Modern India's contribution towards the development of internationalism and world fellowship to the relief of tormented humanity.

India has also actively participated in the international organisations that have sprung up after the devastations of two global wars, and has raised her voice in support of peace, harmony, democratic nationalism and the uplift of the oppressed and the down-trodden. These aspects of India's cultural heritage and her philosophy have been described by Dr. Datta with examples and innumerable quotations from the writings of the great people of India and the world.

MODERN INDIA AND WORLD FELLOWSHIP

BY
DR. K. K. DATTA, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.
Vice Chancellor, Patna University

KAMALA LECTURES FOR 1967
(University of Calcutta)
delivered on the 17th, 18th and 19th February, 1969



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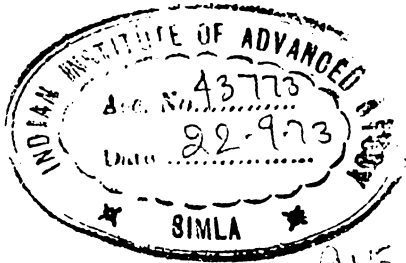
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Nationalism, industrialism and imperialism have been the three dominating forces in the history of the modern world, and there has been tremendous impact of all these on India, transforming her destiny in various ways since the mid-eighteenth century. The period after the termination of World War I has been marked by efforts for international amity. There has also been intimate cultural contact among the different countries since the close of the eighteenth century facilitating growth of the idea of world fellowship, which has proved to be a creative factor in modern history.

Though subject to various restraints and rigours of alien domination, our country, true to her time-honoured ideal of universalism, has played a highly significant role to promote it in modern times. Prophets of renascent India, since the days of Raja Rammohan Roy, writers, poets, philosophers and artists have preached and practised it with profound faith and zeal, in spite of the gigantic strides of militant nationalism and aggressive imperialism of other powers. Our patriots and statesmen have laid considerable emphasis on it. As a matter of fact, a unique feature of Indian nationalism has been its aspiration for perfect reconciliation with international fellowship. It has never been exclusive or narrow in spirit or outlook.

India has also actively participated in the international organisations that have sprung up after the devastations of two global wars, and has raised her voice in support of peace, harmony, democratic nationalism and uplift of the oppressed and the down-trodden.

In the Kamala Lectures, published in this volume, I have tried to present an account of modern India's contributions towards the development of internationalism and world fellowship to the relief of tormented humanity. It is indeed a highly instructive and inspiring subject.

I am deeply grateful to the authorities of my Alma Mater, the University of Calcutta, for their kindness in asking one of its old and humble alumni like myself to deliver the Kamala Lectures for the year 1967. It is a matter of immense gratification for me that I was selected to lecture on a foundation established by the late Sir Ashutosh Mookherjee in 1924 in memory of his dear daughter. I take this opportunity of paying my tribute of regards to the sacred memory of this great son of modern India, whose gifts for its cultural renaissance are numerous and of inestimable value.

27th October, 1969
Patna

K. K. DATTA

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**PROMOTION OF FELLOWSHIP
THROUGH THE STUDY OF INDIAN CULTURE
AND
INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS**

A highly significant feature in the history of India's civilization, age after age, has been the catholicity of her thought and culture. From the days of remote antiquity India's culture with its keynote of universalism has exercised a supremely fruitful influence on human minds, far and wide, beyond the physical limits of her geography. 'To know my country,' observed Rabindranāth, 'one has to travel to that age when she realised her soul and thus transcended her physical boundaries, when she revealed her being in a radiant magnanimity which illumined the eastern horizon, making her recognised as their own by those in alien shores who were awakened into a new surprise of life.' He wrote on the 2nd December, 1932: 'In the great age of India's cultural self-expression, the iridescence of her spirit not only touched with a glorious fulness every aspect of her national life, but shed its lustre on her neighbouring civilizations, uniting them with her in a common awakening of consciousness. Diverse alien lands, with widely varying traditions and cultures, shared her realizations, offering in return their own highest gifts of wisdom and inspiration. A living commerce of ideas was thus established between India and her contemporaneous civilizations, extending far and wide the zone of her influence in the arts, and the sciences, and philosophy, and laying the foundation of a great federation of cultures in which Asia found the supreme manifestation of her humanity.'¹ Vivekānanda very significantly emphasised this historic mission of India in several lectures he delivered here and abroad. 'Those that tell you,' he said, 'that Indian thoughts never went outside India, those that tell you that I am the first Sannyasin who went to foreign lands to preach, do not know the history of their own race. Again and again this phenomenon has happened. Spiritual knowledge can only be given in silence, like

¹ *The Modern Review*, December, 1933, p. 661.

the dew that falls unseen and unheard, yet bringing into bloom masses of roses. This has been the gift of India to the world again and again. This happened ages before Buddha was born and remnants of it are still left in China, in Asia Minor, and in the heart of the Malayan Archipelago. This was the case when the Greek conqueror united the four corners of the then known world. Now the same opportunity has again come; the power of England has linked the nations of the world together as was never done before.¹

Nowhere has the cult of universalism been declared with so much emphasis as in the Upanishads. 'Once the life of India was like a flowing river; the currents of its thoughts were fluid and moving. That is why India could then say, '*Āyantu Sarvatah Svāhā*'—let everyone come from every land; '*Śrinvantu viśve*,'—let the world hear what I have to say; '*Vedaham*'—I know that I have a message to give to the world.' It is well known how Buddhism preached to the world the gospels of love, liberalism and universal brotherhood. From his metropolis in the celebrated city of Pātali-putra, the royal missionary Aśoka issued his famous rescripts on one of which he proclaimed: '*Ta Samavāya eva Sādhu*',—concord alone is meritorious. Manu claimed intellectual leadership of the world for India when he wrote that 'all the people of the world would come to this country to learn from her intellectuals the lessons of moral behaviour.' This claim was well justified by the ideals and achievements of our old Universities. The famous Universities of India, Nālandā, Vikramśilā (near Colgong in the Bhāgalpur District of Bihār) and Oddandapuri (near Bihār Sharif in the Patna District), which developed as international centres of learning, not only attracted to their seminaries, scholars from different parts of Asia, but also sent out to those regions savants well versed in different branches of knowledge as prophets of the sublime messages of Indian culture and thought. Out of these Academies for higher studies and research, flowed creative currents of thought and knowledge which irrigated human minds in the most productive ways in the distant regions. Their influence was too

¹ *The Complete Works of Swāmī Vivekānanda, Vol. III, pp. 222-223.*

deep to be effaced easily, but disappeared gradually due to political vicissitudes.

History records in clear terms how the Arab invaders of India were 'captured' by the civilization of India, and in their turn helped the dissemination of certain important elements of Indian culture in foreign lands. Through their association with Hindu fellow-citizens for many years on terms of amity and peace, the Arabs acquired some knowledge of Indian religion, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy and folklore, which they not only carried to their own home but also transmitted to Europe. Al Beruni, a versatile scholar who came to India in the train of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, was deeply impressed with Hindu learning and himself learnt Sanskrit.

The medieval period of Indian history, though marked by bitterness in political relationship, witnessed, however, a brilliant mingling of Hindu and Islamic civilizations, which produced significant results in religion, art, literature and social habits. Religious reformers of the period like Kabir, Nānak, Chaitanya, Dādu and Rajjab preached the gospel of love and liberalism. Even in the eighteenth century the leaders of the various religious sects in different parts of India maintained, to some extent, this tradition of harmony and conciliation.

But in other respects the eighteenth century was one of the darkest periods in the history of our country. The growing decline and ultimate eclipse of Mughal rule, quickly succeeding political revolutions and the consequent breakdown of administrative order, caused a pathetic economic decline and social anarchy in India. The later Mughal rulers were backboneless sluggards, devoid of strength of character. Court politics was utterly vitiated and most of the nobles were selfish, intriguing and unscrupulous, eager for self-aggrandisement even at the cost of the country's interests. From the mid-eighteenth century India was confronted with the onslaughts of British imperialism, and industrialism and the new-born capitalism of the West, all of which accelerated her national insolvency, subjected her to alien domination and destroyed her old economic order causing immense miseries to the people.

But there was a silver lining to this dark and thickening cloud. Undoubtedly in the modern age reascent India has, from its very dawn in the closing years of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century, played a supremely important role in holding before the world her historic ideals of international amity and world fellowship. This has happened through several forces.

In the first place, from the closing years of the eighteenth century, when India was passing through a period of intense agony due to the quickly succeeding changes in her political destiny and in other spheres of life, her thoughts and ancient lore made a splendid appeal to bands of European scholars. One of its brilliant effects was to foster cultural fellowship between India and the West, which continued as a vitalising process in spite of the regrettable influence of various other discordant forces.

Though the beginning of Indological studies in Europe can be traced since the seventeenth century,¹ the foundation of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in January, 1784, due to the initiative of Sir William Jones, a profoundly learned scholar and linguist, who came to India in September, 1783, as a puisne-judge of the Supreme Court in Calcutta, was a significant landmark in the history of modern Indian cultural renaissance and of Indo-European cultural contact. While approaching the shores of India Jones observed in August, 1783: 'It gave me an inexpressible pleasure to find myself in the midst of so noble an amphitheatre almost encircled by the vast regions of Asia. which has ever been esteemed the nurse of sciences, the inventress of delightful and useful arts, the scene of glorious actions, fertile in the production of human genius, abounding in natural wonders and infinitely diversified in the forms of religion and government, in the laws, manners, customs and languages, as well as in the features and complexions of men.' The object of the Asiatic Society was 'enquiry into the history and antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia,' and it has been well fulfilled. Through its researches, collections, conservation of manuscripts as well as other

¹ V. A. Narain, *Europe and Indian Studies (1600-1782)*, a paper read at the 26th International Congress of Orientalists, New Delhi, 1964.

curiosities, and publications, this institution has made profuse contributions to knowledge regarding the different phases of people's life and thought in India and Asia to the advantage of scholars of the East as well as of the West. Its work was thus valued by a writer in 1849: 'To the fostering care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the world owes a large debt of knowledge, on various subjects, that otherwise might have still remained in obscurity, or have been lost to the world altogether. It afforded, and continues to afford, a stimulus to exertion, in order to rescue from oblivion much that is worthy of the attention of rational beings, that has been preserved by means of the art of printing, to excite a spirit of philosophical enquiry in others.' The Bombay Literary Society, started on the 26th November, 1804, under the guidance of Sir James Mackintosh, who came to Bombay as the Chief Judge in 1803, which was transformed in 1829 into the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, also helped considerably the pursuit of investigations into the different branches of knowledge, physical or moral, concerning the Nature of Man by Indian as well as European scholars. On the 27th June, 1815, the English translation by Dr. John Taylor of the original Sanskrit of *Lilāwati*, a treatise on Hindu arithmetic and geometry, was read in the Society. The *Lilāwati* being a work which was 'frequently called for by men of science in Europe, and it being desirable, for the sake of accuracy, that it should be printed under the eye of the learned translator, it was resolved that the work should be immediately printed at the expense of the Society, under Dr. Taylor's superintendence' and it was soon published by the Bombay press.¹ The papers then read in this Society were published in 1819 under the title of *Transactions*. The example of the Bombay Literary Society was followed in Madras by the formation of the Madras Society, chiefly through the exertions of Benjamin Babington of the Company's Civil Service posted there.

In studying India's past, some, like Warren Hastings or even H. H. Wilson, were influenced by one important

¹ Satyajit Das, *Selections from the Indian Journals, Vol. I.: Calcutta Journal*, pp. 223-226.

administrative consideration, that is, the need of the knowledge of languages of the ruled for the foreign rulers. This is a factor which led to the establishment of the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781, the Banaras Sanskrit College in 1791 and the Fort William College in Calcutta in 1800.

But there were at the same time a band of European scholars, who were inspired by India's classical culture and were genuinely devoted to its study. An Englishman significantly remarked in 1845: 'What Rousseau and his co-adjustors achieved, by the emanations of original genius, for the literary republics of the West, the European adventurers on the plains of India found already achieved for them by the poets and sages of that gorgeous land. When the portals, which for unknown centuries, had guarded the entrance to these flowery realms, were thrown wide open, it seemed like revealing of new gardens of delight, the discovery of a new and glorious world. It seemed as if the fountains of the great deep of an unfathomable antiquity had been broken up, disclosing pearls of inestimable price.'

Charles Wilkins, a servant of the East India Company, translated a copy of the *Bhagawad Gītā* and presented it to Warren Hastings at his request. The latter, while recommending its publication to the Court of Directors in 1784, observed: 'With the deductions and other qualifications, which I have thus premised, I hesitate not to pronounce the *Gītā*, a performance of great originality, of sublimity of conception, reasoning and diction, almost unequalled.' It was published in London in 1785. Wilkins also published a translation of the *Hitopadeśa* in 1787 and a Sanskrit grammar in 1808.

To Sir William Jones, Sanskrit language was, as he himself said, of 'wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either'. He translated into English Kālidās's immortal drama *Abhignāna Śakuntalam* in 1789, Jayadeva's most appealing song-book *Gītagovinda*, *Manusamhitā* or the Laws of *Manu* (1794) and the *Hitopadeśa* of Vishnusharmā and also edited the lyrical Sanskrit poem *Ritusamhāra* (1792).

After Jones's death in 1794, Henry Thomas Colebrooke and Horace Hayman Wilson continued his work enthusiasti-

cally and this produced interesting results. Colebrooke earned fame not only for his studies regarding some famous Sanskrit works relating to arts and sciences, literature and comparative philology, but also for his compilation of a *Digest of Hindu Law* in 1798 and his translation of two treatises on the *Hindu Law of Inheritance* (1810) and a treatise on *Obligations and Contract* (1818). Horace Hayman Wilson pursued Sanskrit studies with considerable zeal and industry and there were important works to his credit. His translation of the *Meghadutam* was published in 1813, his *Sanskrit Dictionary* in 1819 and his *History of Kashmir and Theatre of the Hindus* in 1834. He got the eighteen *Purāṇās* translated into English with the assistance of some Pandits and other scholars educated in the Calcutta Hindu College. He was the first occupant of the Chair of the Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford created in 1832.

Some other British Officers, employed in India during this period, also studied Sanskrit and different aspects of old Indian civilization with much interest. They were James Prinsep (1799–1840), Samuel Davis, Colonel Francis Wilford, Reuben Burrow (for researches in Mathematics and Astronomy), John Bentley (for researches in Astronomy), Rev. W. H. Mill (who held the post of the Principal of Bishops' College, Sibpore), Brian Houghton Hodgson (who came to India in 1819 and was for some time Resident at Nepal), and Dr. W. Yates, whose work on *Nalodaya* appeared in Calcutta in 1844. W. C. Taylor of Bombay, who translated *Prabodha Chandrodaya*, observed in 1834: 'The study of the Sanskrit language which commenced almost within our memory, already holds the foremost rank among the objects that best merit the attention of the philosopher, the historian and the admirer of intellectual beauty; its claims rest not on its novelty but rather on the multitude and importance of the considerations it forces on our attention.'

Many scholars in different European countries studied various works on Indian culture with genuine interest and admiration for it. Anquetil Duperron (1731–1805), the famous orientalist and linguist of the eighteenth century, by translating the *Upanishads* into Latin for the first time brought the fundamental texts of Hindu Philosophy to the notice of

Western thinkers and opened ' a new era in the history of human intelligence '.

Anquetil Duperron was born at Paris on the 7th of December, 1731. In his early youth he decided to visit India almost on a cultural mission and after a hazardous journey landed at Pondicherry on the 10th of August, 1755. He reached Chandernagore on the 22nd April, 1756. Passing through many other places in Bengal and Bihar, such as Calcutta, Bhatpara, Murshidabad, Cassimbazar, Rajmahal, Kahalgaon (in Law's party), Burdwan, Kamarpukur, Midnapur, Balasore, Monpur (an Armenian settlement, famous for cloth manufacture) and by braving countless obstructions and dangers he returned to Pondicherry on the 11th of August, 1757. After moving from place to place in southern and western India and visiting Goa and by collecting manuscripts of the *Vedas* and some other Sanskrit works this scholar-missionary left India on the 15th of March, 1761. On returning to Paris after about a year he deposited all the manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Royale (Bibliothèque Nationale). He died at Paris on the 18th January, 1805. Besides French, Latin and English he knew several other European languages. He learnt Sanskrit, Persian and the major Indian languages. Through his extensive travelling in India he minutely studied Indian manners and customs, the Indian temples, Indian geography and Indian economic conditions. Indian wisdom influenced him so deeply that he spent his last days like a Brahmin; like a Yogi ' taking only a meal consisting of milk, cheese. . . . and the water of the well. He lived without fire in winter; he slept upon bare boards, without any mattress over '.¹

It is significant that even in the stormy days of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and subsequently too, French scholars were very much attracted towards the study of Indian lore. Some issues of the *Asiatic Researches*, the earliest publications of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, contain the names of Frenchmen like M. Volney, M. Carpentier de Cossigny, and M. Le Gentil as its Honorary Members. Some interesting details about them and about

¹ *Bengal: Past and Present, July-December, 1958.*

Indo-French cultural contact of that period were noticed by me some years back in a few contemporary French letters.¹ A modern French scholar, Professor Louis Renou, observes that 'the Asiatic Society of Paris was the first. . . . to be instituted in Europe, many years before that of London. . . . The first teaching of Sanskrit to be instituted in Europe was in the College of France. A Royal Decree of 1816 created Professorship of "History of Sanskrit" which was conferred on Louis de Chezy.'²

Of the French letters referred to above, the most interesting one is an autograph (1837-1838) of Eugene Burnouf, the successor of Louis de Chezy as Professor of Sanskrit in the College of France in 1832. The scholar very significantly observed that in spite of the growing influence of nationalism, the products of Indian genius had their significance for humanity in general. It was his conviction that the monumental works of ancient Indian culture, like the *Vedas*, the Epics, the *Purānas*, etc., would be studied in Europe with profound interest, and he recommended their printing in large numbers. When in the year 1844 Dwarkā Nāth Tagore visited Paris, Burnouf presented to him, at L'institute de France, a copy of his translation of the *Bhāgwat Purāna* which was published at Paris in 1840.

Burnouf made highly valuable contributions to the growth of Vedic scholarship in Europe. Among the several scholars who derived inspiration from him for studies in this branch the two most prominent were Rudolf Roth, whose valuable work on the *Literature and History of the Vedas* came out in 1846, and F. Max Muller, who had already been initiated into the study of Sanskrit by Boff at Berlin and Brockhaus at Leipzig. Max Muller reached Paris on the 10th March, 1845, and paid his first visit to Burnouf on the 20th March. He refers to the effect of his contact with Burnouf thus: 'His lectures were on the *Rig Veda*, and opened a new world to me. He explained to us his own researches, he showed us new MSS (manuscripts) which he had received from India, in fact he did all he could to make us fellow-

¹ *The Indian Archives*, October, 1947.

² *Journal of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta*, Vol. XV, 1949, No. 1, pp. 35-36.

workers.¹ It was under Burnouf's influence that Max Muller decided 'to take up the hymns of the *Rig Veda*, with the great native commentary of *Sāyana*, as his distinctive work'.² At Paris, Max Muller made an acquaintance with Dwarkā Nāth Tagore. Among the other pupils of Burnouf mention should be made of Langlois, who translated the *Harivansa* and the *Rig Veda*. We should also note the name of Regnier, who published before Max Muller the first edition of *Rik-prāṭisākhya*, and of Barthelemy St. Hilarie who for the first time published a work on the philosophy of *Sāṅkhya*.

The battle of Sedan (1871) resulted in the political defeat and humiliation of France. But with the new urge for revival there was 'a brilliant resumption of study' in that country. This period saw the publication of *Kaccāyana's Pali Grammar* translated by Senart and the *Vāminivilāsa* translated by Berzaine. In his work, entitled *Religions of India*, Barth presented a brilliant summary of the religious development of the country. Berzaine's magnum opus, *Vedic Religion according to the Hymns of the Rig Veda*, was produced in the eighties.

Burnouf's and Lassen's joint publication of the *Essay on Pali* in 1826, and the former's *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism* published in 1844, opened a new branch of study to European scholars regarding Pali language and Buddhist literature.

In January, 1852, Professor H. H. Wilson, then Director of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, thus reviewed the progress of the study of Indian literature in Europe: 'In this country the publication of the text of the *Rig Veda*, the first and most important of the four *Vedas* or Scriptural authorities of the Hindus, constitutes an epoch in the history not only of the Hindu religion but in that of the religious systems of the whole ancient world. The first volume is printed, the second is advanced; it will be completed in two, or at most three, more volumes. The second *Veda* also, the *Yajur Veda*, is in progress. The *Rig Veda* is printed entirely at the cost of the Company, and they contribute liberally

¹ *The Life and Letters of the Right Honourable Max Muller, Vol. I. p. 36.*

² *Ibid, p. 37.*

to that of the *Yajur*. They have, it is true, been obliged to avail themselves of the services of German scholars as editors, the *Rig Veda* being printed at Oxford under the editing of Dr. Maximilian Muller, and the *Yajur* under that of Dr. Albrecht Weber at Berlin. . . ., of the third or *Sāma Veda*, a portion, constituting its text was printed by the Oriental Text Society some seven years since, from a manuscript furnished by Rev. Mr. Stevenson; and a translation by the same was published by the Translation Fund Committee. But a more carefully prepared edition with a German Translation, and a copious glossary, has been more recently published at Gottingen by Professor Benfey. The fourth *Veda*, the *Atharva*, has not yet found an editor. Supplementary works, illustrative of the text of the *Vedas*, have been published on the continent, particularly the *Nirukta*, an original glossary and comment, by Professor Roth of Tübingen, who is the author of several learned dissertations on the literature and history of the *Vedas*, published in the Journal of the German Oriental Society, and other literary periodicals. . . . Professor Neave of Louvain has speculated upon the early periods of Hindu society in a strain which, although perhaps not always incontrovertible, is recommendable, by its general correctness and its animated eloquence, to the perusal of those who do not make the subject a study but who would willingly receive some information respecting it. . . . The first part of the *Rig Veda*, the portion of the text in print, has been translated and published by myself. M. Langlois, of Paris, has published a French translation of the whole.¹ Rudolf Roth edited the *Atharva Veda* in 1856. Besides these, the text and translation of the drama *Vikramorvaṣī* has been printed,—the text edited by Professor Williams and the translation by Mr. Cowell.

At Paris a version of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, in five volumes, edited by Professor Gorresio, was published through the generosity of the King of Sardinia, along with two Italian translations by the editor. The text of the *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* of Jaimini, edited by Goldstucker, was under print in Berlin. He was also trying to publish a translation of the *Mahābhārata* and a new edition of Professor H. H. Wilson's dictionary edited by

¹ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1852, pp. 205-208.

himself.¹ Professor Stenzler had reprinted a text of the *Laws of Yājñavalka* at Breslau and Professor Benfey, the great Sanskrit scholar at Gottingen, had prepared a new Sanskrit Grammar² and was also preparing an edition of the *Sāma Veda*. 'An interesting series of works' had been printed at Athens in which the 'two most perfect forms of speech' were 'brought into friendly contact, Sanskrit and Greek. . . .'³ A Greek gentleman, named Demetrius Galanus, who stayed at Banaras for some years and died there, spent his leisure hours there in studying Sanskrit and in translating some Sanskrit works into classical Greek. 'On his death his papers were sent to Athens, where the translations of the *Bālabharata Itihāsa Samuchchaya*, the *Bhagwad Gitā* and the *Satakas* of Bhartrihari had been printed under the care of M. Typaldos, the Superintendent of the Public Library.'⁴

Recent archaeological excavations by Russian scholars have revealed interesting evidence about cultural contact between India and Soviet Central Asia in the ancient and medieval periods.⁵ In the modern age studies about India started in Russia from the closing years of the eighteenth century, and the pioneer scholar in this respect was Gerasim Stepanovich Lebedev. He stayed in India for twelve years, from 1785 to 1797, of which he spent ten years, 1787-1797, in Calcutta. Here he had the opportunity to learn Bengali, Hindustānī and Sanskrit. Lebedev left India in 1797 and published a comparative grammar of Hindustānī, Bengali and Sanskrit in 1801. Soon the Russians also came to know different Indian languages like Bengali, Marāthi, Hindustānī Tāmil and Telugu. Some Tāmil manuscripts were acquired for the Library of St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences.

Till the twenties of the 19th century the Russians were interested mainly in the study of Indian languages including Sanskrit. Thereafter they started studying Indian History as well. Soon papers on Indology were contributed to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* by some Russian scholars,

¹ Dr. Goldstucker himself incidentally referred to his works in a letter written by him to the *Asiatic Society of Calcutta*, dated 18th January, 1851.

² *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1852.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Dr. P. Banerjee *Ancient Relics of Soviet Central Asia—A First Report on 'Indo-Asian Culture'*, January, 1968.

the most prominent of whom were Professor A. Kazem-Bek of the University of Kazan and Professor Dorn of the University of Kharkov. The St. Petersburg University arranged for a systematic course of lectures in Sanskrit by Dr. R. Lenz from 1836. This provided a good opportunity for the training of Russian scholars in Indology. The most prominent of such scholars was P. Y. Petrov (1814–1875), who translated a part of the *Mahābhārata* and the first part of the *Rājataranginī* into Russian. A review of the first volume of Rājā Rādhākānta Deb's famous dictionary by Dr. R. Lenz came out in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society in* 1835. The Asiatic Society in Calcutta sent to St. Petersburg 28 volumes of its publications and requested St. Petersburg to send in exchange the works of the Russian indologists. Some publications were sent to the Asiatic Society in Calcutta by the Russian Government along with a gold medal in its honour. In 1856 the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences honoured Rājā Rādhākānta Deb by enrolling him as its member. The second Indian on whom this honour was conferred was Sir R. G. Bhandarkar.

Indological studies had already been progressing in Russia. In 1851 the University of Moscow, under the guidance of Petrov, who came over to that University from the University of Kazan, started the teaching of Sanskrit. Another reputed Russian Indologist, Kossovich, taught Sanskrit at the St. Petersburg University. He published a *Russian-Sanskrit Dictionary* in 1854. The Russian scholars planned a voluminous *Sanskrit-German Dictionary*. The establishment in 1858 of the Oriental Section of the Academy of Sciences, with Otto Betling as its head, was a significant step for systematic study of indology in Russia. Due to the efforts of this section the *Sanskrit-German Dictionary* was compiled within a few years. Its last volume was published in 1875 and an abridged edition of it was brought out between 1879–1889. Scholars outside Russia also took interest in the indological works of the Russian scholars and an article on this subject was contributed by Rev. James Long in *The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1860. M. Cursetjee, a Sanskritist, visited St. Petersburg in 1865, where he met some Russian indologists and on his

return to India sent his books to the Public Library at St. Petersburg.

Indian studies in Russia received further impetus as a result of growing Indo-Russian contact after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The Russians began henceforth to take interest not only in the study of India's remote past but also in the varied conditions of life in India in the preceding few centuries. The scope of Indian studies in Russia was widened and diversified to include different branches of the Humanities and Sciences. Some of the famous Russian scholars devoted to Indian classical studies during this period were Minaev, Schroeder, Oldenberg and Tscherbatsky. Well-versed in Sanskrit and Pali, Minaev visited India several times and was present at the first session of the Indian National Congress held at Bombay in 1885. Schroeder, a teacher at the University of Tartu (1877-1884), pursued Vedic studies with great zeal and success and earned a great reputation as a Vedic scholar. Highly learned and valuable contributions were made by Oldenberg and Tscherbatsky in the field of Buddhology.

Contact between Russia and India has developed in various ways during the recent years and studies about Indian culture of different periods are being pursued in Russia with remarkable zeal and enthusiasm. A fruitful cultural link has been established between the two countries, facilitating exchange of knowledge and thought to the advantage of both. Indian response to it has been genuinely cordial.

In Bohemia, Sanskrit studies 'were born in the bosom of Comparative Philology'.¹ It was for the study of Philology that Joseph Dobrovsky, who has been regarded as the father of Comparative Philology in Bohemia, began to learn Sanskrit towards the end of the 18th century. Though some amateurs studied Sanskrit in Bohemia after Dobrovsky, the scholar, who next made scientific study of Sanskrit in that country during the first half of the nineteenth century, was Safarik. In his poem, *The Labyrinth of Glory* (published in 1846), E. Vocel, a poet and scholar of Bohemia, refers to the Ganges valley 'as the home of the European family'²

¹ V. Lesney, 'Sanskrit Studies and Czechoslovakia' in *Modern Review*, June, 1923.

² *Ibid.*

and there are several similes from *Śakuntalā* in his poem. In August 1850, Schleicher, a philologist, began to lecture in Prague, and he was soon followed by Alfred Ludwig, a famous Vedic scholar. Professor Ludwig was succeeded by Professor Winterintz.

A Hungarian pilgrim scholar in India, Alexander Cosma De Koros, studied Tibetan for some years with great toil and patience. He thought that his labours would be beneficial to his countrymen and observed in the Preface to his *Tibetan Dictionary* (1834) that 'the study of Sanskrit would be more satisfactory to Hungary than any other people in Europe.' He was in Calcutta also for a few years and his contemporary Schoefit, a Hungarian artist in Calcutta, wrote that he lived here 'like a hermit among his Tibetan and other works in the house of the Asiatic Society' which he seldom left. In Calcutta he added Sanskrit and several modern Indian languages to his studies in Tibetan and Buddhism. For several years 'he gave almost all his time to Sanskrit, and travelled by boat or on foot through north-eastern Bengal to meet and talk to scholars, preferring to live on tea and boiled rice. The money he saved through his austerity was donated to the *Hungarian Literary Society*'¹. He died at Darjeeling on the 11th April, 1842, and the epitaph on his tomb there records that he 'after years passed under privations such as have been seldom endured and patient labour in the cause of science compiled a grammar and a dictionary of the Tibetan language, his best and real monument.'

In the 19th century some scholars in the Netherlands took genuine interest in Indian culture. Hamaker, who was the first University Professor to teach Sanskrit at Leyden University, promoted the study of comparative linguistics and Sanskrit in the twenties and thirties of this century. After his death, Rutgers, Professor of Hebrew, taught Sanskrit there. But higher Sanskrit studies in that country received much impetus from his pupil, Hendrik Kern. Reaching Leyden in 1851, Kern devoted himself to the study of Germanic, Slavic and Indo-Iranian languages, though his primary interest was in Sanskrit. After having obtained

¹ *The Statesman*, 24th February, 1966

the Ph. D. Degree of Leyden University in 1855, Kern went to Berlin and there he came into contact with the famous German Sanskrit scholar, Weber. Following his advice, Kern copied manuscripts of the famous astronomical text, *Brihatsaṁhitā* of Barāhamihira, an edition of which was published by him in the *Bibliotheca Indica* and a translation in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.¹

After returning to Holland, Kern continued his Sanskrit studies and produced a translation of *Śakuntalā*, which evoked much interest there. During his stay in London, Kern received an invitation for the post of Professor at Queen's College, Banaras. Accepting this invitation he stayed at Banaras for two years. At the invitation of the University of London, he became Professor of Sanskrit there in 1865.

It was in Germany that the western response to Indian studies was most fruitful, and it was both emotional and spiritual. The famous German romanticist, Frederick Schlegel, learnt the Sanskrit language with much interest. He was initiated into it by Alexander Hamilton at Paris where he met the latter when he was detained there on the renewal of Anglo-French hostilities shortly after the Peace of Amiens in 1802. Referring to Sanskrit, he observed: 'No other language can be explained so completely in and by itself. Its regularity and simplicity is definite proof of its most ancient origin. It has an organic structure and displays a fine sensitivity for the natural meaning of letters, vowels and roots of words; this sensitivity also implies the development of a script, not of hieroglyphs which depict physical objects, but of letters which are outward manifestations of an inner meaning.' His work on *The Language and Wisdom of the Indians* came out in 1808. In his early years Frederick Schlegel was an admirer of Indian religious faith. 'If one considers,' he says, 'the superior conception which is at the basis of the truly universal Indian culture and which, itself divine, knows how to embrace in its universality everything that is divine without distinction, then, what we in Europe call religion or what we wished to call such, no longer seems to deserve that name. And one would like to advise everyone who wants to see religion,

¹ *Indo-Asian Culture*, April, 1957.

that he should, just as one goes to Italy to study art, go to India for that purpose where he may be certain to find at least fragments for which he will look in vain in Europe.' From India one expected, as Frederick Schlegel believed, 'the unfolding of the history of the primeval world which up till now is shrouded in darkness; and lovers of poetry hoped, especially since the appearance of Śakuntalā, to glean thence many similar beautiful creations of the Asiatic spirit, animated, as in this case, by grace and love.' Later on, however, scepticism overpowered his enthusiasm.

A school of Indian philological studies developed in Germany. Frederick Schlegel's brother, Augustus Wilhelm von Schlegel, who was appointed first Professor of Indology at the University of Bonn in 1818, published text editions of the *Bhagwad Gītā* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Franz Bopp, a contemporary of A. W. V. Schlegel, after studying Sanskrit in Paris and London, brought out in 1816 his work on the *Conjugational System of the Sanskrit Language*. Critical editions of the story of *Nala Damayantī* and certain other portions of the *Mahābhārata* were also published by Bopp. Several treatises of ancient Indian literature of different periods, that is, from the *Atharva Veda* to *Gitagovinda*, were translated by Frederick Ruckert. His translation of *Nala Damayantī* came out in 1828 and his translation of the *Sāvitrī*, and his book entitled *Brahman's Wisdom*, were published in 1839. A Chair in Sanskrit, created at Leipzig in 1841, was occupied for the first time by Herman Brockhaus. The publication of the eighth part of the *Rig Veda*, by F. Rosen in 1838, marked the beginning of 'philological investigation of Vedic literature'.

A German translation of Kālidās's immortal work *Śakuntalā* by George Forster in 1791 had already 'created quite a stir among German men of letters'.¹ In estimating its importance, Goethe, a great admirer of this work, observed: 'It embodies at the same time the blossoms of spring and the fruits of all, that it charms and feeds simultaneously, that it comprises in itself Heaven and Earth.' Following the example of this work, Goethe in this prologue of *Faust* makes the Director of the drama converse with actors.

¹ *J. A. S., Calcutta, Vol. XXIII No. 2, 1957.*

Significantly enough, even the Prussian Minister of Education, Wilhelm Von Humboldt, learnt Sanskrit and after writing a thoughtful paper on the *Bhāgavad Gītā* read it in the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin in 1825. Four volumes of Christian Lassen's valuable work on *Indian Archaeology*, 1843-1862, comprise a brilliant collection of material gathered during the first half of the 19th century about ancient India. A Norwegian by birth, he was a pupil of A. K. Schlegel and succeeded him in the Chair of Indology at Bonn. Another valuable work of Lassen was entitled *Antiquities of India*.

A Chair for Comparative Linguistics and Indology was established at the University of Halle about 135 years ago. The first scholar to occupy this Chair was the famous comparative linguist Professor August Friedrich Pott, who has to his credit many valuable and original works on Indo-European linguistics. Lecturing for fifty-four years at this University he died in July, 1887. After Christian Bartholomae, who began to lecture at the University of Halle in 1880 and became a Professor after four years, the Chair of Comparative Linguistics and Indology went to Professor Richard Pischel, the famous Prakrit scholar, who worked on Vedic interpretations and lectured on almost all the branches of Indian studies, Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit. Mention should also be made of the reputed Epigraphist and Indologist, Professor Eugen Hultzsch, who was in India as Epigraphist to the Government of Madras in 1886 and became associated with the University of Halle for teaching Sanskrit in 1903.

Among the European scholars of the 19th century, interested in studies relating to India and her culture, Max Muller stands pre-eminent. By his deep and original studies of the varied branches of ancient Indian classical literature, pursued for years with abiding faith and spirit of dedication, he made most valuable contributions in the field of knowledge and did much to open the eyes of many others of the West to the rich cultural treasures of India. 'My Sacred Books of the East,' he justly claimed, 'have opened people's eyes in many places.'¹ After several years' study

¹ Letter to Colonel Olcott, 10th June, 1893, quoted in *The Life and Letters of Max Muller*, Vol. II, p. 314.

he fully realised the value of Vedic studies. 'Now, I believe,' he wrote in a letter to the Duke of Albany on the 13th December, 1875, 'that the *Veda* is an extremely important book; in fact, the only book in Indian literature which is important, not only for India, but for the early history of the whole Aryan race, including Greeks, Romans, and ourselves. It contains the first attempt at expressing religious thought and feeling, and it alone can help us to solve many of the most critical problems in the Science of Religion. The Science of Religion is, in fact, the history of all religions, and when I saw, as quite a young man, the gap in our materials for studying the origin and growth of religious ideas, because no one knew then or could know what the *Veda* was, I determined to devote my life to collecting all the manuscripts that could still be found, and thus to rescue the oldest book of our race from that destruction which would have been inevitable, unless it had been printed. This has now been done. People do not yet see the full importance of the *Veda* in an historical study of religion, and yet I feel convinced that the true solution of many of our theological difficulties—difficulties that will become far more terrible than they are at present, is to be found in the study of the history of all religions. We shall then see what is essential and what is accidental, what is eternal and what is human handiwork; among all the possibilities displayed before us, we shall in the end discover the reality of religion, just as a study of the movements of all celestial bodies led in the end to the discovery of a law that supported them all.'¹

In his letter to W. E. Gladstone, dated the 18th January, 1883, Max Muller observed: 'I am afraid I am taking a very great liberty in sending you my last book on India. I must confess I have long wished for an opportunity of engaging your interest in behalf of India; I do not mean the mere surface India, but the real India that is only slowly emerging before our eyes; a whole, almost forgotten act in the great drama of humanity, very different from Greece, from Rome, from modern Europe, and yet not so different that in studying it we cannot feel that *mutato nomine res nobis fabula narratur* (under a different name a

¹ *The Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. I, pp. 530-531.*

wonderful thing is told to us). The discovery of that real India, of that new intellectual hemisphere, is to my mind, a far greater discovery than that of Vasco da Gama's. It was a misfortune that all the early publications of Sanskrit texts belonged really to the Renaissance of Sanskrit literature. Kālidāsa's plays, which were supposed to be contemporaneous with Virgil, belong to the sixth century; the Laws of Manu, which Sir William Jones placed about 1280 B.C., cannot be older than 300 A.D. But there was an older literature in India, the Vedic and the Buddhistic, which are only now being slowly disinterred, and it is there that we can watch a real growth from the simplest beginnings to the highest concepts which the human mind is capable of; it is there that we can learn what man is, by seeing once more what man has been.¹

Of all the German scholars Max Muller had the highest admiration for Indian culture. In one of his lectures on *India: What can it teach us?*, delivered before the University of Cambridge in 1882, Max Muller thus expressed his estimate of the importance of the different branches of Indian knowledge and culture: 'If I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power, and beauty that nature can bestow,—in some parts a very paradise on earth—I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.' Pointing out how in India one could get ample material for studies in various branches,—Botany, Zoology, Ethnology, Archaeo-

¹ *The Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. II, pp. 137-138.*

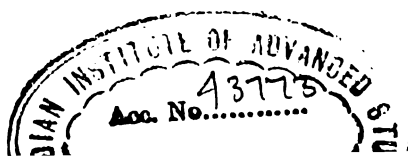
logy, Numismatics, Mythology, Fables and Stories, Philology and Jurisprudence,—he continued: ‘ You will find yourselves everywhere in India between an immense past and an immense future, with opportunities such as the old world could but seldom, if ever, offer you. Take any of the burning questions of the day—popular education, higher education, parliamentary representation, codification of laws, finance, emigration, poor-law, and whether you have anything to teach and to try, or anything to observe and to learn, India will supply you with a laboratory such as exists nowhere else. That very Sanskrit, the study of which may at first seem so tedious to you and so useless, if only you will carry it on, as you may carry it on here at Cambridge better than anywhere else, will open before you large layers of literature, as yet almost unknown and unexplored, and allow you an insight into strata of thought deeper than any you have known before, and rich in lessons that appeal to the deepest sympathies of the human heart.

.....Whatever sphere of the human mind you may select for your special study, whether it be language or religion, or mythology, or philosophy, whether it be laws or customs, primitive art or primitive science, everywhere, you have to go to India, whether you like it or not, because some of the most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India, and in India only.’

In his second lecture on *Truthful Character of the Hindus* Max Muller concluded by quoting from the works of some writers like Sleeman, Heber, Malcolm and Munro, who had ample experience of Indian affairs, ‘ how it was love of truth that struck all the people who came in contact with India, as the prominent feature in the national character of the Indians. No one ever accused them of falsehood.’ ‘ I do not believe,’ he had written to Miss Collet on the 23rd January, 1881: ‘ that the Hindus, do not care for truth; on the contrary, if left to themselves, I believe that they are more truthful than any other nation. Their whole literature from beginning to end is pervaded by reverence for truth.’¹

True knowledge promotes regard for truth and love for

¹ *The Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. II, pp. 99-100.*



all. Thus Max Muller, after having acquired profound knowledge about India's culture, developed an attitude of cultural fellowship for this country. 'I fell in love with India,' observed Max Muller. 'Though I have had,' he wrote in the Preface to his work, entitled *Rāmmohan to Rāmakrishna*, 'but visions of the rivers, the mountains, the valleys, the forests, and the men and women of India, having never been allowed to visit that earthly paradise, I have known for many years the beauties of its literature, the bold flights of its native philosophy, the fervid devotion of its ancient religion, and these together seem to me to give a much truer picture of what India really was, and is still meant to be, in the history of the world, than the Bazars of Bombay, or the Durbars of Rajas and Maharajas at Delhi.'

Even while sending his greetings to Dr. Emerson on the occasion of his seventy-seventh birthday, Max Muller wrote as follows in his letter to him, dated the 19th April, 1880: "The translator of the Upanishads, Moksha Mulara, sends greetings and best wishes to his American Guru, Amarsunu, on his seventy-seventh birthday, and encloses an extract from an Upanishad lately discovered:—

' Old age and decay lay hold of the body, the senses, the memory, the mind—never of the Self, the looker on.

' The Self never grows tired—the body grows tired of supporting the Self.

' The Self never grows blind—the windows of the senses become darkened with dust and rain.

' The Self never forgets—the inscriptions on the memory fade, and it is well that much should be forgotten.

' The Self never errs—the many wheels of our own small watches grow rusty, but we look up to the eternal dial in the heavens above, which remains right for ever.'¹ "

Max Muller rightly felt that study of the ancient literature of India would generate a sense of pride in India's past and thus further the progress of cultural renaissance in this coun-

¹ *The Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. II, pp. 91-92.*

try. He wrote in a letter to the Duke of Argyll, dated 16th December, 1868: 'India can never be anglicized, but it can be reinvigorated. By encouraging a study of their own ancient literature, as part of their education, a national feeling of pride and self-respect will be reawakened among those who influence the large masses of the people. A new national literature may spring up, impregnated with Western ideas, yet retaining its native spirit and character. The two things hang together. In order to raise the character of the vernaculars, a study of the ancient classical language is absolutely necessary: for from it alone can they draw their vital strength and beauty. A new national literature will bring with it a new national life, and new moral vigour.'¹

Max Muller tried to present what he considered to be 'the true historical value' of Indian religion and culture 'not from an exclusively European or Christian, but from a historical point of view', and was anxious to make it known to the people of this country. He wrote in some of his letters to B. M. Malabari, the famous Parsi reformer in India, that his 'thoughts', while writing the Hibbert Lectures, 'were with the people of India'.² He selected as the subject of these lectures *Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religions of India* and delivered these in April, May and June, 1878. These highly thoughtful lectures made a profound impression on the minds of Indian scholars. Max Muller expressed great satisfaction on hearing from B. M. Malabari that there was a chance of his lectures 'being translated into some of the Indian languages'.³

There was wonderful reciprocation of cordiality and regard for Max Muller from many persons in India, and he had here some friends and admirers among the scholars and reformers like Dwarkā Nāth Tagore, Satyendra Nāth Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen, Pratāp Chandra Mazumdār, Rājendra Lāl Mitra, B. M. Malabari, Shankar Pandurang Pandit (Bombay), Bhau Daji, K.T. Telang, the great Buddhist teacher, Anagarika Dharmapāla, and Rāja Rādhā

¹ *Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. I, p. 377.*

² *Letter to B. M. Malabari, dated 29th January, 1882, quoted in Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. II, pp. 115-116.*

³ *Ibid.*

Kāntā Deb, leader of the Orthodox party in Bengal, a patron of learning and author of the famous lexicon *Śabdakalpadrum* which had international recognition for the quality of its contents.

In 1844 Dwarkā Nāth Tagore was introduced to Max Muller at Paris by Burnouf. Many other Indians met him in England and Keshab Chandra Sen stayed with him at Oxford. In October, 1883, Panditā Ramābāi stayed at Max Muller's house. He wrote to her elder daughter: 'We had a nice visit from Ramābāi, a Brahmin lady who knows Sanskrit splendidly. She knows books as large as Homer by heart, from beginning to end; speaks Sanskrit correctly and writes Sanskrit poetry.' Ramābāi paid a second visit to him before leaving England for America where she collected funds to start a Home for child-widows in India. During his visit to the Vienna Oriental Congress in 1886 Sir R. G. Bhandarkar met Professor Max Muller at Oxford and 'had a pleasant and interesting conversation with him for an hour and a half'. Professor Paul Deussen of Kiel and Swāmī Vivekānanda met Max Muller at Oxford. 'Thus three great minds were conversing with each other.' 'I had the good fortune of knowing,' wrote Max Muller, 'a number of Indians in Europe, and no doubt some of the best and most distinguished of the sons and daughters of India.'

Swāmī Vivekānanda was greatly impressed by the profound devotion of Paul Deussen and Max Muller to Sanskrit studies. 'I have seen,' he said, 'Professors of Sanskrit in America and in Europe. I admire their intellectual acumen and their lives of unselfish labour. But Paul Deussen or, —as he prefers to be called in Sanskrit Deva-Sena,—and the veteran Max Muller, have impressed me as the truest friends of India and Indian thought. It will always be among the most pleasing episodes in my life—my first visit to this ardent Vedantist at Kiel, his gentle wife who travelled with him in India, and his little daughter, the darling of his heart—and our travelling together through Germany and Holland to London, and the pleasant meetings we had in and about London.'¹ Paul Deussen visited India in 1893 and

¹ *The Complete Works of Swāmī Vivekānanda, Vol. IV, p. 274.*

delivered some lectures on Vedānta. Śwāmī Vivekānanda saw in Professor Deussen's library a copy of a volume of the Upanishads published in Mysore in Tamil characters. 'What an extraordinary man,' he wrote, 'is Professor Max Muller. The Professor was kindness itself, and asked Dr. Sturdy and myself to lunch with him. He showed us several colleges in Oxford and the Bodleian Library. He also accompanied us to the railway station; and all this he did because, as he said, 'It is not every day one meets a disciple of Rāmakrishna Paramhaṅsa.' It is neither the philologist nor the scholar that I saw, but a soul that is every day realising its oneness with the Brahman, a heart that is every moment expanding to reach oneness with the Universal. Where others lose themselves in the desert of dry details, he has struck the well-spring of life. And what love he bears towards India! I wish I had a hundredth part of that love for my motherland! Endowed with an extraordinary, and, at the same time, intensely active mind, he has lived and moved in the world of Indian thought for fifty years or more, and watched the sharp interchange of light and shade in the interminable forest of Sanskrit literature with deep interest and heart-felt love, till they have all sunk into his very soul and coloured his whole being.'¹

In November, 1851, Rājā Rādhākānta Deb, when sending his Thesaurus, to Max Muller wrote: 'When I ventured to assume the character of a lexicographer, my most ambitious wish was but to revive the study of Sanskrit in my own country, where it has been on the decline; but I should not dissemble that love of fame stimulated my exertions through worldly tribulations, where patience must have failed and perseverance wearied. I devoted the greatest portion of my life and no inconsiderable amount of labour and expense to the execution of the work; and though as an encyclopaedist I have no claim to originality, or to the merits of genius, yet, I trust my industry and application will, at least, be applauded when I may be considered as a humble pioneer of Sanskrit learning. I have endeavoured to obtain the approbation of those whose good opinion one cannot but be proud of and solicitous to secure; nor is it an inconsiderable reward of my

¹ *The Complete works of Śwāmī Vivekānanda Vol. IV, pp 279-281.*

labour that it has deserved the commendation of a Muller and a Wilson, who have won golden opinions by their profound scholarship in Sanskrit.'

■ Again on March 5, 1855, Rājā Rādhākānta Deb wrote to Max Muller: 'I have lately received through the Bengal Government a copy of the second volume of the *Rig Veda*, as a present from the Hon'ble the Court of Directors, and I can ill express the feelings of mingled joy and admiration with which I grasped this most precious gift. Our Pandits are startled out of their wits, and scarcely credit their senses, when they are told that the sacred volume before them has been edited by a distant European scholar who had no opportunities of consulting with a Vaidik Pandit, who had to collect, copy out, and collate various manuscripts of texts and commentaries, mutilated and corrupted, and to refer to the scanty and almost inaccessible sources of information on the subject for the purpose of ascertaining their genuine reading, and then with aching eyes to revise the proof-sheets.

'Great is the obligation under which you have laid the learned world. By your successfully embarking on such an arduous undertaking, you have done to the Hindus an inestimable benefit, supplying them with a correct and superb edition of their Holy Scriptures. Accept therefore my most grateful and sincere thanks, which, in common with my countrymen, I owe you, and my special acknowledgments for the very kind and obliging manner in which you have noticed my name and work in the preface to the second volume of the *Rig Veda*. At the conclusion of this preface is to be found a truly poetic touch, a noble, frank and irresistible gush of feeling for the irreparable loss sustained by the literary world and you personally, on the termination of the earthly career of Eugene Burnouf. I wish I could find terms adequate to respond to your sympathy; we cannot be too lavish of eulogies for his merits, or weary of dirges for his loss. In the few letters he has written to me I find a noble trait of humility and simplicity in his character which is the invariable exponent of a great mind.

'In 1833 on the occasion of acknowledging the present of the *Sabda-kalpa-druma* he says: 'Ce n'est pas à un Européen

qui est à peine sur le seuil de cette vaste science de l'Inde, qu'il appartient de juger une composition de ce mérite et d'une telle étendue. Des hommes comme les Colebrooke et les Wilson, qui ont puisé la grande partie de leurs connaissances à la source de sentretiens brahmaniques, sont les juges les plus dignes d'un aussi beau travail.'

('It does not pertain to a European, who is hardly on the threshold of this vast science of India, to judge a work of this merit and of such size. Men like Colebrooke and Wilson, who have derived the greater part of their knowledge from that living spring of the *Brahmanic Conversations*, are the most worthy judges of such a beautiful work.')

'In 1840, when he had the kindness to send me a copy of his fine edition of the *Bhagawata Purana*, he—the first decipherer of the Cuneiform inscriptions—the first Pali scholar and historian of Buddhism—the Editor and interpreter of the *Zend-Avesta*—and the great Sanskrit philologist—thus speaks of himself: 'Mais, vous songerez que c'est l'oeuvre d'un lointain Mletchha qui ne fait que commencer à balbutier la langue des grands et vénérables Rishis. . . .'

('But you will consider that this is the work of a remote Mletchha who just begins to stammer out the tongue of the great and venerable Rishis. . . .')

'Wishing you a long life to crown all your undertakings with success, and requesting you to offer my best regards to my learned friend, Professor Wilson, I remain with great respect.'

Max Muller studied the philosophy and preachings of the reformers of India of the medieval period like Chaitanya, Kabir and Nānak and also of the reformers of modern India like Rāmmohan Roy, Debendra Nāth Tagore, Keshub Chandra Sen, Swāmī Dayānanda Saraswati, Rāmakrishna Paramhaṅsa, Pawāri Baba of Ghāzipur and Rāi Shālīgram Sāheb Bāhādur of North-Western Province, and expressed respectful opinions about them. Rāmmohan Roy was to his mind 'a truly great man, a man who did a truly great work and whose name, if it is right to prophesy, will be remembered for ever, with some of his fellow-labourers and followers, as one of the great benefactors of mankind'.¹ He

¹ Max Muller, *Rāmmohan to Rāmakrishna*, p. 16.

entertained feelings of deep adoration for Rāmakrishna and his book on the Life and Sayings of this great saint appeared in 1898. 'I have often been told,' expressed Max Muller, 'that I have been misled by these (Indian) acquaintances, and I have taken far too favourable a view of the Indian character; that I had seen the best of India only, but not the worst. But where is the harm? I have seen what the Indian character can be, I have learnt what it ought to be, and I hope what it will be, and though we cannot expect a whole nation of Rāmmohan Roys, of Debendra Nāth Tagores, of Keshub Chandra Sens, of Malabarais and Ramābais, we ought not to neglect them in our estimate of the capabilities of a whole nation.'¹

Debendra Nāth Tagore wrote to Max Muller in December, 1884: 'I was very glad to receive your letter. It will always give me pleasure to hear from the Pandit of the Far West who has done so much for the language and literature of my country. There are branches of knowledge and art in which the East is deficient, and which she must learn from foreign sources. But there are other things all her own, and even your enlightened countrymen may turn with pleasure and profit to a leaf or two out of the books of the East to learn something new, to get a glimpse of vistas of thought with which they are not familiar. And you, Sir, have done not a little to open out before the world treasures of Oriental wisdom which only the diligence of scholars like you could unfold. By the publication of the *Rig Veda* and the Upanishads you have brought within the reach of European scholars the thoughts and aspirations of our ancient Rishis, hitherto hidden in inaccessible manuscripts. And it is to be hoped that the dissemination of the knowledge of our ancient literature will help to cement the bonds of union between the two peoples who, brought up under a common roof, parted from each other and scattered over distant quarters of the globe, again to be brought together under the mysterious decree of Almighty Providence.'²

In 1892 congratulations from the Pandits of India, in the following Address, were sent to Max Muller.

¹ *Rāmmohan to Rāmakrishna.*, pp. 11-12.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

‘ Sir,—We beg to approach you with our sincere congratulations on your having completed half a century of arduous and important work since you took your Degree at the University of Leipzig. In the midst of the congratulations that will greet you from all parts of the civilised world, we beg you will permit us, who have been your admirers in the far East, to send you this brotherly greeting. Notwithstanding the distance that separates us, we hope that you will welcome this greeting as coming from a land which has been endeared to you *by ties of intellectual and spiritual fellowship*.

‘ 2. The last half-century has been distinguished by the vigorous and sustained effort of European thought to emancipate itself from the bias caused by the influence of race, nationality, and religion, and to move towards the conception of the essential unity of mankind. This effort has derived a great deal of its momentum from the study of the sacred language of our country and of the literatures and religions of India and other eastern countries, which European scholars have pursued with wonderful patience and vigour. Among these you have occupied a very prominent place.

‘ 3. By your edition of the *Rig Veda Samhita* with Sāyana’s commentary, you rendered possible an independent study of that unique memorial of the early condition of the whole Aryan race, and not merely of the Indian branch of it; and by your volume of the translation of the hymns to the Maruts, you showed the way how to pursue such studies.

‘ 4. Your series of the *Sacred Books of the East* is calculated to generate and strengthen in the minds of those who read it a conviction that God’s ennobling and elevating truth is not the monopoly of any particular race. It unfolds the gradual evolution of religious thought, the different stages of which were developed by different races or by the same race at different times. It has already communicated a strong impetus to the unifying movement alluded to above, and we are glad to observe that the philosophic writers of England have begun to avail themselves of the information therein laid before them.

‘ 5. By your numerous works on comparative philology,

and comparative mythology, and on the science of language, and science of religion, you have materially contributed to the advance of those branches of knowledge.

‘6. Though a German by birth, you have obtained such a command over English idiom that the charm of your literary style has enabled you to spread far and wide the knowledge of the results of your labours, and of the labours of your brother scholars in the several departments of knowledge which have engaged your attention and theirs.

‘7. It is in this last respect that your services to our country have been of signal value. You have, by publishing in an agreeable form the results of the study of the thought and literature of our country, enabled the people of the countries in which the English language is spoken to understand us, and raised our race in their estimation. And by your works generally, you have made it possible for us, most of whom cannot read German or French, to understand the European methods of study, and enabled a few of us to co-operate with European scholars.

‘8. In conclusion, we wish you a long and happy life, and hope and pray that health and strength may be long spared to you to enable you to continue your beneficial and useful labours.’¹

The Address was written on parchment with many signatures, which comprised the well-known names not only of Hindus, but of Muslims, Parsis, and of Civil Servants from every Presidency. The sheets containing the signatures were placed in a beautiful silver casket of Indian repoussé work, in the form of a manuscript, having on one side a representation of the sun rising above the Himalaya mountains, with the Ganges flowing from the summit, and at the top the sacred syllable *Om*; on the other side the picture of a sacred bird.

On receiving this casket Max Muller wrote to B.M. Malabari on the 8th January, 1895:² ‘Your beautiful casket has safely arrived. . . . To have won the good opinion of so many men of light and learning in India is the best reward I could have received for the work of my life. Of course,

¹ *The Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. II, pp. 319-321.*

² *Ibid, pp. 343-344.*

my work has chiefly been the work of a scholar, but I have tried never to lose sight of the higher objects of scholarship, to make us understand the past in order to understand the present, to make us understand others in order to understand ourselves. Kind and generous as the feeling in England is towards India, there still lurks the old prejudice that, after all, the people of India are strangers, different from ourselves, that allowance must be made for them, and all the rest. Now I have always held that the people of India are not strangers, but are exactly like ourselves, if we only would treat them as such. Their literature, their religion, their customs, are different from ours, but what is essential is the same in both. It may be said that I know the best specimens of Hindu society only, but the best specimens show what a nation is capable of. In literature also, you see, no doubt, the brighter side of a nation; but by all means let us see the bright side wherever we can; the light is there and will conquer in the end, whether in the East or in the West. Reformers like you have the right to disclose the dark sides, and dwell on them; but on one condition only, namely, that like you they work hard to dispel the darkness and to bring in the light. What you have done will not be forgotten and will bear fruit.'

Early in April, 1886, Max Muller received the following letter from Narendra Nāth Sen of Calcutta, which is an interesting evidence of the great estimation in which he was held in India:—

'A friend of mine, Babu Rakhāl Sen, a medical man of this city, on the occasion of the Shradh ceremony of his deceased father, made certain gifts to you as the first Sanskrit scholar in Europe. These gifts consisting of articles usually distributed to the Brahman Pandits in our country on occasion of a Shradh, have been forwarded to you by my friend. I hope you have received them by this time. He has taken the liberty to make the presents to you, and he hopes that, though very trifling, they may be acceptable to you. He has only endeavoured to render some honour to you, as one occupying a foremost place in the hearts of the Indians for his invaluable services in the cause of Sanskrit learning. The fact of a Hindu having on occasion of his father's Shradh

made these gifts to you ought to convince you and our brethren in the West in what high estimation your services are held in this country.'¹

In 1899 Max Muller received from a learned Pandit of Calcutta, named Sarat Chandra Shastri, a copy of verses which he had composed in his honour in Sanskrit ślokas.²

Max Muller indeed won the hearts of many in our country by devoted study of its religion. He revealed to the world its true significance in the best possible way as a prophet of cultural harmony.

In estimating the value of his contributions in this respect Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter observed in 1900: 'It was especially in the parallel developments of Indian and European thought that he found certain great harmonies of belief; and it was his delight to show that the springs of trust are for ever inexhaustible, and well up with fresh force in new minds from age to age. This was the secret of his interest in the modern movements of religious life which produced such men as Rāmakrishna and Keshub Chunder Sen. Again and again he would read some of the sayings in which the Hindu spirit found striking expression, and his voice trembled with responsive feeling. No other scholar has so successfully interpreted India to the West. Looking at the confidence reposed in him by the multitude of her own learned men, it may also be said that no Western teacher has done so much to interpret India to herself.'³

Some eminent German philosophers were profoundly influenced by Indian culture. Of them, Immanuel Kant, who was also a Professor of Geography, for the first time mentioned in the course of his *Lectures on Physical Geography* delivered at the University of Königsberg for forty years, from 1756 to 1796, about not only the mountains and the rivers, the plants and the animals of India but also its customs, manners and religions. Hindu tolerance impressed him much. So, he observed, 'It is one of the principles of the Hindus that they believe that also the religions of other nations are good. For this reason they never compel

¹ *The Life and Letters of Max Muller, Vol. II, pp. 197-198.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 405.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 440.

others to embrace Hinduism.¹ The Hindu ethics in his view 'contained nothing noxious to man'. 'Kant was very much interested in the Hindu doctrine of transmigration which corresponded in some respects to his own teaching about the destiny of the soul after death.'²

Schopenhauer (1788-1860) had admiration for Indian wisdom, and he had remarked that he derived some of his ideas from it. To him the Vedas appealed as 'the fruit of the highest human knowledge and wisdom, the kernel of which has at last reached us in the *Upanishads* as the greatest gift of this century'.³ He regarded the *Upanishads* 'as the solace of his life and death' and preserved in his room a statue of the Buddha, whom he called 'the greatest philosopher the world had ever seen before Plato and Kant'. 'Our knowledge of Hindu literature,' wrote Schopenhauer, 'is still very imperfect. Yet, as we find their ethical teaching variously and powerfully expressed in the *Vedas*, *Puranas*, poems, myths, legends of their saints, maxims and precepts, we see that it inculcates love of our neighbour with complete renunciation of self-love; love generally not confined to mankind, but including all living creatures; benevolence, even to the giving away of the hard-won wages of daily toil; unlimited patience towards all who injure us; the requital of all wickedness, however base, with goodness and love; voluntary and glad endurance of all ignominy; abstinence from all animal food; perfect chastity and renunciation of all sensual pleasure for him who strives after true holiness; the surrender of all possessions, the forsaking of every dwelling-place and of all relatives; deep unbroken solitude, spent in silent contemplation, with voluntary penance and terrible self-torture for the absolute mortification of the will, A religion which demands the greatest sacrifices, and which has yet remained so long in practice in a nation that embraces so many millions of persons, cannot be an arbitrarily invented superstition, but must have its foundation in the nature of man.'⁴

Richard Wagner was highly impressed by Schopenhauer's

¹ *J. A. S.*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, 1957.

² *Ibid.*

³ *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (New York), p. 286.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 315-316.

account of Buddhism. He remarked in a letter written by him in 1859 to Mathilde Wasendonk Wagner: 'You must know how I am unconsciously become a Buddhist.... Yes, child, it is a world view compared with which every other dogma must appear small and narrow.'¹ He further observed: 'Buddha's teaching is such a grand view of life, that every other one must seem rather small when compared with it. The philosopher with his deepest thoughts, the scientist with his largest results, the man with the most open heart for every thing that breathes and suffers, find their unlimited abode in this wonderful and incomparable conception of the world. How does our European world of to-day appear in comparison to it? Either as a wilderness or just as the beginning of a culture which already flourished in India in ancient times. I can keep off the vicissitudes of present every-day life only by drinking at the holy fountain of the Ganga.'²

Besides a group of American writers who came to know of India through comparative religion, some American Indologists 'established,' as Professor Norman Brown remarks, 'a distinguished tradition of productive humanistic scholarship concerning India' during the second half of the 19th century and this tradition has been followed with remarkable zeal in the present century. The American Oriental Society came into existence in 1842 and a few years after this arrangements were made in some American Universities for the study of Sanskrit and ancient Indian texts written in that and allied languages.

The first famous American Sanskrit scholar was Edward Elbridge Salisbury (1814-1901), who taught some students at Yale between 1840 and 1850. One of his students at Yale was William Dwight Whitney (1827-1901) who commenced his study of Sanskrit under him in 1849 and won great distinction in exploring Indian classics in their original languages. In 1850 he went to Berlin and improved his

¹ Quoted in Winternitz's '*India and the West*' in *Visva-Bhārathi Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. II, Part IV, p. 19.

² *J. A. S., Calcutta, Vol. XXIII, Part 2*, 1957. There was then some enthusiasm about Buddhism in Europe and America. When Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* appeared in 1879 in England it passed through sixty editions and in America more than one hundred editions.

knowledge of ancient Indian languages with the help of German scholars like Francis Bopp and Weber. In 1854 he joined the post of Professor of Sanskrit language and literature at Yale University. Under his inspiring guidance Indological studies and researches progressed considerably at this University. Whitney's editions of the *Atharva Veda* are highly valuable contributions and his Sanskrit Grammar (1879) is also an important work. Whitney's successor as Professor of Sanskrit at Yale was Edward Washburn Hopkins (1857-1932), whose studies about Indian religions, and particularly his book on *The Religions of India* (1895), have abiding importance in the history of the world's culture. Harvard University, destined to develop as a distinguished centre of Indological studies, included Sanskrit in its curriculum in 1872 and Charles Rockwell Lanman, its Professor of Sanskrit for more than forty years, has to his credit some scholarly contributions of lasting value. His *Sanskrit Reader* was published in 1884 and in 1889 he travelled in India collecting manuscripts for Harvard University. Like Hopkins he was much interested in the study of Indian religions and his work entitled *Beginnings of Hindu Pantheism* came out in 1890. To Lanman we owe the planning and editing of the *Harvard Oriental Series* since 1895.

Learned societies and international cultural conferences, besides promoting collaboration of scholars in the field of knowledge, also fostered a sense of oneness among different countries in spite of the dreadful influences of militant nationalism. Sir William Jones was elected as a corresponding Member by the Massachusetts Historical Society. This was meant not only to honour him but also to establish contact between these two societies. It was observed: 'As the correspondence of literary and philosophical societies established in different nations is an intercourse of true philanthropy and has a manifest tendency to increase their friendship and to support that harmony in the great family of mankind on which the happiness of the world so much depends it can never solicit your aid without success.'¹

The sponsors of the Russian Asiatic Academy, inaugurated at St. Petersburg in 1870, expressed that 'in the last years of

¹ Quoted in S. N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones*, p. 89.

the eighteenth century there has been a transformation in the attitude of human civilization. The accidental reasons for this revaluation are the successes of the British in India, the mastery on the part of German scholars of the sacred language of the Brahmans . . . and also the foundation of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta '.

The International Congress of Orientalists, for the origin of which we are indebted to the famous French savant, Professor Léon de Rosny, has played an important role in the development of international understanding since its first session met at Paris in 1873. In explaining the objects of this Congress, Max Muller observed at its second session in 1874: ' Many a time I have been asked, what is the good of the International Congress of Orientalists? It seems to me that the real permanent use of these scientific gatherings is twofold: (a) They enable us to take stock, to compare notes, to see where we are and to find out where we ought to be going. (b) They give us an opportunity, from time to time, to tell the world where we are, what we have been doing for the world, and what, in return, we expect the world to do for us.' In amplifying the first point he added: ' Knowledge for its own sake, as it is sometimes called, is the most dangerous idol that a student can worship. We despise the miser who amasses money for the sake of money, but still more contemptible is the intellectual miser, who hoards up knowledge instead of spreading it. Against this danger of mistaking the means for the end, of making bricks without making mortar, of working for ourselves instead of working for others, meetings such as our own, bringing together such a large number of the first Oriental scholars of Europe, seem to me a most excellent safeguard.' Max Muller concluded his Address with the following Vedic verse:

' Come together! Speak together! Let your minds be concordant — the gods by being concordant receive their share, one after the other. Their word is the same, their counsel is the same, their mind is the same, their thoughts are at one; I address to you the same word, I worship you with the same sacrifice. Let your endeavour be the same! Let your hearts be the same! Let your mind be

the same, that it may go well with you.'

India has actively participated in this International Congress since its inception by sending many of her famous scholars to its different sessions, all of whom joined in the lively discussions on various topics. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, one of the most erudite scholars of renascent India whose contributions in the field of Indological studies are of immense importance, attended the Oriental Congress at Vienna in 1886. He was highly gratified at the 'sight of so many men from different parts of Germany and Europe who had chosen a life of study and thought, and who applied themselves with such devotion and zeal to the study of the sacred language' of India like her 'old Rishis'.¹ 'Another feeling,' he added, 'which the sittings of the Congress evoked in me was that of admiration for the respect for human nature and brotherly sympathy for mankind which, I thought, were evinced by the interest which so many people took in the condition, the thought, and languages of the people of Asia, Africa and Polynesia' Inspired by this ideal of universal brotherhood Sir R. G. Bhandarkar opened his versified Sanskrit address with the words, 'Supreme over all is that brotherly feeling for mankind which prompts the constant endeavours of these men to study the languages, the sciences and arts of Eastern races so utterly different from themselves,' and concluded it with the observation: 'May Congresses such as this conduce to knit different countries together in friendship, to the cessation of war, and to the prosperity of mankind.'

In 1899 Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal attended the Oriental Congress at Rome and read there four highly learned papers.² In 1911 he was invited to inaugurate the first Universal 'Race Congress', held in London. Here he read a paper of outstanding quality on 'Race-Origin'.

In concluding his speech he observed: 'Fellow Delegates, be patient with me for a moment, as I deliver to you the message of India to this World Congress. I come from the centre of the Orient, and I would represent the genius,

¹ *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVII (1889), pp. 72 ff.

² Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal (1864-1964) Birth Centenary Commemoration Volume, p. 174.

the intuition, the vision of the land and the people of the Himalays and the Ganges. The harmony of the World Congress would not be complete without that note. For what does India represent? Not the Universal Empire like the Eternal City, not the Universal spiritual domination like the Mother of the Churches. India in the shadow of the glacier-clad Himalaya and the roar of the Southern Ocean has ever dreamt of other than a historic Eternity. India dreamt of building up the foundation of the Life Spiritual preaching Ahimsa—sacredness and inviolableness of all Life and sentiency, not for their own sake merely, but as the progressive manifestation of the Life Eternal. India sought to organize the successive stages of life as in social Amphitheatre so as to lead at the high tableland, the Sinai Peak, the rare and pure air, in which the universal Self, the Self of all that lives and moves, reveals itself to the searching gaze of man.¹ Scholars of Europe were much inspired with the writings of Brajendra Nath Seal. Sir Patric Geddes once said,—‘Brajendra Nath was the best brain that goes on functioning in these planes.’ Einstein also paid a great tribute to Brajendra Nath. He is known to have said—‘most philosophers are indebted to Hindus and to remember also that Dr. Seal was one of the foremost exponents of Hindu Philosophy—to our age.’

The idea of some of the prominent modern scholars about the usefulness of such gatherings in promoting international goodwill has been well echoed in our days. In welcoming the delegates to the XXVI International Congress of Orientalists, held at Delhi in January, 1964, Dr. P. V. Kane, the doyen of Indologists in our country in the recent years, significantly observed: ‘The main purpose of such meetings of the scholars of the West and of the East is, I think, to see face to face one another, to recognise that all who are assembled at such gatherings are fellow-workers in the great and noble task of making people understand and respect one another, and to contribute to the diffusion of the idea of the need of peaceful co-existence among the nations of the world, though they may have different ideologies.’ Professor B. G. Gafurov, President of the XXV Session of the International

¹ *Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal Birth Centenary Commemoration Volume*, p. 178.

Congress of Orientalists held at Moscow in 1960, said in his speech at the Delhi session of the Congress: ' The study of the Orient, to which we have dedicated our lives, plays an ever-growing part in our world. Oriental studies must be inspired by the ideas of humanism; they must serve the cause of progress and peace. In our work we must not be influenced by the feelings of chauvinism and narrow nationalism cultivated in some places. In studying the history and culture of the peoples of the East we must seek to bring the peoples closer together and not separate them.'

**INFLUENCE OF INDIAN CULTURE
ON THE MINDS OF SOME PROMINENT THINKERS
AND WRITERS OF EUROPE AND AMERICA**

We have seen how fellow-pilgrims in quest of truth and knowledge, though belonging to different countries, developed mutual regard and cordiality. There were also some among the great scholars and thinkers of Europe and America in the modern age, who sought in Indian wisdom, solace and relief from what they considered to be the torments of an excessively mechanized, materialistic and soul-corroding civilization of the West. In his Foreword to Dr. Coomāraswamy's *Dance of Siva*, Romain Rolland refers to them as the 'dissatisfied children of the spirit of the West', who, in their agony, wanted to 'look towards Asia'. 'Asia,' continues Romain Rolland, 'the great land of which Europe is but a peninsula, the advance guard of the army, the prow of the heavy ship, laden with a thousand wisdoms. . . .from her have always come to us our gods and our ideas. But, in the course of the many circuits made by our peoples who followed the tract of the sun, losing contact with our native East, we have deformed, for our own ends of violent and limited action, the universality of her great thoughts.'

Influence of Indian thought and culture entered into America from the early years of the 19th century through three channels: study of Indian classical works in English translations, commercial relations, and knowledge about the writings of Rāmmohan Roy and a number of letters written by him to his American friends.¹ One great poet and thinker of the modern world, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), had an attitude of admiration for the teachings of both Hinduism and Buddhism, though he did not like certain features of them. 'The Indian teaching,' he observed, 'through its cloud of legends, has yet a simple and grand religion, like a queenly countenance seen through a rich veil. It teaches to speak truth, love others as yourself, and to despise trifles. . . .Identity, identity! friend and

¹John T. Reid, *Indian Influences in American Literature and Thought* (first published in 1965), pp. 1-17.

foe are of one stuff. Cheerful and noble is the genius of this cosmogony.¹ He observed in 1866 at the age of sixty-three: 'In the history of intellect no more important fact than the Hindu theology teaching that the beatitude or supreme good is to be attained through science: namely, by the perception of the real and unreal, setting aside matter, and qualities, and affections or emotions and persons, as Mayas or illusions, and thus arriving at the contemplation of the one eternal Life and Cause, and a perpetual approach and assimilation to him, thus escaping new births of transmigration.' He wrote in 1856 the following in his deeply Vedantic poem *Brahma*:

'If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain.
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.'

Not long after Emerson's death Pratāp Chandra Mazoomdār, a lecturer sent by the Brāhmo Sāmāj to America, wrote: 'Amidst this ceaseless, sleepless din and clash of Western materialism, this heat of restless energy, the character of Emerson shines upon India serene as the evening star. He seems to some of us to have been a geographical mistake. He ought to have been born in India. Perhaps Hindoos were closer kinsmen to him than his own nation because every typical Hindoo is a child of nature.'² Many years

¹ Quoted in Aronson, *Europe Looks at India*, p. 118.

² Quoted in Arthur Christy, *The Orientation in American Transcendentalism*, pp. 363-64, and John T. Reid, *Indian Influences in American Literature and Thought*, p. 31.

back, an eminent Indian scholar, Principal Heramba Chandra Moitra of City College, Calcutta, observed in a paper on Emerson, read by him before a national Conference of Unitarian Ministers in America: 'I recognise a close affinity between the thought of Emerson and that of the Orient. Emerson's teachings breathe a new life into our old faith. They assure its stability, and its progress, by incorporating with it precious new truths revealed or brought into prominence by the wider intellectual or ethical outlook of the modern spirit.'

Another celebrated American philosopher-poet and a contemporary of Emerson, with whom he came into contact at the age of twenty-one, was Henry David Thoreau, author of the famous book, *Walden or Life in the Woods*. Indian thought and wisdom fascinated him also. Uninfluenced by the strifes or glamour of mundane existence he spent his days as an Indian ascetic in the sylvan retreat on the banks of the Walden pond in Concord, Massachusetts, deeply absorbed in meditation and 'idealistic transcendence'. He 'loved so well the philosophy of India' and found its quintessence in the *Bhagavad Gītā* about which he thus wrote in his *Walden*, which appeared in 1854: 'In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial; and I doubt if that philosophy is not to be referred to a previous state of experience, so remote is its sublimity from our conceptions. I lay down the book and go to my well for water, and lo! there I meet the servant of the Brahmin, priest of Brahma and Vishnu and Indra, who still sits in his temple on the Ganges reading the Vedas or dwells at the root of a tree with his crust and water jug. I meet his servant come to draw water for his master and our buckets as it were grate together in the well. The pure Walden water is mingled with the sacred water of the Ganges.'¹ 'The New Testament,' he also wrote, 'is remarkable for its pure morality; the best of Hindu scripture, for its pure intellectuality. The reader is nowhere raised

¹ Quoted in the *Modern Review*, November, 1962, p. 386.

into and sustained into a higher, purer or rarer region of thought than in the *Bhagavad Gītā*.¹ He made observations on some other ancient books of India, like the *Mahābhārata*, *Manu Samhitā*, and *Hitopadeśa* of Vishnu Sharmā.¹ About *Manu Samhitā* he wrote in his Journal: ‘That little (Manu) . . . comes to me with such a volume of sound as if it had swept unobstructed over the plains of Hindustan. . . . They are the laws of you and me, a fragrance wafted down from those old times, and no more to be refuted than the wind. When my imagination travels eastward and backward to those remote years of the gods, I seem to draw near to the habitation of the morning, and the dawn at length has a place. I remember the book as an hour before sunrise.’² After reading some portions of the *Vedas*, probably in translations, Thoreau expressed: ‘What extracts from the *Vedas* I have read fall on me like light of a higher and purer luminary, which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum,—free from particulars, simple, universal. It rises on me like the full moon after the stars have come out, wading through some far rarer stratum of the sky.’³

India’s religion and ideals of life deeply influenced Count Leo Tolstoy, the author of *War and Peace* and one of the noblest prophets of modern humanity. As a matter of fact this Russian sage conceived of a real spiritual collaboration between the East and the West. Tolstoy studied eastern religions for years. It has been said on the basis of an entry in his Diary, dated the 14th September, 1896, that a copy of Swāmī Vivekānanda’s *Rāja Yoga* was sent to him from America by an Indian named Toda. Tolstoy’s correspondence with Indians started from the year 1901 with his reply to a letter written to him by an Indian publicist, A. Rama-Seshan, Editor, of the *Ārya*, an organ of the *Ārya-Samāj*. A. Rama-Seshan, wrote to him: ‘Your

¹ It is well known how some ideas of Thoreau and Emerson influenced Gandhiji: M. K. Gandhi, *Autobiography*, p. 239; Frederic Ives Carpenter, *Emerson Handbook*, N. Y., p. 251; D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. II, p. 419, Vol. III, p. 15, Vol. IV, pp. 328-329; Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, N. Y., pp. 91-93; *Emerson and Gandhi* by George Hendrick in the *Emerson Society Quarterly*, No. 2 1st Quarter, 1956; *Gandhi and Thoreau* by Walter Harding in the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, April, 1948.

² Quoted in Reid, *Indian Influences in American Literature and Thought*, p. 34.

³ *Ibid*, pp. 35-36.

name is known to the majority of my educated countrymen. They know your work of fiction with great interest.' In 1903-4 he had correspondence about religious topics with Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, a leader of the Indian Muslims. He also replied to some letters written to him by the famous Bengali philosopher and *sannyāsī* Bābā Premānanda Bhārati. Tolstoy felt much interested in a booklet of Bābā Bhārati, entitled *Krishna* (1904), and arranged for its translation into Russian. He also exchanged letters with Professor Rāmā Devī, editor of the *Vedic Magazine*, and D. Gopāla Chetty, editor of the *New Reformer*.

Tolstoy was a source of inspiration for Gāndhijī since his student days and subsequently during his struggle in South Africa. The *Tolstoy Farm*, started by Gāndhijī in South Africa, was a laboratory for experiments in truth, non-violence and training of the spirit. Tolstoy's ideal of universal love for mankind and some other virtues had profound influence on Gāndhijī. His book, entitled *Kingdom of God is Within You*, 'overwhelmed' Gāndhijī, as he writes in his *Autobiography*, and 'left an abiding impression'¹ on him. His other books also 'made a deep impression'² on him and he 'began to realise more and more the infinite possibilities of universal love'.

Tolstoy made highly significant observations about India in his *Letter to a Hindu*, written in 1908, in reply to a letter from the editor of *Free Hindustan*, which was one of the organs of the Indian Revolutionaries and had as its motto, 'Resistance to aggression is not simply justifiable but imperative; non-resistance hurts both, Altruism and Egoism'.³ Tolstoy wrote in his letter; 'From your letter and the articles in *Free Hindustan* as well as from the very interesting writings of the Hindu Swāmī Vivekānanda and others, it appears that, as is the case in our time with the ills of all nations, the reason lies in the lack of a reasonable religious teaching which by explaining the meaning of life would supply a supreme law for the guidance of conduct and would replace the more than dubious precepts of pseudo-religion and

¹ *Autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 172.

² *Ibid.*

³ The letter is not available. But Tolstoy's reply to it was published later on and Māhatmā Gāndhī, after editing and printing its translation with Tolstoy's permission, sent a copy of it to him in one of his letters.

pseudo-science with immoral conclusions deduced from them and commonly called 'civilization'.

'Your letter, as well as the articles in *Free Hindustan* and Indian political literature generally, show that most of the leaders of public opinion among your people no longer attach any significance to the religious teachings that were and are professed by the peoples of India, and recognise no possibility of freeing the people from the oppression they endure except by adopting the irreligious and profoundly immoral social arrangements under which the English and other pseudo-Christian nations live to-day.

'And yet the chief if not the sole cause of the enslavement of the Indian peoples by the English lies in this very absence of a religious consciousness and of the guidance for conduct which should flow from it—a lack common in our day to all nations East and West, from Japan to England and America alike.

* * * *

'Love is the only way to rescue humanity from all ills, and in it you too have the only method of saving your people from enslavement. You say that the English have enslaved your people and hold them in subjection because the latter have not resisted resolutely enough and have not met force by force.

'But the case is just the opposite. If the English have enslaved the people of India it is just because the latter recognised, and still recognise, force as the fundamental principle of the social order. In accordance with that principle they submitted to their little rajahs, and on their behalf struggled against one another, fought the Europeans, the English, and are now trying to fight with them again.

'A commercial company enslaved a nation comprising two hundred millions. Tell this to a man free from superstition and he will fail to grasp what these words mean. What does it mean that thirty thousand men, not athletes but rather weak and ordinary people, have subdued two hundred million vigorous, clever, capable and freedom-loving people? Do not the figures make it clear that it is not the English who have enslaved the Indians, but the

Indians who have enslaved themselves?

* * * *

‘What are wanted for the Indian as for the Englishman, the Frenchman, the German, and the Russian, are not Constitutions and Revolutions, nor all sorts of Conferences and Congresses, nor the many ingenious devices for submarine navigation and aerial navigation, nor powerful explosives, nor all sorts of conveniences to add to the enjoyment of the rich, ruling classes; nor new schools and universities with innumerable faculties of science, nor an augmentation of papers and books, nor gramophones and cinematographs, nor those childish and for the most part corrupt stupidities termed art—but one thing only is needful: the knowledge of the simple and clear truth which finds place in every soul that is not stupefied by religious and scientific superstitions—the truth that for our life one law is valid—the law of love, which brings the highest happiness to every individual as well as to all mankind.’

I have already noted Romain Rolland’s reference to those who, out of a feeling of disgust with the western civilization, looked to the East for harmony and comfort. Romain Rolland, with a marvellous appreciation of Indian thought and culture, preached the gospel of a perfect synthesis between East and West as a panacea for the evils from which humanity was suffering due to the ravages of war and pernicious effects of western materialism. ‘I have dedicated,’ observed this great humanist, ‘my whole life to the reconciliation of mankind. I have striven to bring it about among the peoples of Europe, especially between those two great Western peoples who are brethren and yet enemies.’¹

There are some references about India in Romain Rolland’s book on Tolstoy published in 1911. Shri Dilip Kumār Roy met Romain Rolland in 1922, and this he recorded in his book entitled *Among the Great*. In Romain Rolland’s little villa, overlooking Lake Lemán, Roy ‘saw on his shelf French translations of many books on Buddhism and of Hindu philosophical works such as the

¹ Romain Rolland, *Ramakrishna*, p. 4.

Gītā, the *Upanishads*. etc.’ ‘I feel happy to see,’ said Roy, ‘that you take so much pains to be well-posted in our scriptures, particularly the Hindu philosophy.’ Romain Rolland replied ‘that Hindu philosophy had ever been a source of inspiration to him’.¹ His emphasis on India as ‘the spiritual counterpart of Europe’ came to be known clearly from 1918. Referring to Europe and Asia he remarked in January, 1922: ‘This hand stretched by Asia we take it into ours. Our cause is one: To save human unity and its harmony. Europe, Asia, their forces are different. Let us unite them to accomplish the common work; the greatest civilization, the total human genius. Teach us to understand all, Asia, teach us your life wisdom. And learn from us how to act.’

In 1919 Romain Rolland wrote his first letter to Dr. Rabindranāth Tagore requesting him to sign the *Declaration of the Independence of the Spirit*, which he enclosed with it. It was drawn up by some intellectuals of the world as a protest against the horrors of the World War I. Romain Rolland wrote on the 10th April, 1919: ‘Certain free spirits, who feel the need of standing against the almost universal oppression and servitude of the intellect, have conceived the project of a *Declaration of the Independence of the Spirit*, a copy of which I enclose. Would you give us the honour of uniting your name with ours? My dream will be that one day we may see the union of these two hemispheres of the Spirit; and I admire you for having contributed towards this more than any one else.’ In response to this Rabindranāth sent the following reply:—

‘When my mind was steeped in the gloom of the thought, that the lesson of the late War had been lost, and that people were trying to perpetuate their hatred and anger into the same organised menace for the world which threatened themselves with disaster, your letter came and cheered me with its message of hope. The truths, that save us, have always been uttered by the few and rejected by the many and have triumphed through their failures. It is enough for me to know that the higher conscience of Europe has been able to assert itself in one of her choicest spirits through the ugly

¹ Dilip Kumar Roy, *Among the Great*, p. 9.

clamours of passionate politics; and I gladly hasten to accept your invitation to join the ranks of those free souls, who in Europe have conceived the project of a *Declaration of Independence of the Spirit*. Kindly accept my thanks for the noble words with which you have introduced the French translation of the passages from my *Message to Japan* in your pamphlet. I hope to be excused for publishing, in one of our Magazines, an English rendering of the same, as well as your letter to me with the *Declaration*. I have asked my publisher to send you my book on *Nationalism* which contains my Japanese addresses and some more lectures on the same subject.¹ Rabindranāth added his signature to the list of names already mentioned in the *Declaration*. Another Indian who signed it was Dr. Ānanda Coomāraswamy.

Contact between these two prophets of universalism soon became closer and deeper. Rabindranāth met Romain Rolland on the 17th April, 1921. In April, 1922, Dr. Kālidās Nāg, one of the favourite disciples of Rabindranāth, met Romain Rolland several times at Villeneuve, Switzerland, and impressed him highly by 'his quick and vibrating intelligence'. Through Dr. Kālidās Nāg, Romain Rolland informed Rabindranāth about an interesting project of universal publication, a *World Library*, by a Swiss editor of Rheinfelden, Emil Roniger. 'This would mean,' as Romain Rolland wrote to Rabindranāth on the 2nd December, 1922, 'a collection of contemporary works written by the best writers of all countries which would be published in two editions, French and German (or in one of them only). This enterprise which would be free from any political tendency will be of an essentially idealist character. It would try to establish a centre of art truly universal,—a spiritual centre where free souls meet as brothers.' 'The union of Europe and Asia must be,' wrote Rolland to Tagore, on the 17th June, 1923, 'in the centuries to come, the most noble task of mankind. As for myself, India from now on is not a foreign land, she is the greatest of all countries, the ancient country from which I once came. I find her again deep inside me.' Each sent his publications to the other.

¹ *The Modern Review*, July, 1919, pp. 81-83.

Rolland wrote to Tagore on the 30th December, 1923, that he enjoyed the latter's 'illuminating studies which, whether historical or philosophical, are always visions of the soul'. In an appreciation of Romain Rolland, Rabindranāth wrote in October, 1925: 'Human civilizations have their genesis in individuals, and they have also their protectors in them. One of the few proofs that the present day is not utterly barren of them is the life and work of Romain Rolland. And that the present day needs him most is proved by the scourging he has received from it, which is a true recognition of his greatness by his fellow beings.'¹ '.....I have ever felt,' wrote Rev. C. F. Andrews in 1926, 'that the personal friendship between these two supreme literary geniuses of the West and East which it has been my privilege to witness has been enhanced and sublimated through their spiritual unity as pure and ardent lovers of humanity, who have risen above the lower barriers and boundaries of nationalism into the broader realm of the ultimate brotherhood of mankind.'

It was in the year 1920 that Shri Dilip Kumār Roy first spoke to Romain Rolland about Mahātmā Gāndhī. Since then he developed an unstinted regard for this great son of India, whose personality presented a brilliant combination of unflinching faith in goodness and fearless regard for Truth. 'The Mahatma,' Romain Rolland murmured almost to himself, 'is indeed wonderful.' 'Wonderful! A flame amid flickers, a beacon in stormy waters! His pacifism, non-violence, life of spotless purity, sincerity,—well, there is so much in him, in one man, a giant spirit in a frail frame! Who would have believed such a flowering of faith possible in our starless days of pettiness and selfish fears.'²

Mahātmā Gāndhī observed on the 11th August, 1920: 'I am wedded to India because I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world..... My religion has no geographical limits. I have a living faith in it which will transcend even my love for India herself.' 'These noble words,' wrote Romain Rolland in 1924, 'prove that the Apostle of India is the Apostle of the World, and that he is

¹ *The Modern Review*, 1926, p. 50.

² Dilip Kumar Roy, *Among the Great*, p. 19.

one of us. The battle the Māhatmā began fighting four years ago is our battle.’¹ ‘In the old crumbling world’, he added, ‘no refuge, no hope, no great light. The Church gives innocuous advice, virtuous and dosed, carefully worded so as not to antagonise the mighty. Besides, the Church never sets the example—even when giving advice. Weak pacifists bray, languishingly, and you feel that they hesitate and fumble, talk about a faith they no longer believe in. Who will prove this faith? And how, in an unbelieving world? Faith is proved by action.

This is the great message to the world, or as Gandhi puts it, ‘India’s message—self sacrifice’.²

Romain Rolland’s idea about the fundamental unity of human civilization was reinforced by his ‘study of mysticism and action in modern India’. For this he studied the careers of its two great saints, Shri Rāmākṛishna and his disciple Swāmī Vivekānanda, both of whom, as he noted, belonged to ‘the great army of the Spirit marching on in their own time’. He writes in the *Prelude to his work on Rāmākṛishna*: ‘If there is one place on the face of the earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence, it is India. . . . For more than thirty centuries the tree of Vision, with all its thousand branches and their millions of twigs, has sprung from that torrid land, the burning womb of the gods.’ Addressing his Western readers he wrote in this book: ‘For a century in new India Unity has been the target for the arrows of all archers. Fiery personalities throughout this century have sprung from her sacred earth, a veritable Ganges of peoples and thought. Whatever may be the differences between them, their goal is ever the same—human unity through God. And through all the changes of workmen Unity itself has expanded and gained in precision.

‘From first to last this great movement has been one of co-operation on a footing of complete equality between the West and the East, between the powers of reason and those—not of faith in the sense of blind acceptance, a sense it has

¹ Romain Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, (1924), p. 26.

² *Ibid*, p. 154.

gained in servile ages among exhausted races—but of vital and penetrating intuition: the eye in the forehead of the Cyclops which completes but does not cancel the other two.

‘From this magnificent procession of spiritual heroes I have chosen two men, who have won my regard because with incomparable charm and power they have realised this splendid symphony of the Universal Soul. . . . They are Rāmakrishna and Vivekānanda.’¹

* * * *

‘The man (Rāmakrishna) whose image I here evoke was the consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of three hundred million people. Although he has been dead forty years, his soul animates modern India. He was no hero of action like Gāndhī, no genius in art or thought like Goethe or Tagore. He was a little village Brahmin of Bengal, whose outer life was set in a limited frame without striking incident, outside the political and social activities of his time. But his inner life embraced the whole multiplicity of men and gods. It was a part of the very source of Energy, the Divine Shakti, of whom Vidyāpati, the old poet of Mithilā, and Rāmprasād of Bengal sing.

‘Very few go back to the source. The little peasant of Bengal by listening to the message of his heart found his way to the inner Sea. And there he was wedded to it, thus bearing out the words of the *Upanishads*:

“I am more ancient than the radiant Gods. I am the first-born of the Being. I am the artery of Immortality. It is my desire to bring the sound of the beating of that artery to the ears of fever-stricken Europe, which has murdered sleep. I wish to wet its lips with the blood of Immortality.”²

Romain Rolland described Vivekānanda as ‘the St. Paul of this Messiah of Bengal. He founded his Church and his doctrine. He travelled throughout the world and was the aqueduct, akin to those red arches which span the Roman Campagna, along which the waters of the spirit have flowed from India to the Europes (Europe and America) and from the Europes back to India, joining scientific reason to Vedantic faith, and the past to the future.’³

¹ Romain Rolland, *Rāmakrishna*, pp. 7-8. ² *Ibid*, pp. 13-14. ³ *Ibid*, p. 282.

LEADERS OF RENASCENT INDIA AS PROPHETS OF UNIVERSALISM

In modern times our country has witnessed not only a cultural renaissance resulting in the re-discovery of India's glorious past but also the revival of her old ideals of harmony and fellowship through the preachings and efforts of great apostles of awakened India, like Rāmmohan, Rāmakrishna, Vivekānanda, Aurobindo, Gāndhijī and Rabindranāth. Essentially Indian in spirit all of them were ardent prophets of universalism and best interpreters of India's ideals and culture to the modern world which has yet to solve the crucial problem of true harmony in international relationship. Writing at the end of the 19th century Rāmmohan's biographer Collet significantly remarked: 'We stand on the eve of an unprecedented mingling of East and West. The European and Asiatic streams of human development, which have often tinged each other before, are now approaching a confluence which bids fair to form the one ocean-river of the collective progress of mankind.'¹

When in the post-Napoleonic period of history, the Metternich system was trying in vain to preserve the crumbling edifice of the old regime against the irresistible forces of nationalism and democracy, Rāmmohan enthusiastically advocated the cause of liberty and democratic reform. He expressed sympathy for those countries which were fighting for liberty, and gratification at the victory of the struggling nations against despotic alien domination in every part of the globe. William Adam, a Baptist Missionary intimately associated with Rāmmohan, wrote significantly: 'He would be free or not be at all. . . . Love of freedom was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul, . . . freedom not of action merely, but of thought. . . . This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the highest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of the equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him.'

¹ Sophia Dobson Collet, *The Life and Letters of Rājā Rāmmohan Roy*, edited by Dilip Kumar Biswas and Prabhat Chandra Ganguli, p. 381.

In 1820-21 the people of Naples revolted against the then Bourbon King and demanded a democratic constitution. But this movement did not succeed. On hearing of its suppression Rāmmohan wrote in a letter to Buckingham, dated the 11th August, 1821: 'From the late unhappy news I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European Colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy.'

'Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours. Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been, and never will be ultimately successful.'

'These noble words,' remarks Miss Collet, 'reveal how profoundly Rāmmohan felt with the late James Russell Lowell that 'In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim,' and that

'Whenever wrong is done
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding Sun,
That wrong is also done to us.'¹

Rāmmohan was opposed to colonial imperialism. On the emancipation of the South American Colonies of Spain from the latter's control, he was so happy that he celebrated this occasion 'by illuminations, by an elegant dinner to about sixty Europeans, and by a speech composed and delivered in English by himself at his house in Calcutta'.² On being questioned by someone why he had done so, he replied, 'What! Ought I to be insensible to the sufferings of my fellow-creatures wherever they are, or however unconnected by interests, religion or language?'³ He had sympathy for the struggle for independence on the part of Greece. An article on 'Ireland, the Causes of its Distress and Discontent' was published in Rāmmohan's Persian Weekly *Mir āt-ul-Akhbar*. In it he discussed the evils of absentee landlordism and the injustice of the tithe which the Irish Catholics had to pay for the maintenance of a Protestant Church

¹ *Life and Letters of Rājā Rāmmohan Roy*, p. 131.

² *Rāmmohan Roy Centenary* (1933) *Volume, Part II*, pp. 79-80.

³ *Ibid.*

in their land. To an Irish peasant the tithe 'was at once a drain upon his purse, a sear upon his conscience'.

When the news of the French Revolution of 1830 reached India some months before Rāmmohan's departure for Europe 'so great was his enthusiasm that he could think and talk of nothing else'.¹ On his way to England, Rāmmohan landed at the Cape of Good Hope for an hour or two. 'Returning on board he met with a nasty accident..... But no bodily suffering could repress his mental ardour. Two French frigates, under the revolutionary flag, the glorious tri-colour, were lying in Table Bay, and lame as he was, he would insist on visiting them. The sight of the colours seemed to kindle his enthusiasm and to render him insensible to pain'.² While returning, he exclaimed, "Glory, glory, glory to France!"

Rāmmohan also took much interest in England's effort for Parliamentary reform. During the agitation for Parliamentary reform in England in 1832 he observed that the struggle was not merely 'between the reformers and the anti-reformers, but also between liberty and tyranny throughout the world; between justice and injustice, and between right and wrong'.³ He publicly said that 'in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated, he would renounce his connection with England.' When the Reform Bill was passed he was exceedingly happy and wrote to a friend in England: 'I am now happy to find myself fully justified in congratulating you and many other friends on the complete success of the Reform Bill, notwithstanding the violent opposition and want of political principle on the part of the aristocrats. The nation can no longer be a prey to the few who used to fill their purses at the expense, nay, to the ruin of the people.'⁴

In a period marked by the influence of dynamic forces in human history, with which India was coming into close contact, Rāmmohan rightly realised the unsoundness of isolationism of any kind and stood for internationalism of the right type based on genuine sympathies and ties of cordiality.

¹ *Rāmmohan Roy Centenary Volume, Part II, P. 79.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid, p. 80.*

⁴ *English Works of Raja Rammohan Roy, Vol. II, p. 355.*

With a liberal spirit born of wide and deep studies and with his consciousness of the movement of contemporary historical forces, he stood for an intimate relationship among the various nations of the world. 'He initiated us,' as Rabindranāth pointed out, 'into the present era of world-wide co-operation of humanity.' Max Muller wrote: 'For the sake of intellectual intercourse, for the sake of comparing notes, so to say, with the Aryan brothers, Rāmmohan was the first who came from East to West, the first to join hands and to complete that world-wide circle through which henceforth, like an electric current, oriental thought could run to the West, and Western thought return to the East, making us feel once more that ancient brotherhood which unites the whole Aryan race, inspiring us with new hopes for a common faith, purer and simpler than any of the ecclesiastical religions of the world, and invigorating us for acts of nobler daring in the conquest of truth than any that are inscribed in the chronicles of our divided past.' The 'harbinger of universal humanism,' as Āchārya Brajendra Nāth Seal observed in 1924, 'the Humanist pure and simple, watching from his conning-tower the procession of universal Humanity in Universal History,'¹ Rāmmohan 'pointed the way to the solution of the larger problem of international culture and civilisation in human history, and became a precursor, an archetype, a prophet of coming Humanity. He laid the foundation of the true League of Nations in a League of National Cultures.'² 'Patriot that he was,' observed Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, 'he was not like us a narrow patriot. He was the first great modern International Ambassador.....He said to the world abroad, Come to India. She is still the hostess, broken though she be, plundered though she be by every kind of foreign exploitation, including your own exploitation, you people of the West! you are none the less welcome within the borders of my home.'³ Rabindranāth spoke to Romain Rolland in August, 1930: 'It is curious to note how India has furnished probably the first internationally-minded man of the 19th century.'

¹ *Rāmmohan Roy Centenary* (1933) *Volume, Part II, p. 106.*

² *Ibid, p. 96.*

³ *Ibid, p. 236.*

To facilitate international contacts Rāmmohan pleaded for removal of barriers and restrictions of certain kinds. When he came to know that it would be necessary for him to 'obtain an express permission' from the Ambassador or Minister of France in England, for a journey to France, he expressed surprise that such a regulation 'should exist among a people so famed as the French' were 'for courtesy and liberality in all other matters'. In a letter addressed in 1831 to Talleyrand, Minister for Foreign Affairs in France, he observed: 'It is now generally admitted that not religion only but unbiassed common sense as well as the accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are but one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches. Hence enlightened men in all countries must feel a wish to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing as far as possible all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race.'

For settlement of political or other differences between two countries, Rāmmohan suggested the holding of a Congress of their representatives. 'By such a Congress,' he held, 'all matters of difference, whether political or commercial, affecting the natives of any two civilized countries with constitutional Governments, might be settled amicably and justly to the satisfaction of both and profound peace and friendly feelings might be preserved between them from generation to generation.' Such a Congress was not to be like the Congresses which were summoned in Europe for a few years after 1815 to curb the forces of nationalism and democracy, but it was to serve as a forum for securing true amity amongst nations, for which organisations like the League of Nations and the United Nations Organisation have aspired in our days.

The second half of the 19th century was marked by a wave of reforming movements in India, which produced momentous effects in different spheres of life and also helped the progress of our nationalism. One such important movement, which owed its origin to Rāmakrishna Paramhansa and its growth to his devoted disciple, Swāmī Vive-

kānanda, was comprehensive in its outlook, aims and objectives. It emphasised unity of all religions and stood for complete harmony amongst mankind.

Swāmī Vivekānanda was a great and noble prophet of universalism, irrespective of nationality or creed, with robust faith in Humanity and Truth. He preached his gospel of universalism with wonderful efficacy through his soul-stirring speeches and writings, and had intimate personal contacts with eminent scholars and thinkers of different countries. In his discourse on *What is Religion?* he held: 'I am the universal. Stand up then; this is the highest worship. You are one with the universe'.¹ In his reply to the Address of the Māharājā of Khetri (Rājputanā) in the year 1895, he wrote: 'Know Rājāji, the greatest of all truths, discovered by your ancestors, is that the universe is one. Can one injure any one without injuring himself?'² In another discourse on *The Necessity of Religion* he observed: 'What is needed is a fellow-feeling between the different types of religion, seeing that they all stand or fall together, a fellow-feeling which springs from mutual esteem and mutual respect, and not the condescending, patronising, niggardly expression of goodwill, unfortunately in vogue at the present time with many.'³ In his lecture on *Unity in Diversity*, delivered in London on the 5th November, 1896, he thus expressed his conviction: 'Gradually these nations are joining, and I am sure the day will come when separation will vanish and that oneness to which we are all going will become manifest. A time must come when every man will be as intensely practical in the scientific world as in the spiritual, and then that oneness, the harmony of oneness, will pervade the whole world.'⁴

In the famous Parliament of Religions, held at Chicago in September, 1893, the importance of which in the history of human civilization can hardly be overestimated, Swāmī Vivekānanda not only explained with unflinching faith and courage the true nature of Hindu religion with its significant trait of cosmopolitanism but also pleaded strongly for world-

¹ *The Complete Works of Swāmī Vivekānanda*, Vol. I, p. 341.

² *Ibid*, Vol. IV, p. 327.

³ *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 68.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 188.

fellowship and harmony. In his Address at the final session of this august gathering on the 27th September, 1893, he observed that 'upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction", "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension"'¹

Swāmī Vivekānanda firmly held that the nations could grow not in isolation but through contacts, and that it was absolutely necessary for India to develop relations of fellowship with other countries. In his reply to the Calcutta Address sent from New York on the 18th November, 1894, to Rājā Pyāri Mohan Mukherjee, President of the Public meeting, held on the 3rd September, 1894, at the Calcutta Town Hall, he wrote: 'I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding itself apart from the community of others, and whenever such an attempt has been made under false ideas of greatness, policy, or holiness—the result has been disastrous to the secluding one. Give and take is the law; and if India wants to raise herself once more, it is absolutely necessary that she brings out her treasures and throws them broadcast among the nations of the earth, and in return be ready to receive what others have to give to her. Expansion is life, contraction is death. Love is life, and hatred is death.'² Swāmīji wrote to a disciple from London on the 20th September, 1896: 'You must not forget that my interests are international and not Indian alone.'

With full consciousness of the utility of studying India's glorious past for the country's onward march on the right lines, Swāmī Vivekānanda had a strong conviction that India's ideals of spirituality and universalism had a significance for the modern West very much distracted by the influence of militant nationalism and diehard materialism. He remarked in his reply to the Address at Pamban: 'A great moral obligation rests on the sons of India to fully equip themselves for the work of enlightening the world on the problems of human existence.'³ 'In this land (India)

¹ *The Complete Works of Swāmī Vivekānanda, Vol. I, p. 24.*

² *Ibid, Vol. IV, pp. 365-366.*

³ *Ibid, Vol. III, p. 139.*

are still religion and spirituality,'—he said in his reply to the Address at Rāmnad, 'the fountains which will have to overflow and flood the world, to bring in new life and new vitality to the Western and other nations, which are now almost borne down, half-killed, and degraded by political ambitions and social scheming.'¹ Replying to the Address at Madurā, Swāmiji said: 'It is not that we ought to learn everything from the West, or that they have to learn everything from us, but each will have to supply and hand down to future generations what it has, for the future accomplishment of that dream of ages—the harmony of nations, an ideal world.'² He observed in one of his letters, dated the 20th September, 1892: 'So you see, we must travel, we must go to foreign parts. We must see how the engine of society works in other countries, and keep free and open communication with what is going on in the minds of other nations, if we want to be a nation again.'³

Elucidating the mission of the Vedānta,⁴ Swāmī Vivekānanda pointed out that the world needed from India the grand ideas of 'universal toleration' and 'spiritual oneness of the whole universe'. Speaking about 'The Work before us' at the Triplicane Literary Society, Madras, Swāmiji said: 'To become broad, to go out, to amalgamate, to universalise, is the end of our aims.'⁵ He reminded the audience that India's 'message has gone out to the world many a time, but slowly, silently and unperceived. Like the gentle dew that falls unseen and unheard, and yet brings into blossom the fairest of roses, has been the contribution of India to the thought of the world.'⁶ 'There have been,' he added, 'great conquering races in the world. We have also been great conquerors. The story of our conquest has been described by that noble Emperor of India, Asoka, as the conquest of religion and of spirituality. Once more the world must be conquered by India. This is the dream of my life, and I wish that each one of you who

¹ *The Complete Works of Swāmī Vivekānanda, Vol. III, p. 148.*

² *Ibid, p. 171.*

³ *Ibid, Vol. V, p. 2.*

⁴ *Ibid, Vol. III, pp. 187-188.*

⁵ *Ibid, p. 271.*

⁶ *Ibid, p. 274.*

hears me to-day will have the same dream in your minds, and stop not till you have realised the dream. We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative, we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought.¹ India's eternal and true message of universalism to the world was thus expressed by Swāmiji: 'This is the theme of Indian life-work, the burden of her eternal songs, the backbone of her existence, the foundation of her being, the *raison d'être* of her very soul—the spiritualisation of the human race.'²

As a corollary to the ideal of universalism, Swāmiji advocated exchange of ideas and other matters between India and the countries of the West. In his reply to the Address presented to him by the people of Calcutta on his return from the West, he observed: 'Therefore, we must go out, and the secret of life is to give and take. Are we to take always, to sit at the feet of the Westerners to learn everything, even religion? We can learn mechanism from them. We can learn many other things. But we have to teach them something and that is our religion, that is our spirituality. Therefore, we must go out, exchange our spirituality for anything they have to give us; for the marvels of the region of spirit we will exchange the marvels of the matter. We will not be students always, but teachers also. There cannot be friendship without equality, and there cannot be equality when one party is always the teacher and the other party sits always at his feet.'³ 'And so,' remarks, Romain Rolland, 'in Vivekānanda's eyes the task was a double one! to take to India the money and goods acquired by western civilisation; to take to the West the spiritual treasures of India. A loyal exchange. A fraternal and mutual help.'

The gospel of universalism has been one of the noblest legacies of Swāmī Vivekānanda to humanity and its influence has certainly penetrated into many minds. In our

¹ *The Complete Works of Swāmi Vivekānanda, Vol. III, pp. 276-277.*

² *Ibid, Vol. IV, p. 315.*

³ *Ibid, Vol. III, pp. 317-318.*

age of dreadful conflicts, the Rāmakrishna Mission, started by him on the 1st of May, 1897, has been doing highly valuable work by its religious, social and cultural activities to foster the spirit of world brotherhood.

Sri Aurobindo had a firm conviction about world fellowship of the highest order. 'Our ideal of Swarāj,' observed this saint-patriot of India in 1909, 'involves no hatred of any other nation nor of the administration which is now established by law in this country. We find a bureaucratic administration; we wish to make it democratic; we find an alien Government; we wish to make it indigenious; we find a foreign control; we wish to render it Indian. They lie who say that this aspiration necessitates hatred and violence. Our ideal of patriotism proceeds on the basis of love and brotherhood and it looks beyond the unity of the nation and envisages the ultimate unity of mankind. But it is a unity of brothers and free men that we seek, not the unity of master and serf, of devourer and devoured.' 'The sun of India's destiny,' he said, 'would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India and overflow Asia and overflow the world.' In his message on the inauguration of Indian Freedom on the 15th August, 1947, Sri Aurobindo expressed: 'August 15th (which was the birthday of Sri Aurobindo) is the birthday of Free India. It marks for her the end of an old era, the beginning of a new age. But it has a significance not only for us, but for Asia and the whole world; for it signifies the entry into the comity of nations of a new power with untold potentialities which has a great part to play in determining the political, social, cultural and spiritual future of humanity. For I have always held and said that India was arising, not to serve her own material interests only, to achieve expansion, greatness, power and prosperity,—though these too she must not neglect,—and certainly not like others to acquire domination of other peoples, but to live also for God and the world as a helper and leader of the whole human race. Those aims and ideals were in their natural order these: a revolution which would achieve India's freedom and her unity; the resurgence and liberation of Asia and her return to the great role which she had played in the progress of human civilisation; the rise

of a new, a greater, and nobler life for mankind which for its entire realisation would rest outwardly on an international unification of the separate existence of the peoples, preserving and securing their national life but drawing them together into an overriding and consummating oneness; the gift by India of her spiritual knowledge and her means for the spiritualisation of life to the whole race; finally, a new step in the evolution which, by uplifting the consciousness to a higher level, would begin the solution of the many problems of existence which have perplexed and vexed humanity, since men began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society.....

‘The unification of mankind is under way, though only in an imperfect initiative, organised but struggling against tremendous difficulties. But the momentum is there and, if the experience of history can be taken as a guide, it must inevitably increase until it conquers. Here too India has begun to play a prominent part and, if she can develop that larger statesmanship which is not limited by the present facts and immediate possibilities but looks into the future and brings it nearer, her presence may make all the difference between a slow and timid and a bold and swift development.Nationalism will then have fulfilled itself; an international spirit and outlook must grow up and international forms and institutions; even it may be such developments as dual or multilateral citizenship and a voluntary fusion of cultures may appear in the process of the change and the spirit of nationalism losing its militancy may find these things perfectly compatible with the integrity of its own outlook. A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race.

‘The spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India’s spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever-increasing measure. That movement will grow; amid the disasters of the time more and more eyes are turning towards her with hope and there is even an increasing resort not only to her teachings, but to her psychic and spiritual practice.’¹

Bepin Chandra Pāl, a devout spiritualist and ‘one of the

¹ Sisir Kumar Mitra, *Sri Aurobindo and Indian Freedom*, pp. 15-21.

mightiest and prominent national leaders ' of our country, realised the universal significance of Indian Nationalism. ' Blessed is the perfected life of the individual,' he remarked. ' Blessed is the larger and diviner life of the nation wherein the individual finds his highest fulfilment; blessed, thrice blessed, is that Universal Life of Humanity wherein is the fulfilment of all national life and aspirations.'

The architect of our freedom, Mahātmā Gāndhī, preached and practised the cult of international fellowship with unshakeable faith. Love of humanity was indeed the most burning passion of his soul. In him there was a most wonderful reconciliation between nationalism and internationalism. ' Indian nationalism,' as he said, ' is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian.' ' My idea of nationalism,' he once observed, ' is that my country may become free, that if need be the whole of the country may die, so that the human race may live. There is no room for race hatred here. Let that be our nationalism.' ' I would like to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a willing and pure sacrifice for the betterment of the world.' ' I do want to think,' he emphatically expressed, ' in terms of the whole world. My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service of India includes the service of humanity. Isolated independence is not the goal of world state. It is voluntary inter-dependence. The better mind of the world desires to-day not absolutely independent states warring against one another, but a federation of friendly interdependent states. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about expressing our readiness for universal inter-dependence rather than independence. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence.' ' Patriotism based on hatred,' he held, ' killeth and patriotism based on love giveth life.' We must recognise,' he wrote, ' that our nationalism must not be inconsistent with progressive internationalism. India cannot stand in isolation and unaffected by what is going

on in other parts of the world.'

Fully conscious of the numerous evils which Imperialism in modern times has inflicted on mankind, he considered it to be 'a negation of God', and felt that 'the greatest menace to the world to-day is the growing, exploiting, irresponsible imperialism'.

Political opportunities or hatred for any power had no place in his mind. 'I will not,' he said, 'hurt England or Germany to serve India,' and also observed, 'I do not want India to rise on the ruins of other nations.' He preached and practised his unique cult of universalism and toleration even in moments of grave international crises, and had instinctive sympathy for the struggling democracies of the West in the face of Nazi aggression. When on England's declaration of war against Nazi Germany on the 3rd September, 1939, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, Lord Linlithgow, declared that India also was at war with Germany, Mahātmāji after his first interview with the Viceroy made the following significant statement on the 5th September, 1939:—

"Having, therefore, made my position *vis-a-vis* the Congress quite clear, I told His Excellency that my own sympathies were with England and France from the purely humanitarian standpoint. I told him that I could not contemplate without being stirred to the very depth, the destruction of London which had hitherto been regarded as impregnable. And as I was picturing before him the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey and their possible destruction, I broke down. I became disconsolate. In the secret of my heart, I am in perpetual quarrel with God that he should allow such things to go on. My non-violence seems almost impotent. But the answer comes at the end of the daily quarrel that neither God nor non-violence is impotent. Impotence is in men. I must carry on without losing faith even though I may break in the attempt.

'And so, as though in anticipation of the agony that was awaiting me, I sent on July 23, from Abbottabad the following letter to Herr Hitler: "Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity. But I have resisted their request because of the feeling that any letter from me

would be impertinence. Something tells me that I must not calculate that I must make my appeal for whatever it is worth. It is quite clear that you are to-day the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state. Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of considerable success?

‘Anyway I anticipate your forgiveness if I have erred in writing to you.’

‘How I wish that even now he would listen to reason and the appeal from almost the whole of thinking mankind not excluding the German people themselves. I must refuse to believe that the Germans contemplate with equanimity the evacuation of big cities like London for fear of destruction to be wrought by man’s inhuman ingenuity. They cannot contemplate with equanimity such destruction of themselves and their own monuments. I am not, therefore, now thinking of India’s deliverance. It will come, but what worth will it be if England and France fall, or if they come out victorious over Germany ruined and humbled?’

Yet it almost seems as if Herr Hitler knows no God but brute force and, as Mr. Chamberlain says, he will listen to nothing else. It is in the midst of this catastrophe without parallel that Congressmen and all other responsible Indians individually and collectively have to decide what part India is to play in this horrible drama.” ’

In an article published in the *Harijan* of the 11th September, 1939, Mahātmā Gāndhī expressed: ‘ My sympathy for England and France is not a result of momentary emotion, or in cruder language, of hysteria. It is derived from the never-drying fountain of non-violence which my breast has nursed for fifty years.’ He observed in his speech at a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, held at Bombay on the 15th and 16th September, 1940: ‘ I do not want England to be defeated or humiliated. It hurts me to find St. Paul’s Cathedral damaged. It hurts me as much as I would be hurt if I heard that the Kāshi Vishvanath temple or the Juma Masjid was damaged. I would like to defend both the Kāshi Vishvanāth temple and

the Juma Masjid and even St. Paul's with my life, but would not take a single life for their defence. That is my fundamental difference with the British people. My sympathy is there with them nevertheless. Let there be no mistake on the part of Englishmen, Congressmen, or others whom my voice reaches, as to where my sympathy lies. It is not because I love the British nation and hate the German. I do not think that the Germans as a nation are any worse than the English, or the Italians are any worse. We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into watertight compartments so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, "India should be all in all, let the whole world perish." That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have goodwill towards the whole of the human family and not merely for the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the universe?

Mahātmā Gāndhī believed that salvation for the bewildered and tormented world lay through rightmindedness, liberalism and humanitarian attitudes, for the growth and diffusion of which no other country would be so marvellously fitted as a free India. 'India awakened and free,' spoke Mahātmājī, 'has a message of peace and goodwill, to give to a groaning world.' In answering a question at the Inter-Asian Relations Conference, held at Delhi in April, 1947, Mahātmājī said, 'I would not like to live in this world, if it is not to be one. I should like to see this dream realised in my life.' He further observed: 'I hope that all the representatives who have come here from the different Asian countries will strive their level best to have only one world. They will have to think out ways and means for achieving this goal. If you work with full determination, there

is no doubt that in our own generation, we will certainly realise this dream.' In her closing Address at this Conference, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu thus referred to the message of Mahātmā Gāndhī and our country to the world: 'Love and forgive, love and create and love and be free. This is the message of India. Take that message of Gāndhī to your country.'

Emphasis of Indian nationalists on international fellowship was to a large extent the product of the spiritual idealism which inspired most of them and which they treasured in the face of various ordeals. Very significantly did Carlos P. Romulo, President of the Philippines, remark in his *Azad Memorial Lectures* (1964) on *Contemporary Nationalism and the World Order*: 'The history of India's nationalism has been a consistent adherence to universal principles and to spiritual precepts; a consistent moral posture and rejection of the tempting attraction of political expediency. India's renunciation of the use of force in her struggle for freedom serves as a constant reminder to contemporary politics that the rights of man could indeed be achieved through spiritual force, as Mahātmā Gāndhī used to insist.'¹

To the sage of Sāntiniketan, Gurudev Rabindranāth, the world owes an incalculable debt for the propagation of the ideal of universalism in its truest sense. In his famous sonnet, *The Sunset of the Century*, composed on the last day of the 19th Century, he strongly denounced the evils of Imperialism. Writing in 1909-10 on *East and West in Greater India*, he asserted: 'So, in the evolving History of India, the principle of work is not the ultimate glorification of the Hindu, or any other race. In India, the history of humanity is seeking to elaborate a specific ideal, to give to general perfection a special form which shall be for the gain of all humanity;—nothing less than this is its end and aim. And in the creation of this ideal type, if Hindu, Moslem or Christian should have to submerge the aggressive part of their individuality, that may hurt their sectarian pride, but will not be accounted a loss by the standard of Truth and Right.'²

¹ Carlos P. Romulo, *Contemporary Nationalism and the World Order*, p. 62.

² *The Modern Review*, June, 1921, p. 694

Rabindranāth wrote to C. F. Andrews on the 11th October, 1913: 'In our Asram at Sāntiniketan we must have the widest possible outlook for our boys, and universal human interests. This must come spontaneously—not merely through the reading of books, but through dealings with the wider world.'¹ The poet observed in another letter to C. F. Andrews, written from Ramgarh, near Naini Tal, on the 17th May, 1914: 'To be born naked in the heart of the eternal Truth; to be able to feel with my entire being the life-throb of the universal heart—that is the cry of my soul.'²

Rabindranāth spoke in 1915: 'The hope and aspiration that Indian culture alone would solve at the present age the problems and complexities of the varied phenomena that have appeared gradually in human history find eloquent expression to-day in a unique manner in the voice of mankind throughout the universe.'³ The horrors of World War I and the widespread devastations caused by it deeply shocked Rabindranāth's feelings and he strongly denounced Western Nationalism. He said in 1916 in his lecture on *Nationalism in the West*: 'When this organization of politics and commerce, whose other name is the Nation, becomes all-powerful at the cost of the harmony of the higher social life, then it is an evil day for humanity.'⁴ 'The time has come,' he added, 'when for the sake of the whole outraged world, Europe should fully know in her own person the terrible absurdity of the thing called the Nation.'⁵ He further observed in his lecture on *Nationalism in India*: 'There is only one history—the history of men. All national histories are merely chapters in the larger one. And we are content in India to suffer for such a great cause. Man will have to exert all his power of love and charity of vision to make another great moral adjustment which will comprehend the whole world of men and not merely the fractional groups of nationality. The call has come to every individual in the present age to prepare himself and

¹ *Letters to a Friend*, edited by C. F. Andrews, p. 38.

² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

³ *Rabindra Rachanāvalī* 16th Part, pp. 377–378.

⁴ Rabindranāth, *Nationalism* (1917 edition), p. 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

his surroundings for this dawn of a new era, when man shall discover his soul in the spiritual unity of all human beings.’¹ In the same year the poet expressed similar ideas in his speeches in Japan and the United States.

Rabindranāth’s lectures on *Nationalism* made a deep impression on European minds towards the end of World War I. Romain Rolland had them translated into French through his sister and published them with an introduction of his own. He declared that ‘a new voice had arisen in the East proclaiming peace and goodwill to mankind and called upon Europe to listen to it with humility and awe.’² In an article on Rabindranāth, written in French, Rene Ghil,³ referring to those lectures of the poet wrote: ‘Master, from the lecture which you delivered at the Imperial University of Tokyo, the word that transcends all time and space has reached us—even as your Eastern sun comes slowly westward to open our sleeping eyes.

‘I have listened to the sound of its waves of resplendent music, which seems to come to us from some sacred temple song and then pass into full-orbed silence, where meditation is enthroned.’

The poet remarked in a letter to C. F. Andrews, dated Sāntiniketan, 11th December, 1918: ‘Our emancipation lies through the path of suffering. We must unlock the gate of joy by the key of pain. Our heart is like a fountain. So long as it is driven through the narrow channel of self it is full of fear and doubt and sorrow; for then it is dark and does not know its end. But when it comes out into the open, on the bosom of the All, then it glistens in the light and sings in the joy of freedom’.⁴ In a lecture delivered by him before he left for Europe for the second time, he said:⁵ ‘The age has come when all artificial fences are breaking down. Only that will survive which is basically consistent with the universal; while that which seeks safety in the out-of-the-way hole of the special will perish. The nursery of the infant should be secluded, its cradle safe. But the

¹ *Nationalism*, pp. 99-102.

² *Rolland and Tagore* (published by *Viśva-Bhārati*), p. 13.

³ *The Modern Review*, 1920.

⁴ *Letters to a Friend*, edited by C. F. Andrews, p. 80.

⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 98-100

same seclusion, if continued after the infant has grown up, makes it weak in mind and body.

‘So we must prepare the grand field for the co-ordination of all the cultures of the world, where each will give to and take from the other; where each will have to be studied through the growth of its stages in history. This adjustment of knowledge through comparative study, this progress in intellectual co-operation, is to be the key-note of the coming age. We may hug our holy aloofness from some imagined security of a corner, but the world will prove stronger than our corner, and it is our corner that will have to give way, receding and pressing against its walls till they burst on all sides.

‘. That is why the inner spirit of India is calling to us to establish in this land great centres, where all her intellectual forces will gather for the purpose of creation, and all her resources of knowledge and thought, Eastern and Western, will unite in perfect harmony. She is seeking for the glorious opportunity to know her own mind and give her mind to the world, to help it in its progress; when she will be released from the chaos of scattered powers and the inertness of borrowed acquisitions.’

During his tour in the Continent in 1920–21, Rabindranāth saw with his own eyes the devastating effects of World War-I on all aspects of human life, and spoke to many in Europe with profound emphasis about the need for promotion of real unity of mankind to counteract the dreadful consequences of militant nationalism. His messages of sympathy, hope and harmony, expressed in his unique style and from the depth of his heart, deeply influenced the minds of the people in the war-torn countries. An unknown German author wrote in his note on *Sanctified Days with Rabindranāth Tagore, Darmstadt, June 10–14, 1921*: ‘On the next day we listened to his great lecture on *The East and the West*. . . . The impact of his words was enormous, because he spoke like a prophet with an inner enthusiasm, and at the climax of his speech his voice assumed a tone of sanctity like the voice of a high priest.’ ‘Darmstadt and Tagore have taught me,’ he added, ‘that only active love can set us free, that our true self can only reveal itself in love.’ Referring

to Rabindranāth's visit to Germany, Paul Natorp (1854–1924), Professor of Philosophy at Marburg University and one of the intellectual leaders of the German Youth Movement, observed: 'He did not come to preach an ideology, to excel in oratory or to gather the laurels of a poet; he wanted to extend the hand of a brother, to unite with those who are headed in the same direction, and—if this could be achieved—to form a solid alliance for a common work for the better future of mankind based on love and simple humanism.'

In some of his letters written from abroad in 1921, Rabindranāth gave expression to his hope for a true union of hearts among mankind in different countries of the world through the cult of love. Referring to his meeting with Professor M. Sylvain Levi in Paris, he wrote to Rev. C. F. Andrews, who was then at Sāntiniketan: 'I suppose that I told you in my last letter that I met M. Sylvain Levi in Paris. He is a great scholar, as you know, but his heart is larger even than his intellect and his learning. His philosophy has not been able to wither his soul. His mind has the translucent simplicity of greatness and his heart is overflowing with trustful generosity, which will never acknowledge disillusionment. His students come to love the subject he teaches them, because they love him. I realise clearly, when I meet these great teachers, that only through the medium of personality, can Truth be communicated to men. This fundamental principle of Education, let us realise in Sāntiniketan. We must know that only he can teach, who can love. The greatest teachers of men have been lovers of men. The real teaching is a gift, it is a sacrifice. It is not a manufactured article of routine work. And because it is a living thing, it is the fulfilment of knowledge for the teacher himself. Let us not insult our mission as Teachers by allowing ourselves to become mere schoolmasters—the dead feeding-bottles of lessons for children, who need the human touch lovingly associated with their mental food.'¹ He observed in an article on *A Cry for Peace*: 'The calculation of self-interest can never successfully fight the irrational force of passion—the passion

¹ *The Modern Review*, January, 1921, pp. 27-28.

which is perversion of love, and which can only be set aright by the truth of love. So long as the Powers build a League on the foundation of their desire for safety, and for securest enjoyment of gains,—for consolidation of past injustice, for putting off reparation of wrongs, while their fingers still wriggle for grabbing and still reek of blood,—rifts will appear in their union, and conflicts in future will take greater force and magnitude. It is the national and commercial egoism, which is the evil harbinger of war; by different combinations it changes its shape and dimensions, but not its nature. This egoism is still held almost as sacred as religion; and such religion, by its mere change of temple and of committee of priests, will never save men. We must know that, as, through science and commerce, the realisation of the unity of the material world gives us power, so the realisation of the great spiritual unity of man only can give us peace.¹

Rabindranāth wrote from Hamburg on the 17th May, 1921: 'It has been a perpetual sunshine of kindness for me all through my travels in this country. While it delights me, it makes me feel embarrassed. What have I to give to these people? What have they received from me? But the fact is, they are waiting for the day-break after the orgies of night, and they have their expectation of light from the East.

'Do we feel in the soul of India that stir of the morning which is for all the world? Is the one string of her *Ektārā* being tuned, which is to give the keynote to the music of a great future for Man,—the note which will send a thrill of response from shore to shore? Love of God in the hearts of the medieval saints of India,—Kabir and Nanak,—came down in showers of human love, drowning the borderlines of separation between Hindus and Musalmans.

'They were giants, not dwarfs, because they had the spiritual vision whose full range was in the Eternal,—crossing all the barriers of the moment. The human world in our day is much larger than in theirs; conflicts of national self-interest and race-traditions are stronger and more complex; the political dust-storms are blinding; the whirlwinds of race antipathy are fiercely persistent; the sufferings

¹ *The Modern Review*, April, 1921, pp. 490-491.

caused by them are world-wide and deep. The present age is waiting for a divine word, great and simple, which creates and heals; and what has moved me profoundly is the fact that suffering man in Europe has turned his face to the East.

‘ It is not the man of politics, or the man of letters, but the simple man whose faith is living. Let us believe in his instinct; let his expectation guide us to our wealth. In spite of the immense distractions of our latter day degeneracy, India still cherishes in her heart the immortal *mantram* of Peace, of Goodness, of Unity,—

S’āntam, S’ivam, Advaitam.

‘ The message of the One in the All which had been proclaimed in the shade of India’s forest solitude is waiting to bring reconciliation to the men who are fighting in the dark, who have lost the recognition of their brotherhood.’

In a letter, written in July, 1921, he observed: ‘ For the last fourteen months my own thought was to bring India into touch with the living activities of the larger world of humanity.’

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‘ My aspiration for my country is that the mind of India must join its own forces to the great movement of Mind, which is in the present-day world. Every success that we may attain in this effort will at once lead us directly to feel the unity of Man. Whether the League of Nations acknowledges this unity or not, it is the same to us. We have to realise it through our own creative mind.’

Rabindranāth expressed in 1922: ‘ In the beginning of man’s history his first social object was to form a community, to grow into a people. At that early period, individuals were gathered together within geographical enclosures. But in the present age, with its facility of communication, geographical barriers have almost lost their reality, and the great federation of men, which is waiting either to find its true scope or to break asunder in a final catastrophe, is not a meeting of individuals, but of various human races. Now the problem before us is of one single country, which is

this earth, where the races as individuals must find both their freedom of self-expression and their bond of federation. Mankind must realise a unity, wider in range, deeper in sentiment, stronger in power than ever before. Now that the problem is large, we have to solve it on a bigger scale, to realise the God in man by a larger faith and to build the temple of our faith on a sure and world-wide basis.

‘The first step towards realisation is to create opportunities of revealing the different peoples to one another. This can never be done in those fields where the exploiting utilitarian spirit is supreme. We must find some meeting-ground, where there can be no question of conflicting interests. One of such places is the University, where we can work together in a common pursuit of truth, share together our common heritage, and realise that artists in all parts of the world have created forms of beauty, scientists discovered secrets of the universe, philosophers solved the problems of existence, saints made the truth of the spiritual world organic in their own lives, not merely for some particular race to which they belonged, but for all mankind. When the science of meteorology knows the earth’s atmosphere as continuously one, affecting the different parts of the world differently, but in a harmony of adjustments, it knows and attains truth. And, so too, we must know that the great mind of man is one, working through the many differences which are needed to ensure the full result of its fundamental unity. When we understand this truth in a disinterested spirit, it teaches us to respect all the differences in man that are real, yet remain conscious of our oneness; and to know that perfection of unity is not in uniformity, but in harmony.’¹

Rabindranāth spoke with great conviction in two lectures, — *The Call of Truth* (1921), and *The Union of Cultures* (1921). He observed in *The Call of Truth*: ‘Universal humanity has sent us its urgent call. Let our mind answer in its own language. . . . The dust of angry passion will only obscure the greater world from our view. And we shall exhibit a sorry image of our country if we fail to see for ourselves the vast dimensions of India in its world context.’

¹ Rabindranāth, *Creative Unity* (1950 edition), pp, 171-172.

‘It is my prayer,’ he wrote in *The Union of Cultures*, ‘that India should, in the name of all the East, establish a centre for the culture of Truth to which all may be invited.’

He also said: ‘It is a fact of unique importance in the history of the world to-day, that the human races have come together as they had never done before. . . . The mentality of the world has to be changed in order to meet the new environment of the modern age. Just as, hitherto, the collective egoism of the Nation has been cultivated in our schools, and has given rise to a nationalism which is vain-glorious and exclusive, even so will it be necessary now to establish a new education on the basis not of nationalism, but of a wider relationship of humanity.

‘It has been said in our scriptures: *atithi devo bhava* asking us to realise that the Divine comes to us as our guest, claiming our homage. All that is great and true in humanity is ever waiting at our gate to be invited. It is not for us to question it about the country to which it belongs, but to receive it in our home and bring before it the best we have.

‘Our wealth is truly proved by our ability to give, and *Viśva-Bhāratī* is to prove this on behalf of India. Our mission is to show that we have a place in the heart of the great world; that we fully acknowledge our obligation of offering it our hospitality.’

For realization of this noble ideal Rabindranāth established his *Viśva-Bhāratī*, which had been formally inaugurated in December, 1921. The declared object of this great institution was ‘to study the mind of man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view’ and thus ‘to provide at *Sāntiniketan* a Centre of Culture where research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian, and other civilizations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity in externals which is necessary for true spiritual realisation, in amity, good fellowship and co-operation between thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste.’¹ As the poet said, ‘*Viśva-Bhāratī* represents India where

¹ Sisir Kumar Mitra, *Resurgent India*, p. 285.

she has her wealth of mind which is for all. Viśva-Bhāratī acknowledges India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best.' The poet significantly observed in 1933: 'India's special genius has been to acknowledge the divine in human affairs, to offer hospitality to all that is imperishable in human civilization, regardless of racial and national divergence. From the early dawn of our history it has been India's privilege and also its problem, as a host, to harmonise the diverse elements of humanity which have inevitably been brought to our midst, to synthesise contrasting cultures in the light of a comprehensive ideal.'¹

'We have, therefore, to think deeply and decide,' wrote Rabindranāth, 'as to wherein lies the Truth through which India can realise itself with confidence. That Truth is neither commercial affluence, nor autonomy nor nationalism but, in sooth,—that Truth is Universalism. That Truth was practised, realised and preserved in the 'Tapovans' (secluded hermitages) of India, it was preached through the *Upanishads* and elucidated in the immortal verses of the *Geetā*. It was for the successful realisation and practical utilisation of Truth by all human beings in their daily lives that Buddha practised *tapasyā* and, in spite of the misfortunes and vicissitudes of life in later ages Kabir, Nānak and other saints of India continued to preach this very Truth. The kernel and keynote of this Truth in India has been monotheism in knowledge, the spirit of universal love and practice of *yoga* through action.

'The deep sense of catholicity that has accumulated through the ages in India awaits the happy blending within itself of Hindus, Musalmans, Buddhists and Englishmen (Christians)—blending not in the spirit of abject slavery or gross materialism but through the sacred and solemn spirit of dedication;—and, so long as this unity is not realised, we shall have to face sorrow, ignominy and frustration in various spheres of life. Brahmacharya, knowledge of the Eternal, kindness for all, and realisation of the self in all creatures were not mere trends of thought or lyrical expression of emotion but they were specific injunctions and

¹ *Rāmmohan Roy Centenary Volume*, 1933.

discipline for their practical application in life. Let us not forget those commandments to-day, for, if we shape all our education and culture in consonance with those lofty and noble ideals, then alone will our soul realise true freedom for itself and we shall not be deprived of that true liberty by ephemeral influences of external circumstances.'

Viśva-Bhāratī became indeed a centre of pilgrimage for savants of international fame belonging to different countries, each one of whom did his best to foster cultural fellowship. Besides the two Englishmen, C. F. Andrews and W. W. Pearson, who had already begun to stay at Śāntiniketan and to devote themselves to social and cultural activities with selfless zeal, a band of distinguished scholars from other parts of the West came here in the twenties to prove that 'the advanced mind of humanity was ready to collaborate in the noble work of building up a cultural fellowship as a basis of unity among the nations envisaged by the Poet'.¹ They were Sylvain Levi of France, Mark Winternitz of Czechoslovakia, Sten Know of Norway, Carlo Formichi of Italy, Julius Germanus of Hungary and James Pratt of America. Vincent Lesny (1882–1953), Professor of Indology of the Charles University of Prague, visited India in 1922–23 and 1927–28, when he lectured at Śāntiniketan. With experience of his Indian visits, he wrote three books. One of these, entitled *India and Indians: A Pilgrimage Through Asia* facilitated cultural contact between India and Czechoslovakia. Lesny translated many works from Indian literature, particularly from the writings of Rabindranāth, and developed intimate friendship with him. The poet was in China in April and May, 1924, accompanied by Professor L. K. Elmherst, Professor Kshitimohan Sen, Dr. Kalidās Nāg and Dr. Nandalāl Bose. In all his speeches there he conveyed messages of goodwill and emphasised the need for revival and strengthening of cultural bonds between the two countries of India and China. After the poet's visit to China in 1929 many Chinese scholars came to Śāntiniketan. The most prominent of them was Professor Tan Yun-Shan, through whose efforts was built up the famous *Cheena Bhawan*.

A humanist from the core of his heart, Rabindranāth

¹ Sisir Kumar Mitra, *Resurgent India*, p. 285.

preached the gospel of universalism in his speeches delivered during his visits to foreign countries. When the University of Rome gave a magnificent reception to the poet on the 10th June, 1926, he observed in his inimitable style: 'My friends, I bring you the greetings of love of the youthful minds of India. I hope you will accept me as a fit messenger, though old in years, yet being a poet, I am young in heart and as such claim to represent the youth of India. We, the different peoples of the world, have our different interests and there we can never come together. But above our own self-interest there is a region of common aspirations and common achievements which is the true meeting-place of all human races. Here the East and the West have actually met. We realise in our meeting to-day the spiritual unity of man I hope you will remember me not as a casual visitor but as a messenger of the ancient East and as the poet of youthful Humanity. I shall be fortunate if I can help to establish a guest house in the heart of young Rome for pilgrims of Truth and Love who shall come in future.'¹

Rabindranāth spoke at Paris on May 3, 1930: 'The Human World is made one, all the countries are losing their distance every day, their boundaries not offering the same resistance as they did in the past age. Politicians struggle to exploit this great fact and wrangle about establishing trade relationship. But my mission is to urge for world-wide commerce of heart and mind, sympathy and understanding, and never to allow this sublime opportunity to be sold in the slave markets for the cheap price of individual profits or be shattered away by the unholy competition in mutual destructions.'

Rabindranāth always emphasised the cosmopolitan nature of Indian culture with its immense assimilative potentiality and had a robust optimism about the marvellous role it was destined to play in reorientating human thought and outlook on rational lines for the betterment of the lot of man in the universe, which was one and the same for all.

'The same stream of life,' wrote Rabindranāth, 'that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.'

¹*The Modern Review*, 1926.

‘ It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.’

‘ It is the same life which is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and death, in ebb and in flow.’

‘ I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood.’

Rabindranāth desired a lofty place for India, free from slavery, unreason and obscurantism, so that she might be on a better path for service of the world. Thus we read in his *Gītānjali*:

‘ Where the mind is without fear and the
head is held high.
Where knowledge is free:
Where the world has not been broken up
into fragments by narrow domestic walls:
Where words come out from the depth of truth:
Where tireless striving stretches its arms
towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not
lost its way into the dreary desert sand
of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by Thee into
ever-widening thought and action,—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my
country awake.’

(Poet’s translation.)

With a true awakening India would embrace the world in her time-honoured ways. Thus he wrote in his immortal work, *Naibedya*:—

‘ O heart of music, awake in this holy place of
pilgrimages,
In this land of India, on the shore of vast humanity,
Here do I stand with arms outstretched to salute man
divine,
And sing his praise in many a gladsome paean.
These hills that are rapt in deep meditation,
These plains that clasp their rosaries of rivers,
Here will you find earth that is ever sacred,
In this land of India, on the shore of vast humanity,

We know not whence and at whose call, these myriad
streams of men,
Have come rushing forth impetuously to lose themselves
in the sea.
Aryan and Non-Aryan, Dravidian and Chinese,
Scythian, Hun, Pathan and Mughul, all, all have
merged into one body.
Now the West has opened her door, and they are all
bringing their offering.
They will give and take, unite and be united, they
will not turn away.
In this land of India, on the shore of vast humanity,
Come Aryan, Non-Aryan, Hindus, Mussalmans, come,
Come Ye Parsees, O Christians, come Ye one and all,
Come Brahmins, let your hearts be hallowed by
holding all men by the hand.
Come all Ye who are shunned and isolated, wipe out all
dishonour.
Come to the crowning of the Mother, fill the
sacred bowl
With water that is sanctified by the touch of all,
In this land of India, on the shore of vast
humanity.
' You who are young,' said he, ' belong to the
great republic of men.
Like the water lily, you have
your roots in the soil of
Your home-land, but the wealth of
Your flower is open to ' The-All ' .
You carry in your blood
the call of the unattained.'

We read in his famous song *Janaganamana* :

' Offerings are brought to thy shrine by the East and the
West to be woven in a garland of love. Thou bringest the
hearts of all peoples into the harmony of one life, Thou
Dispenser of India's destiny, Victory, Victory, Victory
to Thee.'

' When the good of the world would be my religion, I
shall derive pleasure from it and any obstruction to it
would pain me.'¹

The poet said : ' Let me mingle with all,
thus let me emancipate myself from fetters.'²

¹ *Sāntiniketan, Rabindra Rachanāvalī, 14th Part, p. 429.*

² *Gitanjali.*

‘ When shall I be able to go out in this vast universe with the chariot of my heart, by breaking the barriers of my own isolated home.’¹

‘ All your wealth has been blessed,
Open your doors to-day.
For the good of the world.’²

‘ Mad with the rays of the dawn
I want to mingle with the world.’³

‘ How does my heart open out to-day
And the world enters it in embrace.’⁴

Artists also contributed to promote world fellowship. Shri O. C. Ganguly, a famous artist of modern India, wrote in 1923 in his article on *British Appreciation of Oriental Art*: ‘ And through political storms and racial clouds the gleam of a blazing future now and then reveals itself and the sure accents of a stentorian voice travel across temporary turmoils and transient dins and (to give the lie to the imperial pessimists) spell out and assert that the Twain shall meet! Indeed the Twain are meeting by diverse ways and means, on the altar of humanity, and in an intellectual and spiritual comradeship.’

Dr. Ānanda Coomāraswamy, an inspired artist of modern India and a profoundly learned scholar, also pleaded for the intellectual fraternity of mankind. He observed that ‘ for the great idealists of younger India, nationalism is not enough. The chosen people of the future cannot be any nation or race, but an aristocracy of the earth uniting the virility of European youth to the serenity of Asiatic age. . . . The flowering of humanity is more to us than the victory of any party. The only condition of a renewal of life in India, or elsewhere, should be a spiritual, not merely an economic and political awakening, and it is on this ground alone that it will ever be possible to bridge the gulf which has been supposed to divide the East from the West.’⁵

¹ *Gitanjali*.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Chayanika*.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Ānanda Coomāraswamy, *The Dance of Śiva* (1948), p. 180.

INDIA'S ROLE AS A CHAMPION OF PEACE AND HARMONY IN MODERN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

India has tried to serve the cause of harmony and fellowship amongst nations through her association with modern international organizations, though her wholesome expectations have not been always fulfilled.

Every cataclysm in world history inflicts untold miseries and severe agonies on mankind. Its termination is, therefore, followed by a natural hankering after peace and security leading to the rise and growth of international organizations. Such organizations may not secure perfect harmony and the ideal of universal fellowship may have remained an unrealised dream. But history shows that organizations like these served in the past at least to arrest confusion in world politics and helped recuperation of ravaged countries. The Napoleonic Wars indeed emitted highly volcanic forces. But Bonapartism proved to be a constructive factor in world history when, after these wars were over, people enjoyed peace to be able to realise its immense potentiality. There is no doubt that the Congress system in Europe starting from the Vienna Congress of 1815 sought to enforce static principles upon a dynamic world and that its authors like Metternich, Castlereagh, Talleyrand and Tsar Alexander of Russia were 'limited in outlook, too prone to compromise, lacking in faith and courage.' But this much is to be admitted that they secured a breathing space of peace for a tired generation, whose successors after comparative eradication of the damages of war, were able to consolidate the results of a great revolution in February-March, 1848.

It is true that in spite of some other concerts of the European powers like those which followed the Crimean War of 1853-56 and the Russo-Turkish War of 1876-78, and the Hague Conferences of 1897 and 1907, the world continued to be seriously afflicted with the scourge of war. Real progress in the growth of internationalism was hampered by the rise of hostile forces in Europe such as militarism and militant nationalism, new Imperialism marked by

inordinate earth-hunger of the western powers, and the gigantic strides of industrialism and commercialism. All these dragged Europe, rather the whole world, into World War I, which produced highly devastating effects on humanity. Realising the horrors of warfare, the belligerent powers emerged out of this upheaval exhausted and some utterly prostrated, and the neutrals did not remain unaffected. This generated a genuine desire for discovering a lasting settlement. So the League of Nations was formed in 1919 'to promote international co-operation and to achieve international security'.

India became a member of the League of Nations by virtue of her being a signatory to the Peace Treaty of 1919. But she could not claim the status of a fully self-governing Dominion. Her position was anomalous. She was a subordinate branch of the British Government and continued to echo in the League the 'Master's Voice' though she had to make heavy contributions towards the expenses of this organisation. She could, however, express her sympathies for and collaborate with some humanitarian activities of the League. In 1922 the Council of the League of Nations appointed a Committee of ten to study the question of International Intellectual Co-operation. The Committee consisted of Professor Gilbert Murray (England), M. Berdson (Norway), Madame Curie (France), Herr Einstein (Germany), and Dr. Pramatha Nath Banerjea, Professor of Economics, Calcutta University. India's association with the League of Nations helped labour and social welfare activities in this country.

After a few years the system of collective security which the League of Nations tried so painstakingly to build up was shattered by various outrages upon it and Europe was once again back in the situation of international anarchy which preceded the outbreak of universal war in 1914. There were various reasons for the failure of the League of Nations. It is significant to note that at the reception given to Rabindranāth at the Hyde Park Hotel in London by the *All Peoples' Association* before he left for India in 1931, the poet said among other things:

'We cannot altogether obliterate national temperamental

differences. There must be separateness between peoples. When it is merely on the surface, it doesn't hurt; but when it becomes selfishness, creates antipathy which causes separateness, then it is not the separateness of national demarcations but darkness and the bottomless abyss.

'You have seen the mischief of this and have tried to bring about peace through the agency of the League of Nations, but there the nations are represented not by their dreamers and idealists but by their politicians. I can't think that this is right in any work which is meant to establish peace. It is like organizing a band of robbers into a police department. I have travelled in different countries lately, and everywhere I have seen signs of sufferings caused by these very politicians—how they have bungled their peace conference and to what an end they have brought this great civilization.' All the attempts in the search for security after the establishment of the League of Nations during the extraordinarily significant period between 1919 and 1939, such as the Locarno Pact of 1925, the Kellogg Pact of 1929, and the Disarmament Conference of 1932-34 proved infructuous. After about two years of sitting, the Disarmament Conference had not succeeded in scrapping a single gun, tank, or airplane.'

While each nation State with 'a provincial mind in a planetary area' failed to solve the problem of disarmament or peace, scholars in different countries, horrified at the ominous prospect of the recrudescence of another war, sought to devise ways and means for maintenance of peace and development of world fellowship. A non-sectarian and non-political *Society for Cultural Fellowship* with foreign countries was functioning in Calcutta in 1931 and it was formally inaugurated in December that year with Dr. D. N. Mitra as its Honorary Secretary. Its aims and objects were:—

'To cultivate and foster international fellowship through mutual understanding, goodwill and service, by securing facilities for foreign educational travel and studies, and providing opportunities for coming in closer contact with the life and culture of the people, for both Indians and foreigners in the countries they visit;

To found an Indian Students' Federation to be linked up

with the International Student Federations of Europe and America;

To honour the great men and women of all countries in a suitable manner;

To interpret the culture of India to the world and vice versa;

To co-operate with other Associations working more or less on similar lines; and

To adopt such other measures as are conducive to these aims and objects.'

An international committee, under the leadership of Henri Barbusse, Albert Einstein, Romain Rolland, Heinrich Mann, H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Maxim Gorky and Mme. Sun Yet-sen, called for the organization of a world congress against war.

In this connection the following appeal was issued from Villeneuve, near Geneva, and was signed by Romain Rolland:—

'War is coming, coming from all the quarters. It menaces all nations. It may burst upon us to-morrow. If it sets on fire one corner of the world, it can no longer be localized. In a few weeks, perhaps days, it will devour up everything. It will be the nameless thing, the destroyer of the entire civilization. Civilization as a whole, the entire world, is in peril.

'We give the alarm. Awake! we appeal to all nations, to all parties, to all men and to all women, who are right-minded. There is no question here of the interests of a particular nation, class or party. Everything is at stake. Deliverance can only come from the hands of all. Let everybody be up and doing. We must put a stop to the dissensions which rend us. Let us all unite against the common enemy. Attack war! Let us put a stop to it.

'We are inviting you to a great congress which will be a powerful demonstration of all parties against war. We are inviting all parties,—Communists, Socialists, Syndicalists, Anarchists, republicans of all shades, free thinkers and Christians, men of no party, all associations of pacifists and war resisters, conscientious objectors, men in individual capacity, in France as well as in other lands, who are deter-

mined to prevent war by every means. We appeal to them immediately to nominate their representatives to a Committee of Organization of the World Congress which will settle with the shortest possible delay the place, the date and the practical procedure of the Congress. There is not a day to lose.

‘ We cannot formulate a plan of action in advance. It will be an encroachment on the freedom of those whom we are inviting. It will be for them to explain the different plans of action freely in the Congress and afterwards to seek an agreement among them with a view to action. What we wish to do is to raise an immense wave of opinion against war whatever it may be, from whatever quarter it may come, and whatever the people whom it threatens. We wish to make the will of nations—of whatever is sane in humanity, thunderingly articulate. Let them stand up against the contemptible and equivocal failure of Governments to chain the iniquitous instigators of war,—the armament manufacturers, their whole clientele of agents provocateurs, the low Press, and the rabble which intrigues for war in order to fish in blood-stained waters. Let us muzzle war!

June 1, 1932

Romain Rolland.’

Nicholas Roerich, artist, archaeologist, scientist and philosopher, who founded the Urusvali Himalayan Research Institute at Naggar Kulu, also issued at this time a plan for peace through a flag known as the *Banner of Peace* and international understanding through culture and beauty of art. Regarding the origin of the *Banner of Peace*, Professor Roerich said:

‘ The idea of protection of cultural treasures of humanity pre-occupied me since the very beginning of my activities. Already in 1904 addressing the *Society of Architects and Artists* in St. Petersburg, I outlined this idea, calling attention to the tragic condition of many state architectural monuments. My extensive travels to ancient monasteries and historical cities, also the archaeological excavations in such important places as Novgorod and other regions linked with

most ancient traditions gave me rich material to affirm the undeferrable necessity for urgent measures to protect cultural treasures. Afterwards in 1914, when many irreparable historical monuments perished, I made a similar report to the late Commander-in-Chief, the Grand-Duke Nicholas. Both reports met with great sympathy and only such extraordinary havoc as the war prevented its immediate development. Then as President of the *Exhibition of Allied Nations* where Flemish, French, British arts and those of other allied nations were beautifully represented, I again had the happy opportunity to propound this idea and was convinced that sooner or later the protection of cultural treasures would become a sacred reality in the world.

‘With new ardour these thoughts preoccupied me when we were compelled to witness no longer the vandalism of warfare, but the vandalism in times of peace. For an untrained eye it is even impossible to imagine how many unrepeatable cultural treasures are exposed to danger and to perish without leaving a trace. One of our foremost duties is to apply all our efforts to direct the public attention to their real treasures. Each day brings news of some new destructions. We are already imbued with the idea that precious monuments must not be removed and should be safeguarded in their own site, the more so because today possibilities of communications made even the remotest places accessible. I am deeply convinced that universal attention will be paid to the cultural treasures, and as its symbol, the universally uniting *Banner* will offer a profound and absolute service to the cultural developments of peoples.’

But the world marched headlong towards the grim tragedy of 1939 by still following the principles of a crumbling order and by failing to solve the poignant issues of a highly artificial social system. Economic nationalism pervaded almost the entire conscience of the leaders of Europe, though the people needed and desired peace so much. A modern writer, Hampden Jackson, very significantly remarks: ‘Reason demanded internationalism; emotion and immediate expediency demanded nationalism. In that conflict lies the essence of the tragedy of the Between-War World.’¹

¹ Hampden-Jackson, *Between-War World*, p. 427.

Thus the various unresolved issues of the intervening period drove humanity to an unprecedented ordeal. With the years 1938-39 a new chapter in history was opened. Once more a totalitarian and global war threw challenges to peace and democratic liberty and began to devastate the surface of the kindly earth with heavy toll on human life and immense miseries for those who struggled and survived. 'Where is the voice left in the world to-day,' exclaimed Pearl Buck in 1940, 'for the simple and practical wisdom of peace and goodwill among men!' This is why Rabindra-nāth struck the following note of warning in April, 1941: 'the spectre of a new barbarity strides over Europe, teeth bare and claws unconcealed in an orgy of terror. From one end of the continent to the other the poisonous fumes of oppression pollute the atmosphere. The spirit of violence which perhaps lay dormant in the psychology of the West has roused itself and is ready to desecrate the spirit of men

'I look back on the stretch of past years and I see the crumbling ruins of a proud civilization lying heaped as garbage out of history! And yet I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in Man accepting his present as final.'

This world-upheaval left plenty of lessons for modern society. It was undoubtedly a crucial test to a diehard civilization and clearly demonstrated the need for the creation of a new order, which, however, has not been a light task, there being many complex issues connected with it.

The gravest of these issues is how to make the world secure for peace, constructive work and progress by keeping under reasonable control and within proper limits the ambitious claims of different nations and countries. The United Nations Organization has most probably originated out of this feeling, of the growing world consciousness that pursuit of selfish interests by individual powers in utter disregard of the true interests of tormented humanity would be a march along the wrong track in this highly dynamic age. It is a consciousness of this stern realism and not Utopian idealism which is the core of post-war internationalism. Human conscience now apprehends that if there is any war again,

its ravages and horrors would dwarf those of World War II.

The Allied Powers thought of an international organization before the termination of the last War. On the 30th October, 1943, the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China made a joint declaration through their foreign ministers that they 'recognised the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable date a general international organisation based on the principle of sovereign equality of all peace-loving States, and open to membership by all such States, large and small, for the maintenance of international peace and security.' Further proposals for international co-operation in war and peace were agreed upon at a discussion by the representatives of these powers held at Dumbarton Oaks (Washington, D.C.) from the 21st August to the 7th October, 1944. These proposals were laid before the United Nations Conference on International Organisation held at San Francisco, California, from the 25th April to the 26th June, 1945, and with amendments to the original proposals the United Nations Charter was signed on the 26th June, 1945, by the delegates of 50 countries. The United Nations formally came into existence on the 24th October, 1945, on receipt of the required instrument of ratification. Fifty-one nations were original members of the United Nations.

The purposes of the United Nations are thus set forth in Article I of the United Nations Charter:—

1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace.

3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or

humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. . .'

The organisation of the United Nations is based on the principle of the 'Sovereign equality' of all its members. Its principal organs are, a General Assembly, a Security Council, an Economic and Social Council, a Trusteeship Council, an International Court of Justice and a Secretariat. The other organizations meant for world co-operation and peace and brought into relationship with the U.N.O. are the International Labour Organization (I.L.O.), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (F.A.O.), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Civil Aviation Organization (I.C.A.O.), Universal Postal Union (U.P.U.), International Telecommunications Union (I.T.U.), and International Refugee Organization.

While each of these is working in its own sphere, to us, as I feel, the activities of the UNESCO are of the greatest significance for a world which seems to be oblivious of the spiritual values of life and still continues to play, as it were, a 'Dance of Death'. Nothing is so much needed for the rescue of the maddened world from its poignant maladies as an absolute reorientation in the outlook of man. It may be a long process but its start should not be delayed. The preamble to the UNESCO recognises that 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.' Its purpose as stated in Article I of the Constitution is 'to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the people of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion by the Charter of the United Nations.' We have grateful appreciation of the valuable work which this organization is doing to promote intellectual co-operation

and dissemination of knowledge among mankind in different parts of the world.

True to her old ideals of world-fellowship and cosmopolitanism India has kept herself closely associated with the activities of the principal organs and the specialised agencies of the UNO. She is a signatory to its Charter and is an original member of it. India played an important part in the work of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations which first met in June, 1945, at San Francisco and later in November, 1945, in London. When the report of the Preparatory Commission was for consideration before the Inaugural meeting of the first part of the first session of the General Assembly held in London in January, 1946, the Chairman of the Indian Delegation, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, emphasised the importance of the Economic and Social Council, greatly helped the international organization and also became its Chairman. The Indian delegation to the second part of the first session of the General Assembly, which met in October, 1946, in New York, was led by Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit. She explicitly declared that India considered 'imperialism, political, economic or social, as being inconsistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.' She was elected President of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1953. On several other important matters before the U.N.O., such as the membership of the United Nations, Franco's Spain, the Veto, Palestine, Atomic Energy and Disarmament, non-self-governing territories, status of mandated territories and former Italian colonies in Africa, India took a very bold stand with a perfectly dispassionate attitude consistent with the best principles calculated to promote the true interests of humanity. She raised her voice of strong protest against the plan of the Union of South Africa for the annexation of South West Africa to its territory. In fact, the 'chapter of India's efforts in reference to the mandated territory of South West Africa is a record of a noble endeavour in the cause of the non-self-governing and under developed peoples of Africa'. India has also tried, in spite of various handicaps, to get a solution through the United Nations of the much vexed question relating to the status of

Indian settlers in South Africa. On the Indonesian question, India's contribution has been highly important. Shri Nehru rightly held that 'India's championship of freedom and racial equality for Asia as well as Africa is the natural urge of India's history and geography.' In the interest of world peace and security India took 'effective individual and collective steps for the prevention and removal of threats to peace' in Korea, in Indo-China, in the Formosa Straits Area, in the Suez and Hungarian conflicts and in relation to the Algerian war. India has made significant contributions in promoting the purpose of the United Nations for growth of friendly relations among nations through respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. She has done her best with much enthusiasm 'to promote the purpose of the United Nations to achieve international co-operation in all fields of inter-State activities, as well as in promoting human rights and in making the United Nations a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these ends.'¹

Without identifying herself with any of the blocks in the United Nations, India has indeed played an important role in it. The chief objectives of free India's policy in relation to the other nations of the world were stated by our Prime Minister, the late Jawaharlal Nehru, in his Address at the Columbia University on the 17th October, 1949, to be 'the pursuit of peace, not through alignment with any major power or group Powers, but through an independent approach to each controversial or disputed issue, the liberation of subject people, maintenance of freedom both national and individual; the elimination of racial discrimination, and the elimination of want, disease and ignorance which afflict the greater part of the world's population.'

Referring to the apprehension about recrudescence of another war Nehru said in January, 1951 :—

'To-day, these hundreds of millions all over the world live under some kind of suspended sentence of death and from day to day an atmosphere is created in people's minds of the inevitability of war. Helplessly we seem to be driven towards the abyss. More and more people in responsible

¹ M. S. Rajan, *India in World Affairs*, 1954-56, p. 591.

positions talk in terms of passion, revenge and retaliation. They talk of security and behave in a way which is likely to put an end to all security. They talk of peace and think and act in terms of war.'

* * * *

' If we desire peace, we must develop the temper of peace and try to win even those who may be suspicious of us or who think they are against us.'

* * * *

' Even in resisting evil and aggression, we have always to maintain the temper of peace and hold out the hand of friendship to those who, through fear or for other reasons, may be opposed to us. That is the lesson that our great leader Mahātmā Gāndhī taught us and, imperfect as we are, we draw inspiration from that great teaching.'

Shri Nehru significantly observed in his own characteristic way in a speech delivered by him in our Parliament on the 14th May, 1953: ' The world is full of problems and a tortured humanity seeks anxiously for some relief from its fears and burdens. In this tragic drama a measure of responsibility comes to us in this great country. We have enough of our problems here and they consume our thoughts and energy, but we cannot isolate ourselves from the great brotherhood of the nations and from the common problems that affect humanity. Whether we wish it or not, fate and circumstances have cast this responsibility upon us and we must discharge it. In the manner that we, in common with other countries, discharge it will depend whether our generation and the next will live in peace and bring about the progressive happiness of mankind or suffer irretrievable disaster. That responsibility we can only discharge if we are united and hold together remembering always our high ideals and objectives and not allowing ourselves to be swept away by the fear or passions of the moment.' He again remarked in 1954 at the end of the first meeting of the Colombo Conference of South-East Asian Prime Ministers: ' Peace can only come if we endeavour to establish the climate of peace. It is not by condemnation or mutual recrimination that we shall achieve the goal. We must forget

past conflicts and past grievances and decide to make a new approach to each other in a spirit of tolerance and forbearance, with charity towards all and malice towards none.' 'Our dominant passion and urgent necessity,' he spoke in his broadcast on the 2nd May, 1954, from Colombo regarding the Colombo Powers' Peace Efforts, 'is for the maintenance of peace, because without that all our plans and visions for the future are likely to be shattered to bits. Indeed, unless peace is preserved, the world itself will be shattered.'

Awakening of the Afro-Asian nations is a significant feature in the history of the post-war world. Shri Nehru rightly remarked in his speech at the concluding session of the Bandung Conference on the 24th April, 1955: 'Asia is no longer passive; it has been passive enough in the past. It is no longer submissive Asia. It has tolerated submissiveness too long. The Asia of to-day is dynamic; it is full of life. Asia might make mistakes, but they do not matter so long as she is alive. Where there is life, there is advance.' Stirred by a new consciousness the Afro-Asian Powers have sought to emancipate themselves from the shackles of colonialism, to improve their economic condition, to effect their social uplift, and to promote the ideal of fellowship among the different nations, irrespective of any consideration of geographical barriers. The Asian Relations Conference, which met in New Delhi in March-April, 1947, and the Conference of the Colombo Powers (Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan), which was held in April-May, 1954, were concrete milestones in the growth of the idea of co-operation and harmony among the Afro-Asian countries. But the most important landmark in this respect was the Conference held at Bandung in Indonesia (April 18-April 24, 1955).

Twenty-nine nations participated in this Conference and its main decisions were for economic development in the Afro-Asian regions, growth of cultural co-operation among them, end of colonialism and grant of freedom and independence to all the peoples of these areas, and promotion of world peace and harmony. There was no feeling of exclusiveness or rivalry in this Conference. It held that

‘ Asian and African cultural co-operation should be developed in the larger context of world co-operation. Side by side with the development of Asian-African cultural co-operation, the countries of Asia and Africa desire to develop cultural contacts with others. This would enrich their own culture and would also help in the promotion of world peace and understanding.’

The most significant decision of the Conference is the ‘ Declaration on World Peace and Co-operation.’ The powers, who attended it, enunciated the principles which were to regulate the relations not only among them but also among all the countries of the world as a whole. The Bandung Declaration embodied the Five Principles of the *Panchsheel* with further elaborations.

India was one of the sponsoring powers for the Bandung Conference. The object of the Conference was thus stated by Shri Nehru at New Delhi on the 14th April, 1955: ‘ For a hundred years, Asia and Africa were “ non-entities ” in international affairs. Their destinies were controlled by others. “ Asia was like an outer fringe of Europe; much more so was Africa.” The decisions about them were made by other people in other countries. Now, the position is changing. The Asian and African countries were now either free, or in the process of being free and were thinking in terms of self-respect, self-determination, self-reliance and self-progress—all of which they desired to achieve in peace, and friendship with other countries.’¹ ‘ We go to Bandung,’ he further said, ‘ with no malice towards any country. We go there with friendly feelings towards the whole world.’ Nehru had every hope, he remarked two days later, that the Conference would help the realisation of the ‘ One World ’ idea, ‘ because Bandung represents the new spirit in Asia, which in itself represents the spirit of the time. When anything is in tune with the historic process, it is bound to triumph. We are marching in step with history.’²

The decisions of the Bandung Conference were indeed ‘ great and epoch-making ’ in relation to the whole world.

¹ Quoted in M. S. Rajan, *India in World Affairs*, 1954-56, p. 204, and the Article on the Bandung Conference by Dr. A. Appadorai in *India Quarterly*, 1955, Vol. II, July-Sept., 1955, pp. 207-235.

² Quoted in M. S. Rajan, *India in World Affairs*, 1954-56, p. 204.

These were the outcome of certain forces which had emerged as a logical sequel to the widespread upsurge among the Asian and African people and their earnest desire for harmony. Nehru observed in his statement in the Lok Sabha on the 30th April, 1955: 'It would be a misreading of history to regard Bandung as though it was an isolated occurrence and not part of a great movement of human history. It is this latter that is the more correct and historical view to take.' He asked the House to realise that because of India's participation in this Conference 'great tasks and responsibilities' had devolved upon her. He expressed the hope that 'in the discharge of these responsibilities, our country and our people will not be wanting. Thus we will take another step in the fulfilment of our historic destiny.'

During the recent years, in spite of the emergence of a 'cold war', formation of military alliances and supply of military aid and some grave complications in international affairs, India has steadfastly adhered to the policy of non-alignment and to the five principles of *Panchsheel*, viz: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence. After visiting India, Marshal Tito remarked in 1955 that 'in her long history of over 7,000 years she (India) never snatched an inch of foreign land. . . . Non-aggressiveness as a national characteristic applies more to India than to any other nation. . . . India has not caused tears to anybody. Christ's teaching of turning the other cheek is perhaps followed in actual practice more by the Hindus than by the Christians.'

Our President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, played an important role in pursuit of world fellowship through his goodwill missions to different countries and in other ways. Speaking at a State Banquet at the Kremlin, given by the Soviet President, in honour of President Prasad on the 21st June, 1960, the latter observed: 'In the endeavour for disarmament and world peace which your country is making, you have our best wishes. Addressing our Parliament a few months ago in New Delhi, your Prime Minister said that "like Prometheus unbound, the peoples of Asia and

Africa are straightening their mighty shoulders, starting to build a new life for themselves.” The one pre-condition for the success of these mighty efforts which are now convulsing a significant part of the world is the continuance of peace and tranquillity in the world. This is the task in which almost all of us must co-operate, because the price of failure would be disastrous.’ Nehru spoke in his Address to the U. N. Assembly in October, 1960: ‘ We are dealing with the future of humanity and no efforts which might have perhaps improved the present situation should be left undone. In this world enveloped and bedevilled by the cold war and all its progeny, with problems awaiting urgent solution, I have ventured to add my voice in appeal. I do believe that the vast majority of people in every country want us to labour for peace and to succeed. Whether we are big or small, we have to face big issues, issues vital to the future of humanity; everything else is of lesser importance than this major question.’

In his Inaugural Address at the Anti-Nuclear Arms Convention organized by the Gandhi Peace Foundation at New Delhi on 16–18 June, 1962, Dr. Rajendra Prasad pointed out the disastrous consequences of atomic warfare: ‘ It is only necessary to realise the danger involved in the nuclear race,’ he said, ‘ to rouse the conscience of mankind and check this mad competition. If it were only a question affecting two combatants, who could fight it out between themselves and destroy each other, one could sit back complacently and say: “ If they are so minded let them do their worst to each other and be damned.” But unfortunately much more is at stake. It is the future of humanity.’

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Shri Nehru’s successor as our Prime Minister, consistently pursued India’s time-honoured ideals of peace and harmony. Within a few days after the demise of Shri Nehru, he observed in his Broadcast to the Nation on the 11th June, 1964: ‘ In the realm of foreign affairs we shall continue to seek friendship and develop our relations with all countries irrespective of their ideology or political systems. Non-alignment will continue to be the fundamental basis of our approach to world problems and our relations with other countries. It will be our special

endeavour to further strengthen our relations with neighbouring countries. With most of our neighbours we have friendly and co-operative relations. We have problems with some of them which we would like to settle peacefully and amicably on an equitable and honourable basis.' Reaffirming India's 'unflinching support' to the United Nations, he added: 'The problem of problems that faces mankind to-day is the achievement of peace and disarmament. For countless generations mankind has been yearning for peace. The supreme task facing the United Nations is to ensure not only that war is banished but that war is made impossible. . . . We pledge ourselves, in co-operation with other peaceful nations of the world, to continue to work for the realisation of this ideal.' In his speech at the closing session of the Non-Aligned Nations Conference, held at Cairo on the 10th October, 1964, he asserted with faith and courage that the 'policy of peaceful co-existence underlines our broad approach to international relations and we have proclaimed admirable principles which should govern the conduct of states in order to promote and to ensure world peace and security. We want a world where peace prevails and where there is freedom from fear of nuclear annihilation.' He said at the World Conference for Peace and International Co-operation at New Delhi on the 16th November, 1964, that 'for us the most important and vital thing is the maintenance of peace in the world.'

Shastriji's mission of peace had its culmination in the Tashkent Declaration signed by the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India in the afternoon of the 10th January, 1966. It constituted, as M. C. Chagla, India's Minister for External Relations at the time, rightly remarked, 'not only an act of statesmanship but also an act of faith'. The relations between India and Pakistan had been for some years very much strained bordering on an armed conflict. Through the bold initiative of A. N. Kosygin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U. S. S. R., President Ayub and Prime Minister Shastri met (4th January to 10th January, 1966) at Tashkent, the capital of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, and after discussing the prevailing relations between the two countries declared their 'firm re-

solve to restore normal and peaceful relations between their countries and to promote understanding and friendly relations between their peoples'. In his speech at the opening session of the Tashkent meeting on the 4th January, 1966, Shastriji remarked: 'Our response to your invitation for a meeting in Tashkent was immediate and positive. The objective of peace which inspired you is indeed a noble one. Peace is vital both for India and Pakistan and indeed for the world as a whole. It should be our endeavour to try to open a new chapter in Indo-Pakistan relationship. Our objective at this meeting should not be recrimination over the past, but a new look towards the future.'

According to the Tashkent Declaration there was to be no interference by either of the two countries in the internal affairs of the other, both the countries were to discourage hostile propaganda against the other, all outstanding differences were to be settled by peaceful means and immediate steps were to be taken for establishment of contacts at different levels. Shastriji was not destined to return to his country. He died suddenly at Tashkent as a martyr to the cause of peace and amity.

Each of the political parties in India in the present day has its own views¹ about India's foreign policy on the basis of its ideology. Considering how international events are moving now with disconcerting quickness it is difficult to say which of these is the correct one from India's point of view and also for the sake of world peace. But tormented humanity, long panting for peace and harmony, cannot afford to bear the terrible strain of another global or partial war which may result in a devastating catastrophe. Consistent with her age-long and historic ideal of world brotherhood India has, to-day or to-morrow, a moral obligation to rise above conflicts and jealousies which still threaten to overwhelm human society and to make all possible efforts for the growth of international amity.

¹ *India Quarterly, January-March, 1967.*

In conclusion I pray:

‘ ya eko’ varno bahudhā śakti-yogāt
varṇan anekān nihitārtho dadhāti;
vicāiti cante viśvam ādāu sa devah,
sa n’o buddhyā subhayā saṃyunaktu:

He, who is One, and who dispenses the inherent needs of all peoples and all times, who is in the beginning and the end of all things, may He unite us with the bond of truth, of common fellowship, of righteousness.’¹

¹ *Rabindranāth Tagore the Humanist* by P. C. Mahalanobis in *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, November, 1936.

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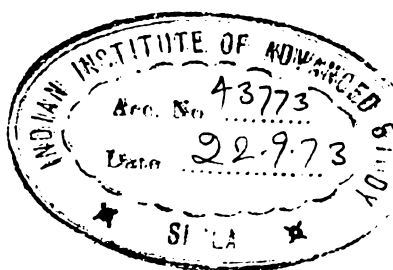
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