

# PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis

## India: Plummeting Rupee Sparks Fears

“ Since coming to power in 2004, the UPA has aggressively pursued a rightwing pro-market and pro-foreign investor agenda, slashing taxes for big business and pressing forward with Public Sector Unit disinvestment. ”



# Wipe Out All the Piled Up Darkness

**EI, PÁPER NIGAÁ DURNIITI GAÁH,  
BHEUNGE PHELO KARO CÚR,  
ESO BHÁI ESO PRÁÑA KHULE MESHO,  
ÁR THÁKIO NÁ DÚR,  
BHEUNGE PHELO KARO CÚR**

**DÁNAVA KARECHE SHÁSAN SHOŚAN, ÁÁ  
DÁNAVA KARECHE SHÁSAN SHOŚAN,  
KARIAÁ CALECHE SVAJAN POŚANA  
DUŚTA PEYECHÉ ABÁDHA TOŚAN,  
NIRIIHA HOLO ÁTÚR,  
BHEUNGE PHELO KARO CÚR,**

**EI, PÁPER NIGAÁ DURNIITI GAÁH,  
BHEUNGE PHELO KARO CÚR,  
PÚRVA ÁKÁSHE DEKHO RÁUNGÁ RAVI, ÁÁ  
PÚRVA ÁKÁSHE DEKHO RÁUNGÁ RAVI,  
MUCHE PHELO JAMÁ JATA KÁLI SABAI,  
DEKHO JENO RAVI NÁHI JÁY DÚBI,  
NÁ ÁSE ÁNDHÁR ASUR  
BHEUNGE PHELO KARO CÚR,**

**EI, PÁPER NIGAÁ DURNIITI GAÁH,  
BHEUNGE PHELO KARO CÚR**

These shackles of vice,  
This fortress of corruption  
Break free and pulverize them.

Come brothers and sisters,  
Come with an open heart,  
Merging with everyone.  
Do not stay away anymore.  
Break free and pulverize them.

Demons are tyrannizing and exploiting,  
Guarding and nourishing their gangsters.  
The vicious and the depraved revel in joy,  
While the helpless poor are frantic.  
Break free and pulverize them.

O look at the colourful sun  
In the eastern skies.  
Wipe out all the piled-up darkness;  
See to it that the sun doesn't sink.  
And that demons do not prowl in the dark.  
Break free and pulverize them.

*(Translated from Bengali original)*



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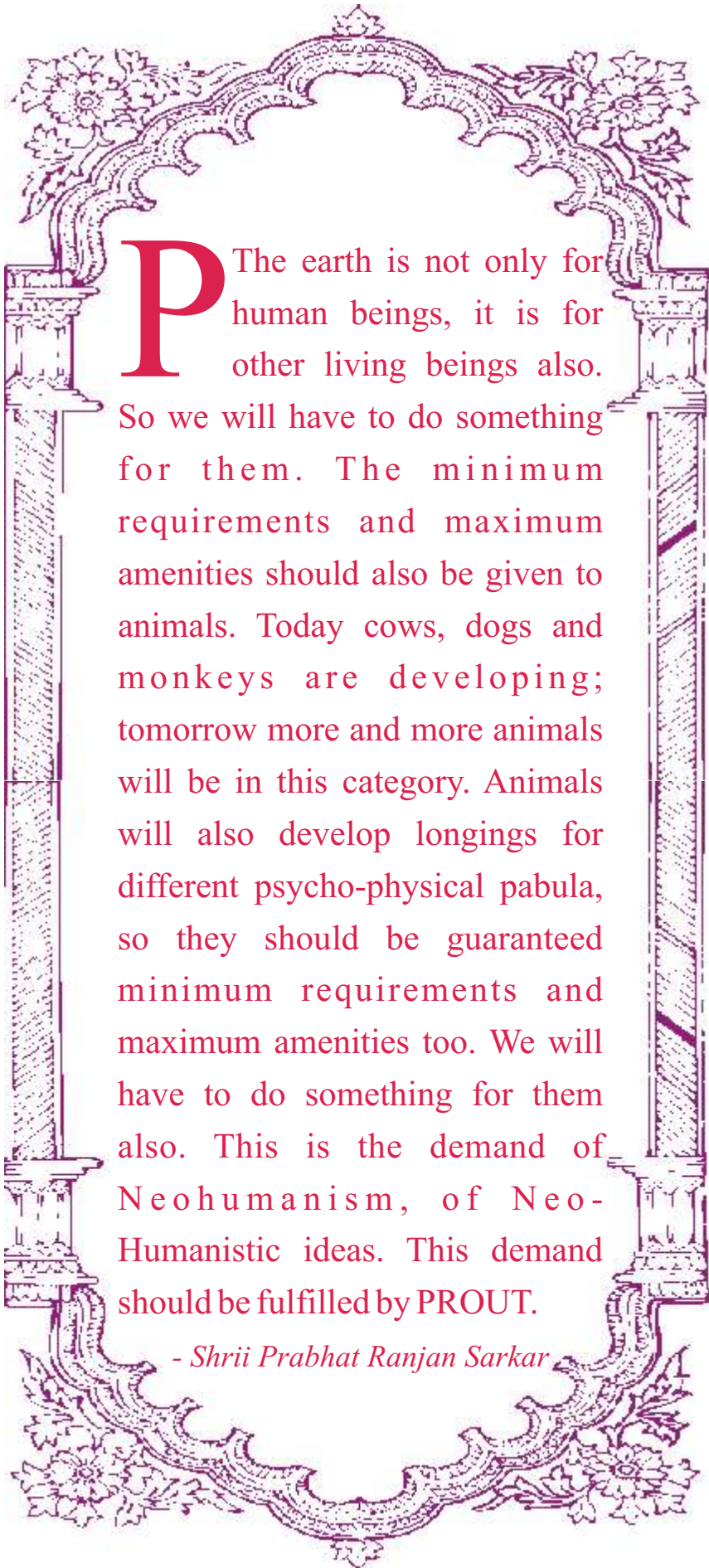
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## Fundamental Principles :

1. No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body.
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.
3. There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.
4. There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.
5. The method of utilization should vary in accordance with the changes in time, space and person and the utilization should be of progressive nature.



**P**The earth is not only for human beings, it is for other living beings also.

So we will have to do something for them. The minimum requirements and maximum amenities should also be given to animals. Today cows, dogs and monkeys are developing; tomorrow more and more animals will be in this category. Animals will also develop longings for different psycho-physical pabula, so they should be guaranteed minimum requirements and maximum amenities too. We will have to do something for them also. This is the demand of Neohumanism, of Neo-Humanistic ideas. This demand should be fulfilled by PROUT.

*- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar*

## UNAUTHORISED CORRUPTION NOT CONSTRUCTION

**T**he recent case of the Campa Cola society land in Worli, Mumbai whose residents faced an army of police and officials and demolition bulldozers, made national headlines. The Supreme Court seeing the plight of the residents on live television footage intervened and put the order on hold which they had passed in the first place to demolish flats that were built without the permission of BMC and hence were declared illegal. For over 100 families residing in the flats that were duly registered and all municipal taxes including property taxes paid regularly over the past 25 years, it brought some relief and tears of sorrow changed into tears of joy.

All this becomes a bizarre situation when viewed in the light of the Maharashtra state's own admission that there are around 5 lakh illegal buildings in Thane city, Navi Mumbai, Kalyan-Dombivli, Vasai-Virar and other areas of Thane district three years ago. Even



*An aerial view of the Campa Cola Compound in Worli, Mumbai*

the judiciary appears helpless. Three years after the Bombay HC, hearing a PIL in 2010, ordered demolition of around 2 lakh unauthorized buildings in Thane, little has been done. Whenever there is an order of demolition, the state proposes to regularize such structures. One thing is quite clear: authorities do not want to demolish illegal structures, but in Ulhasnagar, 1,13,767 illegal building/tenements were identified before a special law which regularised most of them in 2006. How is this possible? Illegal construction has flourished as successive governments have been lenient and as authorities like corporation officials and policemen, their pockets well-lined, turned a blind eye.

As Prout's founder Shrii PR Sarkar said, "In the democratic framework of society the government may be very keen to pass laws to check corruption, but the government is not equally keen to enforce those laws, because the leaders have to depend upon the votes collected through the media of influential antisocial elements. There are three important methods to check corruption: (1) the humane approach; (2) violence; and (3) strict laws.

The Proutist Bloc, India founded by Shrii PR Sarkar, registered with the Election Commission of India – its aim is to create a corruption free society in which every human being can live with dignity. It has mentioned these very aspects in its recent election manifesto viz. "Though for developmental work-building bye-laws have to be strictly followed, illegal construction in connivance with local authorities results in haphazard growth and creation of urban slums. At the same time delay in regularisation of unauthorised colonies causes uneasiness among those living there. Therefore unauthorised colonies have to be regularised at the earliest after providing all basic and necessary civic services".



**BAD HABITS**

Shrii PR Sarkar's discourse on "Bad Habits Which Should Be Given Up" rightly points out that these are bondages that do not allow one to move ahead on the path of progress. These have been listed and explained in a simple language. Avoiding them would solve many of life's problems.

Sonal, Pune

**RESTORING BALANCE**

Restoring balance in human society by Ravi Logan, clearly explains what ails society where economic growth has become an end in itself regardless of the consequences. He has also explained how Prout has the solutions to these problems. It is true, we may have materially advanced more than our forefathers, but at what cost? See what it has done to the environment and how critical it is to restore the balance? The concept of *prama* which has to be understood and worked upon in societies which provides spiritual access to the people to find their divine nature is the only answer.

Grace,  
Sarajevo by email

**ARE WE FREE**

The cover story hits the nail on the head. RD Singh has highlighted the pitfalls in Indian society even 66 years after independence. The latter has been political and the more important necessity viz. Economic for the teeming masses lags far behind.

Sharhad Rathore,  
Ghaziabad

**REALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Sohail Inayatullah after deep study and research has proved that leaders in Malaysia have oriented their educational systems in line with Proutistic thoughts of Shrii PR Sarkar. These also impact the global educational scenario, which over a period of time would channelize human thoughts towards the

Supreme that turns them into neo-humanists and liberates the intellect of the academic world nay the entire society of human beings on planet earth.

Zoya Toronto  
by email

**WATER SCARCITY**

It's high time the authorities woke up to this life threatening fact and take immediate steps to conserve the world's most precious resource water.

Sanmugam,  
Madura

**GLOBAL INEQUALITIES**

The feature by Arun Prakash throws into light the economic inequalities prevailing all over the world. One side we have great and abundant affluence of the minority and on the other extreme poverty, hunger and disease. The founding fathers of the American Constitution who did not like British hegemony and wanted greater freedoms for themselves, did not think much about the mass of people—the poor immigrants—who migrated to the promised world to better their lives. Nor did they wish to change the social structure. In fact in the constitutional debates they studiously avoided the poor

majority and drafted a constitution to protect the interests of the affluent minority. It was no different from Britain's rule of the aristocracy. History gave them a golden opportunity to change the social order and create a near perfect world, but they blew it!

Aruna Gupta,  
Kolkata

**PIED PIERS OF THE NEW WORLD ORDER**

It defies logic and imagination as to how a non resident Indian who has spent most of his life out of India could be appointed as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India? The cartoon on page 35 says it all.

John Falcon,  
Norwich by email

**WAR IN SYRIA**

Lights camera war how quaint yet how thought provoking considering the cartoon on page 40 and the poignant images of disastrous effects of war. It is very true that the rich make war and become richer in the process while it is the poor who suffer by losing lives and getting disabled for life.

Akshay Luthra,  
Ambala

*Our failures will not hurt us until we start blaming them on others.*

*Expecting and accepting are two sides of life — expecting can end in tears and accepting can bring peace of mind.*

*Depression in failure should never reach the heart and ego in success should never go to the head.*

*A generous heart, kind speech and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity.*



## Need of a Common, Good Social Order

মানুষের শারীরিক, মানসিক ও আর্থিক উন্নয়ন  
জন্য প্রথমে প্রয়োজন একটি সুষ্ঠু সামাজিক ব্যবস্থা।  
আমাদের দেশে সামাজিক জীবনের মূল দুঃখের কারণ  
কেন্দ্রে, - জাতির মনের জোর ন্যূন, সুষ্ঠু সামাজিক  
ব্যবস্থা প্রচলিত হয় নি। এতে যাঁ যাঁ  
জাতি সহন ও সহ্যে স্বীকার করে' মানুষের  
মঙ্গল বিবেচনা নেই। অত্যাচার, নির্যাতন  
এবং অন্যায় সামাজিক অসুবিধা বা মনের  
গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ক্ষেত্রে দেশে দেশে সামাজিক আন্দোলন  
স্বাভাবিক প্রকারে উদ্ভূত হয়। তাই পৃথিবীর  
প্রতিটি জাতিতে ও বিবেচক লোক - বিবেচক  
যুবসমাজ যা আন্দোলন জমাতে সক্ষম  
করে, তা বিবেচনা গ্রহণ নিঃসন্দেহে। তাঁরা  
এখন একটা কিছু চাইছেন। জাতির  
স্বার্থ নীতি।

শ্রী প্রবীণ রঞ্জন সর্কার

For the all-round development (physical, mental, spiritual and economic) for common human being first we need a common, good social order. Thinking of the suffering and torture of the common people and to remove all unnecessary social problems and disorder I gave a concept of new system. All the educated and those people having a good conscience should accept it. Especially young people will support you undoubtedly as they wanted it so much. Victory be yours.

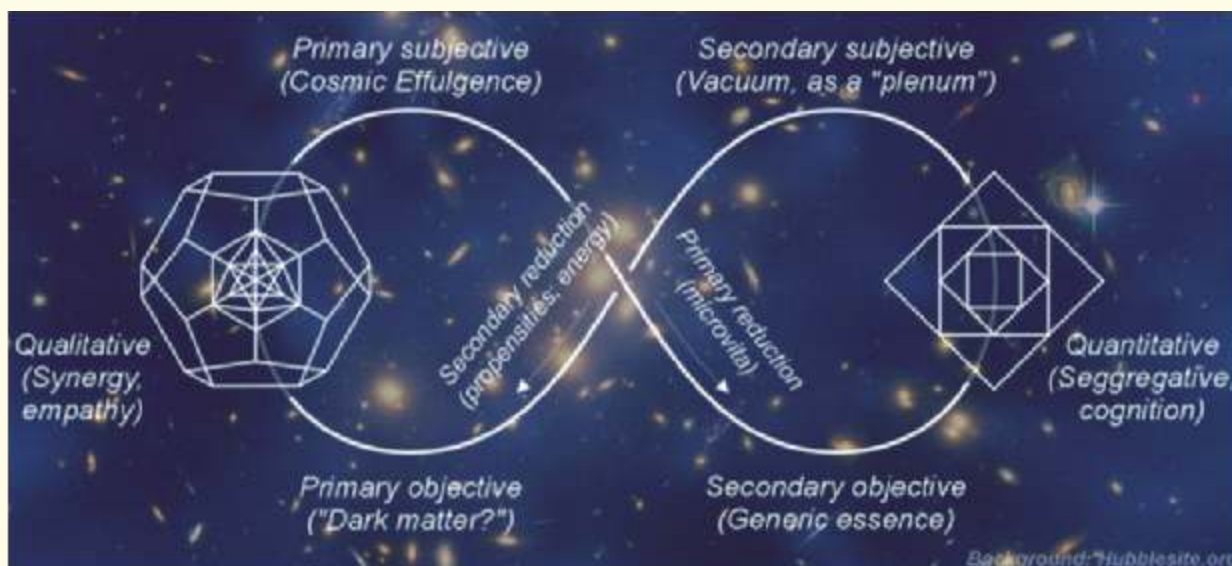
- Sh. Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



Each structure of carbonic origin in this universe, whether animate or inanimate, has a mind. That is, a mind is associated with every structure either in manifested form or in dormant form.

SHRII PR SARKAR

## The Neo-Ethics of Multi-Lateral Salvation



Until now scientists were under the impression that no structure can come into being without carbonic fundaments; that is, the survival, multiplication and decaying of any structure is not possible without carbonic locus standii. Carbons and non-carbons both get their atomic structure from microvita. Microvita requires space in theory, but not in the realm of physicality. A carbonic framework requires space both in theory and practice. Microvita is not of carbonic origin.

Let us consider the case of the structure of a carbon atom. An atom has a nucleus around which electrons revolve. The weight of an atom is decided by the mass of its nucleus. The difference between two atoms is mainly one of nuclear difference. In this respect, the mass of the satellites is of little importance. If the nucleus of an atom is split up,

tremendous energy or calories will surely be released.

It is true that every protozoic structure is based on carbon atoms. A single microvita is insufficient to form one carbon atom, but when billions of microvita get solidified, a carbon atom is formed – generally or naturally of heterogeneous nature, and under special circumstances of homogeneous nature. Singularity or plurality of atoms constitutes one molecule and many molecules acquire the status of an element, either elements of homogeneous nature – hydrogen, carbon, helium, etc. – or elements of heterogeneous nature – hydrogen monoxide, hydrogen peroxide, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, etc. An atom may be internally of both homogeneous and heterogeneous character and also externally of both homogeneous and heterogeneous character. Similar is the case with a molecule. But it is internally more of heterogeneous character and



externally more of homogeneous wants. So an atom stands with its unitary glamour according to its internal homogeneity or internal heterogeneity.

Hydrogen, sulphur and oxygen collectively form sulphuric acid. When these combine under certain temperatures and in particular barometric conditions and in specified proportions, we get the result. If one of these conditional factors varies, the result will also vary. When there are no carbon atoms, protoplasmic structures cannot be formed. Protoplasmic cells are molecular ones of heterogeneous nature. If the nuclei of protoplasmic cells are split up, they release innumerable times more energy than a nuclear explosion does. Obviously, living bodies, being composed of countless protoplasmic cells, possess huge proportions of energy – something which is beyond ordinary comprehension.

Billions of microvita produce a single carbon atom. That is why it cannot be said that everything comes from carbon atoms. Rather, the carbon atoms come from microvita. Not only carbon atoms, but all other kinds of atoms are the creation of microvita. Naturally, chemistry, biochemistry and all other associated branches of science will undergo a revolutionary change. A day is sure to come when an omega of mathematics will coincide with an omega of biochemistry. All formulae and theories followed up till now will have to be reformulated, redefined and reclassified.

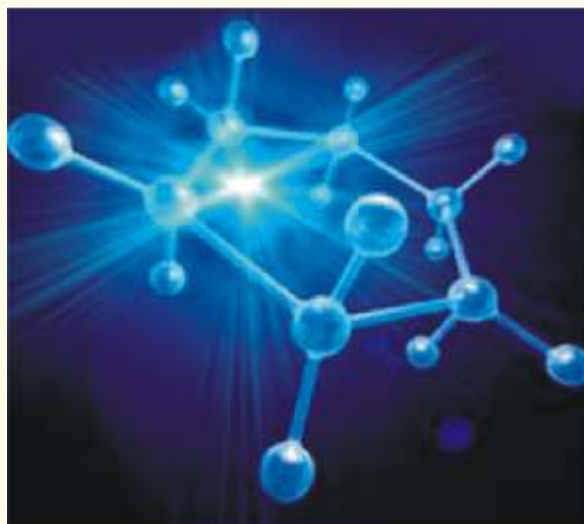
Since an atom does not come within the range of an ordinary microscope or an ordinary telescope, how can microvita – which are innumerable times more subtle and smaller than atoms – come within the scope of an ordinary microscope, an ordinary telescope, or ordinary perception in the psychic sphere, or also of inferences?

Each structure of carbonic origin in this universe, whether animate or inanimate, has a mind. That is, a mind is associated with every structure either in manifested form or in dormant form. Where the mind is not expressed there is no endoplasmic coverage, and where the mind is expressed, endoplasmic coverage shall be there. Wherever there is mind, it must require pabula of both carbonic and non-carbonic nature. When psychic pabulum is of carbonic nature, psychic movement is towards the crude, and if psychic pabulum is of non-carbonic nature, psychic movement is towards subtlety. Non-carbonic psychic pabulum helps in spiritual and supra-psychic motivation. A genuine spiritual aspirant must be very careful in selecting his or her food. Pabula of carbonic nature help in maintaining and nourishing the physical structure, and pabula of non-carbonic nature help in strengthening the psychic

structure. An intake of more and more defective carbonic pabula adversely affects the psychic triangle of forces, and thus hinders one's psycho-spiritual progress. A stage may come when the physical structure becomes almost mindless. The mythological fable of Ahalyá (who was turned into stone for a sin she committed in the epic Rámáyana) may be cited as a case in point.

When people get detached from non-carbonic pabula and become increasingly engrossed in carbonic pabula, there are two ill-effects as a consequence. First, the arena of one's own carbonic pabula will increase and the mind will gradually and steadily drift towards crude matter. Secondly, one's mind will think in terms of devouring other's carbonic pabula. This is the psychological explanation of imperialism. That is, imperialism has its origin in the psyche and functions in the psychic arena. When expressed externally it takes various forms, such as capitalism, state capitalism, communism, nationalism, communalism, parochialism, provincialism, socialism, caste-imperialism, male chauvinism, lingualism, (Once I went to a big village where the people's language was Bengali, but even in the primary school Hindi was taught there substituting the mother-language. It is a glaring example of lingual imperialism.), etc., which are all the same psychic ailments in various forms and figures.

Goaded by this psychic ailment, a superpower forces its own selfish national interests on other weaker states to establish its suzerainty politically, militarily, etc. An imperialist power wants to dominate and exploit other socio-politico-economic units as an expansion, perpetration and consolidation of its vested interests; a powerful linguistic group suppresses other minority linguistic groups; the so-called upper castes subjugate the so-called lower





## The Mind's Geometry Code

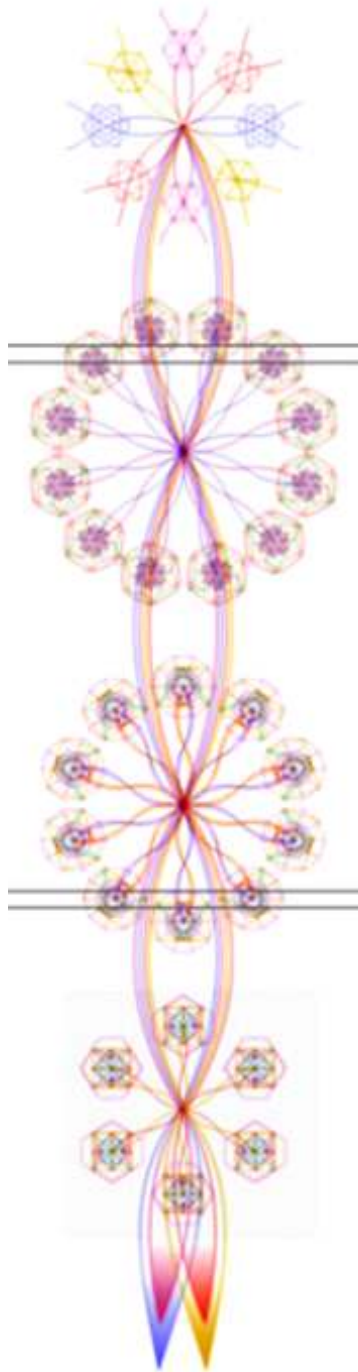


Image courtesy  
[science.trigunamedia .com](http://science.trigunamedia.com)

castes in society and suck their vital juice under so many pleas and disguises; and opportunistic males curtail the rights of women in various ways. In all these cases, the same inherent psychological malady of imperialism prevails.

Imperialism is anti-human. It runs counter to the spirit of Neo-humanism and the ethics of human life. It is detrimental to *pramā samvrdhī*, *pramā rddhī* and *pramā siddhī* in human society. In a word, it thwarts human progress and creates global wars and all sorts of divisive and destructive forces in society. Imperialism is a negative force, a destructive phenomenon, which generates exploitative and unjust conditions in individual and collective life. Such a poisonous radiation of black force attracts negative forces like negative microvita. Those negative microvita intensify and escalate the demonic activities of imperialism in all aspects of human society – art, literature, education, trade, commerce, industry, agriculture, morality and social relations. They cultivate a psychology based on slavery, inferiority complex, pseudo-culture and psycho-economic exploitation, and in certain cases are the cause of nihilism and cynicism.

In order to wipe out imperialism, which is rooted deep in the human psyche Neo-ethics based on the following points is indispensable:

- 1) The Macrocosmic Entity must be accepted as the supreme desideratum in human life.
- 2) There should be happy adjustment and balanced blending between carbonic and non-carbonic pabula.

This is the Neo-ethics of the present age; a panacea for the present imperialistic social ills and a mesh of psychic disorders. The application of Neo-ethics will lead to multi-lateral salvation of human society by removing economic exploitation, political suppression, religious indoctrination, cultural imposition and social subordination.

### The Role of Guru

I have already said that if there is a happy adjustment and balanced blending between carbonic and non-carbonic pabula in the human mind and corpor, there will be no imperialism at all. Rather, heaven will descend on the dusty earth.

While following the path of Neo-ethics, human beings will attain enormous progress in the spiritual sphere with greater speed. With the help of non-carbonic pabula they will sharpen their psychic penetration within inter- and intra-atomic and molecular space. With the help of microvita they will be able to powder down their ectoplasms and transform them into cognitive faculto-factors.

The majority of people today do not know the technique of using microvita. The Universal Entity, sitting in one place, has been using microvita to accelerate the spiritual growth of individuals in different celestial bodies in different ways. Only that Supreme Entity who is conversant with these techniques and can teach them to individual spiritual aspirants is the Supreme Guru. He keeps all within His contact, and with the help of microvita, elevates all spiritually.

Living beings, through their own individual efforts, can achieve only a little progress in the carbonic world, but in the non-carbonic world only the grace of the Supreme Guru can lead them towards the supreme goal.

Hence, it has been rightly said,

Gurukrpa hi kevalam

“The Guru’s grace is everything.”

This alone is the supreme truth. This is the be-all and end-all of life.



## Principles of Proutist Economics

The previous principle created an income floor or foundation. This principle creates an income ceiling and the following principle will create an income dynamic. With regard to incentives, firstly the value of a person's production is a social value and not an economic or market value. Market values are essentially driven by the vested interests of economic elites. Social values emerge from the needs and hopes of the common people. This principle thus provides a rational basis for incentives. In an ideal

### 3

The third sutra states :

*Atiriktam' prada'tavyam' gun'a' nupa'tena.*

**The surplus goods, services or amenities {after the provision of the minimum requirements} should be provided in accordance with the merit {or the social value of an individual's production.}**

world, the moral imperative for work as social service alone motivates individuals. However, it is not yet possible for a minority let alone a majority of today's society to attain such a state of benevolent intellect. Labour productivity at present is largely based on economic rewards and social rewards in the form of recognition. The lack of incentives was the cause of the stagnating economies in communist countries. Furthermore, often talented people in those countries turned to destructive activities such as corruption and organized crime. These elites took over when communism collapsed. The stagnating economy and debasement of the talented was compounded by a policy of lying to authorities in economic reports which led to chaos in the irrational centralized planning of those countries.

In capitalism we see the exact opposite situation where corporate executives are given huge incentives while the workers and the victims of their greed live in penury. This spiraling economic inequality is even more heinous when one moves beyond nationalism and looks at the relationship between the countless poor in historically exploited nations and the elites in wealthy nations. These disparities also cause talented people in poor countries to leave for wealthier countries. In addition the envy and greed fostered by global corporate pseudo-culture destroys the traditional values, languages and culture of those countries thus crushing their self-respect and their will to fight.

It is common sense that a middle path must be found whereby the relationship between the minimum necessities given to everyone and the maximum amenities given to the talent and hard-working is kept within civilized limits so that neither is there great economic disparity nor is there stagnation due to lack of incentives. Hence another specialized part of People's Economy would be to calculate how to constantly increase the minimum necessities and increase the amenities given to the talented in such a manner that the difference between the two is kept within fixed limits. After fixing the minimum requirements at a particular time, the next task is the provision of products that will become part of the minimum requirements in the near future. Then alone will production of amenities for the meritorious begin. The provision of such amenities will encourage other workers to work harder to get the same rewards as their colleagues. Incentives would be in the forms of goods and services rather than money. This requires the courage of members of a society to declare and enforce a ceiling or limit on the maximum wealth allowed to a person. Who has the courage and determination to do this? Only someone who has expanded their heart to care for suffering humanity so much that they become determined to end their suffering once and for all. This expansion of the heart comes most rapidly from mystical love or the love for the Supreme Beloved within our own sentimentality. This is why PROUT is committed not just to a revolution in the realm of society and intellectuality but also in the spiritual realm.



Peking University, China

# The University in Transformation

## *Can Prout Lead the Way?*

**With the rise of Chindia, (China plus India) we can easily imagine a future where Chinese and Indian students stay at home, learning from local outposts of western universities**

\* Sohail Inayatullah

Which direction for the futures of the university? How will globalization, virtualization, democratization and neohumanist pedagogy impact the university? A decade back, in a book titled, *The University in Transformation*, we – Jennifer Gidley, president of the world futures studies federation and myself - identified four drivers creating new futures of the university. In this essay, I ask: are these drivers still relevant, active?

### **Globalization Of Education**

The first driver identified was globalization. While in its current

neo-liberal form it is focused solely on the free movement of goods and services there are many types of globalization. Indeed Sarkar's Prout is a type of globalization as are the utopian sentiments of the ecological gaian movement. For universities, globalization has expressed itself as a resistance by states to continue to subsidize education. More and more students are expected to pay full fees and universities have been asked to cut back to core areas.

This has meant a mindset shift from considering education less as an investment and more as a cost. Specifically it has meant categorizing parts of education as an export (in Australia for example, for both Brisbane and Melbourne, education is the largest export,

surpassing tourism) and aspects as an expense. In the USA, Europe and Australia, the curriculum areas that are export based – seeking to bring in students from the Asia-Pacific, particularly India) – tend to be in the “real-world” areas of engineering, business, information technologies and vocational skill development. These have grown (especially when they are linked to migration policy) while other areas of knowledge – philosophy and even languages, have been subjected to immediate market forces and cutbacks and thus have declined. The overall reason of education - as a civilizing force, as the right to dissent against conventional paradigms, as part of humanity's treasure and as a long term investment in children- has



Delhi University



been put aside for shorter term market concerns. In the last ten years, this trend, and the drivers, creating it, has not in any way subsided.

I anticipate that these trends will continue. However, what is likely to change is the direction of the exports. With the rise of Chindia, we can easily imagine a future where Chinese and Indian students stay at home, learning from local outposts of western universities and Chindia's own rapidly improving educational institutions (China is likely to overtake the U.S. for number of patents filed in 2010 for the first time). Over a period of twenty years we can even imagine Western students migrating to the Asia-Pacific for higher education (and not only for language learning or culture). While this may seem difficult to imagine now, if we go back twenty years, it would have been difficult to imagine the colossal economic rise of China (for the first time having more millionaires than Europe) and certain segments of India (now having eight billionaires in the top 100). While equity remains a critical issue, especially in India, education for Chindia remains an investment. Not a cost.

### **Virtualization**

The second trend we identified was the virtualization of education. With fewer funds available for bricks and mortar and the logic of increasing students, universities and Ministries of education (with India, Indonesia, Turkey, China and other Asian nations leading the way) have focused on using the Web to deliver

education. While the savings are high and outreach stunning, what has hampered the success of distance delivery has been the mindset of university administrators and academics as they still remain committed to the expert driven feudal model. By this I mean there is an unquestioning dominator hierarchical system with the orders coming down from the Minister to the Vice-chancellor to the Dean to the Professor to the lecturer to the student. While functional hierarchy leads to efficiency, dominator hierarchy leads to the death of innovation – each generation copies blindly from the last. Academics are the experts seeing others as unable to provide solutions to problems.

That said, new applications – indeed, “an app for everything” is the new analogy for the futures of instruction - are changing the nature of pedagogy and with exponential technological advancement we can easily see the virtual becoming more like face-to- face. And costs will continue to go down. Innovation will continue to find ways for academics and students to become more comfortable in future virtualized “classrooms”. Over the long term the current distinctions between virtual and real will disappear and we, particularly digital and genomic natives, will become comfortable with different types of reality. The important shift will be from merely more technology in the class room (technology as the silver bullet) and classrooms created by technology to digital pedagogy

### **Democratization – Peer To Peer**

The third trend we identified was the democratization of education. By this we meant enhanced student participation as well as a general flattening of the university. Over the last ten years, this has come about but not in the ways we expected. The peer to peer web platform has been the greatest flattening process – from wikipedia to wikileaks to ratemyprofessor.com...even the cynical must admit the world has changed. I remember well one foresight workshop I ran recently in Singapore for Raffles Institution with forty 14 year olds. All used wikipedia, and over 50% claimed to have contributed content to wikipedia. A few – one or two – had heard of Encyclopedia Britannica. Most had heard of the United Kingdom. They understood the latest technologies and social movements – in one scenario they imagined using social movements and nano-technologies to create environmental sustainability in the Ganges by 2040 – a clean, green, socially innovative India! However, and this is crucial, democratization while partially recreating who creates knowledge has not empowered students or academics in formal university or high school settings.

Indeed, the opposite has occurred.

First, there has been a backlash against increased power of those below – a desire to return to the good old days of authority and



domination. Second, as universities have adopted the neo-liberal globalization model, creating profits or merely surviving has meant retiring expensive professor and hiring the far cheaper younger phds. And, critically, the hiring has not been “full-time” but causal instructors. Experimental courses (new web courses, in particular) especially – futures studies, gender studies, peace studies, consciousness studies, for example – have gotten up by paying academics near volunteer wages. For those at the bottom pay scale, the problem becomes that of loyalty not just to the particular university (why should I stay loyal when I am paid “peanuts”) but to the university model of education itself; that is, “why should I not globalize myself and receive the benefits of globalization.” In this regard, we can anticipate as loyalty breaks down far more innovation in the tertiary sector – new academic run cooperative universities and alternative universities (with either particular ideological leanings or broader missions or Gurukul which combines both). Along with some able to innovate, there will be many who will prefer – and rightly so, if not wisely so - a politics of grievance in and to the university itself. As cutbacks continue, we can anticipate a far more challenging labor

environment.

Returning from globalization to the good old days where education was solely about national development and nationalistic – strong national regulation - is unlikely but this does not necessarily mean retreating on the dignity of the academic and the nobility of the academic profession – alternative futures are possible. For elite professors, the walls of the university and particular university branding will be far less important. In terms of phases, we can see a movement from lower run causal academic to a portfolio academic approach (being linked to a number of universities) and finally to a model wherein the professor becomes a brand unto him or herself.

### **Ways of Knowing – Knowledge on the Edges**

Our fourth driver or trend was multiculturalism in terms of new ways of knowing becoming an acceptable as part of pedagogy. There is no easy way to measure this but certainly the rise of the web with multiple languages and platforms has created more spaces than traditional hierarchies of knowledge. The rise of Chindia (China and its 2.5 trillion dollar reserves) as well is slowly changing the game (Yoga for example becoming a 15 billion dollar

industry in the USA) are indicators of that. But far more impressive has been technology itself as a way of mediating reality. We imagined far more diversity in knowledge regimes – indigenous ways of knowing, spirituality, integrated models of understanding, and while these continue to mushroom, it is technology as a way of knowing that has been the disruptive, if not transformative, factor. With at least five billion mobile phones now in global circulation and more and more phones becoming smart, pedagogy will keep on jumping the boundaries of the real into the differently real. However, in the short run, universities and high schools are still not using smart phones as ways to make pedagogy far more interactive. Fact checking can be done via google. The role of the professor becomes that of inner motivator, mentor and facilitator –enabling students not providing them with more data.

### **The Disruption**

As always, leaving behind factory models of learning and teaching will be crucial as we move to a more 24/7 virtualized and globalized world. Focusing on ensuring equity and life wide and lifelong learning for those academics who do not become brands unto themselves or have portfolio careers will be critical. And: if national accreditation does break down or become porous certainly the trillion dollar education industry will be ripe for major creative destruction. It will not be google or facebook that will become the new Nalanda, Nanjing, Al-Azhar, Al Karaouine, Bologna, or Oxford or ...but someone will create the new platform for the pedagogies of the future. Is it wiser for nation-states to hold on to national accreditation or regionalize as with the EU or attempt to create something truly novel and lead the world and create an institutional jump? Or...?

Prout policy and strategy recommendations:







For Prout, the focus, I argue, needs to be on:

1. Helping lower level causal academics keep their dignity through negotiating better wages and conditions.

2. Helping all academics globalize in the sense of helping break the feudal expert knowledge and university structure and narrative. This means wisely embracing parts of economic globalization without allowing the true reason of the university - to dissent, to continue to carry the culture treasures of humanity and to stay focused on past and future generations – to be lost. This means moving ahead while not losing sight of the mission of the university.

3. Challenging attempts to retain national university regulatory structures or focus the university on national development. Prout is focused on human, spiritual and ecological development and not on the narrow dimensions of the nation-state. Regulations should help universities become more ecological, more neohumanist, more global...not less.

4. Working with vibrant academics to integrate other aspects of their personalities – this includes a focus on the body (exercise, diet, yoga, for example), a focus on the economy (not being dependent on the state for income but developing entrepreneurial skills, creating value), a focus on social justice (challenging oppressive structures) and a service orientation (particularly serving the needs of students).

5. Overtime, Prout needs to develop academic cooperatives and working to create new university structures that are planetary, neohumanist and inclusive of many ways of knowing the world. Cooperation is not easy for academics, however, as the current university structure rewards individual excellence not community excellence. Cooperation is a learned behavior requiring enhancing one's emotional intelligence, and is challenging as the current university structure favors the intellect, not the heart.

In conclusion, developing universities and academics with

strong intellects and open hearts that learn from doing, from engaging with all types of communities can become the value added of Prout to the futures of the university. Globalization is tearing apart the traditional university, as is virtualization and democratization. While some will miss the good old days of the protected campus – subsidized by the state with deep hierarchical structures along with the neck tie to bifurcate the mind from the heart - others will see this as a chance to innovate and create new universities. These new universities, to succeed will need to balance the practicalities of wealth generation with social justice with service to community with ideas that inspire. Prout can help in this process of creating the new university for the new future.

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**Humanity has come to a juncture: It must either adopt a new economic system that works for the planet as a whole, or else continue down a path that is unsustainable and inevitably leads to collapse.**



# Beyond The Greening Of CAPITALISM

\* Ravi Logan

When a corporation sets prices on its products, it does so in a way that neglects to account for all of the costs of production of those products. And the costs that are not paid for by the company are ultimately paid for by the society, or by the earth. Consider a wood products company that produces lumber. To produce this lumber it must pay immediate production costs. These include purchase of timberland, wages to lumberjacks and mill workers, equipment operating expenses, railroad or truck shipping fees, and so forth. When the company then prices its lumber, it must take into account all those costs related to market transactions involved in a product's production and sale.

However, the costs of production are not limited to those accounted for in market transactions. Economist Ed Whitelaw points out that, "While the company pays workers for their labor, saw shops for their chainsaws, and gas stations for their fuel, it makes no payment to commercial

fishermen for the reduction in salmon populations, to non-timber workers who see fish habitat as an essential element of the local quality of life, or to the local municipality for the increased filtration required to produce clean water."

The costs of production which lie outside of market transactions are called, in the jargon of economics,

"externalities." Just because externalities are not taken into account in market transactions does not mean they go unpaid for. In the case of lumber production, it is the fishermen, non-timber workers, and municipalities who pay for these losses who, in effect, subsidize the logging company.

The externalities of the global





industrial economy are massive, and they are a prime cause of the unsustainability of the current economic system. As economist David Korten points out, “Many of these external costs, especially those related to environmental destruction, are being transferred to future generations.” That is, the effects of greenhouse gases accumulating in the atmosphere, of toxic chemicals seeping into water tables, of loss of habitats and biodiversity, and so forth, will have great impact on those living in the future.

The great myth of capitalism is that the free market economy is faithfully guided by Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” to bring benefit to all. Capitalism’s inability to deal responsibly with externalities belies this myth. Someone has to take responsibility for the external costs of production. And if corporations are not responsible, but slough the burden of these costs onto others to pay, then there will be the continued and growing destruction of ecosystems, disruption of community life, and degeneration of cultural vitality.

### **The Greening of Capitalism**

There are five basic reform strategies that have come up for dealing with capitalism’s destructive external costs of production. First, it can be done through responsible patterns of consumption. Consumers can choose to purchase sustainably harvested lumber, cruelty-free cosmetics, organic produce, etc. This is the objective of the green consumerism movement.

Second, it can be done through directing investments toward enterprises that follow socially and ecologically sound practices. Investors direct their capital into solar energy companies, or into mutual funds that exclude investment in nuclear power, tobacco, and insecticide companies. Also corporate shareholders can petition companies in which they hold stock to conduct environmental audits to assess and reduce their



negative impacts on the environment. This is the approach of the socially responsible investment movement.

Third, enterprises themselves can initiate socially and environmentally responsible business practices that reduce or eliminate their external costs of production. Stonyfield Farm, for example, pays premium prices to family dairy farms that use sustainable agricultural practices. And Ben & Jerry’s ice cream Company conducts rigorous social audits of its business practices. This is the aim of the ethically responsible business movement.

Fourth, public policy can be framed that requires accountability for harmful externalities. The levying of carbon taxes on hydrocarbon fuels, for example, would make automobile users pay for the buildup of greenhouse gases. Or natural capital depletion taxes can be levied on products that deplete a nation’s resources, or its “natural capital”. This is the approach being promoted by sustainable development advocates.

Taken together, these four approaches constitute movement toward a greening of capitalism. The key feature of this reform-minded trend is that profit is no longer regarded to be the sole arbitrator of economic decisions; profit no longer stands alone as the bottom line. There is instead a “triple bottom line approach” which holds that commercial activity should generate financial, social, and environmental dividends. This triple bottom line

approach is attempting to create capitalism with a responsible face a capitalism in which responsibility to workers, communities, and the environment weighs equally with responsibility to stockholders.

### **Is it Enough?**

This new way of thinking of putting ethical considerations on par with profits represents a constructive and encouraging reform trend within capitalism.

But can a socially and environmentally responsible capitalism provide solutions that deliver us from the profound problems that beset us? Paul Hawken, author of *Natural Capitalism*, claims that, “Business is the only mechanism on the planet today powerful enough to produce the changes necessary to reverse global environmental and social degradation.” In this he overreaches. Whatever good socially responsible businesses may have to offer and there is much they will not be our deliverer.

The reason that reforms to green and humanize capitalism will not be adequate is this: The capitalist economy operates within a certain range of possibility that is defined by its fundamental principles. The principles that define capitalism’s nature, that give coherence to its economic system, limit the scope for modifying its expression. The more incompatible any proposed reforms are to fundamental capitalist principles, the more difficult they become to adopt and actualize. Capitalism cannot become what it is not; it cannot go against its nature.

Capitalism's fundamental nature limits its ability to solve the pressing crises facing humanity. And what is its fundamental nature? P. R. Sarkar puts it succinctly: Capitalism is based on "an individual-oriented, profit-motivated psychology." Sarkar goes on to say, the natural result of this psychology is for "wealth to accumulate for the benefit of a few, rather than for the welfare of all." This is the inherent contradiction of capitalism the contradiction between the concentrated wealth held by the few and the unmet needs of the many. It is this fundamental contraction that gives rise to most of the imbalances that now afflict societies, individuals, and the biosphere.

Humanity has come to a juncture: It must either adopt a new economic system that works for the planet as a whole, or else continue down a path that is unsustainable and inevitably leads to collapse. A viable new system will not arise out of reforming capitalism through green taxes, green consumerism, responsible investing, and external cost accountability. While positive in intention, such reforms are inadequate to constrain the greed inherent in a profit-driven economy. Sustainability, equity, and holistic fulfillment of human needs must flow organically out of the inner logic of a new economic theory grounded in new values.

Business philosopher (and former priest), Michael Novak, in an effort to formulate a "theology of capitalism", takes a view of capitalism much like the view Winston Churchill took toward democracy: that it is a terrible form of economy except in comparison to the alternatives.

Novak's belief that humanity is stuck with capitalism as the best system available is shared by many reformers who are struggling to end capitalism's destructive social and environmental impacts. But others are not prepared to accept that humanity is stuck with capitalism.

E.F. Schumacher, for example, advocated replacing capitalism with an "economics as if people mattered" and argued for the superiority of a humanistic, decentralized economy.

### **Features of an Alternative Economic Paradigm**

If humanity must go beyond the capitalist paradigm to survive and prosper, what would an economic system look like that optimally meets human needs? Here are some essential features that should be included in a post-capitalist economy.

### **Cosmic Inheritance**

The principle of individual ownership rests on a materialist conception of wealth. This must be replaced with a spiritual conception. Such a spiritual view of wealth has been given by P.R. Sarkar: "This universe is created in the imagination of the Supreme Entity, so the ownership of this universe does not belong to any particular individual; everything is the patrimony of us all. Every living being can utilize their rightful share of this property. This whole animate world is a large joint family in which nature has not assigned any property to any particular individual." According to this view of ownership of wealth called *cosmic inheritance* individual ownership cannot be accepted as absolute. Everyone has the right to use the wealth of the universe, but only the Divine Entity can claim ultimate ownership. This view of the ownership is consistent with the values of most indigenous peoples and of the wisdom traditions.

### **Economic Decentralization**

Economic decentralization must be a central objective of the new, humanistic economy. Paul Hawken's natural capitalism speaks of the need to "replace nationally and internationally produced items with products created locally and regionally." But Hawken does not recognize how problematic this is within a capitalist economy, which

has the tendency to constantly expand markets and concentrate capital so that the capitalist economy inevitably moves toward globalization. A human and earth-centered economy, by contrast, would tend toward the localization of economic power.

### **Worker-managed Economy**

The three most effective incentives for increasing productivity are profit-sharing, shared equity, and participation in decision-making. The form of enterprise in which all three of these production incentives are maximized is the worker-owned and managed cooperative. As cooperatives are best suited to optimizing the productive potentiality of workers, they should become the predominant form of economic enterprise. Cooperatives also minimize worker alienation, promote equitable distribution of wealth, and foster economic decentralization.

### **Consumption-motivated Economy**

Capitalism is a profit-motivated economy. Making profit cannot be ignored, but neither can it be the central purpose of economic activity. The central purpose must be to meet the needs of people. Such an economic rationale would increase the availability of consumer goods, and make them available at prices that are affordable. It would also work to increase people's purchasing capacity and see that none are without the earning power needed to acquire their basic requirements.

### **Economic Democracy**

Concentration of economic wealth subverts the effective functioning of democratic government. Rich people and big corporations use their wealth to finance campaigns, influence legislation, and corrupt regulatory agencies. And if government policies are enacted which severely threaten the financial interests of the wealthy, they will move their capital



out of the local or national economy, leaving behind economic ruin. For democratic governance to be of the people, by the people, and for the people, economic power must be dispersed. That is to say, democracy must be extended beyond the political sphere so that the common people have expanded influence in the economic realm.

### Self-determined Regional Economies

People can best coordinate social and economic development where they possess a common culture, shared economic potentials and problems, similar geography, and a common historical legacy. These are the factors that organically define a regional socioeconomic unit. Social and economic development undertaken within such regional units can be easily adjusted with local conditions, and so development can better satisfy human needs. For locally sensitive development to take place, regional economies need to have control of their resources and capital and to be free from domination by outside forces.

### Balance

Balance is essential to all living systems, and balance needs to be restored to the human society and its economic activities. As detailed in the World Commission on Environment and Development report, *Our Common Future*, most environmental destruction is driven by economic development. An ideal economy should possess the stability that is found in natural systems, not the disruptive growth found in cancer cells.

### Neo-humanistic Values

Humanism makes human welfare the measure of social good. But our world is not only home to humans; it is home to all of Earth's

life forms. Hence human activity must be guided by a new humanism that values the welfare of all living beings. Economic development must not be allowed to violate the inherent right to existence and expression of other species. It is not sufficient to want "an economics as if people matter", as E. F. Schumacher called for. What is required is for economic activity to be guided by neo-humanistic values, creating "an economics as if living beings matter."

### Spiritually-based Concept of Progress

Discussions about how best to conceive and pursue sustainable development generally fail to ask the question: What is the purpose of economic development? If the purpose of development is only to increase material amenities, then sustainable development will bring little more than maintaining our materialist lifestyle without damaging the environment. But it will not help us attain inner fulfillment. For this, we must reorient our idea of progress from life being simply about attaining material increase to being movement toward spiritual realization. It is of course true that people cannot pursue spiritual growth if their material needs are not met. So a spiritually based conception of progress must also recognize that there is need for material development. The purpose of development becomes, then, to support our search for inner meaning not to fill our lives with things that empty our lives of meaning.

### A More Powerful Vision

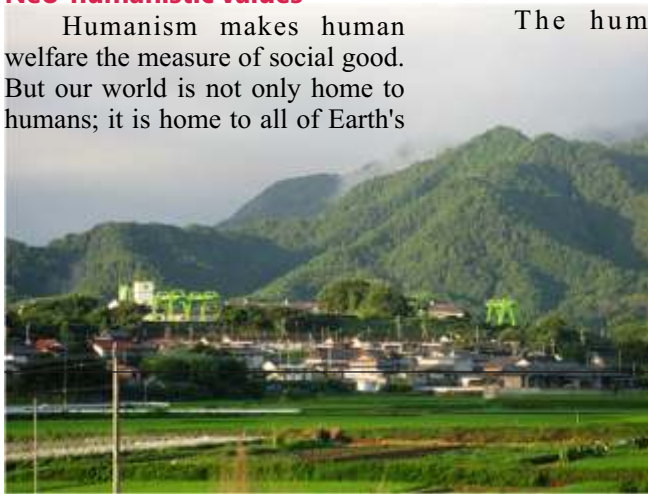
The humanization and

greening of capitalism is a well-intended response to the pressing need to deal with the detrimental effects of capitalist investment, production and consumption. Progressive reforms like green consumerism, socially responsible investing, and ethical businesses deserve popular support. Progressive-minded people should embrace new ways of consuming, investing, and producing of building up new behaviors and new institutions that bring change from within the old economy.

But if we stop at reforms, the problems besetting humanity will only worsen. More fundamental solutions must be popularized and implemented. No matter how much scope there may be in capitalism to humanize production, protect the environment, support social justice, and vitalize local communities, the capitalist system is simply unsuited to benefiting all. It is suited to enriching the few, not meeting the needs of the universal humanity.

We may embrace the progressive reforms of the green capitalists, but we must not embrace the defective premises of capitalism. Humanity is in need of a more powerful vision one that embraces the fullness of our spirit and the greatness of our human potentiality.

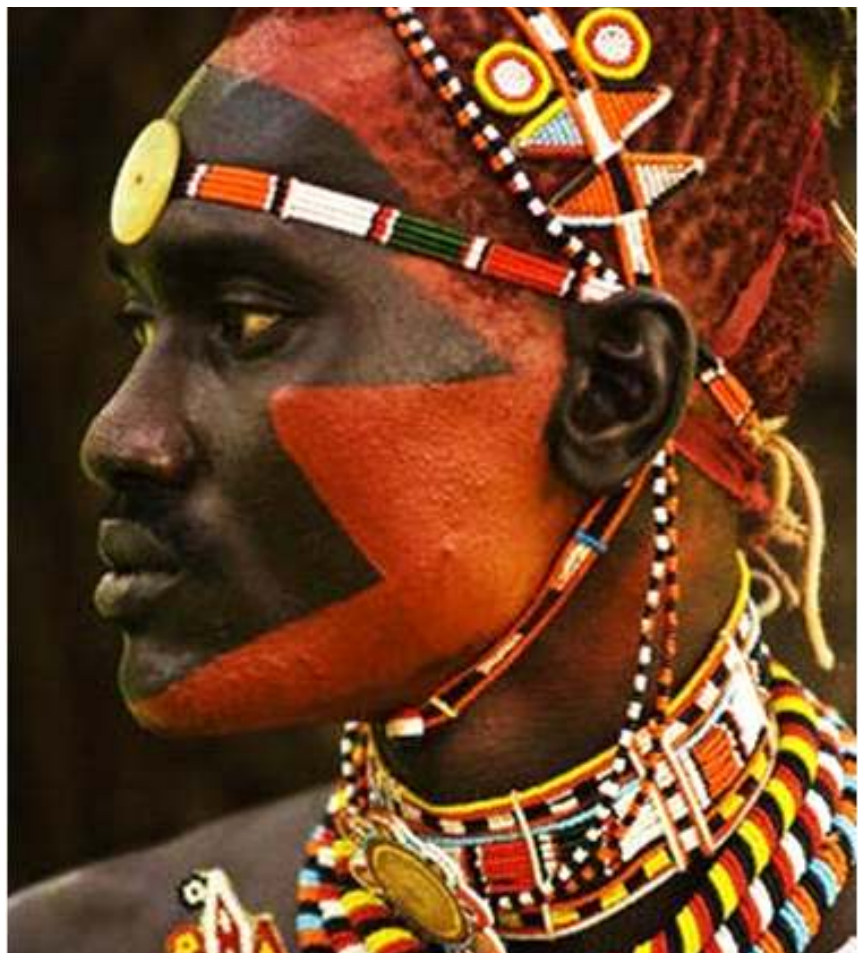
P.R. Sarkar famously declared, "In the interests of living beings as a whole, capitalism must come to an end." But he did not stop at condemning capitalism; he went on to propound a new socio-economic theory, offering a new economic vision capable of bringing sustainable development, equity, and prosperity for all.





\* Arun Prakash

PROUT's founder Shrii PR Sarkar whose spiritual name was Shrii Shrii Anandamurti whilst discoursing on 'The Universal Family' said, "The sum total of all creations is the Cosmic Order (Brahmānda). This includes the sun as well as the small ant which crawls on the earth. Whether it is a dead star or a living star, whether it is a nebula or a milky way or a galaxy all belong to one universal family. The Milky Way is vast from one end to the other; an ant is a very small creature, but the role of both of them in maintaining the balance of the universe is equal. If one ant meets a premature death, it will disturb the balance of the entire cosmos". In this backdrop we attempt to have a look at two ancient tribal communities the Zulus of Africa and the Maoris of



**An Indian, an Englishman ... a Zulu and a Maori, are all linked by the bonds of fraternity.**

*- Shrii PR Sarkar*



## ZULUS AND MAORIS: ORIGINS AND CULTURE

Australasia whose population is rapidly decreasing and they are in danger of extinction. If that happens, the balance of the universe will surely be disturbed. So this aspect has to be carefully guarded against. Those apart, modern urban societies can learn from their culture and traditions.

### **Zulus**

Africa is the most interesting and diverse continent on the earth, the second largest one and is home to incredibly diverse tribes estimated to be 3000 and people of many social and ethnic groups, each usually having its own culture and language with over 2100 languages spoken. It

is known for its beautiful colorful clothing and its history of incredible works of art. Besides Islam, Christianity and Hinduism, many of the people practice traditional African religions. The Zulu people are the largest ethnic group in South Africa. Of approximately ten million Zulus most live in the province of KwaZulu-Natal while a much smaller population live in Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The Zulu tribe played an important part in the history of Africa. Over thousands of years the Zulu's ancestors, the Nguni people, migrated down the east coast of Africa as part of the Bantu

migrations. They eventually reached South Africa around the ninth century AD, where a small Zulu clan formed.

In the early 1800's the famous Zulu warrior and king Shaka kaSenzangakhona united the Zulu tribes into a powerful kingdom the mightiest Africa has ever known. Shaka is known for his military genius matched by his brutality. However, during the late 1800s, British troops invaded Zulu territory and divided the Zulu land into thirteen chiefdoms. The Zulu never regained their independence. Throughout the mid-1900s they were dominated by different white



governments, first the British and later on, the Afrikaner. The Zulu have endeavored to regain a measure of political autonomy, both before South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 and in the subsequent period to the present. They have been unsuccessful, however, with both governments.

### Zulu Society and Culture

The Zulu people's language is isiZulu, which is part of the Nguni subgroup of the Bantu language. It is South Africa's most widely spoken language. Many Zulus also speak several of South Africa's eleven other official languages including English, Afrikaans, Portuguese, Shangaan, and Sesotho. Zulus are fond of singing as well as dancing. These activities promote unity at all the transitional ceremonies such as births, weddings, and funerals. All the dances are accompanied by drums. The men dress as warriors, wave their clubs, and thrust their cowhide shields forward. Zulu folklore is transmitted through storytelling, praise-poems, and proverbs. These explain Zulu history and teach moral lessons. Praise-poems (poems recited about the kings and the high achievers in life) are becoming part of popular culture. Ritual ceremonies also serve as part of the entertainment and recreation for the whole community. Zulu custom does not mandate formal invitations to

gatherings where food will be served, such as weddings and birthday parties. The Zulu believe that food should be shared. Therefore, uninvited arrival at a celebration is an honor to the host. These celebrations include singing and dancing.

Soccer is very popular for both young boys and men. Children learn the game by watching their older brothers play. Whenever boys are together and not engaged in some household or school activity, they play soccer. Young boys, especially those who live next to big rivers, also compete in swimming. Girls, if they are not at school, are expected to assist their mothers in the house. However, they can play games once they have finished their chores. The Zulu, especially those from rural areas, are known for their weaving, craft making, pottery, and beadwork. Women and children weave daily-use mats, beer sieves, and baskets for domestic purposes. They also make calabashes (decorated gourds used as utensils). Men and boys carve various household objects and ornaments from wood and bone. These include headrests, trays, scrapers, household utensils, and chairs. Bead making is mainly women's work because beads are believed to be a way of sending messages without being direct. Although most Zulu people are Christian many still practice

their traditional ancestor worship in conjunction with their Christian religion. While many Zulu still live in traditionally structured rural communities, others have migrated to urban areas. However, links between urban and rural residents remain strong. A mixture of traditional and Western ways of life is clearly evident in the lives of almost all Zulu people.

In contrast to their known warriorism, the Zulu are very warm and amicable people at a personal level. *Ubuntu* (literally, 'humanness', 'good moral nature', 'good disposition') shapes the everyday life of the Zulu people. This comes from a notion that a human being is the highest of all species. There are hundreds of proverbs written about *ubuntu*. These proverbs relate to the treatment of people, good and bad behavior, pride, ingratitude, bad manners, moral degeneracy, conceit, cruelty, obstinacy, pretense, helping others, and so forth. *Sawubona* is usually enough of a greeting for strangers, but a formal greeting is more appropriate for those who are familiar. The formal greeting includes a three-times handshake, while asking about the well-being of the person and his or her relations (*Ninjani?*). Taking leave involves the standard *Sala/Nisale kahle* (Remain well), and the other person responds by

Zulu chief



Zulu warriors with traditional rawhide shields



saying, *Uhambe/Nihambe kahle* (Go well). It is customary for juniors and the young to initiate the greetings when they meet their seniors and their elders.

The Zulu term *umndeni* for family includes all the people staying in a homestead who are related to each other, either by blood, marriage, or adoption. Most rural households comprise extended families, brothers with their wives, unmarried sisters, children, parents, and grandparents all staying together in the same homestead. As a sign of respect, parents and elders are not called by their first names; instead, kinship names (surnames) are used. The Zulu family is patriarchal; a man is both the head of the family and the figure of authority. It is not unusual for young men to have as many girlfriends as they wish. If they can afford it, they can take more than one wife when they decide to get married. Traditionally, women were not supposed to go out and work, since they were a man's responsibility. Nowadays the status of Zulu women is slowly improving with more women getting educated. Zulu women dress up according to their marital status. A single unengaged woman will wear a short skirt usually made of grass and will also wear beautiful beadwork. An engaged woman will let it be known that she is engaged by covering her bosom with a decorative cloth.

## Economy and Living

### Conditions

The rural Zulu economy is based on cattle and agriculture. Consequently, the main staple diet consists of cow and agricultural products. This includes barbecued and boiled meat; *amasi* (curdled milk), mixed with dry, ground corn or dry, cooked mealie-meal (corn flour); *amadumbe* (yams); vegetables; and fruits. The Zulu traditional beer is not only a staple food but a considerable source of nutrition. It is also socially and ritually important and is drunk on all significant occasions. Drinking and



A Zulu performing a traditional war dance



Zulu mother and child today

eating from the same plate was and still is a sign of friendship. It is customary for children to eat from the same dish, usually a big basin. This derives from a 'share what you have' belief which is part of *ubuntu* (humane) philosophy.

Living conditions for the Zulu are similar to those of other black people and is most unsatisfactory. Zulu in most of the rural areas do not have adequate basic services such as electricity, clean water, formal housing, transport, hospitals, or clinics. Urban Zulu live in the so-called black townships and the areas fringing industrial cities. Their living conditions are somewhat

### A nineteenth century Zulu homestead



better than those in rural areas. They constitute the Zulu middle class; their lifestyle is usually no different from that of other Western urbanites. Since the education available in rural black schools is inferior, the

people in these areas are not equipped to migrate and seek a better life in the urban areas. If they migrate, most end up in the poor areas fringing cities. In the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal, a typical Zulu homestead will be circular and fenced, with a thatched-roof house.

Inability to read and write is high among most Zulus. However, education is slowly improving. Earlier children went to school only if their parents could afford to send them. Schooling started at seven years of age and continued until about twenty-four years of age. Since education was not compulsory, pupils could take their time to finish matriculation (high school), which was and still is regarded as a high achievement by the whole community. After matriculation, those parents who can afford it usually send their children to college. Education and raising a child is like a cycle among the Zulu. Parents spend all they have to raise and educate their children. In turn, the children take care of their parents and their own children when they start working. A person who breaks this cycle is viewed as a community outcast, one who has forgotten about his or her roots.

### Maoris

Maori means 'normal', 'natural'





or even 'ordinary' in the Maori language. This is how they would distinguish themselves from deities and spirits from their legends. The first settlement of the Maori in New Zealand according to historical evidence found at archaeological sites occurred sometime around 1280, though it is also believed that the first of these Polynesian explorers arrived in 800 AD. According to oral history, the ancestors of the Maori came from Hawaiki generally believed to be Eastern Polynesia.

They travelled to New Zealand on their 'waka' (war canoes) capable of holding up to one hundred passengers and plentiful supplies. The evolution of these people through time in New Zealand has shaped and defined the Maori

people. These Polynesians (whose forbears inhabited the Bismarck Archipelago to the east of New Guinea), first arrived in New Zealand about 1,000 years ago having migrated from island to



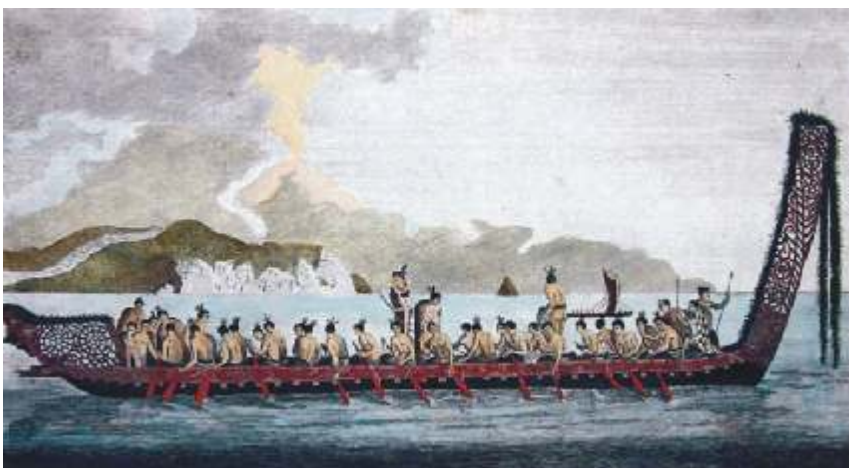
*The Maori settlement of New Zealand represents an end-point of a long chain of island hopping voyages in the South Pacific.*

island over several thousand years and miles eastwards from China.

These early Polynesian settlers spoke a language of the Malayo-Polynesian language group, which was the most widely spread in the world before the expansion of the English-speaking people to America. Over the centuries the descendants of these settlers evolved the Maori culture of New Zealand. The Maoris called New Zealand 'Aotearoa', the land of the 'Long White Cloud' today's North Island. Of the history of *Aotearoa* we still know little in detail, although archaeology has revealed the material culture and patterns of settlement of the early inhabitants. The first European to visit *Aotearoa* was the Dutch Captain, Abel Tasman, who lost several of his men in a clash with the Maoris when he attempted to land on the coast of Westland in 1642. Captain James Cook, who stayed in the country for prolonged periods from 1769 onwards, left in his journals fascinating descriptions of Maori life in coastal regions of the main islands. Like other explorers, he was impressed by the extent to which the Maoris lived in a perpetual state of war. After them, many sealers, whalers, explorers and missionaries travelled to New Zealand in the 1780s. These repetitive encounters deeply influenced the Maori population. They were called New Zealanders and natives by the first European settlers but they also ended up using the term Maori. The Maori also refer to themselves as the people of the land, 'tangata whenua'.

### Warrior Race

Unlike other countries where the British migrated to, the indigenous people could be almost ignored or brushed aside, because they lacked the military and social organisation to resist settlement. That was not the case with the Maoris whose men sought honour on the battlefield and were organised in tribes or related tribal groups, some of them many thousand strong. They built formidable hilltop forts



*A Haka war canoe with a view of Gable End Foreland, New Zealand circa 1784*

Maori war dance painting by Joseph Jenner Merritt circa 1845



(the *pa*), resembling Iron-Age structures like Maiden Castle. They had evolved agricultural practices suited to their new and temperate climate, and while they had no metals, their stone tools were capable of both for delicate tattooing or sewing and of cutting down huge trees to construct war canoes. The Maoris led a sophisticated social and material life that impressed the Europeans: unlike the aborigines, they had gods, generals, warriors, priests, chiefs, artists, slaves, even *puhi tapu* - sacred virgins, the daughters of great chiefs who were protected until a useful political marriage could be arranged. They



had forts, villages, beach cottages, plantations and good clothes. Physically the Maori are a tall, well-built, tough race. Women are strong and easily bore children, and sometimes even accompanied men to war.

The historical period of Maori History between 1100 and 1300 is referred to as '*Nga Kakano*' by the Te Papa Museum. During this period, most settlements were located along the coast and principally within what is today known as the Otago region. Settlements could vary a lot in size ranging from 40 people to 300 to 400 people, which were more common at the time. There were very few weapons at the time as most tribes lived peacefully on this abundant land. Most villages were residential. '*Te Tipunga*' is the classic period in Maori history which runs from 1300 to 1500. Intense earthquakes in the South Island, a colder climate, the extinction of the moa and other food species, as well as the devastation of many settlements along the coast due to natural catastrophes, drastically influenced the culture of the Maori. During these couple of centuries, the Maori developed many aspects of their culture which evolved during the classic period including Maori weapons made from the '*pounamu*' (green stone), ornaments, the Maori warrior culture, the *pa* (fortified villages), and gigantic war canoes.

### Social Life and Culture

Well versed in language and

knowledge of natural surroundings, the Maori were avid observers of the sky and the stars. They saw the constellations as 'guides to man', giving signs regarding fertility, crops, fishing, navigation, migration, and weather changes. The Maori calendar, which began in June, was a twelve month lunar cycle responsible for guiding Maori economic activities such as planting, harvesting, and gathering of the essential food items. Marriage was generally monogamous and regarded, much the same as cultures around the world, as a lifelong partnership. Despite the belief that marriage was for life, divorce and separation were available. Maori marriages began with a definite and explicit marriage ceremony. Though often economic and political



A typical Maori home

alliances, marriages were also united by love and affection in most cases and fidelity, particularly on the part of wives, was coveted. Marriages were often arranged as a means of maintaining tribal lands and heirlooms: this was established primarily through the naming of female children by important relatives. Child-rearing was not just the purview of mothers, however, and fathers usually took an active interest in the child, even before being born. Fathers were responsible for satiating the food cravings of their pregnant wives, for carrying around the newborn, washing the child, watching the child while working, and for educating the male children. In addition to natural born children, Maori custom provided for frequent





Maori whanau from Rotorua in the 1880s. Many aspects of Western life and culture, including European clothing and architecture, became incorporated into Maori society during the 19th century.

adoptions which took place only between relatives, but never inter-tribally or with strangers.

### Land the Communal Property

New Zealand, before its European discovery, was a land divided into territories over which each tribe defended their rights through force. Thus in a general sense, Maori land acquisition is a process of title by conquest “*te rau o te patu*” and one's title is as good as one's ability to keep one's land exclusively for one's own use. Land was considered less a commodity than the basis of identity, the foundation of the tribe and only owned in the sense that it belonged to the community, equally shared among the living, the dead and those yet to be born. This view of land as a 'source of identity' derives from custom: Maori principles of land inheritances hold that through genealogy or *whakapapa*, Maori groups establish and maintain control over the land on which they live. Land possession and maintenance are of the utmost importance to Maori principally because it is through the land that the living are connected to their *tipuna* and also to their future descendants for whom they care for and hold the land in trust. An important aspect of acquiring legal title was proof of occupation. For many reasons intrinsic to Maori culture and

spirituality, land transfers outside of conquests were very uncommon. For one thing, the importance of *tipuna* in tribal life meant that natives of a particular land were often reluctant to leave, particularly in light of the sentimental and spiritual value of tribal burial grounds and important landmarks. Another reason for static land ownership was that families could not sell or exchange their own lands because they were subject to the overseeing rights of the *iwi* in whose interest it was not to allow strangers or other tribes to live in their villages. *Aumatua* (elders) act on behalf of the collective group when a transgression of *tikanga* (cultural values) affects others in the community. Because Maori society is communal, the collective group must take responsibility for the actions of individual members, good or bad and collective rights often supersede individual ones. All this shows the concepts, values, ideology, philosophy and doctrines governing relationships in the Maori world. Something modern societies could well follow.

### Contemporary History

There has also been a large revival of their culture and traditions especially through arts such as *kapa haka* and carving. Politics has become important and a means to help with this revival. The role of

the Maori in politics has been quite successful since the late 19th century and a turning key point in Maori history. They had to go through an assimilation process which included primarily the adoption of European lifestyle and practices, while preserving traditional Maori culture alive. Despite the fact that during World War II the Government of New Zealand decided to exempt the Maori from fighting overseas, around 17,000 Maori volunteered.

With increasing number of white settlers the Maori language



A traditional Maori welcome to a tourist

lost its significance in the country. To revive Maori culture a protest movement began in 1960s and continued during the 70s. The Government of New Zealand responded by redressing unjust confiscation of land and violation of property rights. The Maori population moved to the cities during the second half of the 20th century and that's why many Maoris lost touch with their roots and as a result urban Maori families faced many problems including poverty, alcoholism and domestic violence. Since these protests, Maori language and culture are being taught in schools. Some pre-schools and secondary schools only teach in Maori. Maori has become one of the three official languages of New Zealand and in 2004 the government started the 'Maori Television' channel. Maori have seven designated seats in the Parliament. They play an important role in New Zealand politics today too.



Many of the asanas practiced in today's yoga studios are no more than about eighty years old. In fact, some of them are no more than five to twenty years old.



# WHO INVENTED YOGA

\* Ramesh Bjonnes

History has always been important to me: history keeps me connected and history gives me perspective. But history can also be complex and confusing. How old are our asanas or meditation practices? Answer: it depends, because there are so many expressions and schools of yoga. What was the social condition of India like during Buddha's time? Answer: turbulent, because Buddha and many others were fed up with the prevailing Vedic/Hindu practices at the time: horse sacrifices, widow burning, and the caste system. Which philosophical system influenced Patanjali's Yoga Sutras as well as Ayurveda the most? Answer: Samkhya, the world's oldest

philosophical system, developed by Kapila, perhaps as early as 1500 years before the birth of Christ.

But how old is our asana practice? A few years old? A hundred years old? A thousand years old? Two thousand? Who created them? Many of the asanas practiced in today's yoga studios are no more than about eighty years old. In fact, some of them are no more than five to twenty years old. That's been proven by such books as Mark Singleton's *Yoga Body*. Singleton shows convincingly that modern Hatha Yoga is a mixture of Indian yoga and Western gymnastics first developed in a castle in Mysore, India, by the great and late Krishnamacharya.

But yoga is more than just a set of East-West fitness poses. Yoga also includes simple and sophisticated meditation and pranayama techniques, holistic medicine (Ayurveda), philosophy, and cosmology. And its total history is a lot longer than 80 years, at least a few thousand years longer. Unlike what some contemporary yoga writers claim, there is no need to resort to unsubstantiated mythology or hearsay to prove that yoga is a lot older than 100 years, a lot older than the Ferris Wheel or the Ford Motor Company.

That is, if we agree that Hatha Yoga can be divided in at least three periods: the modern, the medieval and the ancient and that yoga



includes more than just a set of physical exercises. And also: that yoga is a lot more than Hatha Yoga, that yoga also includes meditation practice, philosophy, cosmology, even medicine. If we agree that yoga includes both preliminary and advanced practices for the body, mind and spirit, then there is plenty of archeological, linguistic, textual, genetic or other evidence to suggest that Hatha Yoga is at least 1500 years old, that Tantra is at least 6000 years old, that Yoga philosophy is at least 3500 years old, and that goraksasana (a complex Hatha Yoga bhandha) was practiced more than 4000 years ago.

As a teacher of yoga history to yoga teacher-students, I have researched these issues for a number of years: talked to yogis and gurus and pandits in India, leafed through dozens of books, studied archeology, genetics and searched the internet into the wee hours of the night. Depending on your perspective of what yoga is, there are various ways to look at yoga history. Here are eleven, equally valid, but different, perspectives to keep in mind:

1) If yoga is thought to be synonymous with modern Hatha Yoga as taught from Krishnamacharya to Sean Corn, you may convincingly argue that its history is no more than 80 to 100 years old. Some poses are actually only five to 10 years old. Actually, a few new ones were invented just yesterday. (Source: Yoga Body by Mark Singleton.)

2) If yoga includes traditional practices of Hatha Yoga as preserved in texts such as the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, the Shiva Samhita and the Gheranda Samhita, yoga history is between 400 to 1500 years old. (Sources: various traditional texts, Original Yoga by Richard Rosen.)

3) If yoga history includes Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and its associated practices, its history is about 2200 years old. (The various dates for the Yoga Sutras ranges from between 200 BCE to 200 AD.)



Photo: Mixtribe Photo

4) If yoga includes the sublimely subtle teachings of Ashtavakra, who wrote the Ashtavakra Samhita (also called Ashtavakra Gita) describing a philosophy that is nondual and Vedantic in nature while his practical teachings were Tantric, then yoga history is about 2400 years old. (Source: Traditional textual sources and the writings of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti.)

(Ashtavakra, according to Anandamurti, taught that asanas should be practiced slowly and held in certain positions for a certain period of time to effect glandular secretions and thus your health and mood.

Mayurasana (peacock) can thus be practiced to overcome both fear (including fear of public speaking) and certain digestive problems.

Ashtavakra, whose Tantric system of yoga is called Rajadhiraja Yoga, is similar to the Raja Yoga of Patanjali; I as outlined in the Yoga Sutras, emphasized practicing pranayama with mantra and visualization.)

5) If yoga includes the inspirational teachings and

deep philosophy and practices described in the Upanishads, Vedanta and the Bhagavad Gita, the history of yoga is at least 2700 years old. (Sources: Dating of traditional texts from Western scholarly sources. Various Indian sources, however say that the oral origin of the Bhagavad Gita is 3500 years old. Archeological sources now claim Krishna's city Dwarka has been discovered and is about 3500 years old, hence, according to Shrii Shrii Anandamurti and some Indian scholars, as well as some Westerners, including Georg Feuerstein, it is likely Krishna lived around 1500 BCE.)

6) If yoga includes the long and complex co-mingling of the Vedic and Tantric (Shaiva) civilizations and its associated literature (many texts yet to be translated into English) and oral teachings, then textual, archeological, linguistic and genetic evidence suggests this history to be nearly 7000 years old.

This claim is the most controversial because it deals with the complex history of whether the Vedic people (Aryans) migrated into India from the outside, at what time, and their socio-political-religious hegemony and introduction of the caste system, something the Dravidian Shaiva/Tantric culture was opposed to.

There is now genetic evidence the Aryans migrated to India about 5000 BCE. But even this is contested, especially by the Fundamentalist Hindutva



movement in India, who claim the Aryans were Indian. The most compelling genetic evidence, however, points to a gradual Aryan/Vedic migration into India starting as early as 5000 BCE. This version of history is much like all race related histories all over the world it is tinged with conflict, disagreements, and opposing world views. My own view is that India experienced a gradual invasion, not around 1900 BCE as has been taught in universities for many years, but much earlier, as the genetic and traditional Tantric evidence shows (the Tantric teachers point to the Ramayana as being the allegorical story of the historical conflict between the racial conflict between the Aryan invaders and the darker skinned natives. In that regard, ancient Indian history is similar to the invasions of the New World, Africa, and modern Asia). Even Georg Feuerstein, who contested the 1900 BCE invasion theory, was open to this possibility. Most writers hailing from a Tantric background support this view. (Sources: Satyananda Saraswati, Anandamurti, Lalan Prasad Singh, N. N. Bhattacharya, Alain Danielou, and Stanford University geneticist Dr. Spencer Wells)

During the time of the Indus Valley civilization (2000-4500 BCE), the Vedic scriptures, the Atharvaveda, Yajurveda and Samaveda, were developed in India. The Rigveda had been composed earlier and mostly outside India. The Atharvaveda was greatly influenced by Tantra. Archeological evidence of Hatha Yoga and meditation postures (see the works of archeologists John Marshall and Jonathan Mark Kenoyer and Indologists Heinrich Zimmer and Georg Feuerstein, among others).

While the script in the advanced Indus Valley civilization (perhaps the oldest in the world) is Dravidian according to Indologist Asko Parpola, archeological evidence points to a mixed culture of Shaiva Tantra (Dravidian) and Vedic

(Aryan) influences, much like India today. (Due to religious, caste and political overtones, this period of India is hotly debated, but science is slowly building consensus).

7) Many complain that there is little evidence of yoga practice in ancient literature. It depends on what we mean by ancient. There is scriptural evidence going back at least 2500 years or more. The main reason for lack of scriptural evidence is that most of the ancient history and practice of yoga was preserved as oral teachings, much like in the shamanic tradition. But, according to Alain Danielou, some of the yet to be translated Puranas contain references to yoga and Tantra being at least 6000 years old. Other reasons are that many of the original texts have never been studied by scholars outside the traditions or translated. But, since the yogis preserved their knowledge in easy-to-remember sutras and slokas, it was passed down quite accurately for thousands of years.

There is often a huge discrepancy between the knowledge of yoga written in texts and the knowledge taught orally by yogis within the tradition. There is also disagreement about how old the various asanas are, but researchers in the Indian government's Traditional Digital Knowledge Library have collected evidence of hundreds of asanas from ancient texts, some as old as 2500 years.

8) There are broadly two perspectives on ancient yogic history.

a) Some hold that ancient yoga originated with the early Vedic civilization.

b) Some hold that ancient yoga originated with the early Tantric civilization.

Both perspectives are partially true, because Indian civilization, and thus the yoga tradition, is a blend of these two cultural streams. But if we talk about yoga as practice, as spiritual technology, its source is ancient, prehistoric Tantra, not the Vedas. Most Western scholars based

on scriptural evidence will also say that yoga as we know it today emerged from Tantra, but in the middle ages within the Tantric Hatha Yoga tradition. The reason for this is that their timeline is based on written scriptural evidence only. So, for a long range perspective yoga scholar Georg Feuerstein's words are instructive: "Except for the most orthodox pundits, who view Tantra as an abomination, educated traditional Hindus... distinguish between Vedic and Tantric/Vaidika and tantrikacurrents of Hindu spirituality." Most of what we associate as philosophy, religious ritual and mythology hails from the Vedic tradition, and, broadly, what we associate with yoga as practice originated from the Tantric tradition (also called Shaivism). A more sophisticated yoga philosophy evolved out of this practical Tantra tradition as expressed in the Upanishads, Vedanta, Samkhya and the Yoga Sutras. Over thousands of years, these traditions merged and created what we often term Hindu Tantra. (Sources: Anandamurti, Feuerstein, Satyananda, and many



*A Mind & Body Weekend -  
7th Annual Western  
Canadian Hatha Yoga Championships*



others.) That is to say, while different yogis invented different philosophies and schools of yoga, the practices they had in common can be characterized as Tantric, not Vedic. Not surprisingly, the Hatha Yoga Pradipika (1400 AD) was not written by Vedic priests, it was written by Tantric yogis from the Natha school of Tantra.

9) If your perspective is that yoga is synonymous with contemporary Hatha Yoga or posture yoga, then you may argue that yoga history is not much older than Krishnamacharya and the American car. (Sources: Mark Singleton.)

10) But if your perspective is that yoga includes such marvelous texts as the Bhagavad Gita and the subtle insights of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, as well as the ancient Tantric teachings of meditation and kundalini awakening, then yoga history is at least a few thousand years older than Krishnamacharya.

Krishnamacharya himself did not claim he invented yoga; he simply modified what he had learned from his teachers. And in that spirit of continuous reinvention, the history of yoga will move on.

11) If we search back into ancient human history and try to trace yoga's origin, it seems compelling that yoga emerged from Shamanism rather than from the priestly Vedic tradition, as most Western yoga scholars believe. While Shamans certainly dabbled in dubious belief systems and fantastic claims of magic, they also often underwent an inner journey much like the Tantric yogis, who, instead of shamanic dancing and drumming and drug use, developed inner bodily energies of bandhas and asanas and inner energies of kundalini, prana, and mantras to experience subtle ecstasies of peace, otherworldly wonder, healing and longevity.

Thus we can generally say that the Shaman and the Tantric yogi embarked upon an interior ritual

journey, while the Vedic priest developed a worldview of belief and faith rooted in external ritual. Moreover, the Shamans and the Tantrics were renegades and often lived outside of social norms, or protested social religious norms by opposing social dogmas such as the Vedic caste system, and the subjugated roles of women and sexuality. (Sources: Mircea Eliade, Michael Harner, Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, and others.) As we modern yogis move into and invent the future from the past, it is important to embrace the history of our practice, reflect on it and learn from it.

While we may want to reject those traditions we find sexist or irrational and reinvent ever new practices, it behooves us to be respectful and sensitive to traditional yoga's vast psychological riches potent philosophical poetry, physiological health values, as well as gain fresh nourishment from its spiritual depths and universality. Yoga has, after all, since ancient times, always been about experiencing the oneness, wonder and vibrancy of mind, body and spirit.

Note to the reader: Most dates above are approximate. My research sources are from oral history, ancient Tantric and yogic texts such as the Puranas, Yoga Upanishads, Shiva Samhita, Agamas and Nigamas (ancient Tantric texts, which Anandamurti, Satyananda, Lalan Prasad Singh, and others claim to have been orally



**Stature of Agastya Muni - one of the seven Vedic sages and author of Agastya Samhita**

transmitted as sutras and slokas since 5000 BCE), Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita, Shiva Samhita, Ashtavakra Samhita, and from writers, teachers and scientists such as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, Swami Satyananda Saraswati, Lalan Prasad Singh, N. N. Bhattacharya, Alain Danielou, Richard Rosen, Georg Feuerstein, Mark Singleton, Spencer Wells (geneticist), genetic researchers from the University of Utah, Sir John Marshall (archeologist), and many more.

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The greatest impediment to the growth of a society is the rigid doctrines or dogmas of religions. These rigid dogmas prevent the mental, emotional and intuitional expansion of the people.

# RELIGION

## The Great Barrier to Growth

\* R. D. Singh

Evolution today is revealed in the struggle of people everywhere to have a dignified life. It is out of this quest for personal dignity that the quest for justice is borne. One begins by fighting for justice for oneself and one's family and one attains true social dignity by fighting for justice for suffering humanity. The great social leader Martin Luther King Jr. said that an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

This consciousness of injustice is based on the realization of social equality (sama-samaja). Equality is a cardinal value that arises in our minds when we transcend our limited ego and merge in pure Consciousness that is hidden in our "I"-feeling. The fight for justice is the fight for equality. Equality does not mean identity or absolute similarity as in Marxism. Equality means that each person is granted the fullest expression of their rights in the spiritual, cultural, social, economic and political realms. The growth and fulfillment of these rights of the people is the true growth of a society.

The greatest impediment to this growth of a society is the rigid



doctrines or dogmas of religions. These rigid dogmas prevent the mental, emotional and intuitional expansion of the people. As a result these religious people suffer from an inferiority complex as well as a fear

complex. The fear complex comes from the hidden realization that their beliefs are based on irrationality and hence the spread of free thought and rational analysis can destroy their beloved faith. This fear generates



insecurity that leads to violence and also to isolationism. A majority religion will victimize a minority religion and in response even the rational people of that minority religion will become isolated from the rest of the population and will come under the influence of religious extremists.

A recent book by Nigel Barber documents the fact that when there is economic inequality in a country there is an increase in extremist religious activity. In India we saw with the Mandal program, the reservation of vast numbers of seats in the government sector for people from lower castes. This generated rage and violence from the upper castes (only 15% of the population) that had until then monopolized most of the posts.

The solution of the government was to “liberalize” the Indian economy which meant to dismantle the government-run economic enterprises and sell the economy to the highest bidder. The result as the current Prime Minister has admitted was “crony capitalism”. This crony capitalism as countless studies have shown has resulted in increasing poverty for the vast majority of the population and dramatically increasing wealth for a tiny minority. Recent poverty estimates by the government show that 65% of the Indian population is below the poverty line after nearly 20 years of so-called “reforms”. This sudden plunge into poverty created great insecurity.

The distractions caused by religious and caste violence in India today has helped to distract people's attention from the systematic crimes committed by corporations and mafias with the aid of state and central governments. This is the real reason for the complete lack of genuine growth which is based on the increasing living standard of the common people. This living standard involves freedom from malnutrition, unhygienic and dangerous living conditions, dispossession of land by the

corporate-government nexus, child labour, trafficking of women and so on. In the last few months we have seen several low intensity religious conflicts in the state of UP. UP is a microcosm of India in that it is a huge state in which many cultures are suppressed, in which bureaucrats arbitrarily plan the economic and infrastructural development based on the whims of mafias and corporations. UP since “liberalization” has been the centre of religious conflict and it is no surprise to find that today it has some of the poorest regions in the entire nation where chronic malnutrition and endemic poverty prevail.

Lack of unity amongst members of a society leads to insecurity and violence. The question then arises: how can we bring unity in the society? A common ideal alone brings unity amongst the people. Before the rise of liberalism, the fraudulent ideal of socialism or communism managed to bring some unity and some idealism in Indian society. With the demise of communism world-wide a tremendous vacuum was created in the collective mind. The present sorry state of India is a direct result of a failure to fill the vacuum created by the demise of communism with a positive ideal. As a result communalism has spread like a cancer and in India communalism is connected with the endless rise in caste rapes and killings.

So the question arises that positive ideal can unite the people of every state, India and the entire South Asia in general? A study of Indian history shows that it is sentiment alone that creates unity. However Indian history has thus far only been dominated by negative sentiments.



In ancient times, the Aryans invaded India and enslaved the indigenous non-Aryan people into a slave group called shudras. This caused the creation of anti-Aryan sentiment amongst the Adi Bharatiyas. Lord Shiva led the fight against this Aryan imperialism and then laid the foundations for a social synthesis. Gradually the primitive Aryans accepted the Tantra of the non-Aryans and created the Upanishadic philosophy. Thus, due to cultural synthesis both the non-Aryan and Aryan sentiments died down.

Later, the worsening exploitation by the Aryans caused the first social revolution with Mahaviira Jain and Buddha. Mahaviira clearly denounced the ritual animal slaughter of Vedic rituals as barbaric. Buddha denounced the irrationality of discrimination against the non-Aryan social groups (varnas). This caused the rise of strong anti-Buddhist sentiment amongst the followers of the Vedic religion. This anti-Buddhist sentiment led to the creation of new scriptures (Puranas) based on casteism. To attract the people certain portions of Buddhist and Hindu Tantras were incorporated in these scriptures. Gradually Buddhism and Jainism became corrupt and began to also

accept casteism in practical life. Hence a blending of Buddhists and non-Buddhists took place with the rise of the Vedanta of Shankara which was a mirror-image of Buddhist philosophy. Thus once again the unifying sentiment in Indian society died.

The new Puranic religion was full of dogma and hatred against lower castes. This caused increasing social disunity and cynicism in the society. Hence when the Muslims invaded many lower castes and former Buddhists converted to Islam. However the atrocities and unprecedented violent religious dogmas of the Muslim invaders caused a big reaction in Northern India. Out of reaction an anti-Muslim sentiment was born. These Puranic religious people accepted the name "Hindu" and began to do everything that was contrary to Islam. This artificial identity died out as sufis and bhaktas began to mingle and even extremist Muslim rulers like Aurangzeb learned Sanskrit. This led once again to the death of a unifying sentiment in India.

This led to India falling victim to various European powers. The rise of the British led to unprecedented economic exploitation in India. The massive suffering caused by this exploitation was channeled by the British into

religious violence. The British created history books designed to foster hatred between Hindus and Muslims. The British also funded Muslim and Hindu political parties and on occasion paid the leaders salaries. With the 1857 Rebellion based on the sentiment for the rule of the Mughal Emperor in Delhi, the British embarked on a policy of depriving Muslims from administrative posts. The British created the Hindi language by taking Urdu and adding words from Sanskrit and Haryanvi language (spoken around Delhi). However, the western-educated Hindus soon learned western nationalism and began a non-violent Independence movement. This led the British to start once again actively supporting the Muslims. Extremists like Jinnah were in direct correspondence with British politicians like Churchill. The British, realizing the need for a military base in the Indian subcontinent, encouraged the formation of a Muslim state that would serve as a British and later American colony. When India was split, as recent evidence has shown, British officers (largely pro-Muslim) helped foment violence in both India and Pakistan.

Countless people lost their lives in the violence of Partition. In reality Partition has never ended. The reality is that Partition

continues with the revenge against minorities in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. While Pakistan has forcefully converted most of its minorities, Bangladesh like India sees routine violence against religious minorities. Bangladesh like India faces chronic malnutrition, poverty and corruption and like India is endlessly distracted by religious extremism. What has saved India so far is that the Indian government has been structured as a non-religious country.

Terrorism is one of the main tools of inciting religious hatred. Every terrorist attack in Pakistan is blamed on the Indian agencies RAW or IB and is used to foment hatred towards Indians and Hindus. Similarly, terrorist attacks in India are blamed on the Pakistani agency ISI and is used to foment hatred against Muslims and Pakistanis. In actual fact the ISI has long since been a tool of Western and most recently Chinese intelligence agencies.

In actual fact, terrorism arises due to a lack of economic growth. K P S Gill found out that the majority of Sikh terrorists were coming from very poor villages. He asked the Central government to do something for those villages but was told that the centralized planning of the current government does not allow this to happen. Here we can see how due to a lack of decentralized economic planning and a lack of local economic svaraj or economic democracy, we saw the rise in religious terrorism.

The actual growth of India comes from the economic, cultural and social growth of India's local communities. Under the current economic system, countless communities in rural India are dying at the hands of either chronic neglect or rampant exploitation. Unless there is economic democracy that puts the planning for economic development in the hands of the local people there is no chance for real growth of India's communities.







Unless there is cultural svaraj there is no scope for any movement against economic exploitation.

Culture is the backbone of a society and if that backbone is crushed by Bollywood pseudo-culture then the people will never have the self-respect and social brotherhood to fight against the exploitation of their samaja. This is why we also need movements for cultural svaraja of every region and language in India. Unless this is done, there is no hope for any revolutionary change in the political, economic or social order.

To take the example of UP, where we see social stagnation because the numerous languages of UP (like Bhojpuri, Avadhi, Braja and Bagheli) are being systematically deprived of any government recognition and support. Braja bhasa is the ancient spiritual language of North India but today ancient manuscripts in this language rot in archives while the

Central government prints third-rate Hindi literature. This repression of the people's language has destroyed any sense of collective social psychology. Increasingly people live isolated lives without any sense of collective responsibility and collective sentiment. This isolation is increased by the rampant caste sentiment which causes even people of the same caste to avoid each other because they belong to different sub-castes. This isolation causes many anxieties and fears. Since the people have lost their traditional religion and culture they easily fall victim to religious extremism. Since fight for economic freedom requires courage and since most people are afraid of this kind of sacred war (dharma yuddha), people express their rage through caste and communal violence. This allows the political leaders of the state to go on helping the corporations and mafias to loot the state since the people are distracted by religious conflicts.

This is how religion has become the number one enemy of the genuine economic, cultural, social and spiritual growth of the society.

Religion divides people, communities and nations. It fosters hatred and creates dogmas. When people are guided and controlled by religious dogmas, their dynamism is lost and their society becomes like a corpse. Dogmas enslave the mind and prevent the rise of rationality in the form of collective discussion and consensus. Dogma also causes the mind to remain aloof from the spiritual expansion of meditation. As a result the lack of inner expansion results in many psychic diseases such as various forms of discrimination, intolerance and hatred. It also results in the creation of a greed-based society in which even academic development is destroyed by the rampant greed corrupting professors and universities. All this prevents the unity of the people to fight their

economic exploitation.

Many however advocate secularism or what is called *dharmā-nirpeksha* in Hindi. In reality secularism was imported from the West by British educated Indian politicians. There never was any attempt to discuss this and other political issues in the country that the British called “Congressan”.

We see in America and other countries how the constitution and political doctrines evolved out of extensive discussions amongst the common people. This is the spirit of a genuine political democracy. In India by contrast we find the opposite spirit. Recently we saw Kejriwal and a few others create a Lokpal Bill and call it the Jan Lokpal Bill. In reality it was a bill created by an elite group of upper caste people (Kejriwal rejected any inclusion of Dalits in the planning group). So secularism is another example of a doctrine from the West imposed on the Indian people.

We can note first that there is confusion between what is Dharma and religion. The correct term for religion is dharmamata, since in reality the path of righteousness (Dharma) is one and one only. The various religions are simply different opinions based on dogmas. Secularism evolved in the West in the wake of the terrible Thirty Years War. After these bloody religious wars, the Western nation state system was created and the Western doctrine of secularism in political life began to evolve. Currently with the destruction of national sovereignty by the global economy and by the global police state (in the name of fighting terrorism) we are in

what has been called a Post-secular era. The entire Western political, intellectual, cultural and economic (capitalistic) order is falling apart. This then poses new problems for newly Westernized nations like India.

In the spirit of Kabir and Basava, we need to clearly reject religions and in this sense, secularism or dharmamata-nirpekshita is essential for India's future. The very meaning of Dharma is righteousness and righteousness is shown by fighting against injustice and inequality. This has nothing to do with any religious doctrines. However to increase the Dharma in people's minds, we need a meditation revolution that is free from Hindu dogma so people can expand their minds beyond the influence of narrow religions. This leads the mind towards the world of ideation or merger of the mind with the Supreme within one's very “I” feeling. Similarly we need an Ishq or bhakti revolution free from Islamic and Hindu dogma. As spirituality creates the sentiment that every creature is a manifestation of Consciousness, it destroys the feelings that someone is a *mleecha* or *kaffir*. This *prema* or Neohumanist revolution will create a powerful force for social unity and dynamism which can be used to fight economic exploitation and lay the foundations for genuine growth in the form of local economic *svaraj*.

This is why we can conclude that religion stands as a barrier to the growth of any society and that spirituality lays the foundation for the genuine, all-round growth of every community. Religion creates

inequality in the form of casteism and creates hatred based on various dogmas. Spirituality destroys all sense of difference as the mind becomes lost in the oneness of spiritual ecstasy of *bhava* or *hal*. Thus far India has seen many universal spiritual saints but we have not seen any movement for the creation of a God-centred society by rejecting the self-centred society of capitalism and the dogma-centred society of religions.

In Bangladesh, Turkey and Egypt we see the reaction of people against Islamic fundamentalism. Similarly the recent crimes of Christian fundamentalism under the Bush regime created a backlash in support of ending the domination of religions in the political and military spheres. Similarly in India, the genocide in Gujarat in 2002 has created a similar backlash and the rise of movements against Hindu fundamentalism in India. What is needed in all these countries is for the mystics, the yogis, the sufis and New Age movements to come forward to fight against religious dogma and help the people understand what authentic spirituality is. This alone can create a foundation for a global revolution against capitalist empires. We are in the stage of transition between the American capitalist empire and the Chinese capitalist-communist empire. To prepare our global joint-family to take advantage of this transition (and end capitalist exploitation once and for all) we need first of all to remove dogmas from the collective psychology. This is why the rallying cry of today is “Mystics of the World, Unite!”

**“People are never so completely and enthusiastically evil as when they act out of religious conviction.”**

**– Umberto Eco**



**Affirmative action might get dalit women into panchayats, but caste compounds the gender discrimination they face and stymies real empowerment, 20 years after panchayati raj in India**

# Triple Oppression

of

## Dalit Women Panchayat Members

\* Subhash Gatade

Meet Jharana Kapali (38), the *pradhan* of Lankamura panchayat in Tripura. She has won acclaim for the role she played in leveling barren mounds of earth and turning the area into arable land.

Anyone familiar with Tripura politics will claim that Kapali is not exceptional. With 50% of seats reserved for women in all tiers of the

panchayat system, many women have used the opportunity to rise up as leaders and administrators.

Could it be said then that the emergence of these women vindicates what Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first prime minister, said at the introduction of the panchayati raj system in India in 1960? That it was 'the most

revolutionary development in India because behind it are all the forces which, when released, will change the structure of the country'. Twenty years after this historic project of decentralisation of power began (April 24), it would be interesting to look at its trajectory.

Today, 2.5 lakh panchayats and 32 lakh representatives, including



12 lakh women, are democratically elected in India. But a lot undoubtedly remains to be done as far as further devolution of power, removing bottlenecks in bureaucracy or targeting iniquitous relations in our society are concerned. Only last year, a six-member expert committee, headed by MP Mani Shankar Aiyar, was set up by the panchayati raj ministry to examine how panchayats could be leveraged for more efficient delivery of public goods and services. The committee was also asked to suggest ways to incentivise states to devolve the three Fs -- funds, functions and functionaries -- to panchayats.

The committee report attempts to partially address the situation by recommending decentralisation of planning to reflect local priorities so that panchayats can ensure 'last mile' delivery. It also underlines pitfalls still inherent in its implementation, and points out that although the central government has increased its spending on centrally sponsored schemes by 25%, India hasn't progressed proportionately in the Human Development Index. In fact, the country's position has been more or less stagnant, ranked 136 out of 186 countries, much as it was two decades ago.

How does one explain this predicament? A logical explanation seems to be that internal incongruities arising out of a societal setup mapped by caste, gender, community and class indices have stayed the same. Despite many instances of growing empowerment at the grassroots level, this is a sad commentary on the current state of affairs. It remains a persistent fact that women who generally have a secondary status in our society face discrimination whenever they are able to attain seats of power and privilege. And panchayats are no exception. Apart from sexual harassment and physical assault, attempts are made to delegitimise their leadership by leveling false charges or filing



fictitious complaints against them. The problem is further aggravated if the woman belongs to a socially oppressed section of society.

Some time ago, there was a public hearing in the capital where the focus was on understanding the atrocities and discrimination faced by dalit women representatives of panchayats. The hearing offered a glimpse of the real situation on the ground. Dalit women panchayat leaders and their counterparts in local councils from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan shared their experiences with the audience. Nortibai, sarpanch of Harmara village in Rajasthan, explained how she had to fight the dominance of the upper castes and how they retaliated by declaring her daughter-in-law Rampyari a *dayan* (witch) and calling for a social boycott of her family. When Sunita Bairwa from Bahekhada, Alwar district in Rajasthan, became sarpanch, members of the dominant castes attacked her family as they did not approve of a dalit assuming the top post. Ranjoo Devi, president of the district council in Aurangabad, Bihar, narrated how everyday information was not shared with her as she belonged to the dalit community. In a resolution passed at the end of the hearing, it was demanded that a special office be formed in every district to act as a

support/advisory centre for dalit, tribal and women representatives.

This is not the first time we have heard about the difficulties faced by representatives belonging to socially oppressed sections of society. On the 15th anniversary of the implementation of panchayati raj, a study titled 'The State of Panchayats: 2007-2008', carried out by the Anand-based Institute for Rural Management (IRMA), highlighted the issue. It brought out the fact that sexual harassment and physical violence against women panchayat leaders from scheduled caste households was 'widespread'. Emphasising the continuing subjugation of dalits in social and economic spheres, despite constitutional and legal provisions, it recorded the discrimination and harassment faced by women panchayat leaders from scheduled castes whilst discharging their public roles ('Bias Runs Deep, Says Study' *Hindustan Times*, April 27, 2008).

The IRMA team's observations brought back memories of the tragic suicide of Urmila, an ex-panchayat dalit woman leader from Dularia village, Betul district, Madhya Pradesh (November 2007). In her suicide note, Urmila revealed how she had been raped twice by the son of the panchayat head for raising her voice over misappropriation of



funds meant for village development. She further explained how, despite repeated complaints to the police, no action was taken against the perpetrators. Forget invoking the SC-ST Act 1989, even a first information report was not registered. In fact it took six long years for a report to be filed at the police station. It was a different matter that nobody was arrested for the crime. Frustrated over continued denial of justice and the connivance of the panchayat head with the local police, Urmila decided to end her life. The first arrest in this case came only after her death.

In 2001, NGOs working with women's issues and concerned activists organised a public hearing for dalit women heading panchayats in different parts of Rajasthan. The activists later compiled their presentations into a booklet titled *Dalit Mahila Sarpanchon ki Kahani: Unaki Jubaani* (Stories of Dalit Women Panchayat Heads: In Their Own Words). It was specifically noted that dalit women panchayat leaders have to face triple exploitation/oppression -- being women, being dalit and being poor. Their experiences demonstrated that

while dalit women may get elected to different posts in the panchayat system because of the policy of affirmative action, the real goals of decentralisation of power and empowerment still eluded them.

Women panchayat leaders face discrimination at the level of the panchayat, at the hands of fellow members belonging to dominant castes, and they are also subjected to humiliating treatment by government officials dealing with the department of rural development. The report states: 'Provision of no-confidence motions are very deviously used to further dominate elected panchayat representatives from the SC category.' Chhagibai from Rasoolpura, Ajmer, a panchayat head, was the first woman to depose before the jury at the public hearing. She explained how dominant caste members ganged up against her and removed her by bringing a no-confidence motion against her. They alleged that Chhagibai was not interested in development work despite there being enough proof of the initiatives she began. The administration remained a mute spectator.

Kesanbai from Shergarh panchayat was not even allowed to enter the panchayat office when she got elected as head of the panchayat. When she did manage to get in, she was not permitted to occupy the chair. Panchayat members belonging to the dominant castes tried to bring a no-confidence motion against her four times; they were unsuccessful only because representatives belonging to the scheduled categories were in a majority in the panchayat.

The IRMA report suggests certain measures to rectify the situation. According to it, social justice committees should be formed at various levels of the panchayati raj system. All panchayats headed by scheduled caste representatives should be given special grants by the union ministry. Finally, provisions for a no-confidence motion should be suitably amended so that they are not misused.

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**All Dalit women gathered in Dharane Andolan Beed**



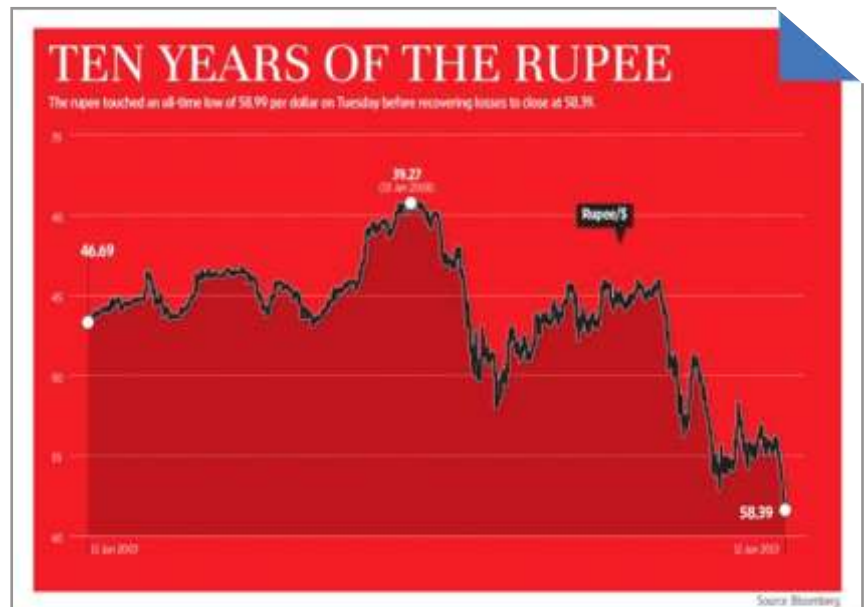
# India: Plummeting Rupee Sparks Fears

## of Current Account Crisis

Since coming to power in 2004, the UPA has aggressively pursued a rightwing pro-market and pro-foreign investor agenda, slashing taxes for big business and pressing forward with Public Sector Unit disinvestment.

\* Kranti Kumara

India's currency is again trading below 60 rupees (Rs.) to the U.S. dollara level widely considered a significant "psychological benchmark." On June 26, the rupee hit an all-time low of Rs. 60.76 to the dollar. As a result of intervention by the Reserve Bank of India, positive investor reaction to the government's announcement that it



will double natural gas prices as of April 2014, and Unilever's decision to buy up all outstanding shares in its Indian subsidiary, the rupee rose in value. But India's currency has resumed its slide, again breaking through the 60 rupees to dollar benchmark.

Since April, the value of the rupee has depreciated by more than 10 percent.

India's Congress Party-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government has responded to this slide by putting on a brave face. It insists that India's economic fundamental are strong and has pledged to quickly bring forward further "economic reforms" a euphemism for social spending cuts

and further concessions and incentives for investors and speculators.

Behind the scenes, however, there are increasing fears within ruling class circles that the rupee's plummet could cascade into a current account crisis. In May, a commentator in the Business Standard, noting that India's current account deficit is now the highest it has been since 1991, said that if Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh "left office tomorrow, he might be remembered less for his response to the crisis of 1991 than causing the crisis of 2013."

In a revealing comment that underscores the government's dependence on and subservience to



foreign capital, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram declared, "I could not agree more with Fitch when it said more reforms are needed."

Fitch refers to the Fitch Credit Rating Agency. Along with other global credit rating agencies, it has been placing relentless pressure on India over the past two years to dramatically accelerate measures to reduce the government's burgeoning budget deficit at the expense of working people and to remove all remaining barriers to foreign investment. Fitch, Moody's and the other rating agencies have repeatedly threatened to downgrade India's sovereign credit rating, which currently stands at one notch above junk bond status. Investors, meanwhile, have voted with their dollars. In the 2012-13 fiscal year, which ended March 31, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was off 38 percent from 2011-12.

In recent weeks Chidambaram has declared the government is committed to increasing the prices of domestically produced natural gas and coal and to lifting caps on FDI in the pharmacy, telecom, media and military manufacturing sectors.

Since coming to power in 2004, the UPA has aggressively pursued a rightwing pro-market and pro-foreign investor agenda, slashing taxes for big business and pressing forward with Public Sector Unit disinvestment. At the same time, it has sharply increased the burdens on workers and the rural poor by repeatedly hiking the price of petrol, diesel and cooking gas. Last September, facing what it thought was an imminent threat of a credit rating downgrade, the Congress-led UPA introduced a package of "big bang reforms," including opening up the multi-brand retail sector to foreign giants like Wal-Mart and Carrefour.

While international capital warmly applauded the "big bang reforms," their impact on financial markets and investment inflows proved short-lived.



Recent weeks have seen a widespread selloff in Asian currency markets because of fears that US monetary authorities may scale back the availability of dollar funds at near-zero interest sometime next year. But the rupee has the dubious distinction of being Asia's worst "performing" major currency. It has also fallen sharply with respect to other currencies such as the Euro, the British Pound and the Japanese Yen.

India's central bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), intervened in the FOREX market several times in June, selling dollars so as to drive up the value of the rupee. But the RBI is not in a position to mount a sustained intervention.

It has seen its reserves fall to around \$290 billion from an all-time high of \$321 billion in 2011. This is barely enough for 7 months of imports and is down significantly from 2008, when the RBI possessed enough reserves for 15 months of imports. In contrast, the Chinese regime has accumulated a mountain of \$3.2 trillion in foreign currency reserves.

Despite the severe hammering the rupee has sustained, a recent report released by the Japanese brokerage firm Nomura Securities claimed that the rupee is still overvalued by a massive 17 percent. If true, this indicates that the rupee should be trading at over Rs. 70 to a dollar, which would represent a decline of over 60 percent from the 44 Rs. to a dollar level at which it

traded as recently as July 2011.

According to press reports, foreign investors sold a net \$7 billion of Indian debt and equity in June putting significant pressure on the rupee.

The immediate cause of the steep fall in the value of the rupee were the recent remarks by U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernake that if "economic conditions" in the US continue to improve the US's central bank might scale back its "Quantitative Easing" (QE) program, beginning in 2014.

The fact that a mere suggestion by Bernake that the Fed could scale back QE created such havoc in the Indian FOREX markets reveals the utter dependency of the Indian economy upon the flow of short-term funds from financial speculators who are parasitically dependent upon the Fed to keep providing what amounts to gambling funds to make quick profits.

The other financial "tool" available to the RBI to bolster the value of the rupee is to increase domestic interest rates. But restricting credit would dampen economic activity under conditions where India's economy is already suffering from anaemic growth.

In the fiscal year ending last March, the Indian growth rate fell to 5 percent, it's lowest since 2003. Previously, it was taken for granted by the Indian elite that the economy would grow between 8 and 9 percent, a level it considers essential to maintaining social peace.

Because of the steep fall in the growth rate, domestic big business and the Congress-led government have been pressing the RBI to reduce short-term interest rates. But the RBI fears that reducing interest rates will fuel inflation, which is already running in double digits at the retail level.

The rapid depreciation of the rupee greatly compounds this problem. In June, the RBI left the Repo rate, the rate at which it lends funds to commercial banks, at 7.25 percent.

India's CAD (Current Account Deficit) which is the difference between imports and exports of goods and services and all monetary transactions such as interest earned on investments and deposits reached a record high of 4.8 percent of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in the fiscal year ending March. CAD has increased because India's exports have been hard-hit by the world economic crisis, especially the recession in Europe. India imports 80 percent of its petroleum requirement, machinery and high-end consumer goods, while exporting IT services, jewellery,

textiles and iron ore.

Attracting the foreign currency mainly dollars needed to finance the CAD has become a preoccupation of the Indian elite. In a desperate attempt to attract foreign funds the UPA government has undertaken several reckless measures such as dismantling regulations which restricted the inflow of "hot money," i.e. short-term speculative funds that can be pulled out as easily as they enter.

The RBI, in its latest semi-annual "Financial Stability" report, expressed unease over both the size of the inflows needed to bridge the CAD and India's increasing dependence on such "hot money": "In addition to the magnitude of flows needed to finance the CAD, the composition of flows, particularly dependence on portfolio and short-term debt flows, represent an added source of concern."

The vulnerability of the Indian economy to a balance of payments crisis is increasingly drawing comparison to the situation faced by the Indian government in 1991. At that time India's foreign currency reserves fell to a level barely enough

to cover a few weeks of imports. This prompted the Indian elite to turn to the International Monetary Fund for an emergency loan. In return, the Congress Party government decisively abandoned state-led economic development and moved to fully integrate India into the world capitalist economy by transforming the country into a cheap-labor haven for international capital.

Another major worry for India's elite and one that is being heightened by the rupee's depreciation is the increasing reliance of India's corporate sector on foreign borrowing. India's companies have greatly increased their overseas borrowing, with the aim of taking advantage of record low interest rates in the US, Europe and Japan. But dollar denominated "cheap money" can quickly be transformed by the rupee's slide into massive losses. As a percentage of the RBI's foreign currency reserves, India's short-term debt has increased from a low of 5.1 percent in 2002-03, to 14.8 percent in 2008-09, and 31.1 percent at the end of 2012.







What if the government could change people's moral beliefs or stop political dissent through remote control of people's brains? Sounds like science fiction, right? Well, a leaked document reveals that the US government, through DARPA research, is very close to accomplishing this.

Activist Post was recently contacted by an anonymous whistleblower who worked on a secret ongoing mind-control project for DARPA. The aim of the program is to remotely disrupt political dissent and extremism by employing "Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation" (TMS) in tandem with sophisticated propaganda based on this technology. TMS stimulates the temporal lobe of the brain with electromagnetic fields.

The program, conducted by The Center for Strategic Communication, is based at Arizona State University. The DARPA funding for this project can be confirmed on the ASU website here.



# Secret DARPA Mind Control Project Revealed LEAKED DOCUMENT

The head of the project, Steve Corman, has worked extensively in the area of strategic communication as it applies to terrorism and "extremism" or what could be called "the war of ideas."

Corman's latest project, Narrating The Exit From Afghanistan and his many presentations make it quite obvious that the mission is to shape the narrative and literally change

people's minds. Lest one believe it will be contained to overseas extremists, we should keep in mind that the word extremist is increasingly used domestically. The dissenters of yesterday could easily become the terrorist sympathizers and supporters of political violence tomorrow.

This DARPA research brings about many ethical questions and dilemmas. Mainly, this research

aims to literally induce or disrupt the operation of narratives within the brain. In other words, this research aims to stop individuals from thinking certain thoughts and make others believe things they normally would not believe. This research has tremendous interrogation possibilities and could potentially be used to more successfully spread propaganda or stop political upheaval to an unsuspecting public.



This research is being conducted by The Center for Strategic Communication at ASU and is entitled “Toward Narrative Disruptors and Inductors: Mapping the Narrative Comprehension Network and its Persuasive Effects” A detailed overview of the project can be found in the document below. Highlights include:

In phase 3 of the research, the research group will “selectively alter aspects of narrative structure and brain functions via Transcranial Magnetic Simulation (TMS) to induce or disrupt selected features of narrative processing.” (Page 16)

Once the research group determines which parts of the brain are associated with cognitive reasoning and narrative comprehension, there will be attempt to impair those sections in order to “create a fundamental basis for understanding how to disrupt or enhance aspects of narrative structure and/or brain functioning to minimize or maximize persuasive effects on subject proclivity to engage in political violence.” (Page 23)

Once it is determined that disruption of certain portions of the brain can enhance persuasive messaging, individuals can be persuaded to do things they normally would not do and believe things they normally would not believe. This could include something as simple as telling a

closely guarded secret, to believing in government propaganda, or even committing a violent act. The group writes on page 26, “once we have produced a narrative comprehension model [i.e., how individuals comprehend stories and persuasive messages], end users [aka the government] will understand how to activate known neural networks (e.g., working memory or attention) and positive behavioral

outcome (e.g., nonviolent actions) nodes with strategic communication messages as a means to reduce incidences of political violence in contested populations.” The group will investigate “possibilities for literally disrupting the activity of the NCN [narrative comprehension network] through Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation.” (page 30)

The group is so confident that they will be able to induce or disrupt the operations of narratives in the brain, that they say on page 26 that the research “offers the capability to induce or disrupt the operation of narratives in the brain, and develops the capability to induce narrative validity [i.e., the believability of a particular narrative/message], transportation [i.e., the ability to be engaged by a narrative], and integration [i.e., associating a particular narrative with a larger, more culturally specific narrative] with certainty.” [text added]

The group gives the following example of this projects usefulness: “If it is the case that activation in one particular neural network enables people to connect personal narrative to master narratives [i.e., cultural narratives], by disrupting activity in that brain area, we should be able to selectively impair that specific aspect of narrative processing while holding other meaning making processes constant, effectively creating a 'narrative disruptor.' Not only would this be an important

finding in the science of neural networks and narrative persuasion, but would also have considerably practical and strategic importance.” (page 40) [text added]

Essentially, the research aims to literally disrupt how people think and comprehend ideas and messages.

Further, and perhaps even more terrifying, on page 40, the group writes, “Mechanical disruptions of narrative processing may be, ultimately, replicated in through targeted strategic communication campaigns that approximate the narrative disruptions induced via magnetic stimulation.” So, after figuring out which parts of the brain are activated by particular persuasive messages and propaganda, the government can test out messages that only activate particular portions of the brain and not others, in order to persuade individuals to believe or not believe something. Essentially, they are attempting to modify brain functioning without TMS, and only words. One can only imagine the strategies the government could use with this technology. They could make the public believe almost anything that suits their needs. It could literally lead to mass brainwashing.

But what does this mean, practically? It means that if this research succeeds, the government will be able to modify how one personally thinks. They could strap you in a chair, put a machine to your head, turn off parts of your brain, introduce a persuasive message, and make you believe it.

Further, through extensive research, they may be able to replicate the machine's brain disrupting functioning simply through carefully crafted and researched persuasive messages and propaganda. They can use brain imaging to determine which portions of the brain are activated when a particular message is presented to an individual, and if the “right” portions are activated, they





know the message will circumvent one's mental reasoning and lead to almost automatic acceptance. With enough data, the government could spread propaganda through the media that people will almost automatically believe, whether it is true or not.

In terms of interrogation possibilities, Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation can be forced upon individuals to make them believe certain things, say certain things, and perhaps admit to acts they did not actually commit (as the TMS can induce narrative validity), or commit acts they normally would not commit.

The government is literally trying to brainwash the public. This is not science fiction. Technology has made it possible to induce and disrupt cognitive functioning in individuals. In the future, your thoughts may not be your own, but ones that have been implanted into your brain through exceedingly successful and validated propaganda.

Meeting notes indicate concern about how the project will be perceived, particularly the focus on the Christian/Muslim element. In 2002 *The Economist* noted that neuroscience would be the future of mind control. Well, now we're evidently here. This area of study

has received \$100 million in funding via Obama's ten-year BRAIN Project, as well as a \$1.3 billion commitment from Europe. The human brain is seen as the final frontier, and is being explored from every angle conceivable.

The above investments are openly discussed. The same is true for the National Nanotechnology Initiative 2011 Strategic Plan. This 60-page document lays out a projected future "to understand and control matter" for the management of every facet of human life in the areas of environment, health and safety. Twenty-five U.S. Federal agencies are participating.

Concurrently, there is heavy military funding through agencies such as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). This raises the question of transparency when a "black budget" often justifies total secrecy in the name of national security.

Advancements in neuroscience are coming at an exponential rate, as each day seems to headline a new breakthrough. For example, it recently has been announced that:

**The 'Google Earth' of 3D Brain Maps is Here**

"Neural Dust" is being researched, which could enable

remote spying on the human brain.

A new microchip can mimic the brain and imitate the brain's information processing in real time.

These are mainstream announcements and can no longer be dismissed as conspiracy theory.

For now, there appears to be a lot of parsing of words within the ASU project to stress that this is about "persuasion" not "influence" which can be seen in the meeting notes. It's also repeatedly mentioned that there is not a desire to organically change the brain itself, but to focus on the story being told and how to properly disseminate information propaganda, in other words. Finally, there is the troubling note about focusing on the Christian/Muslim narrative as exemplary of the extremism which needs to be reprogrammed.

Given what we know about the other military research into direct mind control, any benign assertions of this project at ASU must be called into question. The fact that members of this group were divided into teams red and blue to construct arguments for and against if word was to get out to "activists" and the public is additionally troubling.

If we combine all of this information with other releases about The Pentagon's work with "narrative networks," reported on by the BBC, it becomes clear that now is the time to discuss ethics, as no one in the scientific and military communities seems eager to bring possible attacks on our free will to the forefront.

Will you take the red pill or the blue pill? We would love to hear your thoughts about what has been revealed. Activist Post would also like to call on all experts in this field of research and/or other whistleblowers to come forward and bring out into the open what is being covered up. This technology could affect us all.

**NOTE:** *An e-mail sent to the program director at ASU requesting comments on this research did not receive a response.*

## PROUT Receives Attention in Journalist Circles

# It's the System Stupid

## Structural Crises and the Need for Alternatives to Capitalism

**THE MONTHLY REVIEW - An Independent Socialist Magazine- has published a review of After Capitalism ( by Dada Maheshvarananda ), along with three other great books by Richard Wolff, David Schweickart and Gar Alperovitz. Amazingly a full page and a half of this four-page review is about Prout, and it is very positive.**

On December 13, 2012, The Guardian announced Queen Elizabeth finally received an answer—to “Did nobody see this coming?”—about the 2008 financial crisis.<sup>1</sup> While she was touring the Bank of England, Sujit Kapadia, one of the bank’s economists, informed her that financial crises are a bit like earthquakes and flu pandemics: rare and difficult to predict. An impressive answer indeed. Brilliant for its vagueness, spuriousness, and obtuseness.

However, Kapadia is simply wrong not to have explained that many economists, financiers, and regulators anticipated and predicted the financial collapse.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, metaphors of natural disasters are highly misleading. Financial crises are not inevitable occurrences, but historical, human-created, and contingent phenomena.

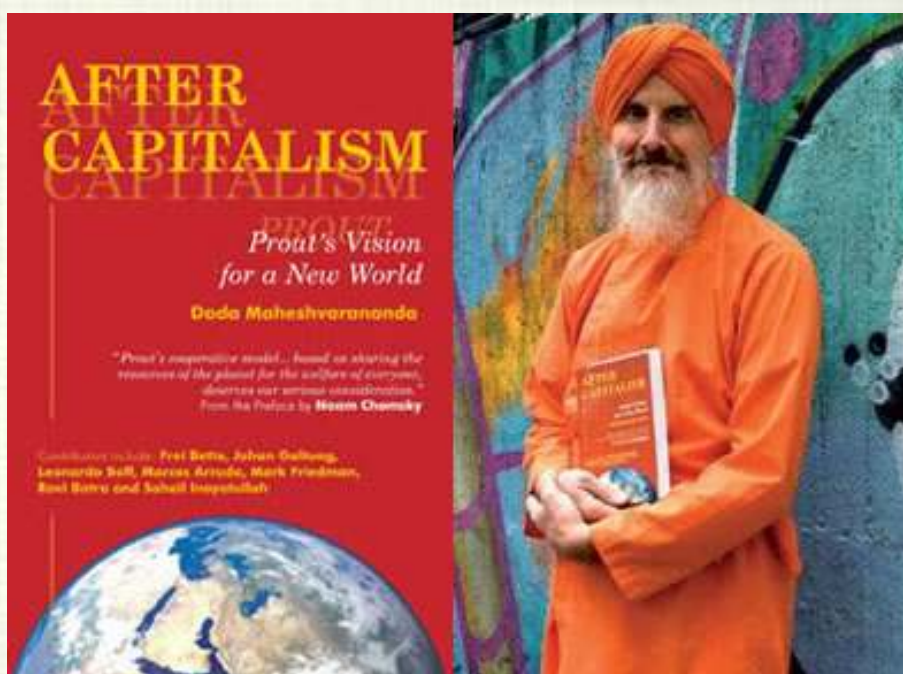
Queen Elizabeth had asked: “Did nobody see this coming?” Perhaps she could have also asked three more questions: Does nobody see the suffering and socioeconomic injustices of oligopolistic-finance capitalism? Does no one see that the problems are structural and systemic? And is there no alternative to a system that generates continuous “quadruple crises”—the socioeconomic, political, environmental, and personal/psychological?<sup>3</sup>

The conventional wisdom is “There Is No Alternative,” or TINA. For this reason most Americans simply acquiesce to capitalistic social relations and, like Sisyphus, are resigned to performing eternal tasks while enduring the “endless” quadruple crises generated by a pathological system.

The most extraordinary aspect concerning the absence of an alternative is that it is fallacious. The capitalistic system itself must be transformed. To put it into a slogan: Capitalism Is No Alternative, or CINA.

Four recent books provide radical and practical alternative visions for both the workplace and the economy more generally. Rick Wolff’s *Democracy at Work: A Cure for Capitalism* (2012), David Schweickart’s *After Capitalism* (2011), Gar Alperovitz’s *America Beyond Capitalism: Reclaiming Our Wealth, Our Liberty, and Our Democracy* (2011), and Dada Maheshvarananda’s *After Capitalism: Economic Democracy in Action* (2012). One important aspect shared by each of these books is that each was either written, or expanded and reissued, in reaction to the crisis of 2008 and the Occupy movement of 2011. All four books provide highly practical calls to action which are capable of transforming the economy and democratizing the workplace.

Before describing this exciting and inspiring work, two points should be underscored. First, these four books are merely the tip of the alternative-society iceberg, and focusing on them specifically is merely a way to put at rest the misconception of TINA and the correctness of CINA. Second, CINA literature has always involved disagreement and debate, but unfortunately,





none of the four authors provided other alternative models to CINA besides their preferred one. The intention here is to provide an overview for the existence of highly innovative and practical responses to the economic collapse and ensuing protests. These turbulent last four years are only a beginning to a revolutionary era of transformation away from capitalism. Each of these books is very well-written, well-reasoned, and well-argued, and all of them offer practical models to CINA.

Alperovitz underscores the fact that in capitalism there is a “democratic deficit.”<sup>4</sup> In the United States it is proclaimed that there is a democracy in the political realm. But once an individual enters the economic realm—when we enter the typical workplace—democracy is abandoned and totalitarianism runs supreme. Even within the political realm, oligopolization and political lobbying have put at peril any sense of a democratic process, and citizens have almost no say in government.<sup>5</sup> Wolff reminds us that democracy is inconsistent with the production of surplus-value in capitalism and the profit motive.<sup>6</sup> Schweickart and Maheshvarananda both maintain that democracy is not possible in capitalistic labor relations, or in financial markets under the hegemony of oligopolistic financial enterprises.<sup>7</sup> Thus, there is not only a “democratic deficit” but a “democratic contradiction” within the capitalistic mode of production.

All these authors also underscore the social pathologies generated by capitalism. For example, in the United States one in four workers are employed in low-wage work with no benefits, no health care, no retirement, and no paid sick days or leave for family caregiving. One in two workers make less than \$25,000 per year.

Each of these authors point out that the processes of concentration and centralization generate not only massive inequality in income and wealth, but also in opportunity, education, and quality of life. Furthermore, economic inequality has generated political inequality, and has given rise to noxious levels and forms of political lobbying, business predation, venomous forms of rent-seeking, and the emergence of the Predator State.<sup>8</sup>

Most investments in contemporary capitalism are highly speculative and short-term, rather than productive and long-term. Debt is ubiquitous. Furthermore, there is a strong tendency in capitalistic production to either ignore or exploit the natural environment.

Wolff, Schweickart, Alperovitz, and Maheshvarananda each present practical and detailed blueprints for democratizing the U.S. workplace. They each provide alternative models to socioeconomic pathologies that constitute the ontology of capitalism. These four alternative models are not incompatible with each other, but rather highly complementary.

In parts 1 and 2 of his book, Wolff details the perpetual historical crises of capitalistic development, and the contradictory action of the government in wake of the crisis of 2008. In the third part, Wolff argues the “cure” is worker’s self-directed enterprises (WSDE). Wolff describes how these enterprises will work internally, and fit within market economies in particular, and in modern society in general. He explains how they extend democracy and give workers far more control, self-efficacy, and responsibility for their lives. Finally, he offers a very practical policy strategy to help bring these enterprises into being.

Schweickart’s book may be the most impressive in its combination of practicality, critique of TINA, argument for CINA, and accessibility to the layperson. According to Schweickart, because of the failures of capitalism (i.e., CINA), “counterprojects” are always present as a “challenge to capitalism.”<sup>9</sup>

Schweickart offers a moral and ethical critique of capitalism, along with presenting the negative socioeconomic effects the dynamics and (law-like) tendencies produce on human beings within the system in the form of inequality, unemployment, overwork, poverty, economic instability, and environmental degradation. Schweickart argues that his alternative model to CINA constitutes “Economic Democracy,” supports workplaces that are “worker self-managed,” offers social control of investment with socialist savings and loan associations, and sees the government as the “Employer-of-Last-Resort.”

Schweickart maintains his model is fully capable of overcoming the moral and ethical problems of capitalism, as well as the negative economic effects of its dynamics. For Schweickart the historical “counterprojects” of capitalism are historical proof of capitalistic failure. In the last several pages, Schweickart demonstrates that his “counterproject” is not utopian but a practical historical result of the failures of capitalism and CINA.

Alperovitz understands capitalism, as well as the “too big to fail” and “too big to succeed” oligopolies, as inadequate for the needs of most people. For him, CINA is the social reality for the majority of people. However, he is less interested than Wolff and Schweickart in detailing the historical facts of capitalistic failure, and far more interested in demonstrating how Americans are reacting to the failure. Alperovitz believes that given the political impasse, whereby the system neither “reforms” nor “collapses” in crisis, there is a (potential) economic revolution underway, in the emergence of “worker-owned firms.” He considers the economic impact and political capacity of these endeavors, and explains how these worker-owned firms change the lives of workers, democratize communities, improve the environment, and promote ecological sustainability.

The United States has 29,000 cooperatives, and the National Cooperative Business Association says they employ over 2 million people, own more than \$3 trillion dollars in assets, generate \$500 billion in revenue, and pay \$75 billion in wages and benefits. There are also hundreds of worker-owned firms, analogous to the Mondragon Corporation of Spain, emerging as viable alternatives to hierarchical, undemocratic, oligopolistically dominated, capitalist enterprises.

Alperovitz urges that we embrace and nurture these enterprises and help to “rebuild” a “pluralistic commonwealth” on the basis of smaller and more human-orientated, worker-owned firms. He maintains that they have the potential to renew a sense of community, and believes they demonstrate that the production process and activity of “business” can be beneficial to workers and community. Finally, worker-owned firms generate values of cooperation, communal responsibility, and social ethics, in addition to personal pride, achievement, and worth.



Maheshvarananda's book outlines the failures and pathologies of "multinational corporate" capitalism. He argues that Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's PROgressive Utilization Theory, or PROUT economics, already exists as a well-developed alternative to both capitalism and state socialism. PROUT has important similarities with both Marxism and Participatory Economics, but its real philosophical basis is in Tantra Yoga, with influences from Hinduism, Taoism, and Buddhism (especially Zen).

PROUT's economic principles are that: (1) all citizens deserve the minimum requirements of life of food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and education; (2) employment is guaranteed; (3) the progressive use of science and technology and a federal institution geared toward research and development should be promoted; (4) the federal political system must include decentralized planning at the level of the local economy, with balanced development of what is needed by local citizens; (5) a three-tier economic system that supports privately owned small businesses, cooperatively owned medium and large businesses, and government-run large industries must be created; (6) "decentralized self-sufficient" local economies should be maximized; and, (7) crucial to PROUT, are the cooperatively owned businesses.

The cooperatively owned businesses referred to must be locally owned and run. They are meant to replace the above socioeconomic pathologies, and would be the largest part of a Proutian economy. According to Maheshvarananda, they will radically transform class relations, class struggle, and generate new perspectives on class.

Maheshvarananda, much like Wolff, Schweickart, and Alperovitz, believes that the activity needed for the democratization of the workplace and economy is already underway. Maheshvarananda offers many existing examples of Proutian enterprises. Most of these are the same discussed by Schweickart and Alperovitz, including the Mondragon cooperative in Spain and Evergreen in Cleveland. However, Maheshvarananda also offers extensive details of cooperatives in Venezuela, where he has founded a PROUT research institute.

In addition to mending the social pathologies of capitalism, he explains how Proutianism promotes leisure, spirituality, and a new humanistic ethic. He also insists that a transformation away from capitalism is urgently needed for environmental production and a new Agrarian Revolution to save the planet and human life. In this sense, Maheshvarananda is far more ambitious than Wolff, Schweickart, and Alperovitz, and is sure to be far more controversial for left-wing theorists and activists.

Wolff, Schweickart, and Alperovitz have developed models of WSDE, economic democracy, and worker-owned firms as emergent realities, but have given less thought toward the longer term goals. Maheshvarananda has in mind a very long-term alternative to capitalism. It requires not only transformation in the workplace, but transformations in the political dimension. On the one hand, it could be argued his vision is far more remote, while on the other hand, once the transformation within the workplace begins, the ripple effect could be massive and sudden. For this reason Maheshvarananda's perspective can be understood in highly practical terms and can be seen as complementary to the works of the other three. Indeed Maheshvarananda's second to last chapter is titled "A Call to Action: Strategies for Implementing Prout." In his last chapter, "A Conversation with Noam Chomsky," they discuss the importance of the Occupy Movement, raising consciousness of resistance, extending democracy and cooperatives, and limiting wealth accumulation within North and South America.

Clearly all four of these revolutionary thinkers believe the time to transform society is now, the time to democratize the workplace is now, the time to recognize CINA and finally absent capitalism from existence is now. These books are a call to, and for, action. Their call to action is radically consistent with systemic theories of capitalism, and with the understanding of capitalism's normal state as stagnation, periodic financial collapse, and individual worker hardship. Although there is certain to be disagreement as to explanations of the quadruple crises of global capitalism and in the models of alternative societies to today's failed system or CINA, there is no room to claim TINA!

## Notes

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- The "political" crisis includes wars, terror, and protests. See Hans G. Despain, "Economic Policy and the Rise of Global Violence and Terrorism," *The Humanist: A Magazine for Critical Inquiry and Social Concern*, July 2004, 26–30.
- Gar Alperovitz, *America Beyond Capitalism: Reclaiming Our Wealth, Our Liberty, and Our Democracy* (Takoma Park, MD: Democracy Collaborative Press, 2011), 50.
- Joseph E. Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2012); James K. Galbraith, *The Predator State: How Conservatives Abandoned the Free Market and Why Liberals Should Too* (New York: Free Press, 2008).
- Richard D. Wolff, *Democracy at Work: A Cure for Capitalism* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012), 149.
- David Schweickart, *After Capitalism* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 152, 105; Dada Maheshvarananda, *After Capitalism: Economic Democracy in Action* (San Germán, Puerto Rico: InnerWorld Publications, 2012), 80.
- On political inequality, see Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality*. Also for an even more sustained argument see Larry M. Bartels, *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2008). The main thesis of Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality*, is rent-seeking; see chapter 2. Also see Barry C. Lynn, *Cornered: The New Monopoly Capitalism and the Economics of Destruction* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011) for dozens and dozens examples of how oligopolistic firms supersede the constraints of the market and use their sheer size, vast resources, and endless political power to control and direct virtually every industry in the United States, effectively reinstating the monopoly power of sixteenth-century feudalism. For the "predator state," see Galbraith, *The Predator State*.
- David Schweickart, *After Capitalism* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 5.



## Stay Healthy, Stay Fit

An Integrated Approach to Health – Natural Life-style Way

Author : Mahesh Prasad

There are many books in the market about health on specialized topics. There are also many books about spirituality. The present book is unique in that it shows that true health lies in spirituality and that the physical expression of spirituality is in the form of a healthy life-style. The author notes that this book is offering the reader a new lifestyle in both dietary, exercise, fasting and meditation.

Unusually, the author begins by exploring the balance in our digestive system and how our lack of thought and discipline in our diets causes this system to break down. This breakdown of balance is even discussed at the molecular level which is something unique in most books.

The author explores fasting dispelling many myths and giving logical explanations for why regular fasting is good for health as well as the correct way to fast that avoids any dangers and gives the optimum benefit to our health. The author also uniquely discusses how one can receive energy without eating and food. For when one's internal system is cleared, one naturally receives energy from trees, the air and nature. In this regard, he mentions the over 5 year fast of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar on two cups of liquid daily. Shrii Sarkar was imprisoned on charges later found to be false. He was the preceptor of PROUT and had gone on this fast to protest the poisoning by the government leaders. The author explains this by referring to Shrii Sarkar's revelation of the science of microvita or the smallest form of life in the physical and psychic realms. The author notes that fasting also has spiritual benefits in that it helps exhaust one's karma or samskaras from our past. In fact lowering the intake of food and the number of meals within a rational limit significantly improves one's health

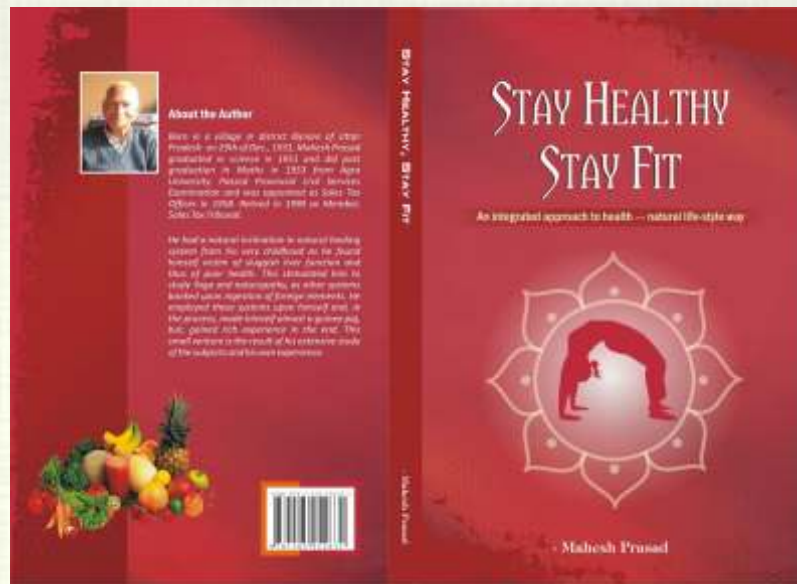
The author then explores the well-known life-style of the Hunzas – a nomadic tribe of Pakistan. The science behind this life-style is revealed through a discussion of the yogic classification of foods into sentient, mutative and static. The issue of balanced intake of protein on which there is much controversy is then explored in a level-headed manner revealing the importance of balance and the avoidance of unnatural proteins from animal flesh. After a detailed exploration of other essential elements, the author explores how wrong cooking techniques such as overcooking, using pressure cookers and microwaves.

For good health and a fresh (non-chemical) diet, the author recommends gardening and explains organic gardening simply and succinctly. Then follows a spiritual discussion of yogic exercises or asanas and a brief illuminating glimpse of the world of acupressure and basic tips for the common man. The power of positive thinking or biofeedback is simply explained and enables the ordinary reader to realize that maintaining a proper psychic diet of benevolent, optimistic thoughts and feelings is the key not just to psychic health but to physical health as well.

Finally the book closes with a simple but illuminating exploration of spirituality and spiritual health. The technological obsessions of modern life are shown to have significant negative impact on our health. More fundamentally, the fear of death arising from spiritual ignorance is explored. Finally the different levels of mind are explored in relation to different processes of meditation or yoga.

For the common reader with little knowledge of nutrition, healing, yogic exercises, meditation this book is a constant resource of information and inspiration. Above all new life-style, a new outlook on life and a new sense of purpose will be found in this volume to so many of people today who have lost their way in the meaningless maze of modern life.

For social activists this book can provide the basis for health education based on a brand-new vision going beyond 19th century medicine. As India and many other countries face the rapid rise in malnutrition due to price inflation, this book can be truly life-saving for those with a small budget who are struggling to provide healthy diet and a inspired state of mind to their children.



## International Forum on Economic Democracy Lisbon, Portugal on November 16-17, 2013



The First International Forum on Economic Democracy in Portugal was organized by the Prout Research Institute of Portugal and the PROUTugal Group and it was held in the French Institute of Portugal auditorium in Lisbon. National and international specialists came together from various fields within the Economic Democracy model, including social innovation in rural and urban communities, cooperation, mutual development and growth, decentralization, human values and exchange sharing.

"Why Do We Need Economic Democracy Now?" was a very powerful manifesto by the Prout Research Institute of Portugal that was read out at the start of the Forum in English and Portuguese. It said in part: "What is happening in Europe is more than a debt crisis, it is also a crisis of inequality. As long as money controls politics, and remains concentrated in the hands of only a few, we cannot have real democracy. The only way to achieve real self-determination among people is by guaranteeing that the economic power can be distributed among the population. All participants gathered in this Forum to share and explore other alternative options to the current economy, namely Economic Democracy."

**Panel 1:** "Do we Need a New Economic Model?" - "Inequality and Economic Disasters: New Evidence" by Mark Friedman (USA), "Local Action in a Global Vision and the Role of Communicators" by Pieter de Vos (Belgium), "Economic Democracy in Latin America and Portugal" by Dada Maheshvarananda (Venezuela).

**Panel 2:** "Why Decentralize the Economy?" - "Prout and Economic Decentralization" by Dada Krsnasevananda (Denmark), "Re-designing a New Paradigm for the Economy" by Filipe Moreira Alves, and "Social Currency Systems" by Bruno Ricardo Ferreira.

**Panel 3:** "Self-sufficient Economic Zones" - "YoungCoop" by Lurdes Barata, "The Importance of Local Development for Sustainability Planning" by António Pedro Dores, "Participation, Inclusion and Local Development: The Institutionalization of Social Enterprises from a Comparative Perspective" by Giulia Galera (Italy).

**Panel 4:** "(Re)Locate" - "Resilient Communities Begin Inside Us" by Hélder Valente, "Ajudada" by Filipa Pimentel and Luis Bello Moraes, and "Developing Community in Rural Romania" by Didi Ananda Devapriya.

There was live video streaming of all the panels and also high resolution video recording that is now being edited. All the powerpoint presentations and the texts and videos of the panels will eventually be posted on <http://www.democraciaeconomica.pt/?lang=eng>.

Each afternoon there were two simultaneous workshops: "Motivation and Inequality" by Mark Friedman, "Sociocracy: Dynamic Governance" by Frands Frydendal (Denmark), "Intentional Communities" by Rakesh Rootsmann Rak (UK) and "Developing Community in Rural Romania" by Didi Ananda Devapriya. At the same time





there was also a question and answer debate with the morning speakers. Proutist economist Edvard Mogstad from Norway also gave a historical perspective to economic self-reliance. Shiila's staff of Ananda Cafe in Covilha came and served free snacks and juice during the breaks that were delicious and very popular.

Two excellent documentaries were shown: "Buy Buy Europe", followed by a discussion with the director, Pieter de Vos, and "In Transition 2.0", about the Transition Towns global movement. The late night dance party hosted by DJ Rootsman Rak (Rakesh) and DJ Microclima (Hélder Valente) was really popular.

At the end of the program Teresa Gabriel sang her own compositions, which were very appropriate and inspiring, like "The Balance will be Restored", "Phoenix Generation" and "We Are One." For the closing ceremony, the organizers invited everyone to join them onstage to sing "Todos Juntos" ("All Together") followed by "Baba Nam Kevalam" ("Love is all there is").

## **An Extensive Relief Work in Philippines**

### **Report by AMURT**

### **(Ananada Marga Universal Relief Team)**



AMURTs (Ananada Marga Universal Relief Team) relief work was still going on for the survivors of last month's earthquake, when only 3 weeks after the quake, came super typhoon Yolanda, or as known elsewhere hurricane Haiyan.

This one was said to be the strongest hurricane in world history.

In the beginning hours the news was scattered and mostly in the form of rumors, with electricity cut all over this part of the country. In the worst hit areas even cell phone coverage was wiped out.

At least in our Ananada Marga Wellness Center and in the Yoga Center in Cebu the only losses were numerous trees ripped out by their roots, and the trauma of seeing countless objects roaring past our doorways and windows. In the midst of it, a heartfelt strong kiirtan enabled our own fears to subside. But when the winds diminished we found some of the neighbors roofs blown off, including the homes of some of our own staff.

And then it was quiet, and yet still news only came in drops and dribbles. Apparently at that point the outside world still knew more than we did.

We sent a team to survey the damage in northern Cebu Province, where the Eye directly passed. Another team was sent by specially chartered ship to survey Tacloban. One more team surveyed northern Cebu Province -- this time with food for the suffering.

The Tacloban team had a tough time even reaching there. To get there we partnered with the Federation of Volunteers through Radio Communication (FVRC), of which the Chief Officer is our close friend. The FVRC is one of the first to go to any catastrophe area, as other communication systems are usually down. The ship arrived in Hilongos, due to the danger of sailing directly into Tacloban, where at least 10,000 were already dead. From Hilongos the 140 kilometer trip was by 4-wheel drive jeeps, and it took many hours not only because of trees across the road, but especially because of numerous people lying on the road -- people who wanted to stop and then ambush the jeeps and steal whatever food and water was on board. But our staff and partners had wisely hidden their foodstuffs, and so gradually they passed through that test.

They reported that from the half way mark until finally arriving in Tacloban -- 99% of the houses and structures were demolished.

In the city they temporarily established a base in the damaged but still standing city hall, and from that time we began intensive communication with our team leader, Avaniish.

*Approximately in his words:*

"The faces of the people look completely blank -- like zombies. The damage is 10 times beyond the earthquake (where he had also worked for many days). Debris is piled everywhere, and the smell of death is unavoidable. All the government offices are wiped out, no where to turn for protection. The military only to be found at the airport. Here they are in the worst need for food."

Then he reported that even though shops had been ransacked for food, at least while stealing gas from the gas stations everyone was patiently standing in line.

And so we have made a plan to borrow \$5000 to purchase food for Tacloban, and are arranging military escort and a ship -- hopefully by tomorrow itself. We will most likely send it with cooking equipment and served it cooked, as people simply have no stoves to prepare uncooked materials we might give them.

It will be far from sufficient, but at least it is a start.

*As to the team that went to northern Cebu Province:* Our van had less than a 3 hour drive before encountering a scene hardly better than Tacloban. Again most of the houses were leveled to the ground. Children and adults were standing in the road begging for food and water. The only difference from Tacloban was that not so many had died because there had been no storm surge, so no drowning. But the hurricane winds had done their work with equal power, demolishing almost everything in sight. Tens of thousands of houses were destroyed.

Our contacts were in Bogu City, precisely where the Eye had passed. No government workers, no non-governmental workers had been there to help them. We were the first on the site, and the people were overwhelmed with happiness to see our volunteers. We brought cooking equipment, and a small amount of food, enough to serve 600 people. Upon receiving the food, many cried and embraced those serving. In fact it was painful not to be able to help others.

We will borrow another \$2000 to purchase food for the north, and likewise serve it to them cooked.

More days of great need will follow.

Our global and sectorial AMURT staff are doing what they can to drum up support. We shall likewise do all we can to serve as many as we can according to the funds sent.

Later when the threats of starvation and disease are less pressing, we shall think about house rebuilding and other long-term works

**For more details, please log on to : <http://www.amurt.net/typhoon-relief-response-in-philippines/>**

## **Campaign against Water Privatization**

"The privatisation of water is a deliberate policy choice by the government. We all believe that local communities are 'natural protectors and sustainable users' of water; not its 'customers'. The privatization of water is against the spirit of a welfare state, as enshrined in our Constitution. Privatization of water leads to corruption and makes water a profitable market commodity which we are experiencing in Delhi and others part of India where water has been privatized which led to increased financial burden in the form of high water bills for the citizens of Delhi. The Delhi Government is privatizing city's water supply to allow corporate control over water through "Public Private Partnership" that will lead to high water tariffs. It is clear that private corporations have no ethical agenda to make water a 'social good', rather they have to "develop markets" to make huge profits out of water.

All over the globe the model of Privatisation has miserably failed and now there is a trend of reversing privatisation and re-municipalisation of water services to regain public control in countries like France, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Finland, Tanzania, Indonesia and Malaysia, while there is a strong resistance to water privatization in different countries around the world, e.g. in Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain, Brazil and others.

We therefore appeal you to raise your voice to stop the privatization and commodification of water services in Delhi and strengthening of public water services in Delhi.



# PBI Candidates in the Electoral Battle



**Uday Sahu**  
JABALPUR (MP)



**Baljit Aditya Khatana**  
KARAWAL NAGAR



**Aflatoon**  
GHONDA



**Rekha**  
KONDLI



**Renu Poddar**  
MATIALA



**Baijnath Sah**  
NAJAFGARH



**Birendra Jha**  
JANAKPURI



**Ram Simran Bhagat**  
CHHATTARPUR



**Ar. Amar Jeet Verma**  
SANGAM VIHAR



**Bijendra Singh Lohia**  
BADARPUR  
(INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE)

**New Delhi :** Proutist Bloc India ( PBI) had finally fielded ten candidates in the current general elections for Legislative Assembly.

Uday Kumar Sahu has contested from Jabalpur constituency of Madhya Pradesh. He has made valiant efforts to convince the electorates that Prout alone can provide viable solution to the deepening all round crisis, specially in socio-economic field. He did also spell out how will Prout grapple with the glaring problems of the contemporary society. He also explained how Prout's concept of Economy based on cooperative enterprise can effectively fight out the demon of capitalist exploitation.

The final list of PBI candidates for Delhi Elections include : Baljit Aditya Khatana (Karawal Nagar), Aflatoon Ghonda, Rekha (Kondli), Renu Poddar (Matiala), Baidyanath Shah, Advocate (Najafgarh), Birendra Jha (Janakpuri), Ram Simaran Bhagat (Chhattarpur) and Amarjeet Verma (Sangam Vihar). Their election symbol is bat as allotted to PBI well before submission of nomination papers.

Due to some technical lapse, the Returning Officer of Badarpur constituency did not accept the nomination papers of Bijendra Singh Lohia, party's candidate from the constituency. He however gave the option of contesting as an independent candidate. He is therefore officially contesting as an independent candidate supported by PBI.

All the ten candidates have worked hard in their constituency and inspired voters to cooperate actively in bringing about genuine polarisation between moral and immoral politicians.

It was observed during the elections that despite Election Commission and vigilance, there has been much use of money and muscle power. It was felt that in order to give proper and decisive reply to these immoral tactics, PBI cadres will have to fully concentrate in the poverty-stricken areas, and work for the amelioration of the sufferings of the poor.

One message has clearly gone to the public that a new flow has been introduced in the domain of politics. Politics should be the area of activity exclusively for moralists, and economic democracy ought to be the first agenda of the moralist government. Results are to be declared by 10th of December.



# PROUT

Progressive Utilization Theory

# A

# Vibrant

# Magazine

# which

# Informs

# &

# Inspires

## *Cry of the Suffering Humanity*

### What is PROUT :

PROUT is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory. Conceptualized in 1959 by Indian Philosopher Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, PROUT is a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist socio-economic paradigms. Neither of these approaches has adequately met the physical, mental and spiritual needs of humanity. PROUT seeks a harmonious balance between economic growth, social development and cultural expression.

Combining the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self-reliance, and the spirit of economic democracy, Proutist intellectuals and activists are attempting to create a new civilizational discourse. PROUT news-magazine aims at conveying comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT Philosophy.

PROUT magazine invites scientists, economists, politicians, artists, intellectuals and others to join us in the creation of a new, spiritually bonded society by propagating and popularising unambiguous elevating thoughts. Through Proutistic views and Neo Humanistic analysis, it strives to serve as beacon for the benighted civilization of our times.

### Main principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism :

Neo-humanism expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a philosophical basis for creating a new era of ecological balance, planetary citizenship and cosmic kinship.

**Basic necessities guaranteed to all :** People can not strive toward their highest human aspirations if they are lacking the basic requirements of life. PROUT believes that access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.

**Balanced economy :** Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of excessive wealth.

**Women's Right :** PROUT encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. PROUT's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.

**Cultural Diversity :** In the spirit of universal fellowship PROUT encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.

**World Government :** PROUT supports the creation of world government with a global constitution and a common penal code.

*For both civilization and science, intellectual knowledge is indispensable. Spiritual or intuitional development is possible through the happy blending between civilization and science. - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar*