



Prof. (Dr.) Divya Nath is an eminent educationist, researcher and administrator, with over 25 years of experience in the field of higher education. Promoted as a Principal in May 2016, she has served as the Head of the Institution at Govt Degree College, Hala Kushinagar, SMP GG PG College, Meerut including the additional charge of the Regional Higher Education Officer of Meerut Division and is now working diligently to take her present institution, Km. Mayawati Govt Girls PG College, Badalpur, (G.B. Nagar), to new heights. An expert on international politics, with focus on India's role in the UNSC, SAARC, BIMSTEC and South Asia, Dr. Nath has several scholarly publications to her credit and has chaired many national/international conferences and seminars. Having a keen interest towards enhancing the quality of higher education institutions, Dr. Nath has rendered great service through her vast administrative experience and selection as a member of the NAAC Peer Team, as well as prestigious Govt and University panels. For her contributions in the field and meritorious services, she was conferred the prestigious Rashtriya Gaurav Award in 2014 and the Guru Dronacharya Award in 2018.



Dr. Kishor Kumar is a reputed historian working as Associate Professor, History and as Director of UGC sponsored Swami Vivekananda Study Centre, at Km. Mayawati Govt Girls PG College, Badalpur (G.B. Nagar). He has authored three and edited eight books, along with over thirty quality publications, during his two decade old career. Having successfully completed several research projects sponsored by UGC/ ICSSR, he has also been an active Life Member of IIPA, IPSA, IHC etc. He has delivered more than 80 invited lectures at national/international conferences, which includes chairing a technical session at international conference in Munich and Austria. He has organized more than 30 national / international seminars/ conferences/ workshops on diverse topics of History, Humanities, Ancient Wisdom and ICT etc. Several Ph.D./PDF scholars have been pursuing research under his guidance. His Facebook page Keertihas, dedicated to History, Humanities and Current Affairs, is very popular among scholars. He has been empaneled with ICCR, as Professor Chair, Indian Studies overseas. For his contribution in the field of environment and history he was conferred the Green Leadership Award in 2019 and Environmentalist Award in 2020 by ESDA, New Delhi.



Dr. Dinesh C. Sharma started his career in the year 2000 and has been working as Associate Professor, Zoology at KMGGPG College, Badalpur (G.B. Nagar), specialising in the fields of Toxicology, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Bio-musicology (Music Therapy) and e-Education. He is the founder chairperson of Indian Association of Music Therapy, also known for starting the use of ICT in Government Colleges of UP. He has more than 160 publications to his credit, including four books with an international publisher and has organized several national seminars, conferences and workshops on bio-musicology and e-Education etc. Several scholars including a Woman Scientist with DST funding, have been pursuing their research project under his guidance. His lectures and interviews have been telecast on various television channels. He has also been assigned additional work as Nodal Officer (Directorate Level) RUSA, besides being Member PAB-RUSA, Advisor-UPSAAC and SLQAC. He is also the pioneer for introducing two UGC sponsored B.Voc. Courses in Medical Lab and Molecular Diagnostic Technology and Airline, Tourism and Hospitality Management at KMGGPG College, Badalpur. He has been honoured with Shiksha Ratan Puraskar-2013, Shikshak Shree Samman-2015 (UP State Award) and IAES-gold medal (2019).



Dr. Deepti Bajpai has a bright educational profile, being a scholar, academician, and researcher with almost 20 years of teaching and research experience behind her. At present, she is working as an Associate Professor, Sanskrit, at KMGGPG College Badalpur, (G.B. Nagar). Dr. Bajpai has enriched her career graph by organizing/participating in several national/international seminars, workshops, professional development programs and has over 40 quality publications with two authored books, nine edited books, and one UGC project to her credit. She is a devoted worker of many academic societies in the capacity of a Life Member. Having an interest in poetry writing since student life, her poetry creation has been broadcast time and again on Radio "Aakashvani". Many research scholars are pursuing their Ph.D. under her supervision. Her area of interest is Indian culture and ancient wisdom, with a focus on Vedic literature.



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ANCIENT WISDOM, CIVILIZATIONAL
ANTIQUITIES AND THE CONTEMPORARY UNIVERSE

Prof. (Dr.) Divya Nath
Dr. Kishor Kumar
Dr. Dinesh C. Sharma
Dr. Deepti Bajpai



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Ancient civilizations the world over are replete with rare antiquities, tangible and intangible, waiting to be explored. However, in the race for technological progress over the years, though we may have achieved unprecedented development in all avenues possible, we seem to have forgotten the pearls of wisdom hidden in the sands of time. This book, through its collection of articles, attempts to contemplate on the above reality from diverse angles, so that the human race is able to achieve not only development that is sustainable, but also harness the treasures of ancient civilizations for making the contemporary universe a better place for all.

Ancient Wisdom, Civilizational Antiquities and the Contemporary Universe

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Editor-in-Chief

Prof. (Dr.) Divya Nath

Managing Editor

Dr. Kishor Kumar

Editors

Dr. Dinesh C. Sharma

Dr. Deepti Bajpai



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डॉ. विनय सहस्रबुद्धे
Dr. Vinay Sahasrabudde



सांसद
राज्य सभा
Member of Parliament
Rajya Sabha



अध्यक्ष
भारतीय सांस्कृतिक सम्बंध परिषद्
President
INDIAN COUNCIL FOR
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July 8, 2021

Foreword

Ancient Indian civilization is one of the oldest amongst other world civilizations and is distinguished by its profound thought and wisdom. While other ancient civilizations reached their zenith and disappeared from the pages of human history, the heritage of ancient Indian civilization endures and continues to live in the myriad traditions of India. This particular volume on ancient wisdom, civilizational antiquities and the contemporary universe is a rich collection of articles/chapters, focusing on ancient Indian thought and wisdom therein, which is acknowledged worldwide for its relevance for our modern age.

I extend my hearty congratulations to both, the editors and the publishers for this wonderful compilation. I am sure, researchers and readers will be greatly benefitted by this publication.

(Vinay Sahasrabudde)

Preface

Since the last two centuries, humanity has taken a serious turn, with not only two devastating World Wars having ravaged the entire earth, but several problems like pollution, climate change, terrorism, and disease etc., threatening the existence of the earth itself. On its worst side, the survival of humanity on earth has come under its severest attack, while on its best side, it has come to be realized that a new consciousness must seize humanity and change human nature so radically, that the spirit of oneness and unity gets embodied in human life, like its living breath. This envisages the rise of a new awakening to push humanity to open up the gates of spiritual and supramental future. Sri Aurobindo had pointed out that the recovery of knowledge contained in the Vedas, Upanishads and in Bhagavad-Gita is of capital importance for guiding research and the development of new philosophical, scientific and critical knowledge in such a way, that ancient wisdom can not only synthesize the best of the East and the West, but also show the way for handling of our contemporary problems.

In the Indian scriptures, we have a long history of dialogue. The Rig Veda says, 'let noble thoughts come to us from every side' (आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः). Though the centre of ancient Indian wisdom is rooted in spirituality, the area of Indian Knowledge extends to diverse fields like astronomy, geography, environment, yoga, state craft, management, yoga, medicines specially Ayurveda, philosophy including the Six Schools of Thought, mathematics, literatures, art and languages etc. We are a civilizational state and believe in

plurality. We have always believed in postmodern principles through the ages without knowing that it will be a futuristic concept. We have admired the truth that different cultures can flourish together'. Our collective spirit and consciousness have made us consider the whole world as our family (वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) where there is unity in diversity. But the diversity here does not imply divisions and unity is not oneness. In fact the dissemination of unique Indian ideas and practices has shaped the way we view spirituality in the West. Many concepts in early Vedic philosophy have been backed by empirical evidence today, so that modern science is just catching up with the wisdom of early Indian teachings, rooted in ancient Vedic texts and still pervasive in the culture of the Indian subcontinent.

The age of Mysteries has come to be acknowledged as a common feature among some of the most ancient cultures of the world. Whether in India or in Chaldea, in Egypt or in Greece, in Atlantis or in some previously extant but now submerged islands of ancient times, there seem to have flourished people with knowledge of secret truths and remarkable discoveries. But the result of these discoveries have been lost in some developments of the past, so that our enquiry for truth in its myriad dimensions continues. The Rig Veda defines the manifold nature of truth in another way saying, 'there is only one truth and learned persons call it by many names (एकम सद विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति) In Santana Dharma our enquiry for truth leads us to believe in Dharma (Duty), Arth (Wealth), Kaam (Desire) and Mokshe (liberation) Lord Mahavira gave the doctrine of manifold nature of reality, which is also known as theory of relative truth (Syadvada). Buddhism told us about the Four Noble Truths and gave us the philosophy of the Middle Path and the Eight Fold Path which is always relevant in practical life.

Ancient civilizational antiquities and wisdom abounds with a rich store house of knowledge, which have the potential to transform modern day culture, society, polity, education, health and contemporary problems of the world. History is an endless dialogue between the past and the present also having answers for curing the ills that may plague the future. Through the rich collection of research papers, presented at the International conference on "Ancient wisdom civilizational Antiquities and the Contemporary

Universe” we have collected and edited some selected papers on diverse fields like culture, art, history, education, literature, polity geography, environment and technology. The first section deals with Culture and History, having papers on ancient Indian religion, philosophy, upanishadic spiritualism and leadership. It also covers the Jain karma theory and its relevance, along with discourses on development and impact of Buddhism. Part II deals with Society, Geography, Technology having articles/chapters on good governance in ancient India, divorce laws, importance of rivers down the ages, evolution of society and family, environment conservation, impact of climate change and the advance and impact of science and technology. Part III deals with Education in different civilizations, significance of value education, child development through school education and the progressive journey of teacher education in India. Part IV deals with Nutrition, Health and Yoga which traces the history of Indian food culture, health in ancient and modern times, effects of yoga on physical and mental health as well as its importance. In the end, Part V covers Art and Literature, showcasing ancient art in Ajanta and Bagh murals and glimpses of ancient civilization in Shakespeare’s works, urbanization in Kamala Markandeya’s writings John Donne’s poems as well as comparative study of ancient and modern forms of entertainment.

We also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our collaborators the Gautam Buddha University, specially the Vice Chancellor Prof. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma who encouraged us right from the word go, not only in finalization of the topic/ theme of the Conference, but also in the planning of logistics right till the end of the Conference. The scholars who made the conference a success by their contribution of these well-documented papers deserve our thanks, because without their participation, this volume would not have come into existence. On the production side, we have to thank our colleagues at KMGGPG College Badalpur and GBU, NOIDA who constantly provided their valuable inputs in the process of bringing out this publication.

Today, extreme weather conditions have become the norm across the globe leading to farmers woes and diseases that threaten the existence of humanity. One part of the world witnesses floods, other

drought. Over population is sapping world resources, advance of science and technology have created new problems rather than solving old ones, society faces degradation, education has become commercialized and modern food fads have led to increase in lifestyle diseases. For the solution to most, if not all the above modern day problems, we only need to go back to ancient wisdom and we are sure to find myriad ways to deal with them successfully. According to Benjamin W. Decker, “Time and again technology, along with advances in neuroscience and even genetics, seems to be validating things our ancestors knew all along by revealing exactly what happens physiologically during meditation and how regular practice can improve our bodies and minds”. We agree with the above statement not only in terms of health but to improve situations in all walks of life in the universe today And we would be happy if the present volume is able to change people’s mindsets in order to achieve the cherished objectives behind our International Conference as well as our efforts in bringing out this volume.

New Delhi (India)

Prof. Divya Nath

Dr. Kishor Kumar

Dr. Dinesh C. Sharma

Dr. Deepti Bajpai

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Part - 1
History and Culture

1.

Ancient Indian Wisdom: Religion, Philosophy and Science

Dr. Kishor Kumar*

The ancient Indian tradition of epistemology includes an interdependent relationship between the three important parts of mankind 1. Religion 2. Philosophy and 3. Science. In *The Life Divine* (1919) Sri Aurobindo says that there are two ways and these two are simultaneously true to reach at the divinity or to the higher self. These two paths are Materialistic and Spiritualistic. No one can achieve the higher self or divinity with the knowledge of only materialistic world or with the spiritual one. He claimed that while Cārvāka (Materialistic Philosophical School) philosophy taught about the validity of the perceivable objects only, on the other hand the Advaita Vedanta teaches about the one ultimate truth (Brahman). That entire studies of Advaita Vedanta concentrates on the spirituality. These both philosophical schools affirmed the truth which are completely different from each other. Here Sri Aurobindo says for an individual intellectual growth needs the equal help of both teachings (Cārvāka and Advaita Vedanta). Hence the science as a materialistic tool cannot help someone to be enriched as a whole, it needs the complete support of Religion (As religion is about attaining the goal 'God' but here the materialistic world's actions work as the means to attain the spiritual goal 'God', so here the God is the goal and the material world and the actions like charity, Bhutaseva etc. works as the means to attain that goal '(God)', and as

*Associate Professor, Department of History, Director, Swami Vivekananda Study Centre, Km. Mayawati Govt. Girls P.G. College, Badalpur, Gautambudh Nagar.

Philosophy works with the both ways of teachings (materialistic and spiritualistic) it works as a bridge between these two, philosophy of Ayurveda and many other teachings of Veda and in Western Philosophy Leibniz claims the truth of the monads it completely taught about the necessity and truth of the today's scientific claims beside this many philosophical schools are completely spiritualistic like Advaita Vedanta (though in Practical Vedanta Swami Vivekananda claimed that Advaita Vedanta has practical implications also), thus, philosophy works with these teachings . In this way these three studies (Religion, Philosophy, and Science) work with each other to reach at the ultimate truth.

By the definition of these three studies, they all are actually looking for the truth, like science searches for the truth of any events, religion teaches to understand the ultimate truth 'God' and Philosophy says that these both studies are true, but we need to find out the ultimate, certain truth which is the one truth behind of all facts. In this way these three are internally related with each by their aims. According to Albert Einstein "Religion and science complement each other. Science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind". Despite being a great scientist, he believed that the creation of universe is not based on the random lights of coincidence, but on the basis of a predetermined system. The superpower working behind the creation of the universe is God. Science describes the operation of the universe as based on the principle of conservation of energy, which is called "Law of Conservation of Energy". This energy can neither be generated nor be destroyed, it gets converted from one form of energy to another. Our ancient notional wisdom also accepts this concept of energy. According to which the God/ supreme creator is 'that' energy from which the world has created. As it is said in most of religious books, that energy is the supreme power regulating the elements, it is self-proclaimed, eternal and manifested in different forms, we believe that everything we found in this planet or in cosmic world is reflection of God, it is just the transformation of the superior energy. Science assumes that the transmission of energy in the world takes place in an energetic source, a source that never ends. This cosmic world is a transformed form of energy, even in the religious texts (IshaVasya Upanishad, Which is a part of the Shukla Yajurveda) God is defined as-

*Om Purnamadah Purnamidam, Purnat Purnamudachyate, Purnasya
Purnamadaya, Purnamevashishyate*

The teaching derived from the sutras is that as the Supreme Power (Paramatma) is complete, true and real, so the creation of this supreme power, the world must also be real and complete. It is an expression of that perfect divinity. According to our eternal thought everything which seems conscious or unconscious all are transformative reflection of God. That supreme energy is scattered here and there in various forms. The divine supreme power is the source of energy that exists in this whole world in many forms and that source never ceases. The corresponding science also assumes that when the conversion of energy takes place, the total amount of energy remains constant, along with that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. Only the forms (body) can be changed. According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita (Chapter-2, Verse 20), the soul which is a pure energy and part of supreme divine power, never destroyed-

*(Na Jayate Mriyate Va Kadacin, Nayam Bhutva Bhavita Va Na Bhuyah
Ajo Nityah Sasvato 'Yam Purano, Na Hanyate Hanyamane Sarire)*

That is soul neither takes birth nor dies. It is unchangeable, eternal and undestroyable. At the time of death of the body, the soul discard the old and accept new body just like a person puts new clothes, giving up old ones. Thus both religion and science consider the energy to be infinite, eternal and changeable. Here, Sun as the star plays a vital role in science and religion as well. In science 'Sun', central power of the universe, provides light to all the planets in the universe. On the other hands in religion Sun is the life giving energy that's necessary for survival. The sun is often identified with the supreme deity and a symbol of divine power. Hence it is worshipped and glory is described in various text of Hinduism.

In other context, science also considers sun as a source of strong energy. In Astronomy (related to science) and astrology they both are based on the planetary systems and on the respective planet's functions. Here it the Sun is the major source of energy which play a vital role in survival of life on earth. Without the sunrays, all photosynthesis on earth would stop. As a result, plant, animals & humans all will be die without the Sun's warmth, temperature would drop immediately and earth would soon freeze, so life without sun is impossible on earth. So sun holds a primary and central place in these two studies.

Thus according to the ancient Indian wisdom, religion and science are two sides of the same coin. One interprets the invisible, the other describes the visible. So our oriental

knowledge is all about balance between intangible and tangible things. In Indian Ancient knowledge, science has been used as a human welfare by associating it with religion. The same thing can be seen at the point of environmental protection as well. The religious texts of our culture contain an inscrutable message of preserving nature as worth worshipping. Worship of lifesaving trees like Banyan, Neem, Tulsi, Peepal etc., faith on water as a holy resources of world rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Indus, Saraswati, Godavari, Narmada, Kaveri etc, and saying “माता भूमिः पुत्रोऽहं पृथिव्या.” (land is our mother and we are her son) keep the feeling of gratitude towards the earth by considering it as motherly, all of this created balance of ecology like science. It was a successful attempt to do so, whose preservation is considered indispensable by scientists today to prevent the creation from taking it to the brink of destruction.

Thus religion and science virtually confirm the same fact. The only difference is in the way of saying. Religion confirms the same facts through faith and belief which science proves through logic and experiments. Along with understanding the relation of religion and science, it is also necessary to know the relation of religion and philosophy. According to Indian ancient wisdom, philosophy is called the knowledge through which the knowledge of the element can be seen. According to Pāṇini's Aadhyayi (Eight Chapters-Sanskrit treatise on grammar written in the 6th to 5th century BCE by the Indian grammarian Panini), the word Darshan (Philosophy) doesn't mean 'perceiving in a lame sense, it is something more, it is about perceiving the truth beyond our sense experience (acquired by our 5 senses). So, it's a process or enquiry for holistic truth. The use of the word “perception” is seeing through the inner eye or concluding by contemplation. The Indian philosophical schools are divided into two branches-Theist and Atheist. The schools affirm Veda as a source of Prama or 'Veda' as itself a pramana, are the schools known as Theist or Astika Philosophy. It contains 6 schools like Samkhya Darshan, Yoga Darsha, Nyaya Darshan, Vaisheshika Darshan, Mimamsa Darshan and Vedanta Darshan. Now the 6 schools will be stated one after one.

1. **Samkhya Darshan (Samkhya Philosophy)** - The Samkhya philosophy, propounded by Kapil Muni, is a dualistic philosophy. The primary text of Samkhya philosophy is the Samkhya Sutra. It accepts the power of two basic independent entities which are consciousness and matter. According to this philosophy,

the Purusha (consciousness) & Prakrti (matter) are the two elements, by their coincidence-merging and split the creation and destruction take place in cosmic world. The whole materialistic things have three type of properties (Sattva- Those which have the properties of goodness, compassion, calmness, and positivity, Rajas- Those which have the properties of activity, chaos, passion, and impulsivity, potentially good or bad, Tamas- Those Which have the properties of darkness, ignorance, dullness, laziness, lethargy and negativity). When Purusha (consciousness) realized himself and detached himself from Prakrti (matter), then he became free from the bondage of nature which paves the way to salvation.

2. Yoga Darshan (Yoga Philosophy) - Maharishi Patanjali is the originator of Yoga Philosophy. The authentic oldest book of this philosophy is the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali. Yama (abstinences), Niyama (observances), Asana (Postures), Pranayama (breath control), Pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), Dhyana (Meditation), Dharna (concentration), and Samadhi (absorption) occupy a prominent place in yoga practice. Yoga Darshan is considered to be a complementary philosophy of Samkhya Yoga. In addition to the 25 elements of Samkhya, God is also accepted in it. According to this philosophy the yoga means :(yogas chittavritt in irodha) which refers to stilling the mind in order to experience ultimate reality and move toward Self• realization.

3. Nyaya Darshan (Nayaya Philosophy) - The originator of this philosophy is Maharishi Gautam. Nyaya Darshan is the logic-oriented philosophy. So this philosophy's most significant contributions to Indian philosophy was systematic development of logic, methodology and its treatises on epistemology. According to the Nyaya philosophy that there are four valid means of knowledge which are Pratyaksha (perception), Anumana (Inference), Upmana (Comparison) and Shabda (Testimony or sound) are required for accurate knowledge of substances. The major text of this philosophy is the Nyaya-Sutra of Gautama. The aim of this philosophy is to prove the existence of the soul and God and to liberate the soul from the worldly bondages and to show the path of salvation. Moksha can be realized by element knowledge. For this, sixteen substances have been explained in the Nayaya Darshana , which are as follows: Pramana (valid means of knowledge), Prameya (objects of valid

knowledge), Sanshaya (doubt), Prayojana (purpose), Drishtant (example), Siddhanta (principles), Avyaya (components), Tarka (logic), Nirnaya (judgment), Vaad (debate), Jalpa (arbitration), Vittanda (cavilling), Hetvabhasa (fallacy), Chala (deception), Jaati (refutation), and Nigraha Sthan (point of defeat).

4. Vaisheshika Darshan (Vaisheshika Philosophy) Vaisheshika philosophy is also called atomism. Vaisheshika philosophy is also known for its insights in Naturalism. Maharishi Kanad has given this philosophy in the Kanad-sutra. This philosophy accepts two evidences, inference (Anumana) and perception. According to this philosophy there are all the seven basic substances of creation- Dravya (substance), Guna (quality), Karma (activity), Samanya (commonness), Vishesha (particularity) Samavaya (inseparable) and Abhava (Absence). Like the Nyaya philosophy, the purpose of Vaisheshika-darshan is also to achieve salvation by achieving objective element knowledge and leaving fake consciousness.

5. Mimamsa Darshan (Mimamsa Philosophy) - Mimamsa • Darshan is the master piece of Acharya Jaimini. The philosophy of Karma-kanda, the former side of the Vedas, is called Mimamsa Darshan that mean reflection and critical investigation thus refers to a tradition of contemplation which reflected on the meanings of certain Vedic text. The main objective of Mimamsa Darshan is to explain religion in an objective manner. In this philosophy Vedic method of worship is desirable to be closed with your particular God.. The symptom has been stated as Mimamsa-Darshan which accepts six proofs Pratyaksha (Perception), Anumana (Inference), Upamana (Comparison & Analogy), Arthapati (Postulation, presumption), Anuplabdhi (Non-existence) and Shabda (Testimony). Mimamsa philosophy is concerned with the earlier parts of the Vedas known as karmakanda, it is also referred to as Purva-Mimamsa or Karma • Mimamsa. Vedanta, which deals with the later portion of Vedic literature based on the upnishads, is called Uttara Mimamsa.

6. Vedanta Darshan (Vedanta Philosophy) - The pinnacle of Indian philosophy is found in Vedanta. It is also called Uttara Mimamsa, which means the latter enquiry or higher enquiry and is often contrasted with Purva Mimamsa. Many Acharyas have interpreted the Vedanta sutra, but Shankaracharya and Ramanujacharya are special among them. Shankaracharya has

accepted Advaita Vedanta by saying 'ब्रह्म सत्यं जगत् मिथ्या' (Brahma Satya Jagatmithya) means God is the only reality and the cosmic world is not truth. According to him, Nirgun Brahm is eternal, conscious and blissful sat-chit-ananda. According to Shankar 'knowledge is the door to salvation'. The Advaita Vedanta is a supreme form of Indian philosophy because it is fully based on abstract thinking. Shankaracharya had revised and corrected the concept of Vedanta and Swami Vivekananda expand its dimension beyond India as true ambassador of Indian culture.

The foundation of eternal religion 'Hinduism' is based on the above Six Schools of Thought. We are moving regularly from low level truth to high level truth. Moving progressively on the basis of various forms and way, the Indian wisdom especially in philosophy finally reached the conclusion of monotheism or non-dualism as we reach by experimental research in science.

According to New (navya) Vedanta, human development is a continuous process, this process of development moves from inertia to the highest spirit of human mind (superhuman), to attain the consciousness of absolute truth means beyond relative truth. Therefore, in practical sense, development is all about to the God, by the God for the God, there are three stages of development. The moving of chitta Shakti towards the upward movement is the first stage of development, such as life element from material object, mind from life element and the development of the super mindfulness from the mind stage. The expansion or broadening of the object is the second stage of development, in which the expansion and differentiation of a low-level object increases and takes the form of a high-level object. The third stage of development consists of the coordination among higher level element and lower level elements. So through knowledge and wisdom, development, evolution, coordination, synthesis and finally transformation take place. This progress takes place on both the front at individual level and at the universe level. The individual's development is possible through knowledge, meditation, yoga and rebirth etc., as we know the progress or development is process not the destination, so it is continuous and eternal, the ultimate goal is salvation. Tattvamasi, means 'That art thou'. This is one of the most important goal of Vedanta philosophy. The origin of this sentence can be traced to the Chandogya Upanishad to the dialogue between Uddalaka and his son Svetaketu. The meaning of this saying is that the

self-realization - in its original, pure, primordial state is wholly or partially identifiable or identical with the ultimate reality that is the ground and origin of all phenomena. Religion favors spiritual development and science is about physical development. One represents the intangible part which is above all and another speaks about tangible things. Ancient Indian wisdom emphasizes on coordination and balance on every aspect, so in the end it is desirable to say that only the balance among religion, philosophy and science can give the world the feeling of Satyam (Truthfulness) Shivam (An act of Welfare) Sundaram (Beautiffulness).

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