

The Relevance of Swami Vivekanand's Thoughts for the Modern Youth

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India has always idolized its icons and has made their character into a national phenomena. During the early Vedic times, knowledge was all important, and hence we placed our hermits on a high pedestal. Even kings would pay obeisance to them. Then came a phase wherein we began placing human valour higher than knowledge, and the Kshatriyas began getting more importance. We also had Brahamanas like Dronacharya, who became teachers and trainers of warriors. Gradually this value of 'valour' changed with the times, to that of nationalism and patriotism. This was the period of the British rule, where every young man considered it a sacred duty to lay down his life for the motherland. But today, the post independent India has a value system different from that of the past. Despite calling ourselves a knowledge-based society, we have placed people making millions out of this 'knowledge' on a high pedestal, and consider money-making to be our sole aim. The tragedy is that while we do have a few icons worth emulating in making money, we have hundreds of others whose means do not justify their ends.¹

The result of all that has been said above, is that there has been a great decline in our value system today. We are now living in a dangerous environment, where our youth is increasingly being carried away by the attractions of crass consumerism and commercialization of human existence,