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### Editorial comments

To be fortunate to look upon the ruins of the ancient city of Vijayanagar at Hampi in the modern Indian state of Karnataka is to find oneself reflecting on the fundamentals of Hinduism and exploring philosophical questions that have challenged mankind down the centuries. Sites such as the Vittala Temple cannot but trigger questions about the tenets and practice of Hinduism whilst also causing the visitor to marvel at indigenous religious art, craftsmanship and culture. Such sites also give rise to reflecting on how faith and spirituality manifests itself in society whilst also pondering upon the motivation that drives some civilizations to engage in iconoclasm on a horrifying scale. Dr Keith Lloyd in the first paper of this journal reminds the reader that whilst religion and philosophy are often portrayed as being antithetical it need not necessarily be so. This inaugural edition of the *International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy* (IJHP) recognises the value of providing a scholarly platform for papers that explore the multifaceted nature of Hinduism along with those anchored in philosophy of various traditions.

This edition opens with a paper entitled: *Logic and religion working together: implications with India's Nāyaya reasoning*. The prevailing orthodoxy, at least in much of the Western world asserts that religion and philosophy are largely incompatible and thus are viewed quite separately, even as rival entities. Lloyd points out that whilst such division is pronounced it does not mean that philosophers are non-religious or for that matter anti-religious. In offering a definition of philosophy as; "seeking meaning through logical reasoning" the author of the paper provides an opening for reflection on the degree to which religious belief and observance involves "logical reasons"; some in certain philosophical traditions in the West have often taken a jaundiced view of religious belief particularly in respect of the role of reason. Lloyd posits that Nāyaya theism offers an interesting synthesis between religious belief and philosophy, one which challenges certain accepted norms and preconceived notions. Herein lies a bridge between disciplines that some might argue that for too long have been viewed as mutually exclusive.

Those familiar with Richard Dawkins' book *The Blind Watchmaker* (1986 CE) will recognise the useful exploration of "the so-called "design" arguments familiar in the West", yet Indian faith-based traditions offer fresh perspectives, ones that challenge us to think afresh whilst not seeking to dilute or avoid aspects that leave certain questions unanswered. A paper of this nature offers its own insight on "the path of *jnana* (knowledge)". The point about the principles of Nāyaya involving a degree of simplicity lays down the gauntlet to those who see innate complexity in everything. This paper certainly elucidates an oft overlooked branch of theism and in so doing provides a useful service and considerable food for thought.

The second paper: *Karma yoga, its origins, fundamentals and seven life constructs* by Dr Palto Datta and Mark T. Jones attempts to discover the core elements of karma yoga and presents these as "life constructs" that form a template for daily living. The challenge of a paper such as this lies in the literature that it explores and seeks to ground itself in. The *Bhavaḡad Gita* provides the first challenge, not least because it is always open to interpretation, and thus a degree of subjectivity is to be expected. One of the ways in which the authors have endeavoured to anchor and secure their research is through the exploration of works authored by Swami Vivekananda, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Swami Chinmayananda. Sources of this nature could be said to be authoritative, although the case could be made for other sources to be used and as a consequence they might result in different interpretations. What follows is a reasonably indepth analysis of the dimensions of karma yoga and its supposed positive outcomes. One of

the most interesting aspects of this research lies in the way that it has reviewed current academic literature in order to try and discover the dimensions of karma yoga. Table 1 provides a useful overview of perceived dimensions; these have been drawn together by the authors and added to in such a manner as to formulate a series of life constructs.

The second part of the paper takes as its focus what the authors dub the Heptagon of life constructs of Karma Yoga. For many the greatest challenge presented by karma Yoga is the quest to live a virtuous life, one where an individual remains detached and thus in this world but in a sense not of this world. The heptagon presented here offers a “practical template”, one the authors’ claim; “can inform behaviour that is attuned to the world and cosmos, rather than obsessed with self.”. The seven life constructs (work, duty, service, purpose, giving, now and acceptance) are explained with reference to the *Gita*. Whether numerologists and Hindu scholars see any special significance in the number seven for the number of life constructs discerned in this paper is another matter. The authors see potential for the seven life constructs to be relevant to those in leadership and management roles and thus this might provide an avenue of future study.

The next paper is by Dr Anita Bobade and is entitled: *Significance of Indian Philosophy, Tradition, Culture and Indian Management Science*. Societal value systems have long been a topic of interest and thus a paper that seeks to explore indigenous models for business management have a relevance far beyond India. In laying out the sheer volume of students in India undertaking business management courses and in suggesting the teaching of the value of Indian ethos in Management it is evident that such an approach presents an opportunity to bring about a sea change in outlook, attitudes and potentially practice. Bobade makes clear that she is of the opinion that there; “is a dire need” for students to be exposed to values that are shaped by the study of *Dharmashastra*. Other education traditions, whether these be in the US or Japan are claimed to take a very different approach, ones that could be argued to be underpinned by utilitarian, and even secular values. In expounding on the Indian ethos in Management this paper may well trigger questions about the type of case studies and textbooks used in many leading Indian business schools, especially as some leading figures in Indian institutions routinely appear to genuflect towards US institutions, American academics and American case studies. How of course a spiritually influenced syllabus is shaped and implemented raises interesting questions of itself.

The author argues that there is “a need for indigenous models of business management” and looks to *The Manusmṛti* (Sanskrit: मनुस्मृति). One of the challenges faced by any academic wishing to access a text of this nature in its original language is the fact that less than 1% of the Indian population speak Sanskrit. The point made in this paper about *Dharma* is a telling one, that said, some of those of a ‘muscular’ atheist disposition may seek to resist the introduction of anything into the curriculum that has spiritual or religious underpinnings. In an era increasingly concerned about skewed or impoverished organisational and personal ethics there certainly could be mileage to be gained from exploring the likes of “Occupational Purity”.

The fourth paper is entitled: *The eternal teachings of Hinduism in everyday life* and is by Dr Atish Prosad Mondal. This is an ambitious paper that tackles a vast canvas, as is evident by its title. In seeking to address the enormity of the subject matter head on the author seeks support through those who have made the case that Hinduism is a way of life and not merely a religion. Those who live in the land that gave birth to Hinduism have imbibed certain ideas and thus what has been of India has become for the world. The section on Examples of Philanthropic Practices in Daily Life underscores the importance of the way one treats visitors, guests and even prisoners and benefits from the fact that it draws on devotional texts and history to support such notions. The author makes the case that India’s religious freedom has been instrumental in helping forge certain ideals, as has been the teaching that have emanated from the likes of the *Mahabharata*, the *Upanishads* and *Puranas*. Strands of teaching from Hinduism have ensured

that that deemed eternal has become universal which means that the world in general benefits from values that have long taken root in India. Mention of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* brings to mind the wider value of exploring Indian classical works and history, hence the relevance of scholars of diplomacy tracking down and reading a copy of *Kautilya's Concept of Diplomacy* by Bharati Mukherjee.

For many their journey into the meaning and wisdom of the *Bhagavad Gita* comes through stories and *alochana* (discussion). The next paper, whilst somewhat folksy in nature is a timely reminder of the routes into sacred text as well as the way in which Hindus and non-Hindus have taken inspiration from the *Gita*. In writing: *Knowledge and humanity in the light of the Bhagavad Gita* Nani Gopal Debnath seeks to explain that understanding of Hinduism can be gained through it being anchored in real life tales and experiences. Mention is made of role of the Gita Sangha ('Sangha' being a Sanskrit word variously translated as "association", "assembly" or "community"), a communal institution that for those familiar with them has often been the path to enlightenment. The author of this paper makes considerable play of the relevance of the the *Bhagavad Gita* whilst being sure to mention the importance of "selfless action" and "disinterested work", the latter being a notion that has the potential to confuse if people interpret it incorrectly. The disinterest of course being a spirit of detachment along with work being done absent of the quest for personal gain. The light and darkness anecdote featured in this paper is certainly one that reminds the reader that profundity is often to be found in that which is most simple.

Another interesting aspect of this paper is the connection that it makes between the Vedas and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), this is a point that warrants further discussion and is a point that is well made. The influence of the *Gita* is further explained through an exploration of influential figures who have found inspiration in this sublime work. The likes of T. S. Eliot, J. Robert Oppenheimer and Nikola Tesla are cited as examples of individuals of prominent individuals who have quoted the *Gita* and sought to discover more of its wisdom and teachings, even to the point where in Oppenheimer's case he was inspired to want to learn Sanskrit.

The penultimate paper of this edition is by Dr Dinesh Bist and is entitled: *Exploring the potential of Human Body and Brain to synchronise with Earth electromagnetic Resonance and Schumann Resonance – A critical reflective learning journey of my Cerebral Spinal Fluid experience and the learning it evoked*. Whilst at a first glance this paper might appear to be decidedly left field for inclusion in this journal, wellness and wellbeing is often enhanced in those who discover a inner harmony that comes through a particular way of living that is grounded in the tenets and practices of religious belief. Hinduism does not take an 'us and them' attitude when it comes to mankind and nature and thus it should be unsurprising that a paper that contains a wealth of fascinating medical information also takes the reader into the diurnal habits of the author in respect of the natural environment, whose degree of self-observation and monitoring has resulted in this highly original paper.

The trigger for this research lies in a high level of self-awareness as well a quest for a life change driven by certain health conditions. Central to the self-study (systematic self-observation – SSO) was the active engagement with and immersion in the natural world and the impact that this had on the author's Central Spinal Fluid (CSF). A key component of the journey towards this study was a heightened sense of inner awareness borne out studying Hindu philosophy and taking up and practicing meditation. As well as sharing a CSF neuroscience perspective the author elucidates something of Kundalini Science (The word Kundalini comes from a Sanskrit word 'kundal' meaning 'coiled up') with emphasis on Kundalini yoga and the awakening that comes from it. In respect of Kundalini Awakening the author states that "synchronicity" requires a controlled diet and a willingness to become attuned with nature coupled with a mind emptied of discordant thoughts. Bist articulates a clear desire "to raise awareness about the potential of the human body" with special reference to the earth's electromagnetism and Schumann resonances and

by so doing brings some fresh perspectives that challenge the reader to view certain experiences and phenomena in a new light.

It is fitting that the final paper also explores human harmonization with the world around us. Dr Richa Baghel's paper: *Purusha and Prakruti of the Samkhyakarika Philosophy: Rationalising Decisions of an Individual in Synchronization with the Environment* takes the reader on a journey into Hindu philosophy. The *Samkhyakarika* (Sanskrit: सांख्यकारिका) is the earliest known surviving text of the Samkhya school of Hindu philosophy. This paper seeks to explore the relationship between the individual (*Purusha*) and the environment (*Prakruti*) with reference to *The Samkhyakarika* which dates from circa 350 CE. Based on her research Baghel posits that an individual's decisions are based on both their internal environment and their external environment and thus the decisions or choices that a person makes are influenced by our degree of consciousness. Those who have heightened consciousness place greater attention on "pre-mid-post decisions" and thus it could be argued are more attuned with self and their immediate environment. This need for heightened self-awareness was a message that was central to the ideas expounded by the previous paper. The ability to rationalise and make decisions that are devoid of harmful effects depends on making the right choice, one that will depend on the dynamics and understanding of both the internal and external environment. The author explains that *Samkya* philosophy defines a person's behaviour in terms of three *guna*, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, these being fundamental to an individual's outlook and understanding. With decision making being fundamental to life it is easy to appreciate how essential it is that we have a better understanding of ourselves and why we need to be more sensitive to the people around us, as well as at ease with the natural environment. Dr Baghel has certainly made the point that ancient Hindu philosophy remains germane to any discussion of life and living, and thus such a paper is a challenge to the reader to explore that which can bring greater enlightenment and possibly greater contentment.



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