

AMRIT

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Inauguration ceremony Shri Chinmoy
Exhibition at Interfaith Discussion



**Dr B.R. Ambedkar:
Father of the Indian
Constitution**

अमृत



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From the Ambassador's Desk



Dear Reader,

Spring is in the air, or so it seems, despite nature's strange vagaries. There is a theory building up in some parts of the world, perhaps in the most polluting countries that all that pollution is not man-made. Who then? Sometime back I was struck by some horrendous pollution-related figures related to India and in particular Delhi, which has become the most polluted city in the world today. Are we Indians thus condemned to a polluted future in the name of development? Our PM just addressed an Environment conference where he highlighted the importance of how a pollution-free environment and the need for rapid development can be addressed at the same time. Simultaneously the Quality Air Index has been installed in several metropolises, with more cities to be covered. Some improvement, at least in vigilance, if not prevention.

But back to the wonderful sunshine of Budapest. As I look out from my office window, I feel a sense of joy unparalleled, as the bliss of the moments merge in the bliss eternal, that which has become the leitmotif of living. The other day I watched two beautiful birds with long blue plumage frolicking on the residence lawns and realised that they have arrived with the first call of spring. Europe is unique in that respect, here the seasons change distinctly as nature plays along in a wonderful symphony. Thus the trees sprout blossoms which will transform into flowers, flowers into fruits, the leaves themselves will come up, first a faint green, then acquire a distinct hue of nature before turning crimson for autumn and finally denuding in winter. Such is the mysterious transformation, so visible and therefore so thrilling which habitants of the tropics sorely miss out on. We also had our traditional Holi celebration to herald spring with the Indian Community, organized by the Bharatiya Samaj.

Bharat Ratna, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, adorning our cover page and on whom we run a feature article, has been quite deservedly called the 'Father of the Indian Constitution'. But he brought to chairing the Constitution over three long years, all the wisdom acquired from his life-long struggle in emancipating the Dalits, the millions of impoverished low-caste marginal groups from the confines of a polluted, caste-ridden, rigidly hierarchical society. Giving them representation in national life and in all avenues of development through affirmative action has been his distinct legacy to the Indian nation. Along with Mahatma Gandhi, he had incessantly fought for the social emancipation and political empowerment

of these categories of people all through the freedom struggle, who were later included in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution as Scheduled Castes and Tribes. And thus got their dignity, respect and vocation in life.

This has been an amazing time for us in the Mission and I can point out just two seminal events among many others to testify. The first was a unique gathering of all Christian priests, teachers, sisters and Missionaries who, having come from distant corners of India, have settled down in the balmy environs of Hungary, delivering the sermons of Jesus and his apostles to the forever-born native Christians of this country. And it was not so very long ago that Indians were derided as pagans and western Christian Missionaries had to travel all that distance to 'civilize' them. It had taken a worthy Indian of the like of Swami Vivekananda abroad, and countless others at home, to convey the virtues of Vedanta emanating from an eternal way of life, what we know as Sanatana Dharma, to an awestruck West and to the world at large. The Christian protagonists of that evening congregated in our Cultural Centre and one by one took to the stage, some thirty of them, shy, hesitant, somewhat reticent even to be speaking to such a large gathering from a public platform and opened up their wonderful lives. In the process, we drew many steps closer to the Lord who has instilled in us all His divinity.

That was to show up in yet another unprecedented way in an inter-religious discussion featuring representatives from some ten religious congregations and faith bodies. Thus we had the major religions represented in this country, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and of course, Hinduism in its various denominations. We publish in the pages of this issue their valuable presentations, all that within the one theme of "The Pursuit of Truth and its Relevance in Life". If all faiths speak about the same goal though expressing that in different ways, languages, visuals, myths and philosophies, certainly they could all discuss on Truth in one platform, that of the Amrita Sher-Gill Cultural Centre, an event to feel proud of as an Indian. For never in any other geographical space in this world have so many religions flourished over millennia, as India's. Never will there be any other land so varied, so spectacularly diverse and colourful, constantly renewing, as India.

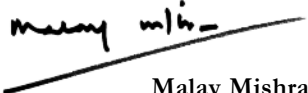
Yet business amidst this spiritual splendour did not lag behind. To bring forth all the novel schemes of the Modi Government, Make in India, Skill India, Clean Ganga, Smart Cities, et al. We had a full house seminar where great interest was evinced in building upon the potential that existed in carrying our bilateral economic relations forward. Many prospective areas were discussed by concerned stakeholders in a fitting finale to the successful visit of a 23-member Pharma delegation from India which had visited Hungary, one of the emerging Pharma, biotech and innovation hubs of Europe, a month earlier.

In the sister territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, India was given the honours of a 'Focus Country' in the prestigious Sarajevo Winter Festival, virtually a one-man show by the indefatigable Ibrahim Spahic and we laid out an array of diverse fare; traditional medicine in the form of Yoga and Ayurveda, classical music in the strains of Sufiana Santoor by maestro Pandit Bhajan Sopori and his accomplished musicians, a photo exhibition on 'Vibrant India' and a series of brilliant documentary films on the multi-faceted India. Of course, in a first of sorts, I was invited to take part in a 'Dialogue' by the prestigious Academy of Arts and Sciences in Sarajevo, to speak on 'Shift of Focus to Asia and India in the 21st Century'. We present its transcript to bring to you the intellectual dimensions of a nuanced topic as this, which has been the toast of thinkers and policy makers, either in devising a new world order or getting overtaken by the swift flow of circumstances beyond their control. On the whole, a hugely productive engagement for India in the beautiful environs of Sarajevo, Mostar and thereabouts.

Our Mission to promote Indian traditional medicine has continued with vigour and we organized yet another Open Ayush Day in the Residence on 19 April in preparation for the seminal 21 June event, which is going to be celebrated as the International Yoga Day all over the world, not only by all the 193 Indian Missions, but also in many countries out of the 177, who have been signatories to the resolution moved by India in the UNGA last year, without talking of the huge commemorations which will throng the length and breadth of our country.

Sage Patanjali's Yoga Sutra and Charaka and Sushruta's immortal treaties on surgical and medicinal Ayurveda, purely based on ingredients taken from nature, had shown a way to the world some five thousand years ago. They are still alive and practised today with millions of homes in India and overseas, lit up with the knowledge of holistic healthcare and well-being. Emanating from the Vedas, they have forever thought of humanity as the primary beneficiary of all knowledge systems enshrined therein and handed down over posterity. Indeed, a treasure for all mankind.

Be blessed and enjoy a happy and healthy life.


Malay Mishra

Seminar on Indo-Hungarian Trade and Economic Relations on 26 March 2015



Dr. Zsolt Becsey, Dy Minister of State
speaking on the occasion



Dr. Csaba Balogh, Dy State Secretary
speaking on the occasion

The Embassy organized a Seminar on 26 March 2015 on Indo-Hungarian Trade and Economic Relations, in collaboration with the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Indo-Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry / Association of Indian Businessmen in Hungary. The idea was to cover the latest developments in Indian economy and the Budget as also various schemes of Government like Make In India, Digital India, Skill India, Swachh Bharat Campaign, Clean Ganga, etc. and the opportunities that it offered to Hungarian companies.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of India, Shri Malay

Mishra pointed to a slew of measures taken in the last one year to open up the economy and make India a friendlier place to do business. He highlighted the need to diversify the trade and investment relationship between the two countries. Ambassador stated that the Indian economy, which had grown at the rate of 7.4% in the year 2014, was poised to grow further over the next two-three decades. He urged the Hungarian companies to take advantage of the opportunities offered by Indian's economic growth especially in the sectors of infrastructure, clean technology, water purification, food processing etc in which Hungarian



Mr. Kovács Vince Vice President,
HCCI speaking on the occasion



Dr. Karoly Kazi, Bonn-Hungary



Apollo Tyres Hungary Kft presentation delivered by
Mr Kannan Prabhakar, Managing Director



View of the audience; Mr Peter Cseresnyes, MP from Nagykanizsa, can be seen in the foreground

companies had expertise.

Chief Guest of the Seminar, Dr. Zsolt Becsey, Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of National Development of Hungary, in his key-note address, appreciated the Embassy for organizing the high-level Seminar. He highlighted the importance that Hungary attached to furthering bilateral economic cooperation in its Eastern Opening Policy. Dr. Becsey mentioned that some new sectors like food processing and water resource management were showing promise and stressed on the need to have direct air connectivity as the key to further give a boost to the economic and people-to-people relationship between the two countries.

Dr. Csaba Balogh, Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade recalled his visit to India in February 2015 for the CII Partnership Summit held in Jaipur, Rajasthan, and mentioned that he was impressed with the vibrancy of the country. He mentioned about the opening of the Consulate General of Hungary in Mumbai and plans for opening a Trade House in Bengaluru this year.

Mr. Kovács Vince, Vice-President of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI), gave an overview of the role of HCCI in promoting

Institutional linkages to further bilateral economic cooperation, and emphasized on the complementarities that existed between the two economies that needed to be leveraged. Mr. Vijay Khanduja, First Secretary (Economic & Commercial), Embassy of India, Budapest, gave a presentation on the subject "Developments in Indian economy and the Indian Budget in 2015-16". The representatives of Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency, Hungarian National Trading House and EXIM Bank of Hungary, gave presentations on the roles being played by their organizations in promoting trade and investment linkages between India and Hungary. Dr. Amar Sinha President-elect of the Indo-Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, spoke about the steps being taken to galvanize the Chamber. Mr. Sandeep Deshpande, CFO of CG Electric Systems, Hungary (an Indian company based in Hungary), gave a presentation on "Indo-Hungarian collaboration in the coming years".

Dr. Karoly Kazi, Managing Director, and Mr. János Solymosi, BHE Aerospace Director, of Bonn-Hungary Electronics Ltd, spoke on the potential for Indo-Hungarian Collaboration in High-tech Sectors. BHE stressed that 30% of its export revenue amounting to about \$ 1 million came from India. BHE Bonn Hungary was also a supplier of transmission receivers for India's Mars Mission.

Mr. Kannan Prabhakar, Managing Director, of Apollo Tyres, Hungary, spoke about the company's plans to have a long-term presence in India and to roll out the production by 2017 from its plant being set up at Gyöngyöshalász (about 80 Km from Budapest). The company has announced plans to invest Euro 475 million in Hungary in a greenfield venture for which it has received "Investor of the Year" Award from Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency, a couple of days ago. By virtue of this investment, India has been the largest foreign investor in Hungary in 2014. Apollo has started tying up with the technical institutions to get trained manpower and has awarded 100 scholarships to selected students who would be employed with Apollo Tyres Hungary on completion of their studies. Mr. György József Farkas, Senior retired journalist, gave a vivid overview of his experiences in India and stressed on the importance of the tourism sector in furthering the bilateral economic relationship.

The Seminar aroused considerable enthusiasm with an attendance of over 90 people. Announcement of the forthcoming visit of a CII-led delegation to Hungary in June 2015 was well received. ■

Ambassador's visit to Iskcon Vedanta College

Ambassador visited the Iskcon Vedanta College on 28 February 2015 and gave a talk on "Ramayana and its relevance today", where he gave a contemporary look at the importance of Ramayana, delineating it as the most important text of the Bhakti tradition. His talk was followed by a few questions from the participants. The talk was well appreciated by the students of the college doing Diploma courses on Vedanta.

Visit Miskolc on 5 March 2015



Ambassador with the mayor of Miskolc in front of his office



Ambassador with a family in Ozd

At the invitation of Mayor of Miskolc, Ambassador visited Miskolc on 5 March 2015. Ambassador had a very fruitful discussion with Dr Akos Kriza Mayor and Mr Peter Pfliegler, Deputy Mayor in Mayor's Office about further enhancement of economic and cultural ties with India.

After that, Mayor took Ambassador for a city visit where Diosgyor Steelworks and Diosgyor Cattle were shown.

During the day, Ambassador visited Ozd, the Roma town in northern Hungary, bordering Slovakia. ■

Ambassador's visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) 10 – 18 March 2015

Ambassador undertook an official tour of BiH from 10 – 18 March 2015. Major highlights of the visit were the following:

On 10 March 2015, Ambassador met with the Mayor of Bihac, Mr. Emdad Galijasevic. Bihac is developing as a manufacturing base in the country and is looking for foreign investors. The different areas to look at are dairy farming, meat exports, forestry, mineral resources, water bottling and construction of small hydro-power dams.

On 11 March 2015, Ambassador had a meeting with the President of Republika Srpska (RS) Mr. Milorad Dodik. President Dodik (PD) has returned to office for the second consecutive term as the President with truncated numbers for his Party SNSD. Ambassador conveyed India's intent of increasing the level of bilateral cooperation between India and BiH, including RS. Ambassador also took the opportunity to congratulate President Dodik for consenting to the declaration pledging support of all parties to the EU accession process with the conditionality of the Government of BiH carrying out specific and time-bound economic and social measures. President Dodik laid stress on building good relations with India and felt that there should be exchange of business delegations.



Ambassador at Eco-village in Bijeljina



With the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Bihac



With the Speaker of Parliament of RS, BiH

Ambassador had a meeting with the Speaker of the Assembly of RS, Mr. Nedeljko Cubrilovic soon after meeting the President. The Speaker was very enthusiastic to maintain good bilateral relations with India and reiterated the role of Mittal for the economic development of the country. He said that there should be a legal framework for investment which did not exist at the moment and therefore foreign investors did not feel secure. Ambassador invited him to consider forming an India-BiH Parliamentary Friendship Group for India which was positively viewed by the Speaker.

The next day Ambassador inaugurated the premier performance of the eminent Pt. Bhajan Sopori Santoor concert in Mostar.

On 13 March at a meeting with Dr. Mladen Ivanic (MI), Chairman of the BiH Presidency in Sarajevo, Ambassador reiterated the close and cordial bilateral relations and mentioned that India had stood by the people of BiH during the severe floods in May 2014. India had then extended a financial assistance of US\$ 100,000 for the flood victims. Ambassador also congratulated Dr. Ivanic



President Milorad Dodic of RS admiring a gift presented by Ambassador

on the Presidency's initiative in supporting the EU proposal for BiH to join the EU accession process.

MI mentioned his earlier role as the Foreign Minister when he had visited India, some 12 years ago. He expressed his keen desire to visit India again. Ambassador mentioned about the Indian proposal for setting up of 2 CEITs as well as signing of various documents i.e. CEP, abolition of visa requirements for the holders of diplomatic and official passports, Extradition Treaty etc. Dr. Ivanic seemed extremely keen on engaging with India in a closer bilateral cooperation programme. Ambassador informed the Chairman of the Presidency about the International Yoga Day being planned on 21st June all over the world, pursuant to the UN declaration of the day as International Yoga Day. Mr. Ivanic conveyed his best wishes and said that Yoga had a global impact now and even in BiH many people were fond of Yoga and practised the same.

Ambassador also met with Mr. Amer Kapetanovic, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Bilateral



Ambassador discussing bilateral economic cooperation with the mayor of Bijeljina



With the senior advisor to the Mayor of Mostar, in Mayor's Office

Relations. Bilateral cooperation was discussed at the meeting viz.,

- i) Setting up the Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) in Sarajevo and Banja Luka for which a MoU had been sent in July last year. In this regard, the University of Sarajevo and University of Banja Luka had been identified as venues for the Centres.
- ii) Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) 2015 -18: The nodal Ministry is Civil Affairs. Mr. Kapetanovic said that they had been pushing from their side to expedite the matter but now the decision on both will have to be taken at the Entity level i.e. the Federation level, Ministry of Civil Affairs would now decide on signing of these 2 MoUs and move them accordingly.
- iii) Agreement on abolition of visa requirements for holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports - BiH side is mulling over the MOU which will pass through the Presidency before it was conveyed to us.

iv) Ambassador also discussed the possibility of the visit of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of India to BiH in May 2015. The visit will take place after the new Foreign Minister at the State level took office.

v) Extradition and Visa Free Agreements are likely to be finalized for signing during MoS's visit.

Besides the above bilaterals, India's participation as the 'Focus Country' in the Sarajevo Winter Festival was a major highlight of the visit. The Embassy could arrange an array of activities, viz. Yoga, Ayurveda, photo exhibition, screening of documentary films, Santoor concert (3 performances in different places, including one in Mostar) and finally a lively dialogue on the theme "Shift of Focus to India and West in the 21st Century" with the Ambassador at the Academy of Sciences and Arts. On the margins of the Festival, a special Santoor concert was organized for the Bosnian Serb population in the eastern part of Sarajevo. ■

BOSNIA DIARY

By Malay Mishra



LEFT: Ambassador before the map of the Bosnian Valley of the Pyramids. **CENTER:** Ambassador at the iconic old bridge, Stari Most of Mostar. **RIGHT:** Ambassador inside the cave of the Pyramids

My page this time will talk of a very interesting discovery, something extraordinary which I discovered all to myself. But before that let me talk some bit of the wonderful coverage which India got in the Sarajevo Winter Festival.

The Festival had opened in early February and was to conclude in the third week of March. We came in between, for barely four days including one preview show in Mostar where the visiting Santoor Maestro Pandit Bhajan Sopori and his equally eminent accompanists on table and pakhawaj and an able disciple on Santoor, presented their first concert. This was India's second cultural offering in two months to the cultured audience of Mostar, the most politically controversial city of the country. Under the auspices of the Mayor's office,

the show was presented, though the Mayor himself was taken ill, absent for the second time for us, undergoing cardiac surgery, I was told.

But back to focus on India in Sarajevo with the initiative of cultural activist and former MP, Ibrahim Spahic, a great friend of India. Ibrahim had planned the whole setting for us. The second Santoor performance (and the first inaugural show for India's part in the Festival) was held in the prestigious Maison de l'Armee (House of Army) to a rapturous response, with the ovation continuing well beyond the strains of the hundred stringed harp, modified by the master to make it a unique Sufiana music. Pandit Sopori, besides being an excellent artiste, proved to be a fine communicator, the way he picked up a



LEFT: Ms Fatima Sita Somun with her invited guests including the experts of Ayurveda and Yoga and director of Cultural Centre.
RIGHT: Ambassador speaking on the occasion of Indian Santoor presentation at Mostar interpreting for him is Ms Anna



LEFT: Eminent Santoor Group accompanied by tabla.
RIGHT: Senior advisor facilitating the artists after the presentation in Mostar



LEFT: Mr Ibrahim Spahic opening the press conference to introduce the Focus India programmes.
RIGHT: A view of the audience at the premises at the premier of Santoor Maestro in Sarajevo

musical harmony with the audience, indeed a concert to savour.

But then we also had Yoga and Ayurveda seminars, workshops, consultations and the two knowledgeable experts sent to the Festival had the time of their life. Never had they been mobbed by a totally different clientele, the experience was simply overwhelming for them, and for me too, to see the big interest in Indian traditional health systems among the people of Sarajevo. That makes our task easier when we prepare for the

International Yoga Day on 21 June since we have developed some interesting local contacts on the Yoga front.

The photo exhibition on “Vibrant India’ and documentary film show, part of India’s participation, were held without much of a response. The reason, as the wise Ibrahim and our dear friend Fatima Cita Soumon were to modestly explain, was that too many activities were going on at the same time as part of the Festival which kept the small

group of cultural aficionados of Sarajevo much occupied.

The scene at the Academy of Sciences and Arts was however different with the 'Dialogue'. I was the protagonist with the President of the Academy setting me on the field with a thought-provoking topic, 'Shift of Focus to Asia and India in the 21st Century', quite appropriate to India being the focus country in the Festival, with a range of diplomats, officials, intellectuals, social activists and media in the audience. My critical remarks followed by the interactive session turned out to be highly interesting. And I discovered another streak of the Bosnian mind, their intellectual curiosity to know and understand the 'new world'. Whether they can still conjure of Asia and India as substantiation of the new world is yet another subject of discussion. But the point was well made, I thought.

The discovery, however, that I mentioned at the outset was something an Indian friend had spoken to me in passing. He had heard from some of his friends in the Balkans, and nothing more. But for me, it was stupendous. The Pyramids, not one, but five of them in a constellation, the Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun (Visocica Hill), the Moon (Plejesevica) and three others, laid out neatly on the road beyond from Sarajevo to Zenica and can be partly visible from the highway, were discovered by chance by Bosnian researcher based in Houston, Semir Osmanagic in April, 2005. These have been partially discovered and a tunnel, called the labyrinth, dug



Participating in the dialogue at Academy of Sciences and Arts

underneath which travels nearly 1 km. now but has a lot of underground networks as is being uncovered by a voluntary foundation, the Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun Foundation.

I found my way inside the tunnel accompanied by the guide and Miklos, my man Friday. We were to stumble upon many more interesting physical and geological phenomena, the point of meditation, the zone of good health, of deep breathing, the caves of nourishing water which could cure the body of many ailments. Such magical sites awaited us on our way to discovering the underpass of the Pyramids.

Osmanagic's work over the past few years has entailed intensive research in the Maya world. Several international conferences have since taken place and archaeological finds are still being unearthed, though the scientificity of the Pyramids is yet to be proved once and for all. Osmanagic and his team are in the process of preparing the excavation, restoration and permanent protection of the entire Pyramid complex. Though there is still lack of unanimity on dating of the Pyramids as geological testing and dating of the massive monolithic rocks forming the substance are yet to be scientifically ascertained, such discovery has not been disregarded either by scientists. The modest claim that they date back to at least 5000 years and is the most ancient and largest Group of Pyramids of Europe is in itself astounding. Definitely a place worth visiting and if proved conclusively, could forever change the face of BiH and indeed the whole of Europe. ■

INTER-FAITH DISCUSSIONS

"The Pursuit of Truth and its relevance in life"

ASCC, 4 March 2015

Inaugural address by HE Dr László Szabó Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade

I believe we are filling a gap here and this is a fantastic initiative, so I am very happy to contribute to this discussion.

Let me give you a quote at the beginning, 'there will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions and no peace among the religions without dialogue among religions.' I believe this is exactly what are you doing here today, so I wish you really all the best in this quest.

These dialogues are not only important between nations actually in these days but within nations also. The globalization, the migration of people all around the world is really creating tension between people even within countries. Just look at the recent events in Western Europe in the last few months. You can see that this tension is really growing and without proper discussions, without understanding each other, there will be no peace. So, I wish all of us all the best

in this quest to understand each other, to understand where we are coming from, to understand the values of our thinking, to be open to each other's feelings, emotions and thinking. This is really vital.

India is probably the most appropriate country to talk about religion because all the five major religions of the world are in this big melting pot of India and India's culture is really a good example to show that all these religions can live together in peace and understanding of each other. Therefore, I believe that the fact that the Indian Embassy has taken on the role to create this discussion is really exemplary. Moreover, I hope, Hungary and the rest of Europe will learn from India's openness to religion and welcoming all these religions.



Dr László Szabó, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade speaking

Religions and cultures do not talk to each other, people talk to each other and that is the way I think we have to encourage ourselves, we have to encourage our relatives, our co-workers to do this on the streets, in the shops, in sport events, in the evenings over dinner, wherever we go to encourage this discussion, because it is us who will have to take responsibility in sharing our ideas and understanding.

Let me finish also with a quote from Buddhist philosopher, Daisaku Ikeda; 'Let us extinguish the flames of hatred with a flood of dialogue'. So I wish you a very good, a very interesting and inspirational dialogue for tonight and let us continue this dialogue for the rest of our lives. Thank you. ■

Ms Ganga Bhagirathi Upasika Vedic Foundation of the Himalayas

Almost everyone, including scientists, religionists and philosophers, are engaged in a noble search for truth. Yet, what is truth and how do we find it?

According to the Yoga Sutras by Patanjali, there are different ways in which we arrive at knowledge, truth; there are different ways to understand and respond to the environment. These ways of 'knowing' are set in a hierarchical mode of processing information in which sensory perception (utilizing the five senses) is considered to be an inferior form of awareness, followed by the conceptual mode (rational, linguistic) and finally by the supramental mode which is intuitive in nature and which reveals to us the true nature of reality.

When our consciousness is identified with the physical body (sthula sharira) then we are said to experience the waking state (jagrat). When consciousness is identified with the subtle body (sukshma sharira) then we experience the dream state. When consciousness is identified with the causal body (karana sharira) then we experience the deep sleep state. The common aspect shared by these three states of being is the 'absence of knowledge' of the true nature of reality. It is emphasized that it is only in the super-conscious state (turiya) that consciousness breaks free from the limitations of all the bodies and takes cognizance of the Absolute Reality (Brahman).

Observation and sensory perception serve as suitable methods of processing information when it comes to the lower functions of consciousness such as thinking,

emotions, volition. However our senses are limited in their range of processing information and cannot always solve all problems, especially those of a metaphysical nature. Reasoning and logic take place through the agency of the intellect (buddhi) and so serve as useful modes when we cannot rely on our senses to provide us with adequate information. However, the intellect has been found to have its limitations too.

The super-conscious experience on the other hand, moves beyond the faculty of the senses, the mind and the intellect. It enables one to have 'direct' experience of reality without being influenced by the conditioned filters of the mind. The mind and intellect are then meant to serve as useful intermediaries to organize and communicate such esoteric knowledge.

One can clearly see how the age of pure intuition which defined the early Vedic and Upanishadic thinking was then followed by the age of reason which organized the Vedic insights into scriptural, metaphysical philosophies. This period saw the rise of many conflicting schools of thought, each of which founded itself on the Vedas but used its text as a weapon of reason against the others. Today's age on the other hand is defined more by pursuits of experimental science.

Early Vedic thinking has however been more holistic, with a tendency towards the synthesis and unity of all knowledge. So by establishing itself in the higher,

supramental mode of being, the Vedic experience has very early in history discovered the eternal and spiritual fundamental reality that lies beneath all the formation and movement constitutes the apparent physical reality.

This kind of experience tends to surpass ordinary sensing, perceiving, conceptualizing, reasoning or understanding and is unlike anything remembered or imagined. It is, the Hindu mystics say, pure intuition, pure consciousness, 'sat-chit-ananda'. Yet, even this description of the Supreme Experience is simply akin to the finger pointing to the moon, which is not the moon. It can never be conceptualized or described as it is beyond all thought and imagination. It is nothing within the mind or outside it, nothing in the past, present or future for all these are merely conceptions in time and space.

In the context of the Vedas, 'sravas' literally means 'hearing'. From this is derived 'sravana, sruti, sruta', meaning "revealed" or knowledge that comes through the opening of the mind's channels. Drsti- direct perception of the truth and Sruti- direct hearing of the truth are hence the two chief powers and faculties of that advanced consciousness, which corresponds to the old Vedic idea of the Truth, the Ritam. Whoever is thus at this advanced level of consciousness, possesses and becomes invariably open to the faculties of drsti and sruti and is then considered the Rishi, sage or seer of Truth.

satyam paramo dharmah - the truth as supreme dharma
ahimsa paramo dharmah - non violence as supreme dharma

TRUTH AND NON VIOLENCE - are the supreme dharmas (supreme laws) to reach the truth. They are the base to develop true vision and understanding.

Reality is the Truth and truth is reality. All that is subject to the play of the senses and emotions are not real.

This you can only understand in turya avastha, through meditation that was designed by the Rishis and Siddhas and their disciples.

Br̥hac ca tad divyam acintya-rūpaṁ sūkṣmāc ca tat sūkṣma-taraṁ vibhati, dūrāt sudūre tad ihāntike ca paśyatsv ihaiva nihitam guhāyām (3.1.7):

Vast is That, divine, its form unthinkable; it shines out subtler than the subtle: very far and farther than farness, it is here close to us, for those who have the vision it is here even in this world; it is here, hidden in the secret heart.

Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.7

We are encouraged to practice meditation as a means to experience the truth. ■

Dr. László Tóth-Soma Bhaktivedanta College

For me, a follower of Gaudiya Vaishnava line of Hinduism and Vedic Sciences, the truth can be properly understood in the light of the absolute Truth. I think all of us are very enthusiastic in pursuit of not only the truth, but of this absolute Truth too. The search for the truth is an essential part of human existence, but the proper dimension in which this absolute Truth can be found is not always easy for us. Actually, that is why the source of existence has been given to us by the Vedas, especially the Upanishads and the Sattvic Puranas and, of course, other world religions' scriptures which contain directive principles regarding this absolute Truth.

The first step of this quest is to look far beyond the parameters of this material world with the help of the scriptures, with the guidance of saints, bonafide gurus, and spiritual teachers. The second is to think of and understand the difference between the material and transcendental realm. And the third is to meditate on that transcendence especially on its essence, the topmost transcendental personality of Para-Brahman and serve him because he is Satyam Param, Vibha Bhagavata himself, the topmost

absolute Truth. Of course, the different paths shown by Vedanta think differently on the essence and final basics of this transcendence. Some say that it is a non-material energy or Brahman without any valuation, without any forms and qualities. Others say that he is a Para-Brahman in our heart. And we, the representatives of Gaudiya Vaishnava line say that on the basis of the scriptures like Bhagavad-Gita, the essence and the basics of this transcendence is the supreme personality of God that we call Krishna containing both Brahman and Para Brahman aspects.

Until the stage of Mukti or Moksha or as in Patanjali's words 'Kaivalya', which means liberation from this material world, the Vedic method of the pursuit of the absolute Truth are almost the same. The austerities (tapah), the study of the self through Vedic literature and devotion to God are universal methods for those people who want to reach or have this absolute Truth. Actually, we can find these three items in almost every spiritual and transcendental path universally regardless of the type of religion. Our food, our entertainment, the knowledge that we have, our relationships, our education and the mode of thinking are

deeply under the control of the Rajasic and Tamasic influences.

The first aspect of the acceptance of spiritual life is the acceptance of life based on harmony. Dharma is a universal law for all human being which has four principles, I will explain them later on. And here is the pursuit of Truth and its relevance to life. As from Tamasic, ignorant life comes illusion, from Rajasic, passionate life comes pain and misery. Those from Sattvic and Dharmic life, which is the life in goodness, directly comes knowledge and happiness. These are what have been searched for by humanity from millennia.

The main principles of Dharmic life are namely: austerity (tapah) which can loosen our attachments to the material

world. The second is compassion (daya) which helps us to love every living entity. The third is purity (saucha) by which our behaviour and consciousness can be purified. And the last principle of Dharmic life is the practice of truthfulness (satya) which can help us to stay always on the path of truth. Unfortunately, these qualities are absent from our modern society.

The bonafide practice of spiritual search for the absolute Truth results in a Dharmic and happy life. However, the search for the Truth does not necessarily arise from a well organised Dharmic behaviour. That is why I suggest to our revered Vedic society to help lay people conceive the acceptance of this spiritual quest for the absolute Truth, which can be the source of their high level of happiness. ■

Prof. Dr. László Fórizs Dharma Gate Buddhist College

I will discuss Truth not only from the Buddhist perspective, but also from the Vedic perspective and even also by the scientific perspective. Because I think, our view of perspectives should be as wide as possible if you would like to be faithful to your ancestors. So, let's start with the Vedic definition of Truth with a quotation from the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, which is one of the earliest.

"It [the brahman] still did not become fully developed. So it created the Law (dharma), a form superior to and surpassing itself. And the Law is here the ruling power standing above the ruling power. Hence, there is nothing higher than the Law. Therefore, a weaker man makes demands of a stronger man by appealing to the Law, just as one does by appealing to a king. Now, the Law is nothing but the truth. Therefore, when a man speaks the truth, people say that he speaks the Law; and when a man speaks the Law, people say that he speaks the truth. They are really the same thing." (Translated by Patrick Olivelle)

This idea of the self-transcending is so unique to the Vedic way of thinking that it is very important to emphasise it. Therefore, he created a form, which in a sense is exceeding itself.

The next one is what is missing from our modern epoch, an all encompassing view of Truth and Law. Continuing with another quotation from the same Upaniṣad, which is about a very famous event, when King Janaka organised a kind of



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competition for the wise. The important thing is that Gārgī is a woman and it contains the discussion of two questions.

[Gārgī Vācsaknavī:] "The things above the sky, the things below the earth, and the things between the earth and the sky, as well as all those things people here refer to as past, present, and future—on what, Yājñavalkya, are all these woven back and forth?"

[Yājñavalkya:] "...On space, Gārgī, are all these woven back and forth."

[Gārgī:] "On what, then, is space woven back and forth?"

[Yājñavalkya:] "That, Gārgī, is the imperishable ...at whose command the sun and the moon stand apart. This is the imperishable, Gārgī, at whose command the earth and the sky stand apart. This is the imperishable, Gārgī, at whose command seconds and hours, days and nights, fortnights and months, seasons and years stand apart. This is the imperishable, Gārgī, at whose command rivers flow from the snowy mountains in their respective directions, some to the east and others to the west. This is the imperishable, Gārgī, at whose command people flatter donors, and gods are dependent on patrons of sacrifices, and forefathers on ancestral offerings. ... On this very imperishable, Gārgī, space is woven back and forth." (Tr. P. Olivelle)

Our next quote is from the 20th century by A. N.

Whitehead providing us a direct insight into depth as yet unspoken intuition and mystical knowledge.

“The use of philosophy is to maintain an active novelty of fundamental ideas illuminating the social system. It reverses the slow descent of accepted thought toward inactive commonplace. If you like to phrase it so, philosophy is mystical. For mysticism is direct insight into depth as yet unspoken. But the purpose of philosophy is to rationalize mysticism: not by explaining it away, but by the introduction of novel characterizations, rationally coordinated. Philosophy is akin to poetry, and both of them seek to express that ultimate good sense which we term civilization. In each case there is reference to form beyond the direct meanings of words. Poetry allies itself to metre, philosophy to mathematic pattern.” (Modes of Thought, Cambridge, CUP, 1938, 237)

As we can see religion art and science went hand in hand in the past. There are some examples from India, for example ritual geometry of the Śulbasūtras, Baudhāyana's theorem (also known as Pythagorean theorem), Kerala (ritual) school of mathematics: trigonometry, power series expansion, (proto)calculus and the extraordinary mathematical inventions of Ramanujan who was a deeply religious man believing that his mathematical ideas are coming from his God.

Telling the Truth nowadays is more like in the hand of institutions, like universities, monasteries as both Buddhists and Sri Ravishankar founded monasteries.

As a reconciliation of Vedic and early Buddhist thoughts we will now take a look at process and participation in the Rigveda.

Process in the Rigveda is participatory creation which is shown through the allegory of weaving.

The very essence of creation and that of process is participation. It is the moral of the image of weaving as an allegory of sacrifice and creation itself throughout the Rigveda, and a form of its statement goes back at least to Dīrghatamas, who also uses the imagery of weaving in the context of sacrificial contest (RV 1, 164, 5).

The relevance of process philosophy for a better understanding of the teachings of the Buddha is not surprising. In professor Gombrich's words:

“The most basic point of the Buddha's teaching ... is that everything in our lives changes: that most of us have no experience of anything unchanging. ... But is change random? Surely not. Even if we and everything around us change all the time, life could not go on if we did not

recognize continuities at every step. The change, in other words is not random. The Buddha axiomatized this in the proposition that nothing exists without a cause. Another, simpler way of saying that all phenomena exhibit non-random change is to say that everything is a process. That is indeed, in my view, the Buddha's position.” (R. Gombrich: What the Buddha Thought, Equinox, London, 2009, p.10)

In fact some scholars realized the relevance of process thought for Buddhist philosophy before Professor Gombrich. Among them are Professor Kenneth K. Inada and the author of this lecture, too.

The search for a fundamental ontology has a long history. It had been a long and difficult journey and led to new and very surprising insights. Not only the interconnectedness of ontology and epistemology became manifest but also the collapse of the substantialist dogma of natural philosophy became inevitable. Here are some of the most important steps:

To be is to be perceived (*esse est percipi*) – George Berkeley

To be is to be felt (*esse est senti*) – (W. James & A. N. Whitehead)

To be is to be empty (*dharmāḥ eva śūnyāḥ*) (Nāgārjuna & Candrakīrti)

Let us elaborate upon the last member of the sequence only (as Candrakīrti did it, commenting on MMK XIII: 8): As it is said in the great Ratnakūṭasūtra, “Things are not empty because of emptiness; to be a thing is to be empty. Things are not without defining characteristics through characteristiclessness; to be a thing is to be without a defining characteristic... [W]hoever understands things in this way, Kāśyapa, will understand perfectly how everything has been explained to be in the middle path.”

Time is not an ultimate category in the description of nature. Take a look at John Archibald Wheeler's vision of reality. The absolute central point would seem to be this: The Universe had to have a way to come into being out of nothingness, with no prior laws, no Swiss watchworks, no nucleus of crystallization to help it - as on a more modest level, we believe, life came into being out of lifeless matter with no prior life to guide the process.

When we say "out of nothingness" we do not mean out of the vacuum of physics. The vacuum of physics is loaded with geometrical structure and vacuum fluctuations and virtual pairs of particles. The Universe is already in existence when we have such a vacuum. No, when we speak of nothingness we mean nothingness: neither structure, nor law, nor plan.

There is a connection between early Buddhist thought and the foundations of physics.

“It would be very interesting to know what led ancient thinkers to recognize — if they did recognize — the possibility of an anhomomorphic logic. They cannot have had access to the kind of technology that has led in modern times to quantum physics. Are there then other experiences that one could point to which were in fact available to them and to which anhomomorphic inference is more suited than homomorphic inference? If so, we might gain a better intuition for the microworld by ourselves paying more attention to those experiences.” (Rafael Sorkin)

Let me finish with a poem from Dhammapada.

*‘The monk who dwells in kindness,
with faith in the Buddha’s teaching,
may attain the peaceful state,
the blissful cessation of conditioning.’*

“The verse is in fact saying that kindness is salvific, and it is surely no coincidence that the term for nirvana, ‘the peaceful state’, is the same as that used at the opening of the Metta Sutta. Thus the author of the Dhammapada verse apparently interprets the Metta Sutta to mean that it is kindness which will get one to nirvana. Tradition holds, of course, that the author of both poems is the Buddha himself.” ■

Dr. József Szécsi Christian-Jewish Society

Truth in the Bible / In the Old Testament and the New Testament

What is Truth?

At the interrogation of Jesus by Pilate He said “All who are on the side of truth listen to my voice”. Pilate then said: what is truth? (Jesus used the word ‘emet’, while Pilate used the word ‘alétheja’).

The meaning of truth in the Old Testament

Translating the Old Testament we face the language with difficulty in that our concepts do not match the one-time Hebrew concepts. Specially in the case of truth = emet. In general it means something that can be trusted, that is valid. A thing one can rely on, that one can follow, and even needs to follow. The term “true, straight, reliable” can be used for things, facts, people. Emet used for people can also mean remaining faithful, and being sincere. Being true in the case of people is stated by judging their behaviour, as it can be experienced. So truthfulness of men is the same as him being faithful, reliable, and expectable. The talk of a man is true not only because it is according to facts, but also because he is reliable and faithful, and his words are trustworthy. So it is quite normal, that the truthfulness of a man is proved by his love.

Emet is a quality of God. The Lord is the true God, because in comparison with the other gods (fetishes), Israel was persuaded of his Power, and because of the testament He made with Israel, again and again He proved His truthfulness and faithfulness. It is the Lord’s behaviour that proves that being true means being faithful. Also that true words are routed in trustworthiness and in faithfulness. In this respect Truth meant the same as God’s Law, the Torah. This means that the primary source to learn truth for man is God’s Law.

As the early Jewish used the term, God’s law is truth. What

God says is always reliable, credible. Therefore, man’s aspiration is not only to mentally understand truth, but also to perform what God requests.

The Truth of God can be known only by the guileless and devoted, who are introduced to truth by God Himself. From sinners the truth is hidden. In this way, we can understand that the Prayer House of the Qumran community was called the House of Truth. All who joined were supposed to teach the truth. Besides translating truth to deeds, it was also said that the members of Qumran community, the children of truth were compared with the children of falsehood, the sinners. The devoted Qumran believer also new that he can translate truth to action only with the help of God.

In the time of doomsday, God’s truth (or we can say faithfulness or trustworthiness) will be revealed in a special way. To the guileless, He will give justification, and all their actions will be purified. So also in this later understanding, the Truth of God is manifested in love. Eventually the whole world will praise God for his Truth.

The meaning of truth in the New Testament

In the New Testament truth is called “alétheja”. It’s meaning compared to emet is widened. The meaning of “true unveiled reality” is added.

Alétheja also means somebody being true and reliable. God is true because He keeps His promises and helps. According to Paul, truth is found by the Jewish in the Torah, by the unbeliever in the facts of the reality of the world, and by the Christian in the gospel. The opposite of alétheja in this meaning is wickedness (adikia).

Besides alétheja means a statement being true, and in this way the opposite of false (pszeudosz). The gospel is the voice

of truth as Truth itself is embodied in it. To come to the knowledge of truth is the same as becoming a Christian. Those drawn to false teachings go against truth and will be lost.

In the writings of John, the apostle, *alétheia* can not be separated from Jesus, who revealed the truth. Not only because Jesus preached only truth and nothing else. Also because He is Truth and without him Truth can not be reached. As the father God revealed Himself through Jesus, therefore the truth revealed by Jesus is God's Truth. This Truth of God was received by humanity as a gift in the form of Jesus, the embodied teaching. Receiving truth faithfully

means salvation, its rejection brings perdition.

"What is truth?" The answer to this question could be: Truth is somebody, a person, who possesses truth. If we realize the eternal laws of our existence, the law of love, than we follow God, who is Truth himself. When Jesus says He is the way, the truth and the life, He also talks about the way, which is God's Way. The way of God's love, His will and if we like His commands. To walk God's way means the Truth that emanates from Him till the end of times and beyond into the hearts of human beings. So truth is God himself. We human beings are true if we live by our conviction. ■

Father Mahima Raj Anthony of the Catholic community

I am grateful to God for the gift of this day and grateful to the Indian Embassy for organising such a wonderful event. A fitting title is chosen for this evening, 'The Pursuit of Truth and its Relevance'. And I am expected to highlight on how we, the Catholics, strive to pursue this truth. I try to present the way how I think would be the pursuit of truth.

The Cricket World cup of 2015 is going on in Australia and New Zealand and it started on 14th of February and it will end in the end of this month, the 29th of March. This is an event that occurs once in four years. This year 14 teams of different nations are participating in this mega event. And all the teams are working hard, all the nations are backing their teams. All the fans are supporting their players and the players themselves keep their best to be fit physically as well as mentally. When the actual moment comes for them to perform, they give their best that at the end of the match one team wins, one team loses and sometimes it is a draw. Winning and losing is part of the game. What is interesting, that all the teams, whether weak or strong, are putting their efforts to their maximum in order to hold this trophy. Without effort, without struggle, without pain, no success is possible.

Respected members, it is an awesome moment, when we achieve this higher goal, this higher mission in our lives. It gives us happiness and joy for becoming successful persons, every pursuit therefore indicates a particular goal that we wish to achieve. Our pursuit for today is for the truth. This is not an object that is visible nor any other object that is available in the shops. No one has ever defined what it is in itself. We realised that our mind is not capable to comprehend the



Fr Mahima Raj Anthony

reality of truth in its totality and at the end we realise that it is a spiritual reality. Hence, why not make a spiritual pursuit towards this truth, experience the power of truth, begin the journey.

Various faiths of the world have played significant roles in the history of humanity. All the religions have emphasised that the absolute Truth, the incomprehensible truth is God. This God is the fullness of all truth. He is defined by various attributes: God is love, almighty, everlasting, supreme, divine, good, omnipresent, omnipotent, gracious... so many definitions. In fact, all the religions of the world have

emphasised such attributes to God, but only differ in showing the way towards God. An ordinary seeker of truth is in a dilemma sometimes in choosing a religion that fulfils his aspirations, after all, all religions show directions towards the truth. Mahatma Gandhi once said, 'Truth is one, paths are many'.

From this point, I would like to highlight about the religion that I or any other Christian chose to walk, the religion of Christianity. Why was it appealing to me or to any other Christian? It is because of the invitation; 'come to me all, who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest'. For an ordinary person who is burdened with his daily struggles, pains, failures, disappointments, this invitation is a soothing medicine. Yet, remember, coming to Jesus is not through comfortable means, but through the Holy Cross.

At times, it all looks good, meaning that at times we feel happy to go closer to him. At times, the road seems to be not clear, only the present looks clear but the end of the journey

is not clear. It is in such moments that new doubts arise in our minds whether we have made the correct choice or not. Where to go? At such critical moments, when the human intellect gets confused, there comes the heavenly assistance in the form of faith.

For Christians the faith charged with the word of God becomes a panacea to the confusions and doubts. St Paul defines faith in the Bible, 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' Now, with the heavenly assistance of faith, Christians move for that destination to find. He reveals Himself, "My son, my daughter, I am the Way, I am the Truth and the Life." That means Jesus is the Way, Jesus is the Truth and Jesus is the Life. All our pursuit is towards Him. We are actually seeking Him in the form of faith. As Jesus says "I am the Truth". He says, whoever wants to be my disciples, let them take up my Cross and follow me. A disciple is someone who follows the Master, who fulfils the wishes of his Master, who wants to be obedient to his Master or who imitates the lifestyle of his Master. Jesus does not instruct his followers to carry their daily crosses to follow Him, but he Himself showed the way to carry the cross for the life of humanity.

The Old Testament made instructions, the commandments of ten, Jesus simply defines the ten commandments in two commandments; 'You shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind'. And the second is; 'You shall love your neighbour as you love yourself'. Love of your neighbour

according to Jesus involves even these instructions; 'do good to those who hate you', 'bless those who curse you', 'pray for those who persecute you'. In other words, Jesus suggests that we need to break our ego, our selfishness, pride, anger and all other elements that are blocking our spiritual relationship with God and have a relationship with humanity. Jesus expects his followers 'to love others the way he loves, love another the way I have loved you. By this all will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.' Jesus then clearly reveals 'If you hold to my teachings, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.' No more chains, no more struggle, no more pursuit, no more search for Truth. Jesus is the Truth, there is no further way, He is the way. The moment we experience Him, we experience Truth itself as the heavenly experience. We pursue this Truth. He is extending His hands to hold us, even to embrace us. As He embraces us, He reveals Himself. Now we realise, 'I am the Way, the Truth, the Life'. When He was in this world, the last moment in front of Pilates, he said 'For this reason I was born, for this reason I came to this world to testify to the Truth, and everyone who belongs to this Truth listens to my voice.' Then Pilates listened to these words from Jesus and in confusion he asked; 'What is Truth?' He did not understand what is Truth, he was confused. Only those who follow obediently the instructions of Jesus will become His disciples.

Because only they who will know Jesus is the Truth and once they know the Truth, there is the true freedom. Hence their obedience is the key to freedom. I pray that all people may recognise the Truth one day. ■

Mr Zoltán Szabolcs Sulok President of Organisation of Muslims in Hungary

As we have already seen from the speakers, the perception of truth can be very different in the different religions and the way for a believer aiming for the truth can be very different. That is why I would like to focus more on the dialogue itself and the principles of the dialogue. Because if we start to discuss the truth, we might not arrive at an agreement, but if we focus on the principles of an interfaith dialogue, God willing, we will be able to sit together and work together.

In Islam it is a very important starting point in the interfaith dialogue that there shall be no compulsion in religion. I didn't quote it, but in the Holy Qur'an and in the Sunnah, which are the two basic



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sources of Islam there are a lot of quotations encouraging the dialogue with other believers. I would like to quote some. From the Qur'an first, "O mankind [God speaks to man in general, to followers of different faith], indeed we created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted". Another one, also from the Qur'an, this is also addressing all human beings; "And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed,

So this is addressing all human beings. And the third one from the Qur'an; because there are some examples for this dialogue "Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes – from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. Allah only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion – [forbids] that you make allies of them. And whoever makes allies of them, then it is those who are the wrongdoers." And we can take some quotation from the Sunnah, the Sunnah is the life of Prophet Mohammed, his teachings, his verbal and non-verbal teachings. And Prophet Mohammed said "O people, Your Lord is One and your father is one. [Because according to Islam, all people are the descendants of Adam.] All of you are traced back to Adam, and Adam was created from dust. No privileges of a certain person over the other save by righteous deeds". And the last one from the Sunnah; "The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one". And from Islam, from different teachings, we can take out some guidelines, some basis for this interfaith dialogue.

From the Islamic point of view, it can be the oneness of God, because all the religions, somehow, arrive ? that there is only one God. The mission of the prophets can be another basis, or the common origin of mankind because as human beings we are all the same. And if we interact with each other, we will realise there is no difference between us. And also, acting against sin and transgression, for example atheism, materialism, social decay can hold a lots of problems and lots of things that we have to or should stand up against.

We have to speak some words about the purpose of interfaith dialogue. We can list some, first of all, eliminating ignorance, because ignorance is a very dangerous thing; it can hinder life, it can hinder the dialogue and it can hinder peace and destroy the world. And also for the interfaith dialogue, the purpose can be dispersing fear. From the Islamic point of view, there is islamophobia, there is a general fear in the world, people are cautious with Muslims and they are afraid of Muslims and we have to dispel this. But in other regions, there are other fears from other people, but we have to dispel all these fears. And also, we have to eliminate prejudices, because humans tend to have prejudices without knowing each other, that this person should be like that without speaking to him, without listening to him, sitting with him, eating with him, so we have to eliminate that. Interfaith dialogue is a very suitable mean to do that. And from the Islamic point of view, in the dialogue, we have to show that Islam is not the alternative enemy, because in the course of history there are certain enemies; there was

Communism, the Arabs, there were other people and nowadays, in the media somehow, Islam is the present enemy. But with the interfaith dialogue we can show the world what Islam is in reality.

And also we have to collaborate in common interests and aims, because as human beings we have a lot in common. There is poverty, we have to fight against it, there is persecution, we have to fight against it. And we can list lots of problems which is not good for anybody and as human beings we have to fight against these kind of things. But at the same time, we have to stress that interfaith dialogue is not certain things. For example, it should not be a missionary work, because the purpose is not to convert other people to different faiths, to my faith or to any other faith. And it's not asserting our own truth or imposing it on others, because the perception of truth can be different. And it should not be criticizing or mocking the faith of others and rituals of others. In my religion it is like this, and it's very noble, and yours is not like that, so it should not be the way. And we should not belittle or humiliate each other.

And that is way the principles of interfaith dialogue where everyone should speak about himself, his or her religion, not the religion of the others. And if criticism is given, opportunity should also be given to respond to every point of the criticism and it should be a fair play like in sport. And in participating in the interfaith dialogue, one should restrain from offensive and defensive participation because it should be on equal level. Going on with the principles, in the interfaith dialogue no one can be the target of hidden agenda of the others, because it might happen, but it should not happen. No one can be the target of international abuse, because it also could happen very easily. And last but not the least, it is not necessary to initiate dialogue with everyone, but we have to look for suitable ones as not everyone is suitable for dialogue because it needs some manner, it needs some understanding. That's why we have to look for those parties who are capable and able to do that.

And interfaith dialogue in practice means we have to present our own faith and more importantly we have to look for the common ground and values which are common in all faiths, all religions, in all human beings. And we have to discover common fields for action because the purpose should be to improve the world so we have to do something, not just speak and sit, because it is very comfortable, very nice, but if it does not result in action, it is useless spending time. And we have to cooperate for the common good within the boundaries of our own faith, not to let anyone feel that I am pressed or I am taken out of my religion, out of my faith, so we have to find a way that everyone in his or her faith can work together with other people without violating the boundaries of the religion. ■

Zoltán Katona Art of Living Foundation

I respect the divine in you. This is the word how we welcome each other in the Art of Living Foundation. This was founded by Sri Sri Ravishankar. He was born in 1956 in India, the southern part of India. At the age of four he was often found reciting Vedic wisdoms and it was very clear that he was not an average child. When he was seventeen years old he finished his studies in Vedic literature and physics and later on founded an international organisation, the Art of Living. Today this is one of the biggest non-governmental organisations in the world.

One of the aims of the organisation is to reach a violence-free society and a stress-free society. Sri Sri Ravishankar always emphasised the importance of breath, because breath is something which leaves your body and your mind and your emotions. In the Art of Living we say that there are seven layers, seven levels of existence. First is what you see, it's the physical body, the second is breath itself, the third one is the mind, the fourth is the intellect, which is the function of the mind, so for example you sit there and you are listening to me and judging 'oh, he is right, oh, he is wrong', so this is the function of the intellect. The memory is the fifth level, the ego the sixth. And then the self.

With the help of the breath in meditation you can harmonise yourself and find yourself in your inner self. So, I think the truth is the knowledge of the self, the spiritual aspects of life.

What is spirituality? Spirituality is when you are asking, 'Okay, why are we here? What are our purpose here on the planet?' So, the answers probably you can find within yourself.

So the question is how? Let's move on. We usually accept other culture's food or technical innovations or films or anything else, but we are a little bit reluctant to accept the wisdom or the culture of the others. And this kind of events help us to go on this path. So don't be blind, open your eyes and accept other people's knowledge and you will see that the divine, the God is everywhere.

So gorgeous masters or teachers, if I say so, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, I think they are the same consciousness in a different form. So, we heard here that these people are saying almost the same, the same messages about love, about God. However, we tend to search God somewhere outside. We are looking up or we want to grab something. And we never go inside or we rarely go inside, however, I assume that most of you actually do this. So, when you enter into your heart, then prayer begins and when prayer begins then God is there automatically. So you will find all yourself by himself, and the truth as well.

One day a person was searching for something near the lamp post. What are you doing? I lost my key. You lost your key. You lost it here? Actually, if I remember correctly, last time I saw it in the bathroom. So why didn't you go there? Why don't you check out the bathroom? Well, you know, in the bathroom it's too dark there. I don't want to go there. So sometimes, when you close your eyes, you feel it's too dark inside. So most people are reluctant to close their eyes and look into themselves and find their own self. And these times some of the people may take drugs and alcohol or something else outside. But obviously, there is no way to do so. You can only find the truth in yourself, within yourself. So when you go deep into yourself, you can see that you are the truth and you are the transcended self. ■

Mr. Gábor Malaya Rongits Chinmoy Inner School

Sri Chinmoy opened the Parliament of World Religions in 1993, on its 100th anniversary. He offered a brief silent prayer and meditation, and I think today if he were here, he would do the same.

Here we all search for the Truth. What is Truth? Sri Chinmoy writes in his poem:

"O Lord, where is the Truth?
Where Your Beloved is.

Who is my Beloved, who?
In whom your life is peace."

"The simple truth:

God loves me.

The simpler truth:

God needs me.

The simplest truth:

God and I

Love each other's heart

And need each other's life."

In human life truth is often

founded on power. Who has more power, has the truth. He also enforces that truth with his power.

In divine life Truth is founded upon love. The real Truth we can understand in divine love. This love unites us beyond all our seeming differences, and creates oneness. In the heart's divine love we can realize the Truth, that all great Masters and scriptures teach, that „everything, and everybody is one”.

The heart does not ask from where you have come, what is the colour of your skin, what is your view on the world, what is your religion. The heart only sees, or rather feels that the same reality exists in you and in me. And that there are far more things uniting us, than dividing us.

Sri Chinmoy writes: "Because I love mankind, God loves me. Because I love God, Truth loves me. Because I love Truth, I really and truly love myself."

Because I love Truth, I love myself. Why? Because the Creator and the creation are one. Divine truth breathes in man. Man, in his real existence an expression of Truth. God's reality is manifested through each human being in an unparalleled and unique way. God wants to express Himself through each human being in a unique way. Each human being has to love himself, because in him is God, using him, and fulfilling Himself through him.

"this unparalleled truth has to permeate each man." – writes Sri Chinmoy

There is a sufi saying: „The search for truth is the first step to finding it. After the search comes the understanding, that truth also is searching for the seeker."

"Truth is in all, but love is all." – says Sri Chinmoy

Saint Augustine said: "Love, and then do as you like." "Whether I speak the language of man or angels, if I have no love, than I am only an ore



Mr Gábor Malaya Rongits
of Chinmoy Inner School

with sound." But if man is filled with the love of God, then his words and deeds become divine. Divine love itself will guide him.

Love is the only law, love is the Truth in whole, that shines above all earthly human truths.

What does this mean in our everyday life? That we need to realize only one thing in life, and that is divine love. Pure love for ourself, for people, and for God.

Sri Chinmoy writes:

"Love is not a thing to understand.

Love is not a thing to feel.

Love is not a thing to give and receive.

Love is a thing only to become

And eternally be."

"What is the purpose of life?

The purpose of life is to manifest the inner divinity. The purpose of life is to become a conscious instrument, a

chosen instrument of God. The purpose of life is to manifest the highest Truth which we embody. First we have to see the Truth and feel the Truth. Then we have to reveal and manifest the Truth."

"The purpose of life
Is to become one with
the Absolute Truth.

This Absolute Truth
Is God the infinite Compassion
And
God the infinite Satisfaction."

I would like to conclude my talk with a few quotes from my Master:

"A God-seeker
Knows the Truth.

A God-lover
Becomes the Truth itself."

"When you see the truth,
you will know the path.
When you feel the truth,
you will belong to the path.
When you realise the truth,
you will become the path."

"Love the Truth.
This is human illumination.
Become the Truth. This is divine
illumination.
You are the Truth. This is the
supreme Illumination."

"My evening descends
To tell me
The simple Truth:
God is in all;
The simpler Truth:
God is for all;
The simplest Truth:
God is All."

Krishnananda Károly Kovács Yoga in Daily Life

Naham karta Prabhu Dip karta ?

I am not the doer, Mahaprabhu Dip, the God is the doer.

When I met my Master, His Holiness, Swami Paramhans Maheshwarananda for the first time forty years ago his first

shocking teaching was that we have to search and find the truth in daily life and we have to descend from the high mountains. As His Excellency, Deputy Minister László Szabó has said, religions cannot have a conversation with each other, only people can have conversation with each

other. The Naham karta Prabhu Dip karta I heard a lot of times in the Satsangs and spiritual lectures of my Master Swami-ji. The meaning of this is that I am not the doer but Mahaprabhu Dip, the God is the doer. This is a very simple principle, the pen in the hand of the poet cannot say that I write the poem and the brush in the hands of the artist cannot say that I paint the picture, there is someone else who does this. If God is the doer, than what is our task? Our task is to be the instrument through which we have to serve all living beings. When I heard the countless lectures of my Master Swami Guru-ji, he always returned to the Sanatana Dharma, the eternal law. It is probably not a new information for those present here that Sanatana Dharma means the eternal law the way which leads to God. When we talk about Hinduism, that part of the word 'ism' means some kind of distinction, that those one billion people belong to some group and that means that some other group also exists but Sanatana Dharma in itself is more than a religion.

Sanatana Dharma gives a view of the world, but the most important thing about it also the main topic of the evening, the Sanatana Dharma gives a rational point for everyone. Everyone can utilise his or her own situation, for example, if I am a parent then my Dharma is the task of a parent, if I am a child then my Dharma is the task of the child, if I work then my Dharma is also in the work and so on. The duty of a teacher, the duty of the doctor, the duty of a policeman, these are all very important tasks in order to fulfil that task for which we actually were born. For example when we are driving a car, we have the Dharma of the driver of the car which means that we have to control that force which is in the car and we have to take care of all the people in the traffic, the pedestrians and also all that are there then.

We can approach Yoga in two ways. One of the ways is that Yoga is the unifying principle which exists in the whole universe. On the other side, Yoga is a system of practice, which helps the practitioner to find the goal and self-realisation. ■

Ambassador's concluding remarks

Sisters and brothers of Budapest who have blessed us with their presence and their wonderful elocutions to this evening. We are all children of immortality, Amritasya Putrah. The Upanishads or Vedanta are the fountainhead in defining truth in the Vedic tradition. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says "From untruth lead me to truth, from darkness lead me to light, from death lead me to immortality." This wonderful verse therefore talks about untruth, darkness and death as equated on the same level. And they all aspire to reach the level of truth, the level of light and the level of immortality, salvation and realisation.

It's not that we are not in light, this hall is lighted, no one can say we are in the dark in this room. Nobody can also say that we are not truthful. We are truthful, we observe truth in our every day life. And of course we are alive, not dead so how can we aspire to go from death to immortality?

The Upanishad is talking about two levels of being. In the Vedic tradition, truth has many definitions. In the ontological tradition, the tradition of reality, the tradition of where we are existing, truth is equated to being. In the epistemological tradition, the tradition of knowledge, truth assumes a higher force that which we aspire to be. And on the level of ethics,



Ambassador speaking on the occasion

truth is associated with goodness, with purity in all areas of life. No one of these levels is unimportant for us, each one of them is important, all the three. And therefore, we have to understand truth, the value of truth, the relevance of truth to life and we have to understand truth in these distinctive levels.

The reality of truth and the perception of truth, one absorbs the other. When a man takes his camera and tries to photograph the sun from morning till evening, he takes a picture of the sun in the early morning, when he sees the rising sun, that is one sun, when it is orange in colour. He takes another picture at 10 in the morning when the sun has assumed more light and bright. He takes another picture at one o'clock when the sun is too bright and he takes another picture in the evening, when the sun is setting and it is nearly dark. All these pictures are of the same sun, the only difference is that they were taken at different times of the day. That is truth, as we understand truth in different ways. That is why again the Rig Veda says: Truth is one. The wise people speak in different languages, in different ways and all you, wise people today in this congregation defined truth in your own individual way, in your own individual perspective.

In India, which is home to nine major religions of the

world, which has seen the birth of four distinct, important religions, and five of them have come and lived in India and people in India embraced those religions, it is good to talk about dialogue and interfaith communication or a communion of ideas like what we are doing today. It is also good to talk about this in Budapest, in a country like Hungary where you have an interface of communication. We could not have done it in some other parts of the world, and you know what parts I am talking about.

There is a dreadful disease today in the world, which is called intolerance, fanaticism, radicalism, which distorts the meaning of religion and produces a completely different product. In fact, the raw material is the same but the product becomes absolutely different and perhaps unrecognisable even to the person who produces that product. Religion is the greatest force on Earth that has brought people together like nothing else. The Christians in Africa and the Christians in Europe and the Christians in India will come together on the basis of Christianity like nothing else. They don't care what is the colour of the skin, they don't care what is their nationality, because their religion binds them. But religion is also the most destructive force on Earth. Look at the crusades when the Muslims and the Christians were killing each other in millions on this very soil of Europe.

They wanted to establish the supremacy of one religion over the other. In fact, in religion the sword has been mightier than the pen as history has shown, time and again.

Our humble exercise this evening is to ignite in us the awareness, the consciousness, the faith to believe in ourselves as repository of the Truth. Here, today what we say about who we are as human beings with our faith, and we are represented by a series of faiths and all have talked about the Truth in their respective ways. Yet, finally they have all pointed to the same direction. 'Know thyself'. I think, for the first time, we are having such a programme in the Centre. So much awareness, so much energy in this little place is coming from the diverse faiths that have come to us. We respect all faiths. We not only respect all faiths, we embrace all them.

In the Bhagavad-Gita Lord Krishna says: "Forsake all religions. Renounce all religions. Come to me. I will tell you the Truth". Jesus Christ says: "Come with me, I will tell you the Truth. Take my path, I am the path, love me, take me." When the path, the preceptor and the idea become one, there is a great communion in life. The path is truth, the preceptor is truth and the idea of reaching up to them is also truth.

What will you take away when you go out of this small auditorium today back into your life? And I see so many

people among yourselves, young, middle aged. We see such a diverse congregation here today. It is one idea, as the Veda says, "I am the Truth." Absolute truth is Brahman and I am Brahman, "Aham Brahman Asmi", one of the Mahavakyas, great Truths. Sanatana Dharma mentions about realisation, about your own realisation, about your own experience. The Holy Books are there, the teachings are there for you to assimilate through your very powerful intellect, but they are not enough. The realisation comes, the Nirvana comes, the final part comes when you yourself realise it, your own self-realisation. And that is the part of realisation, who are we. And then you understand what are you looking for, what are you searching for, you search within yourself, then you find the truth. Now you go out with this revelation, out to the world.

This will not only change your life, this will change the life of countless other people with whom you come in touch. It only shows that the divinity, which is within yourself, has expressed, it only shows the recognition within you for the other divine being. Therefore it brings this feeling of brotherhood, this feeling of love, it brings the feeling of empathy, the feeling of compassion and the world will be so much a better place to live thereafter.

I thank all the participants, all of them who came and spent their time in our midst talking about such an important matter, that we least regard in our lives, the search for truth. I for one believe that this was not an exercise in metaphysics nor was it an explanation of philosophy. I believe that it was real. Here, where the two levels of the so called unreal and the real merged I stand as Atman as well as the impersonal Brahman. And therefore, for me there was nothing unreal, this was a real revelation for me. That is the Supreme relevance of Truth in our lives. And that explains all the wonders in our lives, that you are the truth. Nothing else.

So I will end my talk by thanking you all, thanking all my colleagues who put this programme together, thanking all distinguished persons who are here this evening with again a prayer for all happiness, good health, peace for all of us that may we be blessed by the same feeling of divinity which runs in us all like the thread and we are the beads which are all part of the thread. Like the ocean from where we draw water, whether we draw water in a bucket, in a glass or in a jug, from the largest substance to the smallest, it's still the same water. And therefore this universal prayer is for all,

May we all be blessed, happy, fulfilled and healthy, let no danger come to us or our families, our community, our country and may we contribute wholesomely to the world at large. ■

THIRD AYUSH CAMP

19 APRIL 2015



In order to raise awareness about Ayurveda, Yoga and traditional systems of medicine, Embassy of India, Budapest, had set up the AYUSH Information Centre in the beginning of 2014 and thereafter organized several events, including two AYUSH [Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy] Camps in the months of May and September 2014, the latter being addressed by visiting Secy, AYUSH. Following up on the success of the earlier camps, the third Ayush Camp was organized on 19 April 2015.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of India, Shri Malay Mishra, stressed on the importance of adopting a holistic approach to life to overcome modern day stressful living which created disharmony in bodies and minds leading to several ailments. The United Nations has recognized the importance of Yoga and decided to celebrate June 21 as International Yoga Day each year. The Resolution was introduced by India and co-sponsored by 177, the highest number ever for any resolution in the 193-member UN General Assembly. The Resolution was adopted by an acclamation, without having to take a vote in “a testimony to the enthusiastic cross-cultural and universal appeal that Yoga enjoys amongst members of the United Nations.”

The Ambassador reminded the audience that PM Modi in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2014 had asked world leaders to adopt an international Yoga day, saying that by changing lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us deal with climate change. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon said in his message that, “Yoga can bring communities together in an inclusive manner that generates respect” and can “promote peace and development.”

Ambassador announced that there were almost 200 Yoga Institutions in Hungary and around 30 in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Embassy of India, Budapest, was the only Indian

Mission in Europe to have opened an AYUSH Centre and systematically organising events for promotion of Yoga, besides giving regular consultations on Ayurveda. Ambassador also announced that an Ayurveda Chair had already been set up since December 2014 at the University of Debrecen and that there were plans to further institutionalize cooperation and promote Ayurveda in Hungary through the establishment of an European Institute of Ayurveda. Ambassador mentioned that in this context it was only natural that the International Yoga Day was celebrated in a grand manner, in both Budapest and Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina), to which this Mission was concurrently accredited. Following Ambassador's address, consultations were held with various Yoga Institutions based in Hungary on organizing the International Yoga Day on June 21, and a number of enthusiastic suggestions were received.

Prof. M.S. Baghel, the Chair of Ayurveda at Debrecen University, spoke on the theme “Role of Ayurveda management of a healthy lifestyle”. He maintained that Ayurveda was more than 5000 years old, which was well documented. He also spoke on the researches on Ayurveda having been conducted in various renowned institutions in the West and the findings validated. Prof. Baghel stressed that Ayurveda offered an inexpensive and reliable alternative, especially in prevention of diseases. The AYUSH Camp also saw sessions on “Cleansing Yoga Techniques” by Ms. Melinda Irtl, on “Homeopathy” by Ms. Andrea Szekely, on “Sahaja Yoga” by Ms. Katarina Korhec, on “Importance of Ayurveda in the Spiritual Path and Vyayam Yoga” by Ms. Bhagirathi Upasika and Ms. Rurdrani Chaitanya. There were also practical sessions on Pranayama, Asana and Yoga Nidra by Mr. Karoly Kovacs Krishnanand.

There was enthusiastic response to the organization of AYUSH Camp with a participation of 150 people, including representatives of 50 Yoga Institutions. ■

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar – A visionary

By Umesh Kumar

Dr B R Ambedkar, popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, was one of the illustrious sons of India, a great visionary, eminent jurist, economist, politician, a social reformer and one of the main architects of the Indian Constitution, which envisages a secular, progressive and all inclusive India. Ambedkar made tremendous efforts to eradicate social evils like untouchability and caste restrictions during his lifetime. He fought for the rights of the Dalits and other socially backward classes and women. He also inspired the modern Buddhist movement in India. Ambedkar was India's first Union Law Minister. He was Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee charged with writing the new Constitution of India. In the Constitution, Ambedkar



included several guarantees and protections for civil liberties including freedom of religion, abolition of untouchability and discrimination, economic and social rights for women, reservations in jobs for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes in the form of affirmative action.

Dr. Ambedkar was born to Bhimabai Sakpal and Ramji on 14 April 1891 in Madhya Pradesh. He was the fourteenth child of his parents. Ambedkar's father was a Subedar in the Indian Army and posted at Mhow cantonment, MP. After the retirement of his father in 1894, the family moved to Satara district of Maharashtra. Shortly after that his mother passed away. Four years later, his father remarried and the family shifted to Bombay, where he passed matriculation exam in 1908. His father Bhimabai Sakpal died in Bombay, in 1912.

Ambedkar was a victim of caste discrimination. His parents hailed from the Hindu Mahar caste, which was viewed as "untouchable". Ambedkar faced severe discriminations from the society. This discrimination and humiliation he even faced at the Army school, run by the British government. Fearing social outcry, the teachers used to segregate the students of the lower class from those of the upper classes. The untouchable students were often asked by the teacher to sit outside the classes. After shifting to Satara, he was admitted to a local school but the change of school did not change the fate of young Bhimrao.

Discrimination followed wherever he went. In 1908, Ambedkar got the opportunity to study at the Elphinstone College. He was very intelligent and hard working. Besides clearing all the exams successfully, Ambedkar also obtained a scholarship of twenty five Rupees a month from Sahyaji Rao III, the Gaikwad ruler of Baroda. Ambedkar graduated with Political Science and Economics from Bombay University in 1912. Ambedkar decided to use the money for higher studies in the USA.

After return from the USA, Ambedkar was appointed as the Defence Secretary to the King of Baroda. Here also he had to face humiliation for being an 'Untouchable'.

With the help of the former Governor of Bombay, Lord Sydenham, Ambedkar obtained a job as a professor of political economy at the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay. To continue his studies, he went to England at his own expense in 1920. Ambedkar spent a few months at the University of Bonn, Germany, to study economics. On 8 June 1927, he was awarded a Doctorate by the University of Columbia.

After his return to India, Bhimrao Ambedkar fought against caste discrimination which fragmented the nation. Ambedkar felt that there should be separate electoral system for the untouchables and lower caste people. He also favoured the concept of providing reservations for Dalits and other religious communities. Ambedkar began to find ways to reach out to the people and make them understand the drawbacks of the prevailing social evils. He launched a newspaper called "Mooknayaka" (leader of the silent). In 1932, the British had announced the formation of separate electorate for 'depressed classes' as part of the communal award. Gandhiji opposed separate electorate for untouchables fearing it could lead to a division in the Hindu community. On 25 September, 1932, due to the efforts of Gandhiji, Madan Mohan Malviya and Dr. Ambedkar, an agreement known as Poona Act was signed to provide for reserved seats for depressed classes in the Provincial Legislatures without creating a separate electorate. The depressed classes were later on called as Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes.

In 1936, Ambedkar founded the Independent Labor Party. In the 1937 elections to the Central Legislative Assembly his party won 15 seats. Ambedkar oversaw the transformation of his political party into the All India Scheduled Castes Federation, although it performed poorly in the elections held in 1946 for the Constituent Assembly of India.

Dr. Ambedkar objected to the decision of Congress and Mahatma Gandhi to call the untouchable community as Harijans. He used to say that even the members of the untouchable community are the same as the other members of the society. Dr. Ambedkar was appointed to the Defence Advisory Committee and the Viceroy's Executive Council as Minister for Labour. His reputation as a scholar and an eminent jurist led to his appointment as free India's first Law Minister and Chairman of the Committee formed to draft a Constitution of India.

Throughout his life, Dr. Ambedkar worked hard to bridge the division between the classes of the society. According to him, it would be difficult to maintain the unity of the country if the difference among the classes were eradicated.

In 1950, Dr. Ambedkar had traveled to Sri Lanka to attend a convention of Buddhist scholars and monks. After his return to India, he decided to write a book on Buddhism and soon converted to Buddhism. In his speeches, Dr. Ambedkar criticized the Hindu rituals and caste division. He studied Buddhism throughout his life. Dr. Ambedkar founded the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha In 1955. His book "The Buddha and His Dhamma" was published posthumously. On 14 October 1956, Dr.

Ambedkar organized a public ceremony to convert himself and around five lakh of his supporters into Buddhism at Dikshabhumi, a Stupa at a site in Nagpur. Dr. Ambedkar traveled to Kathmandu to attend the Fourth World Buddhist Conference. He completed his final manuscript, "The Buddha or Karl Marx" on 2 December 1956.

On 6 December 1956, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar expired at his home in Delhi in sleep, three days after completing his final manuscript 'The Buddha and His Dhamma'. Since, Dr. Ambedkar had adopted Buddhism as his religion, a Buddhist-style cremation was organized for him. The ceremony was attended by thousands of his supporters, activists, sympathizers and admirers.

A memorial for Dr. Ambedkar was established in his Delhi House. His birthday is celebrated as a public holiday and known as Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti. The legacy of Ambedkar as a socio-political reformer has deep impact on modern India and has earned acceptability across the political spectrum. He was awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, posthumously in 1990.

The life, works and achievements of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar are exemplary and a shining example of hard work, dedication, selfless service for the upliftment of downtrodden of Indian society. Some Hungarians (Roma people) draw parallel between their own situation and that of downtrodden people of India. Inspired by Dr. Ambedkar's approach they have started converting to Buddhism. ■

—The writer is the Director of ASCC.
Ambedkar Jayanti was celebrated all over India and abroad as a national holiday on 14 April

Ambedkar School: a profile

By Tibor Derdák, Director

Dr Ambedkar High School opened its gates in 2007 at Sajókaza, Hungary. Classes from Alsózsolca and Mátraverebély joined later. At present 200 students are enlisted from the age of 14 until the final exam. The aim of the school is to provide disadvantaged youngsters the 'A' level, and to send them to colleges and universities. The founders of the school are Roma youngsters, who started from slum areas, reached university level and initiated younger generations to do so. They follow the advice of Dr Ambedkar: "Educate, agitate and organise". The Ambedkarite educational work in Hungary is helped by Indian volunteers. The proud achievements of the youngsters from Milind College, Bahujan Hitay, Bhim Sen and Tiratna influence the thinking of Hungarian people.





The children listen to the story of Dr Ambedkar like a true fairy tale: Once upon a time, more than a hundred years ago, there lived a seventeen year old untouchable boy in a big family, his name was Bhím. He was the youngest child among 14 siblings. He surpassed all of them because of his brilliant mind. A wealthy Maharaj acknowledged his talent and poverty and bestowed a scholarship on him. Bhím tried his fortune in London and New York where he achieved the highest university degrees. He received the title Doctor in Economics and lawyer when he returned home to serve his people as a barrister.

He became a human rights fighter and his authority was constantly growing throughout the whole country. When India gained independence in 1947 he was nominated as Law Minister. He was also entrusted with drafting the Constitution for the country. He wrote in it that discrimination was forbidden.

In his old age the Dalit people addressed him with veneration as Dr. Babasaheb. Though he and the laws he made were respected, he was still frustrated at the prevailing social discrimination against these caste groups. He decided then to show the people a spiritual

alternative.

He was seeking a religion which fitted together reason with modern science, and which declared liberty, fraternity and equality amongst people. He decided to follow the path of the Indian prince who lived 2500 years ago: he would be a follower of the Buddha. This was a decision of profound importance for the Dalits because the Buddha is venerated throughout the world, and India is entitled to take pride in her great son. Dr. Ambedkar showed his astuteness: all of us can choose the way to be respected, we can change our fate for the better. Hundreds of thousands followed Ambedkar to the magnificent ceremony in Nagpur in October 1956. This was the rebirth of Buddhism in India.

Those who at that time embraced a new world view with him are today grandfathers and grandmothers. Their grandchildren are as numerous as the whole population of Hungary. They follow Ambedkar's example: they face even the biggest difficulties in all things - to study and to exercise their human rights.

Dr Ambedkar Iskola, H-3720 Sajókaza, Sólyom telep 7., Hungary. www.ambedkar.eu ■

PERSONALITY

Ferenc Snétberger bio-profile

The guitarist/composer Ferenc Snétberger, the youngest child of a Roma musical family, was born in 1957 in northern Hungary. He first learned the basics of playing guitar from his father, and very quickly the two were playing together. He studied classical music in music school, and later jazz guitar in the Music Conservatory of Budapest (the later Music Academy). Snétberger studied classical music and jazz guitar. Today he is best known for his art of improvising and his crossing of stylistic borders. His music is inspired by the Roma tradition of his home country, Brazilian music and flamenco as well as classical guitar playing and jazz. He made numerous

albums as a leader, co-leader and sideman and has toured all over Europe as well as Japan, Korea, India and the United States.

Early in his career the guitarist taught at a music school in Germany which supported musically talented Sinti and Roma youth. After meeting Roma youngsters and their families at his concerts throughout East and Central Europe, it became clear to Snétberger that this region also had a need for a similar type of musical institute as the one in Germany.

In 1995 he composed his Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra, "In Memory of My People", on the occasion of the fiftieth year following the end of the holocaust. Inspired by melodies of the gypsy tradition, the concerto is a powerful statement against human suffering. It has been performed by the composer himself with chamber orchestras in Hungary, Italy and Germany and also at the New York UN headquarters (International Holocaust Memorial Day, 2007).



Ferenc Snétberger performed

Ferenc Snétberger © Jens Röttsch

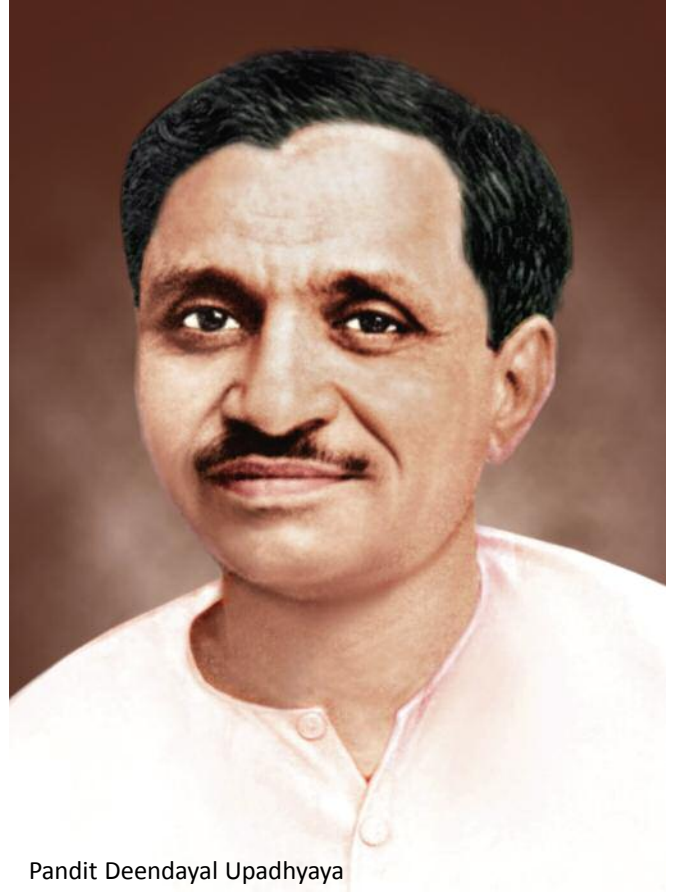
Luciano Berio's Sequenza XI (for solo guitar) as well as concertos with orchestra by Vivaldi, Rodrigo, and John McLaughlin. He also wrote music for film and theater. On stage he performed with David Friedman, Dhafer Youssef, James Moody, Trilok Gurtu, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Bobby McFerrin and others. In 2002 Snétberger was appointed freeman of his birth town and two years later received the Hungarian Order of Merit. In 2005 he was awarded the Liszt Ferenc Prize in Budapest. ■

An Exceptional Leader Of India A Biography on Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's life

By Ribhav Khanduja

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was a philosopher, economist, sociologist, historian, journalist, and political activist. Facing deaths of loved ones at an early age leaves one dispassionate about life. Despite this, Deendayal Upadhyaya was one of the remarkable people who progressed to become a well-recognized leader in one of the leading political parties in India and also an exceptional volunteer of the world's largest voluntary non-governmental organization. He served in Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Bharatiya Jana Sangh (now Bharatiya Janta Party). He stood up against various western issues like western democracy, western secularism, western ideology, etc. that were blindly followed by India during the British Rule. He did accept the idea of democracy but refused to step into the shoes of western oligarchy, exploitation and capitalism. Deendayal Upadhyaya wanted to frame a democracy that represented the public and its ideals.

Deendayal was born on 25 September 1916, in Chandrabhan (now Deendayal Dham), Mathura District. He was the son of Bhagwati Prasad, a well-known astrologer and Shrimati Rampyari, a religious minded lady. Unfortunately, his father passed away when he was two and a half years old. However, this was only the beginning as soon, his mother passed away due to tuberculosis and his maternal grandfather (his caretaker at that time) also died when he was 10 years old. He moved in to his maternal uncle's house. Deendayal was aware at a very



Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya

young age that he had to take good care of his younger sibling. Dedicatedly, he cared for his younger brother until Shivdayal contracted smallpox. Despite all efforts, Deendayal could not save him and as such, was left all alone as Shivdayal breathed his last on 18 November 1934. Deendayal was a bright child from birth and won several gold medals in different schools. He did not let the deaths of members of his family interfere with his studies. He attended school at GD Birla College and graduated from Sanatan Dharma College in Kanpur University. Further, he even qualified in the civil service exam but did not join as he was more attracted towards service for the common public.

Deendayal, highly encouraged and dedicated towards social service, got associated with the RSS in Kanpur in 1937. He devoted himself fully towards the organization even during the days of his college. After college, he did not look for a job nor did he marry, but he attended a 40 day summer RSS camp at Nagpur to acquire training in Sangh Education. He started a monthly journal named Rashtra Dharma from Lucknow in the 1940s. This was the period of time when the journalist inside him developed. During the days he worked for the RSS, he also started a weekly Panchjanya (weekly RSS newspaper) and a daily Swadesh. He sketched the drama "Chandragupta Maurya" and penned the biography of Shankaracharya in Hindi. He also translated the biography of RSS founder Dr. K. B. Hedgewar from Marathi to Hindi. His many other brilliant literary works include Samrat Chandragupta (1946), Jagatguru Sankaracharya (1947), Akhand Bharat Kyon? (1952), Bharatiya Arthniti: Vikas Ki Disha (1958), The Two Plans: Promises, Performances, Prospects (1958), Rashtra Jivan Ki Samasyayen (1960), Devaluation: A Great Fall (1966), Political Diary (1968), Rashtra Chintan, Integral Humanism, and Rashtra Jivan Ki Disha.

Deendayal Upadhyaya wanted India to grow on the basis of its rich culture and not western concepts left by the British at the time of their departure from the nation. He felt that independence was not the legitimate time to introduce democracy in India. He believed that democracy was India's birthright and not a gift of the West, but he also emphasized that it was not only for dictators to torture and exploit their workers; but workers could also look up to the government to address their grievances. Be it the most rich or poor, white or black, everyone had the right to state their viewpoint and everyone must be respected and incorporated into governance.

Deendayal was appointed as the first General Secretary of Bharatiya Jan Sangh, which was founded in 1951 by Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee. He held his post until the 14th Cabinet session in December 1967. His immense intelligence and perfectionism impressed Dr. Mookerjee so much that he was honoured with a famous statement "If I had two



Deendayals, I could transform the political face of India". Unfortunately, Dr. Shyama Prasad died due to pleurisy in 1953, and all his responsibilities and burden of the organization were left on the young shoulders of Deendayal. He served as the General Secretary for nearly 15 years and raised the organization with high spirits and enthusiasm, thereby making it one of India's strongest political parties. By 1957, Bharatiya Jan Sangh had 243 regional and 889 local committees, with a membership of 74,863. At the 14th annual session of Bharatiya Jan Sangh in Calicut on December 19, 1967, Deendayal was elected as the president.

Deendayal emerged as an all-rounder national leader and became the President of Bharatiya Jan Sangh. Unfortunately, destiny had different plans for him. He only served as the president for 43 days until 10 February 1968. He was found dead at the Mughal Sarai railway station in the early hours of 11 February 1968. The entire nation was plunged into grief. People thronged on Rajendra Prasad Marg to pay their tribute to the great leader. He was travelling to Patna for the budget session, but his compartment detached from the train at Mughal Sarai railway station. Till date, his death remains an unsolved mystery. The then Indian President Dr. Zakir Hussain, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and Morarji Desai, amongst other eminent leaders, social workers, and cultural figures paid homage to the worthy soul.

The new Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has honoured his memory by launching an ambitious skill development initiative for rural youth called Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojna on his 98th Birth anniversary last year. The ambitious 'Make in India' campaign was also launched on the same day. He was a very important figure in Indian politics and social service and shall always be remembered as one of the most powerful leaders of India. ■

—The writer is a 10th class student in the American International School of Budapest.

Humanity, Love, and Atman

By Kin Bhattacharya

"The essence of Vedanta is that there is but one Being and that every soul is that Being in full, not a part of that Being."

— Swami Vivekananda

These words told by Swami Vivekananda reflect what essentially Vedanta is about. It is a connection between man and god. And in essence it is the realization that in everything and everyone resides the great spirit of God. What Swami Vivekananda was trying to say was that Vedanta is more than just a philosophy. Hence Vedanta is not a religion but a way of life that everyone should practice to bring more harmony and peace in this world. In essence, practice compassion and realize the unity of all beings in this vast universe and also within this even smaller planet called Earth. To love one another as we would love oneself and to realize that everything in nature is the essence of the divine spirit of God is the true aim of Vedanta. It is this self realization that brings us even closer to the divine in our own hearts.

If we examine the word Vedanta we will understand its meaning literally. "Vedanta" is a combination of two words: "veda" and "anta" where Veda means knowledge and anta means "the goal of" or "the end of". This knowledge is not limited to the books or the knowledge of our own intellect but it refers to the knowledge of self or knowledge of God. In other words, the realization of our own divine nature.

Vedanta teaches that God is the divine self that dwells in our own hearts as the atman or soul. The atman never dies as it is never born. It is neither affected by our failures or changes in the state of our body or mind. Neither emotions such as grief, despair, ignorance or diseases of the body affect its state. It is pure, perfect and free from all forms of limitations. Therefore according to Vedanta the atman is one with Brahman or the creator. Hence, the greatest temple of God resides within the human heart and it is in this realization that we find peace and happiness and in return are able to give others peace and happiness. As Swami Vivekananda said

"Religion is not in books, nor in theories, nor in dogmas, nor in talking, not even in reasoning. It is being and becoming."



Swami Vivekananda

"Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success, and above all, love."

—Swami Vivekananda

According to Swami Vivekananda we must use reason and humility and above all love to realise the atman or God within. As Jesus related with God as his father and Ramakrishna worshipped God as his mother while others related God with the sun, the moon or even empty space. Most have thought of God as friend or master. God is essentially always in relation to something. Hence to realize the atman we must learn that essentially God is love and love is

god and to love God is to love oneself and to love oneself is to love everything. The point to remember is that God is very close to us. The more our minds are absorbed in thoughts of the divine the closer we come to attaining the goal of human life, God-realization.

In conclusion, Swami Vivekananda has contributed immensely to promote the teachings of Vedanta. His vision was macroscopic and his message universal. He promotes humanity in general irrespective of race, gender, age etc. He suggests that for humanity to come out of its problems, we must unite like brothers and sisters and create a world of immense unity. As he says:

"What can be a greater giver of peace than renunciation? A little ephemeral worldly good is nothing in comparison with eternal Good; no doubt of that. What can bring greater strength than sattva guna [serenity of mind conducive to spiritual knowledge]? It is indeed true that all other kinds of knowledge are but 'non-knowledge' in comparison with Self-knowledge, but I ask—how many are there in the world fortunate enough to gain that sattva guna? . . ."

Swami Vivekananda's message to the world: **become love.■**

—The writer is a student of BE of Electrical and Electronics from Manipal University in India. This write up was part of the competition held at ASCC on the occasion of the 152nd birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

Gods of Zero and Infinity

By Devdutt Pattanaik

If you travel to the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, and visit a place called Deogarh, which literally means citadel of the gods, you will find the ruins of a Hindu temple, one of the oldest, at least 1500 years old, built by the kings of the Gupta dynasty. On its walls, there is the image of a man reclining on the coils of a serpent with many hoods, surrounded by his wife and many warriors and sages. It is clearly inspired by a scene from the royal court, but it is a celestial scene, visualization of the moment when the world was created. For Hindus, the world is created when Narayana awakes. Narayana is the God reclining on the serpent with multiple-hoods. When He is in dreamless slumber, the world does not exist. When He awakens, the world comes into being. Narayana is thus a visual representation of human consciousness, whose awakening heralds the creation of our world. What is interesting is the serpent on whose coils Narayana reclines. Its name is: Adi-Ananta-Sesha, which literally means Primal-Limitless-Residue, which is numerically visualised as One-Infinity-Zero. For with consciousness, we become aware of the first moment of beginnings, of limitless possibilities, and of nothingness that existed before the first moment.

The Hindu worldview has always been obsessed with infinity (everything-ness) and zero (nothingness) and with the number one (the beginning). More than Hindu, it is the Indic worldview, the substratum of thought which gave rise to three major ideas: Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, all of which speak of rebirth, cyclical time, and a world where there are no boundaries. Buddhism came up with ideas such as nirvana (oblivion) and shunya (which literally means zero). Jainism spoke of a world of endless possibilities (an-ekanta-vada).

This is in stark contrast to the Greek worldview where the world begins as chaos until the gods create order. And with order comes definitions, boundaries, certainty, and predictability. It is also different from the Abrahamic worldview where God creates the world out of nothingness and the world he creates in seven days has a definite expiry date: the Apocalypse. The Greek and Abrahamic worldviews inform what we call the Western worldview today that is obsessed with organization, and is terrified of disorder, and unpredictability, something Indians are used to and rather comfortable with, even thriving in it. The story goes that when Alexander, the Great, after having conquered Persia, visited India, he met a sage on the banks of the river Indus, who he referred to as a gymno-sophist or naked wise man, in Greek. This sage sat on a rock and spent all day staring at the sky. Alexander asked him what he was doing and the sage replied, "Experiencing nothingness." The sage asked Alexander what was he doing. Alexander replied, "I am conquering the world." Both laughed. Each one thought the other was a fool. For Alexander,

the sage was wasting his one and only life doing nothing. For the sage, Alexander was wasting his time trying to conquer a world that has no limits, with a sense of urgency that made no sense when one lives infinite lives. Belief in one life, which is the hallmark of Greek worldview, and later Abrahamic, results in valuing achievements. But belief in rebirth, hence infinite lives, which is the hallmark of Indic worldview, makes achievements meaningless, and puts the focus on wisdom and understanding. When the denominator of life is one, the world is different from when the denominator of life is infinity.

India's philosophical obsession with infinity and zero led to mathematicians not just conceptualising the idea of zero, but also giving it a form (a dot), and finally using it in a decimal system. This happened around the same time that the Gupta kings built the temple in Deogarh. The mathematician Brahmagupta, 638 AD, is associated with giving form to the number zero, and formulating the first rules with its usage. The rise of the decimal system enabled the writing of vast numbers, of huge value, a practice that has been traced to even Vedic texts written around 1000 BCE, values that are not seen in any other parts of the world. The Arab sea-merchants who frequented the coasts of India, and who dominated the rich spice and textile trade then (before the European seafarers took over in the 16th century) saw value in this system and took it with them to Arabia. The Arab mathematician Khwarizimi suggested use of a little circle for zero. This circle was called 'sifr' which means 'empty', which eventually became 'zero'. Zero travelled from Arabia through Persia and Mesopotamia to Europe during the Crusades. In Spain, Fibonacci found it useful to do equations without using the abacus. Italian government was suspicious of this Arabic numbering system and so outlawed it. But the merchants used it secretly, which is why 'sifr' became 'cipher', meaning 'code'.

It comes as a shock to many people that the modern use of the number zero is less than thousand years old, and that it became popular less than 500 years ago. Had it not been for the arrival of zero, neither would the Cartesian coordinate system nor calculus have developed in the 16th century. Zero enabled people to conceptualize large numbers and helped in book keeping and accounting. In the 20th century, came the binary system which forms the foundation of modern computing. All because some wild Indian sages conceptualised the universe and their gods in terms of zero and infinity. ■

—Devdutt Pattanaik is author of over 30 books and 400 articles on relevance of mythology in modern times. A 2009 TED speaker, he is renowned for drawing attention to the Indian consequence-based approach to management, quite distinct from objective-based modern management. To know more about him visit devdutt.com

ASCC ACTIVITIES

Film Club

On every first and third Friday of every month film evenings are arranged at the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre. Four films were screened at the Cultural Centre in March and April in 2015 under the aegis of

the Cine Club:

Chokher Bali (2003, Hindi version) 13.03.2015

Luck by Chance (2009, Hindi) 27.01.2015

Barfi (2012, Hindi) 10.04.2015

Mardaani (2014, Hindi) 24.04.2015



Interfaith discussion on the subject 'A Pursuit of Truth and Its Relevance in Life' 4 March 2015

Continuing the tradition of scholarly discussion on faith and philosophy matters, Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre, Embassy of India in Budapest, under the aegis of Vedic Society of Hungary organised an interfaith discussion on the subject of the pursuit of truth and its relevance in life on 4th March 2015. The programme started with brief introduction by Mr Umesh Kumar, Director of ASCC followed by welcome address by Dr László Szabó, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Thereafter, a galaxy of scholars from various religions, faiths and socio-cultural groups dwelt on the subject.

The informative and interesting talks by various speakers were concluded by the address of Mr Malay Mishra, Ambassador of India. (Excerpts of the talks on pages 11-23)

As part of the programme, Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre, in collaboration with Chinmoy Association of Hungary organised an



Shri Chinmoy

abstract painting exhibition. The paintings had the motives from the sayings and messages of Shri Chinmoy on peace, harmony, brotherhood, love etc. The painting exhibition depicted the various thoughts and colours of life. More than 100 people attended the discussion and the painting exhibition. Among the attendees, the prominent ones were Dr Imre Lázár, Head of Department, Department for Cultural Relations in Ministry of Human Capacities, H.E. Marie Antoinette Sedin, Ambassador of Palestine and H.E. Mr. Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, Ambassador of Malaysia.

BSH HOLI MILAN in Ellátó Kert 7 March 2015

Holi, the Festival of Colours, is an



Holi Milan

important festival of India. It is celebrated to welcome the spring season around the end of February/beginning of March. The festival has much significance; most prominently, it celebrates the beginning of spring, also to commemorate fertility, good spring harvests and the fertile soil.

As in the past years, since its establishment in the year 2010, the Bharatiya Samaj of Hungary (aka the BSH), i.e. the Society of Indians in Hungary, celebrated its annual Holi get together, "BSH Holi Milan-2015", this year on the 7th of March 2015, with the participation of the local Indian expat and Hungarian communities with lots of fun and frolics, festivities, including stage performances, smearing of colours, display and tasting of a variety of

food representing different cuisines of India. The celebration was graced by dignitaries, including H.E. Shri Malay Mishra -the Ambassador of India to Hungary, H.E. Mr. Winston Dookeran -the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, H.E. Mr. Zeljko Jovanovic – the Ambassador of the Republic of Bosnia & Herzegovina, H.E. Shri Umesh Kumar –the Director of the Amrita Shergil Indian Cultural Centre, in Budapest.

Written by Mr Snehangshu Roy, President, Bharatiya Samaj of Hungary.

Solo ‘Ragmakamtar’ performance of Edward Powell (CAN) – Fusion of Indian and Middle-Eastern musical traditions, 10 March 2015



Eddie Powell playing on Ragmakamtar

On 10 March Mr Edward Powell visited ASCC to perform on his hand-made instrument, the Ragmakamtar (The name refers to these three features: raag – makam – taar). The artist is from Canada, living in the Czech Republic at present.

Edward Powell is a cross-cultural performer, composer, instrument builder, and educator recognised internationally as being an innovative pioneer in his field. Having spent more than a decade living and studying in the Orient with indigenous masters, Edward’s music is now profoundly influenced by the Indian, and Middle-Eastern modal traditions. Since 2000 Edward has released 6 albums of original music and handcrafted more than 20 complex

original instruments which he uses for performing and recording. Edward has been a professional musician for more than 30 years, has performed in a wide variety of venues and festivals around the globe, and is today considered one of the world’s leading fretless guitarists. His experience as a luthier began with humble experimental practice instruments and progressed to the point where his instruments are sought after by innovative musicians around the globe. Edward primarily builds for himself for his own use and the main thrust of his research has been an effort to perfect the instrument which he invented: the “ragmakamtar” which is a sarod/oud hybrid.

His latest “child” is this prototype musical instrument, the ‘Indian slide guitar’. Eddie is not only a talented musician and the master of his instruments, but also an artiste gifted with a good sense of humor. The performance was very well-received by the audience.

India’s participation in Sarajevo Winter Festival 2015, 13-16 March 2015

India was invited to participate as the “Focus Country” in the prestigious ‘Sarajevo Winter Festival 2015’ with the very pertinent title “Infinity Incredible India” from 13-16 March 2015. This was the 31st edition of the annual cultural Festival organized in the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) by the International Peace Centre, a member of the International Society for performing Arts (ISPA), the European Festival Association (EFA), Association of Biennials of Young Artists of Europe and Mediterranean (BJCEM). The Festival is organized to enable people from all over the world to participate and enjoy the programmes consisting of plays, concerts, movies, fine arts, exhibitions, panel discussions, literary events, architectural exhibitions, video shows, children programmes, etc.



Ambassador addressing the media at House of Army before the Sopori Group performance



Ambassador reading MOS(EA)’s message & greeting the audience



Santoor Group performing in the House of Army Hall

More than 40 countries participated in the six week event from 7 February to 21 March 2015. Besides India being the ‘Focus Country’, USA, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, Iran and most of the European countries participated.

The activities organized for Indian participation by Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre (ASCC), Budapest, at the Festival included Santoor Indian Classical Music Concert performed by Pandit Bhajan Sopori group (sent by Indian Council of Cultural Relations, New Delhi), 2 Yoga Workshops-cum-



Audience enjoying the performance



Ambassador with Director(ASCC), members of the Pt Bhajan Sopori Group and the Indian Community after the Santoor performance

demonstration/practice of yoga postures by Yogi Udai, 2 Ayurveda workshops plus 1 diagnostic-cum-clinical session by Dr. N. Srikant (Yoga and Ayurveda experts sent by Ministry of AYUSH, New Delhi), photo exhibition titled 'Vibrant India' by famous freelance photographer Mr. Bijoy Mishra, screening of Indian documentary films provided by XP Division, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi and a scholarly dialogue between Prof. Milos Trifkovic, President of Bosnian Academy of Sciences & Arts and Mr. Malay Mishra, Ambassador of India on the topic "Shifting of Focus to India and Asia in the Present Century".

On 13 March 2015, the inauguration of the Indian participation started with the interaction of Ambassador Mr. Malay Mishra with the media at the House of Army, where he briefed the media about India's activities organized in the Festival. He also dwelt about the warm, friendly and multi-faceted

relations between India and Bosnia and Herzegovina which are being steadily augmented with all round cooperation between the two countries. At the auditorium of the House of Army, before the Santoor musical concert by the 4-member Pandit Bhajan Sopori Group, Ambassador greeted the audience and read out the message of Gen. (Dr.) Vijay Kumar Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs & Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India, for the Sarajevo Winter Festival 2015. Ambassador also introduced the two Indian Yoga and Ayurveda experts sent specially for the Festival by Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. Mr. Amer Kapetanovic, Assistant Minister for Bilateral Relations, Government of BiH, several members of the diplomatic corps and senior officials attended the event. The auditorium was full of enthusiastic fans of Indian music. The public lustily cheered the Indian artistes and gave them a standing ovation at the end.

On 14 March 2015, Ambassador Mishra and Mr. Ibrahim Spahic, Director, Sarajevo Winter Festival 2015 jointly inaugurated a colourful photo exhibition by Indian freelance photographer Mr. Bijoy Mishra titled "Vibrant India". The exhibition depicted various facets of Indian landscape, festivals, religions and people. The exhibition was open to the public from 14 to 16 March.



Inauguration of the exhibition by Mr Malay Mishra, Ambassador and Mr Ibrahim Spahic, Director of Festival



Audience exploring the photographs

On 14 and 15 March, two Yoga workshops were organized at a local Yoga Centre 'Yoga in Daily Life'. The workshop-cum-demonstration-cum performance of postures was conducted by Yogi Udai from India. The workshops being from an authentic Indian expert were very successful and attended to by 30-35 persons each day. Before the workshops, a documentary film on Yoga was screened.

On 14 March, two Ayurveda workshops were organized at Bosniak Institute Adil Zulfikarpasic Foundation, Sarajevo, and Iskcon Centre respectively. Again the response was overwhelming. Before the workshops, a documentary film on Ayurveda was screened. Besides the workshops, 1 diagnostic-cum-clinical session was organized at Hotel Festival for Dr. N. Srikanth. More than 50 persons attended this session as well.



Dr Yogi Udai explaining the asanas to students



Diagnostic-cum-consultaion session in Hotel Festival by Dr. N. Srikant



Audience attending the Ayurveda Workshop



Screening of Indian documentary films at the House of Army Theatre



Ambassador Mishra greeting the audience at National Theatre



Senior Advisor to Mayor, Mrs. Rudmila addressing the gathering at Mostar



Pandit Bhajan Sopori Group performing at National Theatre, Mostar

On 15 March, an Indian documentary film festival was organized at the movie theatre of House of Army showcasing our culture, sufi music, Islamic architecture in India, innovations and economy. The films were attended by a large number of spectators.

On the concluding day of 16 March, a scholarly dialogue was organized between Prof. Milos Trifkovic, President of the Academy of Sciences of BiH, Sarajevo, and Mr. Malay Mishra, Ambassador of India, on the topic "Shifting of Focus to India and Asia in the Present Century". The dialogue was attended by a large number of students and members of the academic community, public and several diplomats. After the dialogue, there was an interactive session between Ambassador and the audience and questions about Indian democracy, secularism, India's foreign policy and role of non-aligned movement in the contemporary world and India's education system. Everybody appreciated the lively, informative and thought provoking dialogue, a first time event in the Festival.



Greetings from Ambassador at East Sarajevo Cultural Centre



Performance in East Sarajevo by Pandit Bhajan Sopori Group



Mr Ljubo Grokovich, DG, Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcoming the Santoor Group



Minister for Foreign Trade, DG, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Govt. of BiH and Mayor of East Sarajevo with Ambassador and Director(ASCC)

On the concluding day of 16 March, a scholarly dialogue was organized between Prof. Milos Trifkovic, President of the Academy of Sciences of BiH, Sarajevo, and Mr. Malay Mishra, Ambassador of India, on the topic “Shifting of Focus to India and Asia in the Present Century”. The dialogue was attended by a large number of students and members of the academic community, public and several diplomats. After the dialogue, there was an interactive session between Ambassador and the audience and questions about Indian democracy, secularism, India’s foreign policy and role of non-aligned movement in the contemporary world and India’s education system. Everybody appreciated the lively, informative and thought provoking dialogue, a first time event in the Festival.

Before participation in the Winter Festival, ASCC had organized a concert of the 4-member Pandit Bhajan Sopori Group at National Theatre, Mostar. The programme started with Ambassador’s interaction with National and local TV, greetings to the audience, screening of an XP Division documentary film ‘Spirit of India’. Mrs. Rudmila, Senior Advisor to the Mayor of Mostar, senior officials of Mayor’s office and local government and some diplomats stationed in the city were present at the event. More than 200 persons attended the event and appreciated the performance.

On the margins of the Winter Festival, ASCC also organized another performance by Pandit Bhajan Sopori group in a Cultural Centre in the eastern part of Sarajevo City on 14 March owing to popular demand of inhabitants of the region (who are ethnically of Bosnian Serb origin). The programme was attended by Minister for Foreign Trade, Govt of BiH, Mr. Ljubo Grokovich, DG, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Nenad Samardžija, Mayor of East Sarajevo besides a large gathering of over 250 local residents of the area.

India’s participation in the Festival by way of an array of diverse activities starting

from yoga to music to audio-visual and including stimulating intellectual discussion brought alive the Spirit of India in all its dimensions. Without exaggeration, India’s participation was a runaway success in the cultural landscape of the Festival. Such an exposure needs to be sustained over a longer period of time so that there is comprehensive development of our bilateral relations informing many sectors.

The Indian participation was successful with the active cooperation of ICCR, AYUSH, Indian Tourism Office as well as XP Division of Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

Fashion Week Show in PRLMNT Cinema, 15 April 2015



Magma Theatre at the Fashion Show



Fashion Show at PRLMNT Cinema, Budapest

On 15 April India was in focus at the programme of National Fashion League Hungary. ASCC contributed to the event with a small exhibition and cultural programme. After the Press Conference organized by the League, Director inaugurated the event. There was an exhibition of exclusive clothes and jewellery provided by the leading designers and companies present in Hungary.

The Fashion Show started at 7 pm with a Bharatanatyam dance piece, which was followed by the cloth presentation on the cat-walk. The evening was concluded with a melodious Sitar performance by Mr Szabolcs Tóth. This was the first opportunity that ASCC presented itself in a Fashion Show function.

Darbar Duo: Indian (Hindustani) improvisatory acoustic music performance by Mr Tibor Mótýán



and Mr Zoltán Fügedi, 26 April 2015

The acoustic music of the Duo Darbar is rooted in Eastern musical traditions, based on improvisation. In their programme can be found both longer compositions in more meditative tone rooted in the North Indian (Hindustani) music and the shorter, more song-like, danceable pieces that originated in the Middle-East traditions.

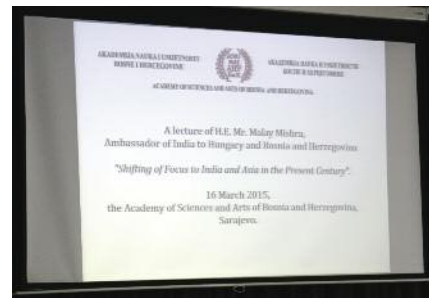
Mr Laszlo Fügedi has been playing Eastern music for about 10-15 years. He has been learning to play the Tabla and the Saz (Turkish lute) for several years. He is playing his own compositions too. His second music instrument is the Kashmiri Santoor that he learned in India from P. Bhattacharya and has been bringing into perfection with the help of Jonathan Voyer (Canada). Mr Tibor Mótýán was born in Szarvas; he

has been playing music since the age of 7. He plays the Violin, the Piano, the Bass Guitar, but his name is best known for his Tabla performances. He learned in India, under guru Vinode Pathak. At present he plays with several Contemporary and Jazz formations in Hungary.

The Darbar Duo gave their maiden performance in ASCC. ■

The Dialogue on “Shift of Focus to India and Asia in the Current Century”

Academy of Sciences & Arts, Sarajevo
16 March 2015



Dialogue of Mr. Malay Mishra, Ambassador of India with Prof. Milos Trifkovic, President of the Academy of Sciences of BiH on the topic of “Shifting of Focus to India and Asia in the Present Century”

President

Members of the Academy, dear Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for coming. It's my pleasure to greet you on behalf of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in my own name. This is a particular occasion when his Excellency, Ambassador of India, will deliver a short introduction about the topic of shifting focus to India and Asia in the present century. Afterwards we hope to have a fruitful dialogue between him and the members present in this room. The compelling idea behind this topic came from the International Peace Centre, headed by Mr Spahic who has chosen the topic “Infinity Incredible India” for this year's Sarajevo Winter Festival of Sarajevo. The Academy of Sciences and Arts is going to initiate negotiations for an agreement with the corresponding Indian Academy of Social Sciences. Your Excellency, please take the floor.

Ambassador

President of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Professor Milos Trifkovic, colleagues, excellences of the Diplomatic Corps resident in Sarajevo. I am a non-resident Ambassador, I reside in Budapest and

concurrently accredited to Bosnia and Herzegovina. I have been coming quite often to this country and in fact in December last year I visited the Academy and had very useful talks with the President and members of his staff about how we can explore possibility of cooperation institutionally with the Academy of Sciences and the corresponding academic institutions in India. To this effect we have already started looking at various possibilities and informed some concerned bodies in India.

As I talk to you, I shall be running a quick slideshow on India, which is self-explanatory. You will see the history and evolution of India along with the progress she has made since independence over the last sixty eight years, though much still needs to be achieved. We have not devised a set agenda for the discussion this afternoon. The president just spoke a few introductory words, maybe I could speak a few introductory words so that you come back to us with questions on what we can further elaborate on various subjects of your choice. And we leave it open-ended, then it becomes more of a critical discussion.

India is today an acknowledged knowledge power.

However, we believe that since the days of the Vedas, which is over 5000 years ago, India had established herself as a recorded civilisation on Earth, where knowledge has been the primary and essential attribute of the Indian society. The Vedic society was basically based on knowledge, we had all the sciences, for example mathematics, astronomy, astrology, medicine, physics. These were much later known to the world through the archaeological excavations in Mahenjo Daro and Harappa. Those places speak highly of a developed civilisation at the time where we had habitations, developed town planning, architecture, navigation, and they flourished on the banks of the rivers, so they always had fertile land for agriculture. And then we find that there had been a hiatus, a little gap in this civilisation for a certain time until we find again a robust civilization. We have had various religious influences, for example Buddhism, which emanated from India in the 6th century BC. Today we have millions of Buddha's followers called Buddhists. And we also have Jainism, which was another breakaway religion, but they all came from the same source. What we call Hinduism was then not known as Hinduism, it was called Sanātana Dharma meaning an "eternal way of life". Dharma is a combination of what life is, what life means to me with all essential ethics, morality, value-systems and principles of good living. And good living also includes good health, all that together is dharma. The Dharma tradition has given birth to Buddhism and Jainism. Christianity came to us around the same time as it came to Europe, and we got the first apostle, Saint Thomas, one of the early disciples of Jesus Christ, who came to our south-western shores of Kerala and then further travelled through India. Similarly we have many other religious incursions into India. We had thus many symbiotic influences in India, where the original part was completely assimilated, integrated into various cultural streams which were penetrating into the Indian society. Islam was a notable example. And then we have had a wave of colonialists. Thus we had the Portuguese, the French and finally the British. The British were of course the most long-lasting. They spent a whole of two hundred years on our soil. They ruled us politically. But of course the fibre of the society was always strong and that led to a regeneration of thoughts and ideas, and outstanding leaders were produced, notably Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi. The direction, which he gave to liberating our land was as if he was liberating an entire oppressed humanity. India's political liberation in 1947 was among the earliest liberation movements in the world. India's independence had a snowball-effect and country after country in Asia, in Africa, in South America got their freedom, unleashing a wave of decolonisation.

People wanted to set up their own destinies. And that is how our modern industry was built. We emerged after nearly 200 of British and before that five-six hundred years of Islamic rule. So it was like nearly 800 years of conquered history for us. We have not disclaimed this part of our heritage. We are a nation of 1.25 billion people, we are the youngest nation in the

world, in the sense that half our country's population is below twenty five years old. India is an aspirational society. This has turned to be a demographic dividend for us, kind of a skill reserve. Today if you go to the Silicon Valley, you will see maybe 40 percent or more of Silicon Valley is occupied with Indians. And if they were not there in the professions, in medicine, in law, in management, in IT, in the hotel industry, we don't know what would happen to America. Today's society is a global society, there is absolute freedom of movement, there are no borders anymore, we are all penetrating all kinds of borders, there is no rigidity about rules anymore. So the Indian skilled manpower is travelling to several corners of the world. They are doing extremely well for themselves and earning laurels for their country.

The subject of today's dialogue was conceived by Mr Spahic, when he discussed that for the first time with me. It will not be an easy subject to discuss, particularly among so many diplomats from the Western hemisphere present here. There is a general perception in the world today that power is moving. Power is moving from the Western hemisphere to the Eastern hemisphere. Specifically, power is moving towards certain points in Asia. And why is that? Because there are certain points which are developing as power-points in Asia, and these points, for example China is one of the points, India is another point, Japan is another point, South Korea is another point. Other subsidiary points like Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia. All these are highly dynamic economies, emerging economies as they are called, all waiting to merge into the global economy by virtue of globalization. They all want a place under the sun. In the global sphere as well, too much competition is happening. And as you know, where there is competition, there is innovation, where there is innovation, there is productivity, and where there is productivity, there is growth. Today India's growth per capita, GDP counts for 7.4% and this is the second highest after China of course, and we, according to all indicators, we feel that next year we'll be exceeding 8%, beyond China's growth. And we're looking at some of the biggest growth engines. For example, manufacturing, innovation, infrastructure development? There are the strategic sectors for growth and we are giving a lot of emphasis to developing that.

We have a project in India called "Make in India", which has been made globally popular with the dynamic efforts of the new PM Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi, who came to power last year in May. He has already done about 10 months in the government, and would like to take India very much forward. India is skill-building very well, we have one of the largest markets in the world, so therefore there is a lot of investments coming into India. Furthermore, an English speaking working class, a buoyant market and an ideal location in the heart of Asia makes India one of the most active foreign direct investment destinations. Also because it is spiritually so mature, as I mentioned in the beginning, we have inherited the Vedic Dharma civilisation which continues to this day. We had

so many invasions on our land, so many people came and went. Of course, India suffered, we suffered nearly a thousand years of colonisation and impoverishment of our country, so therefore there has been a great drain of resources from our country over the centuries. But we have learnt from the suffering, because as per our philosophy we look at tomorrow more than yesterday, and we feel what we can do today we should do better. We feel that we can cater up to global expectations, too, as one of the global powers. Thus we look at being one of the emerging global strengths of the world. And our strength is perhaps, unlike other countries, who have their own strategies to build. We have no axe to grind against any country. We believe in a positive attitude, we believe in taking everybody along with us and we believe in South-South cooperation which has been the axiom of our global cooperation.

India believes in being a positive member of the globally networked society. I will not say much about the European Union, you know it well. I hope, one day Bosnia and Herzegovina moves into the European Union. But as of now you have your own scheme of things, you can take your own trajectory, you can see what is good for yourself. Mr President, I was very impressed with the Academy's various accomplishments, the number of agreements you have signed with so many other leading Academies of the world. That shows your Academy is one of the most important centres of knowledge in this region. And we greatly respect that and we would like to see how best we can share our knowledge resources with you. And once again I thank Mr Spahic for the opportunity he has given me and ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for this special afternoon.

President

Thank you very much, your Excellency. Thinking about this meeting, the dialogue we have established, I was struck by the fact that it's very difficult to find two countries which are more different from each other. And yet share histories and problems. Your problem seems to be much less subtle than ours. Anyway, we both live in the era of globalisation. For the sake of the discussion I will define it as the creation of the transnational social spaces. Globalisation impacted a lot in India. I am much more interested in the general question, what do you believe that the process of globalisation has contributed to India and what is India's most important contribution to the globalisation process?

Ambassador

I think India's most important contribution to the globalisation process, is in the domain of informational technology. I think that has been a very important factor of globalisation itself. And IT is a broad platform, it cuts across many sectors and can be a platform in itself. And a lot of sectors in S & T can be built on this platform, e.g. defence. I know that Bosnia and Herzegovina is innovating in this area.

And we stand by you. What we have developed for ourselves, we want to share it with the rest of the world. In IT itself, what we developed for ourselves, we have shared with the entire world through our reliance and market penetration in software. And if I am accused of being theoretical, I see a great deal of spiritually regenerative values coming out from India to the world, e.g. Yoga and Ayurveda. I must tell you for this Festival in Sarajevo, we got two experts from India in these domains and their activities in holding workshops and consultations have been immensely successful. That just shows, there is a need for these things and India can show the way.

President

Thank you very much. That was really what I was asking to hear and I agree with you because the measurement of the globalisation process is the speed and the accuracy of the exchange of information. And that's why I hope we will be able to use your information platform to build the cooperation between our two institutions Academy of Social Sciences in India and this one. Thank you very much. I would like to give the floor to some other speakers.

Swiss Ambassador

Ambassador, you spoke about this big country of India, so long standing and chequered history. You also spoke about the diversity of language and culture. And I would like to ask you, where do you see the glue of the Indian society that for the has joined your country together? What are the key factors which unify India?

Ambassador

It is a very important question, I'm glad you asked it. One who lives in India could experience it. If you go to any part of India, you have the sense that you are in India. That could be called nationhood, that wherever you are you belong to the nation and you're an Indian national. You could be in the North-east, in the West or South or in the North, each of these regions is a mini country and they have nothing in common with each other. They are like the European Union. You take all the States of India, all have their own identity. So it is very difficult actually to portray what is that root. I think one root is nationhood, which binds us all. The other root is that we have all been sufferers of history, everybody, without exception. We fought together under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He was the one who rallied the whole masses, and they fought for independence from the British. So when we were all part of the struggle and got independence finally, we owned it. We cherished it and wanted to build on that. So everybody has a sense of belonging to that struggle and therefore in the aftermath of that struggle everybody holds an equal share in an independent, modern India. And then we have other glues. Let's say democracy. Democracy is very successful in India. It has lasted for the last 68 years and India, as you know, is the most populous democracy of the world. We just finished with our 15th general elections with an

electorate of 850 million people, out of which 660 million people actually voted. Voting booths were functioning all over the country and elections were successfully conducted on that large scale by our Election Commission. That is a big glue, that you are a constituent of a great democratic tradition which is unbroken. Our army lives in the barracks, they do not go out on the streets. They have never been a threat to our leadership. Another glue could be secularism. We strongly believe in holding that secular idea. When India got independence, our country was breaking apart. Not only by partition. The British gave option for the five hundred and fifty two principalities, royalties, who were still existing to join India or Pakistan. And there was a communal frenzy raging in the country. The partition alone saw displacement and hate murder of 10 million people, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. Hindus and Muslims were killing each other. That was perhaps the biggest bilateral genocide in human history. Our immense diversities have to be contained, glued together. Thus we had to adopt secularism. We owe it to Pt. Nehru to have introduced the ethos of secularism into our constitution which was law enshrined. India is an old and continuing civilization, as I remarked in the beginning, we are getting 'modernized' today, not 'westernized', mind you, we may have taken Western attributes, but we do not allow those Western attributes to dominate our cultural consciousness. Our traditional values are very powerful. You go to a classical Indian concert, you'll find a packed audience and mostly younger people. And if you attend a Jazz concert somewhere in the same place, you will find equally good attendance. Thus tradition and modernity exist together and that is the beauty of the Indian society, the overriding glue. We do not deny anything, everybody is welcome, we are an all-inclusive, all-encompassing society, and that is perhaps our greatest strength.

Participant

Your Excellency, thank you for the presentation. It was very useful and I hope that it can be available online, on our Academy's website. For us, at least for my generation from Bosnia, the knowledge of India really came through the Non-Aligned Movement, - Tito, Nehru, Nasser – and then I guess for everyone from the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It would be very interesting to hear what kind of impact does the Non-Aligned Movement have today on the policies of the foreign affairs of India.

Ambassador

Thank you very much, it's a very good question. You know the Non-Aligned Movement was a necessity of the times. You had a situation where there were two emerging power blocs with two dominant ideologies, one a capitalist, free-market ideology and the other, a communist, state-driven ideology. There was a clash between these two ideologies and the whole world was in a way affected by it. And that was also the time when there was this group of countries liberating themselves. That was the time when India got its liberation and thereafter

many other countries get theirs, which happened during the forties, fifties and sixties, when many of these emerging countries needed a third option as they could not settle for any the two dominant ideologies of the time. And that was the time when non-alignment was born. It was thus born out of a historical necessity. After being dominated for so long, they did not want to be dominated again, having got their nationhood after a long-drawn struggle. So that was the spirit in which all these countries were grouped together to find direction. It was born out of the now famous Nehru-Tito handshake. And there was Bandung and Belgrade, and the Non-Aligned Conference was set up which subsequently turned into a summit. But the essential part is that non-alignment today has lost its edge. Because you do not have a conventional cold war situation now. Leave out the Ukraine part, I'm not going into that here. Those emerging countries of those times have today become well-established nations, developed their economies. So they want to reinforce themselves and find their own identity in a rapidly globalizing multi-nodal global system. So what do they do? They join some other networks. For example G20, where almost 15 of the G20 members are also non-aligned members. And G20 is today the most effective decision-making multilateral body in the world, sharing the table with the big powers in one space. Today, there is a review of the effectiveness of the non-alignment movement as to how to be more relevant in contemporary global affairs. There is a kind of re-evaluation of various international bodies, which have lost their edge emerging as a powerful force today and need to correspond to the needs of the day. The 21st century is going to be the most dynamic society in human history. The previous century saw so many wars, thus the development process was very largely damaged. And in the 21st century people would have learnt already from experiences not to repeat history. You have the civil society, non-governmental bodies are challenging the government, even challenging established institutions. Why is it happening? Because, the knowledge, fast spreading through the information age is also containing the knowledge to resistance. Therefore the most dominant language in this century will be the language of knowledge. And India as a knowledge-power will gain increasing prominence in the current century. There is no second thought about that.

Board member

Thank you your Excellency for this great afternoon and opportunity to talk about India as a modern country with a very bright future. I would like to ask you about, just about knowledge and, as you said, knowledge is power, about the caste system. India, where there is such a great diversity, where there is such a diverse education system, must have a lot of differences which has to be directed in one goal. First of all, to create better citizens. And then to give them modern facts of knowledge, which is also very important. On one hand, this effort is to keep this tradition alive and on the other, to become part of the modern knowledgeable world. So what are the

most important pillars in which the Indian education system is based on? And how you assimilate all these divergences tradition in the modern world? Are your experts, you mentioned that, forty percent IT in the Silicon Valley originate from India. I met plenty of them also in my visit to America. Were they educated in India first and then came as an already specialist over there? I suppose you know the problems in our education system. And it will be great to compare.

Ambassador

Of course every country builds the foundations of education in its own way depending on the circumstances of its development. India developed in a different way than many other countries. For example developing countries have seen the education progress in a different way. Our education has been born out of necessity of nation-building. We wanted people who came out of our schools and colleges to hold that responsibility that they were going to be an integral part of the society. They were going to be responsible enough to call themselves nation-builders. Because for us, nothing was given, all was new for us. So as soon as we got our independence, our first Prime Minister, Mr Nehru with the able support of our first Education Minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad laid the foundation of almost all our institutions of knowledge. For example the IITs, the IIMs and our premier institutions of science and technology, all these were developed right in the fifties and sixties, and by the end of the sixties the entire knowledge structure of the new India was developed. And we had some thirty years of incubation time for our best graduates to come out, and when they came out they became knowledge-sources themselves. So to answer your question, yes, most of these people were primarily educated in India. Their basic knowledge has been received in India. And after having received that, they are going to America or to other advanced

countries to further build on that. Our progress in creating a huge knowledge infrastructure for 1.25 billion people has to take time, you will understand that. Even if you take the formal education needing population, that's huge. The school curricula is being constantly verified. Under the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' project, all school going children are to be provided free education within a certain time frame. Almost all our school and college books are published in India, mostly written by Indian authors. And therefore they are very accessible, very cheap. You could buy the same book from an American publisher somewhere and that will cost you five times more. Indian people can't afford that. Our education policy has therefore been built like that, even fees in schools and colleges upto the university level are extremely reasonable compared to many developed and developing countries as well. We have a huge population to carry along and we have to make it accessible to all. Naturally, there is a lot of competition, because today the educated population has increased so much giving way to competition to reach the highest levels so that they get admission into the best institutions. And when they come out of these institutions, they are the best. When they go out to America or to Canada, they already have the fire in them which takes them to the top of their line. The choice is also to stay back home, get further education and seek a vocation or take a scholarship, bank loan or your parents' money and go abroad to study. So the choice is there and today the educational sector has opened up tremendous opportunities again synergizing with IT.

President

I would like to thank Mr Ambassador for the wonderful answers to our questions and I hope we have profited a lot this afternoon. Thank you very much for being here and see you next time I hope. Good bye. ■

HUNGARIAN SECTION

Udaipur – India Velencéje

Indiát járva sokan elsőr az Arany Háromszög városait látogatják meg, ami úgymond „kötelez” és nem véletlenül. Delhi, Agra, Jaipur mesés épületeit, palotáit látva az utazó az indiai építészeti és kultúra örök emlékeit viszi magával haza. Érdemes ezt a háromszöget kiegészíteni és egy kiruccanást megejteni Jaipurtól dél-nyugati irányba Udaipurba is. Kamatostul megéri, az élmény felülmúlhatatlan.

Szeszler Szilvia

A kiruccanás azért nem lesz kicsi, bár a mintegy 300 kilométernyi utazás India vonatkozásában nem tekinthető nagy útnak. Az India észak-nyugati részén fekvő Udaipurért az ember még sokkal messzebbre is elutazna viszont, a nagyjából 8 órás autót megéri a fáradságot. A város Indián belül is egészen egyedülálló, nem igen van hasonló hozzá, több szempontból is.

Udaipur, az Aravalli hegyek gyöngyszeme mintegy 600 méteres magasságban fekszik, egykor Mewar állam fővárosa volt, Udai Szingh maharána tette meg azzá 1568-ban, amikor megalapította a várost a Pichola tó partján. A város lakosainak száma mindössze 452 ezer fő, ami üdítően hat az Arany Háromszög nagyvárosainak túlszűfoltysága után. Az utcákon



sokkal kevesebb az ember, így azok szellősebbnek tűnnek. Noha a város klímája már trópusi, mégis a hegyek és a hét tóból álló tórendszer miatt sokkal hűvösebbnek, szellősebbnek tűnik, pedig a hőmérséklet nemigen megy 35 fok alá.

Az India Velencjének nevezett város méltó elnevezésére, a három nagyobb és négy kisebb tóból álló, egymással összekötött tórendszer köré épült, melyek vízállása az aktuális évszaktól függ. A vízbőség alapvetően meghatározza a város arculatát, kis hajók, csónakok közlekednek a tavakon, és a gondosan ápoltság, a közterek a trópusi növények teljes gazdagságát tárják elénk. A kertek az itt honos madarakkal, pillangókkal, kisebb állatokkal vannak tele, a majomcsapatok sem ritkák, sem a várfalakon, sem a fákon.

A korábbi Mewar királyság történelmi fővárosa a világon a leghosszabb ideig uralkodó dinasztiával büszkélkedhet. A királyi palota néhány szárnyában a mai napig ott élnek a királyi család leszármazottai, akik – mint megtudtuk - már brit oktatásban részesültek és nem túl sokat tartózkodnak az ősi birtokon, mert nem nagyon bírják a meleg klímát.

Pedig a City Palace – Városi Palota épületegyüttes igazán „bírható” hely, elefántcsont színű tornyaival magasan emelkedik a város fölé a Pichola tó keleti partján.

A maharána egykori palotája a tóra néző sziklagerincen áll. Később még különböző korszakokban továbbépült és Rádzsasztán legnagyobb palotája lett. Balkonjairól mesés a kilátás a „Jag Niwas”-ra, azaz a Lake Palace Hotelre, amely a világ legdrágább szállodája, négy éve „A Világ legjobb hotel”-jének rangos díját nyerte el. A palota másik oldalán a városra tekinthetünk le. A főkaput, a hármastúró Tripoliát 1725-ben emelték. A hihetetlenül gazdagon díszített palota-komplexum különböző udvarok, palotaszárnyak, kertek, teraszok összessége és rengeteg antik műtárgynak, festménynek, méregdrága (akár ezüstből készült) bútornak ad otthont.

Feltétlenül megemlítendő a Jag Mandir, amely külön kis szigetet a Pichola tavon, egykori kis „Teázó palotája” a királyi hölgyeknek, ma méregdrága étteremként működik.

Udaipur a rendkívüli vízbőség miatt „A Kertek Városának” is nevezik. Ennek egyik legcsodálatosabb példája a Fateh Sagar tó partján épített Saheliyon Ki Bari, a buja zöld növényzetéről és számtalan szökőkútjáról híres trópusi kert együttes. A rekkenő hőség ellenére itt hűsnek érezzük a klímát, a pálmák, pazar trópusi virágok és bokrok között áramló hűvös vízpára miatt. A márvány elefántok által őrzött szökőkutak tavait fürdőzésre is használták a királyi család nőtagjai, a feleségek, lányok és egyéb nőrokonok, ahová délutáni pihenésre, teázásra gyűltek össze anno. A Lótusz szökőkút és a Madár medence is része a kert együttesnek, valamint az eső-szökőkutak, ahol a szökőkutak hangja összességében olyan hangot ad, mintha a dzsungel mélyén állnánk, a trópusi eső hangjait hallgatva. ■

—Kép és szöveg: Szászler Szilvia

Az upanisadok filozófiájának hatása a nyugati-filozófiai és irodalmi életre (részlet)

Alaitner András

EURÓPA

A XIX.-XX. Századi nyugati filozófiáiban, a filozófiai gondolkodásban és az irodalmi életben nagyon érdekesen és izgalmasan, mutatkoztak azok a témák és motívumok, melyek mentén kibontakozott és jól megfigyelhető módon beépült az indiai filozófia hatása. Az upanisad-filozófiát szemlélve látjuk, hogy már Buddha színre lépése előtt komoly kozmológiai és meta-fizikai kérdések kerültek felvetésre. Ezek a kérdések az archaikus embert épp úgy foglalkoztatták - ha nem jobban -, mint a XIX.-XX. Század vagy a ma emberét. A fizikán túli, spirituális világ „legáltalánosabb” felvetéseire adott titkos tanítások a nyugati világ kiemelkedő gondolkodóinak figyelmét sem kerültk el. Az upanisad irodalom legismertebb és leghíresebb tanításainak - Brihadárányaka és Cshándógja upanisad - filozófiai tartalma és irodalmi szépsége a bölcséleti élet és az irodalmi világ olyan egyéniségeit ragadta magával, mint Arthur Schopenhauer, Walt Whitman, Szabó Lőrinc vagy Hamvas Béla. Az upanisadok üzenete a XIX. századi európai filozófiai élet palettáján minden bizonnyal Schopenhauer munkásságára tette a legerőteljesebb és legmélyebb benyomást. Schopenhauer e titkos tanításoknak az esszenciáját bámulatos eleganciával, és a kor szellemét meghaladó intuícióval tudta átfordítani és beleszőni a saját filozófiájába, ami később egy külön filozófiai rendszerré nőtte ki magát. Annak ellenére is, hogy abban az időben még nem álltak rendelkezésére a legtökéletesebb fordítások, valamint köztudottan totális ellenszélben evezett és szenvedélyes vitában állt pályatársaival szemben. E filozófiai munkáinak a hatására számos gondolkodó és az irodalmi világ egyéb területein aktívan tevékenykedő költő és író fordult az indiai filozófiához, vagy csak egyszerűen továbbgondolta azt, amit Schopenhauer főművében több fejezetten keresztül fejtegetett.

AZ UPANISADOK FILOZÓFIÁJÁNAK MEGJELENÉSE SCHOPENHAUER FILOZÓFIÁJÁBAN

Bár nem tisztem megítélni egy olyan lángelmét, akinek főműve olyan karizmatikus emberekre volt közvetlen hatással, mint Nietzsche, Wagner, Freud, Jung, vagy Hesse, de ha csak az any-nyiszor idézett „Tat tvam asi” tanítás bölcsességét vizsgáljuk, vagy azt, hogy Schopenhauer hogyan vélekedett arról, hogy a valódi lényünk a halálban elpusztíthatatlan, akkor látjuk, hogy filozófiájának lényeges pontjai mekkora hasonlóságot mutatnak az upanisadok bölcsességével. Maga Schopenhauer mondja az upanisadokról: „Csaknem emberfeletti koncepciók, amelyek szerzőit alig lehet közönséges embereknek gondolni a

legmagasabb emberi megismerés és bölcsesség gyümölcsei” Schopenhauer filozófiájában, nehéz egyértelműen elkülöníteni az upanisadok, a hindu és a buddhista tanok által inspirált gondolatokat. Filozófiájának kiinduló gondolata nagy hasonlóságot mutat a buddhizmus egyik alaptanításával miszerint minden, ami a léthez köt, szenvedés. Munkásságának vezérmotívumát a következőképp fogalmazta meg: Ez a világ, amelyben élünk és létezünk, egész lényegét tekintve teljes mértékben „akarat” és ugyanakkor teljes mértékben „képzet”. Mindegyik művében ezt a gondolatot állította a centrumba, és e köré építette föl a filozófiai rendszerét. De vajon mit jelentenek és rejtenek e sorok mögöttes tartalmait? A világ, mint „képzet” igazi értelmét és lényegét tekintve még többszöri olvasás után sem biztos, hogy sikerült pontosan úgy megértenem, ahogy azt Schopenhauer át akarta adni. Értelmezésemben „a világ, mint képzet”, egy olyan filozófiai felvetés, amiben először van az én, és ebből következik a világ. Itt nem csak a szubjektumra gondolok, hanem az egész teljességre. Mert a legbelsőnk, a lelkünk, egyben a világ is, ami a létezésünk fennállásának pillanatait alkotja, és a jelenünk forrása mindig belülről fakad. Az, hogy a világ van és létezik, az elválaszthatatlan a belsőnkől, a tudatunktól. Az egész világot a tudatunk hozza létre. Ha nem vagyunk tudatunknál, vagy mélyálomban, fekszünk, vagy az út végén a halálunkban a világ nekünk megszűnik. Mert azok a feltételek illannak el és olvadnak össze, amik addig összerakták az oly valóságot és stabilnak hitt rendszerünket. Ennek értelmében az egész létünket álomszerűnek és nem valóságos létezőnek kell megélnünk, amiben a halál egyfajta felébredés.” Kedvesem, hadd tanítsalak az álom állapotára. Kedvesem, amikor azt mondják, hogy alszik az ember, akkor a lét egységébe tér. Magába szállt, és azért mondják, hogy alszik (szvapati), merthogy magába szállt” Mikor nem vagyunk magunknál, akkor nyilvánul meg igazi énünk, mert visszatérünk az alap állapotunkhoz. De visszatérve Schopenhauer halálról alkotott írásához és az upanisadokhoz. „Én vagyok minden, ami volt, ami van, ami lesz.” Az emberek nagy részében – jó esetben - élete során legalább egyszer felmerül az a kósza, homályos gondolat – főleg a kor előrehaladtával vagy a durva határhelyzetek során -, hogy tulajdonképpen létezésük valami egészen más. Amikor valaki a létét más szférákban is elképzelhetőnek látja és a világra nem végesként tekint és feltételezi, hogy a megfogantatása környékén nem a megfoghatatlan semmiből jött, akkor megnyílnak a határtalan kapuk. Aki rá-jön, hogy a jelenlegi életének minden megnyilvánulása csupán a belső világából fakad, az többé lényének a halhatatlanságát sem kérdőjelezi meg. Megérti,

hogy a halálkor a pillanatnyi életének a végére ért, de a létét tekintve örök és elpusztíthatatlan. „Mert a test meghal, ha elhagyja az élet, az élet azonban nem hal meg soha.” Persze egy teljesen materialista világnézettel nem lehet sok mindent kezdeni. Ott a halálban az élet végével a lét is megszűnik. A halálban ugyanis egy dolog tud csak meghalni: az ép aktuálisan fölépült én. Vagyis ettől jóval összetettebb dolog történik, de az egy másik írás témája lenne. Az ént alkotó halmazok (szkandhák) feloldódnak majd ismét összeállnak. Ezen a ponton Schopenhauer megjegyzi, hogy a buddhizmus a halált, az elemek fel-illetve egymásba oldódásukat, majd újbóli összeállásukat egy nagyon komplex rendszerként írja le. „Az egyén felbomlik, mint egy közömbös só, melynek bázisa aztán más savval új sóvá egyesül” Sok esetben a halál oly módon rajzolódik ki előttünk, mintha a hatalmas nagy semmibe csúsznánk át. A születésünk - ha egyáltalán belegondoltunk valaha is - épp ellenkezőleg: mintha a semmiből jönnénk. Ezért, ha a halálunkkor a lét egységébe térünk vissza és születésünkön onnét jövünk, akkor jogosan merülhet fel az a kérdés, hogy a földi életünk során miért nem ismerjük fel azonnal a mindenben benne rejlő „egyet”, és miért csak hosszú idő elteltével jövünk rá - ha egyáltalán rájövünk -, hogy az egységtudat a kiteljesedés megélése teszi lényünket boldoggá.

„Ami meghal, az oda megy, ahonnan minden élet jó.”

*„A nemlétből vezess a létbe,
a sötétből vezess a fényre,
a halálból vezess az öröklétre!”*

Ha így szemléljük Schopenhauer „képzetét”, és a filozófiájának magvát, akkor látjuk, hogy az upanisad - filozófia lényegi elemei rajzolódni kezdnek előttünk. Ezek a gondolatok több ponton, ha nem is megegyezők, de nagy hasonlóságokat mutatnak a Brahman és Átman fogalmaival. Az upanisadok több ezer éves bölcsessége a Brahman és az Átman fogalmi köre épül, és e fogalmak mentén teljesedik ki. A fogalmak princípiuma a Brahman és az Átman azonossága. A Brahman a teremtő, a végtelen, a transzcendens erő, mely mindenhol, és mindenkinben megtestesülve leledzik, és ami nem más, mint saját lelkünk felfedezése mindenben. Tulajdonképpen a világ és a lélek vagy szubsztancia, vagy átman nevezzük bárhogy is egy és ugyanaz.

A felvetés másik része Schopenhauer szerint: A világ „akarat”. Értelmezésemben az akaratot, a legegyszerűbben a vágyak, késztetések, érzések és szenvedélyekként definiálhatjuk. Ha így nézzük, akkor az egész világ, és benne az életünk legörömtelibb pillanatait is a szenvedés hatja át. Ebből kifolyólag a világ igazi lényege az akarat, vagy más néven vágyak, mert ez az az erő, ami motiválja, ösztönzi, sarkalja és összerakja az embert. Még akkor is, ha tökéletesen tisztában van azzal, hogy egyik-másik vágya, ami később ilyen vagy olyan formában szándékos

cselekedetként manifesztálódik, a legdurvább szenvedés erdejébe vezeti. Abban a pillanatban, amikor megjelennek a vágyak, amikből akaratlagos tettek lesznek, kikerülhetetlenné válik az újbóli megszületés. Így marad a létezés forogtatásának láncolatában a lélek. Ezeket az alapvető analógiákat ismerte föl Schopenhauer és ebben nyilvánult meg filozófiájának a pesszimizmusa is. Ezt a világot nem tudta másnak látni, mint a szenvedés végtelen folyójának, amin nem találta meg a (túl) - partra juttató tutajt. Bár tett utalásokat az aszketikus és a belső elvonultságot és lemondást hangsúlyozó életvitelre, de a saját életét tekintve, csak a magányt gyakorolta. Az upanisadok, valamint a vele párhuzamosan vagy utána megjelenő különféle indiai filozófiai rendszerek és vallások mindegyike tulajdonképpen a folytonos születés és halál örök körforgásából akar kitörni. Ezt a célt az upanisad tanításai szerint azok érhetik el, akik fölismerik az Átman és a Brahman azonosságát. Mai nyelvre fordítva: szert tesznek egy mély önmegismerésre, tudásra saját magukról, ami által a mindenben benne lévő teremtő lelket, az egységet, a mindenséget képesek látni.

XX. SZÁZADI MAGYARORSZÁG

Az XX. század derekára hazánkat sem kerülték el a keleti filozófia hatásai. Az indiai filozófia a magyar irodalmi és bölcséleti élet olyan alakjaira volt hatással, mint Szabó Lőrinc, Hamvas Béla vagy Weöres Sándor. Szabó Lőrinc lírájáról és a benne megjelenő keleti hatásokról nagyon nehéz, szinte lehetetlen egyedi és eredeti gondolatokat írni. Ezt előttem már Simon Zoltán és Markó István tanulmányaikban nagy alapossággal kifejtették. Ennek ellenére fontosnak tartom - ha csak pár mondat erejéig is - megemlíteni Szabó Lőrinc „Ez vagy TE!”... ez a könnyű pára című versét, mivel jól mutatja, hogy Európában Schopenhaueren kívül, vagy Schopenhauer által más gondolkodókat is megérintettek az upanisadok üzenetei. Szabó Lőrinc „Ez vagy TE!” című verse rímekbe szedve öleli fel és foglalja magába a Cshándógja-upanisad VI. 8-13. lénységét.

EPILÓGUS

Ha az upanisadok kapcsolatát és hatásait vizsgáljuk a nyugati filozófiai és irodalmi életre, akkor egyértelműen megállapíthatjuk azt, hogy a lélekről, a természetfeletti világról és jelenségekről alkotott vélemények minden korban, kontinensen, és gondolkodónál egyformán vagy nagy hasonlóságot mutatva hatottak. Az upanisadoknak van valami univerzális üzenetük, ami az emberek legtöbbszörében ugyanúgy csapódik le. Ennek az üzenetnek a lényege az, hogy valójában egyetlen dolog van, a lélek, a teljesség és ez nincs elválasztva sem tőlünk, sem másától ez mindenben benne van. Ez vagy te, ez minden. ■

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क्षमा

क्षमा कर देने और क्षमा मांगने, दोनों के ही लिए एक साहसी, संवेदनशील, साफ और बड़े दिल की जरूरत होती है। क्षमा मांगना कायरता की निशानी बिल्कुल भी नहीं है बल्कि यह तो अहंकार का नाश है। दूसरी ओर क्षमा कर देना भी बड़प्पन, सकारात्मकता और महानता को ही दर्शाता है। देखा जाए तो दोनों ही चीज़ें प्रत्यक्ष और परोक्ष रूप से हमें ही फायदा पहुंचाती हैं। ना किसी से नफरत, द्वेष और ईर्ष्या रखकर हम खुश रह सकते हैं और ना ही कोई हमसे नफरत करे यह बात हमें अच्छी लगती है।

अपनी गलतियों को स्वीकारने और किसी को माफ कर देने के लिए दिन विशेष की जरूरत नहीं होती, पर हाँ दिन विशेष हमें ठहरकर सोचने का समय देता है, जीवन की भागदौड़ में जो कुछ छूटता जा रहा है, उसे सहेजने का अवसर देता है। लेकिन अक्सर महज औपचारिकता में यह दिन भी निकल जाता है। संवत्सरी की संध्या से शुरू हुआ सिलसिला अगले 1-2 दिनों में खत्म हो जाता है, और हम वहीं के वहीं रह जाते हैं, फिर से ढेर सारी गलतियाँ करने की तैयारी के साथ।

अगर किसी चीज़ की सबसे ज्यादा जरूरत है तो वह है आत्मविश्लेषण की, अंतर्मुखी बनने की, अपनी गलतियों को पहचानने की, उन्हें स्वीकार करने की और इस संकल्प के साथ क्षमा मांगने की, कि भविष्य में ये गललियाँ नहीं दोहराई जायेगी। हम जैसा व्यवहार दूसरों से अपने लिए चाहते हैं, वैसा ही व्यवहार सबके साथ करें, यह बदलाव ही इस दिन की सार्थकता है।

अगर हमने गलती की है तो उसे स्वीकार करने और क्षमा मांगने से हमें कतराना नहीं चाहिए। क्षमा का उम्र से भी कोई लेना देना नहीं होता। अगर आप ऐसा सोचते हैं कि आप बड़े हैं इसलिए आप क्षमा नहीं मांगेंगे तो ये आपकी छोटी सोच और अहंकार को दर्शाता है। जो सच में बड़े होते हैं वहीं क्षमा मांग सकते हैं और क्षमा कर भी सकते हैं। क्षमा आत्मग्लानि से मुक्ति दिलाती है, टूटे रिश्तों को जोड़ती है, अहंकार का नाश करती है और हमारे जीवन में सकारात्मकता की वृद्धि करती है।

कोई भी पूर्ण दोषमुक्त नहीं होता। हर व्यक्ति में कोई ना कोई कमी होती है, और छोटी-मोटी गलतियाँ सभी से होती हैं। अगर हमें हमारी गललियों के लिए हमारे माता-पिता, शिक्षकों ने माफ ना किया होता तो? इसलिए इंसान की गलतियों और कमियों को देखने की बजाय उसकी अच्छाइयों को देखना चाहिए। अगर हम छोटी-छोटी बातों पर मन में बैरभाव लेकर बैठ जायेंगे तो सबसे ज्यादा नुकसान हमारा ही होगा।

किसी को क्षमा करके हम बड़ा उपकार खुद पर करते हैं, क्योंकि हमारे अन्दर पल रही नफरत, द्वेष और घृणा दूसरे को तनिक भी क्षति नहीं पहुंचाती बल्कि हमारे स्वयं के लिए विष का कार्य जरूर करती है। जब तक हम क्षमा नहीं करते तब तक हम नकारात्मक विचारों



का बोझ अपने दिल और दिमाग पर ढोते रहते हैं। क्षमा करना स्वयं को इस बेवजह के बोझ से मुक्ति प्रदान करना है। क्षमा करने से क्षमा पाने की तुलना में ज्यादा खुशी और हल्कापन महसूस होता है।

आज सबसे पहले मेरी क्षमा खुद से है। उन सभी गलतियों के लिए मैं खुद को माफ करना चाहती हूँ, जिन्होंने प्रत्यक्ष या परोक्ष रूप से मुझे, मेरी आत्मा को, मेरे व्यक्तित्व और मेरे चरित्र को क्षति पहुँचाई हो, इस संकल्प के साथ कि भविष्य में उनका दोहराव नहीं होगा। इसके पश्चात् मैं इस सृष्टि के समस्त जीवों से क्षमा याचना करती हूँ। जिन्हें भी मेरे शब्दों, मेरे व्यवहार या मेरे किसी भी कार्य से जरा भी ठेस पहुंची हो, हो सके तो वे मुझे माफ करें। साथ ही जिन्होंने भी मेरा दिल दुखाया है, उन सबके प्रति मन में उपजे नकारात्मक विचारों का त्याग करने की मैं सच्चे दिल से पूरी कोशिश करूंगी।

-मोनिका जैन 'पंछी'

एक बूँद

मैंने देखा

एक बूँद सहसा

उछली सागर के झाग से

रंगी गई क्षण भर

ढलते सूरज की आग से।

मुझको दीख गया:

सूने विराट् के सम्मुख

हर आलोक-छुआ अपनापन

है उन्मोचन

नश्वरता के दाग से!

-‘अज्ञेय’ नयी दिल्ली

5 मार्च, 1958

Angulimála

Buddhista mese – vál. Irtl Melinda

Egy alkalommal a Magasztos Szávatthi mellett, a Dzsétavana-ligetben, Anáthapindika kertjében tartózkodott. Ugyanebben az időben Paszénadi király birodalmában egy Angulimála nevű bandita időzött, aki egy véreskező, kegyetlen, könyörtelen gyilkos volt, aki nem kegyelmezett semmilyen élőlénynek. Falvakat, városokat, vidékeket rombolt porig s tett lakatlanná. S a meggyilkolt emberek levágott ujjából készített füzért viselt a nyakában.

Egyik reggelen a Magasztos felöltözött, magára öltötte felső ruháját, fogta alamizsnás szilkjét és elindult Szávatthiba alamizsnáért. Miután bejárta Szávatthi alamizsnáért, majd az étel elfogyasztása után visszaindult alamizsnakörútjáról azon az úton, melyen Angulimála portyázott. A gulyások, a pásztorok és a földművesek, akik látták a Magasztost Angulimála területe felé közeledni mondták neki, hogy ne menjen arra, mert arra portyázik Angulimála, a véreskező, kegyetlen és könyörtelen gyilkos, aki nem kegyelmez semmilyen élőlénynek, aki falvakat és városokat rombol porig és tesz lakatlanná. És aki a megölt emberek ujjából készült füzért visel a nyakában. Az emberek hiába mentek ezen az úton, tízesével, húszasával, harmincasával, sőt negyvenesével, mégis Angulimála kezére kerültek. Mikor a Magasztos ezt meghallgatta, csak csendben, magányosan tovább folytatta útját.

Másodszor...harmadszor is elmondták a gulyások, pásztorok és földművesek a Magasztosnak, hogy ne menjen arra, de Ő csendesen csak továbbment.

Angulimála, a bandita meglátta, hogy a Magasztos az ő területén halad át. Mikor meglátta, ez a gondolata támadt: Ez pompás, ez hihetetlen! Az emberek hiába járnak ezen az úton tízesével, húszasával, harmincasával, negyvenesével, de mégis a kezeim közé kerülnek. És most ez a remete egyedül jön, kísérők nélkül, mintha üldözné a végzete. Miért ne venném el a remete életét? Tehát Angulimála felcsatolta

kardját, páncélját, nyílát és a Magasztos nyomába eredt.

Ekkor a Magasztos olyan, a természet törvényeit meghazudtoló, erővel robbant ki, hogy az Angulimála bandita ugyan futott, ahogy csak bírt, mégsem tudta utolérni a Magasztost, aki normális iramban lépkedett. Ekkor Angulimála bandita azt gondolta magában: futok ahogy bírok, s mégsem tudom utolérni a Magasztost, aki normális iramban lépked. Ekkor Angulimálának az a gondolata támadt, hogy ez hihetetlen, ez egy csoda. Korábban utolértem és elfogtam egy sebes elefántot, egy sebes lovat vagy képes voltam akár egy harci szekeret utolérni és befogni. S most nem tudom utolérni ezt a remetét, aki normális léptekkel halad.

Erre ő megállt és odakiáltott a Magasztosnak:

– Állj meg remete, állj meg!

– Én megálltam, Angulimála. Állj meg Te is!

Ekkor Angulimálának ez a gondolata támadt: Ezek a szákja remeték a valóságról prédikálnak, az igazság szószólói, de akkor hogyan gondolhatta ez a remete, miközben ő sétál azt, hogy „én állok Angulimála, Te állj meg.”

Ezek után Angulimála ezt a verset mondta Magasztosnak:

Miközben te sétáltál, remete,
azt mondtad nekem, hogy megálltál.
De most, amikor én megálltam,
te azt mondd, hogy nem állok.
Akkor én most kérdezem, ó, remete,
mit jelent ez, hogyan lehetséges,
hogy te megálltál én pedig nem?

A Buddha:

Angulimála, én megálltam,
egyszer s mindörökre.

Tartózkodom az erőszaktól, az élet kioltásától,

de te nem tartózkodsz az élet kioltásától.

Ez az amiért én megálltam és te nem.

Angulimála:

Ó, végre valahára ez a remete, egy nagyra becsült bölcs

eljött a kedvemért ebbe a hatalmas erdőbe.

Hallottam tanításodról, világosítsd meg előttem a Tant

és én megtagadom a gonoszt mindörökre.

Ezt mondván a bandita kardját és fegyvereit átdobta a sziklán, bele egy mély, tátongó szakadékba. A bandita a nagyra becsült Magasztos lábai előtt áhítattal meghajolt, s oltalomért folyamodott hozzá.

A Felbredett, a Könyörületes nagy Bölcs, a világ összes Istenének tanítója ezeket a szavakat mondta neki: „Gyere, Koldus!”. Így történt, hogy kolduló remetévé vált Angulimála, teljes belső békében élve hátralévő napjait.

A Kulturális Központban megrendezett ahimszáról szóló gyerekprogramon az erőszakmentesség egyetemes erkölcsi elvével és különböző aspektusaival ismerkedhettek meg a résztvevő iskolások. India szabadságát kivívó, "szelíd háborús győztesének", Mahatma Gandhinak és néhány buddhista mese, történet példáján keresztül került megvilágításba az erőszakmentes cselekvés, beszéd és gondolkodás jelentősége. A mai világban a gyerekek is sokféle erőszaknak vannak kitéve, a fizikai vagy verbális erőszakon túl pl. a média és az internet is jelentős mentális erőszak tényező a hétköznapi életben. A közös játék, beszélgetés során belső feszültségoldó gyakorlatokat próbáltak ki, melyeknek célja, hogy a külső negatív hatásait tudatosan kezelve leállítsák és transzformálják a belső indulatokat, felismerve azt, hogy ez is az erőszak, ártás egy formája, amivel nem csupán magunknak, de a környezetünknek is árthatunk. A program eredményeként a gyerekekben szinte kivétel nélkül hasonló válasz született a kérdésre, hogy hogyan lehetne a világban csökkenteni az erőszakot: belső békével, türelemmel és együttérzéssel...shanti shanti shanti. ■

PHOTO GALLERY



Audience listening to the speeches at the Inter-faith Discussion



Dr János Jelen, Rector of the Dharma Gate Buddhist college;
Shri Malay Mishra, Ambassador of India; Dr László Szabó, Deputy
Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade



Outside the village of Ozd with the guide



Children practicing the Ahimsa with Melinda Irtl



Master Apoorba Chatterjee playing the piano at ASCC



At the painting exhibition put up by Sri Chinmoy at ASCC



Ambassador with Winston Dookeran and Mr Snehangshu Roy at
Ellàtò Kert at Holi Milan



Ambassador speaking at Holi Milan

SNÉTBERGER MUSIC TALENT CENTER

The concept for the Talent Center came from guitarist and composer Ferenc Snétberger, who is of Hungarian Roma origin and is now living in Berlin. The goal of this center would be to support talented Roma youngsters, and provide a unique type of mentoring in their development. The teaching is based on their knowledge brought from home. The students get support in building on this knowledge, and broadening their talents in the direction of jazz, classical and world music. The mission is to establish an exemplary institution acknowledged both nationally and internationally, in which young, disadvantaged Roma music talents get world-class training and mentoring to help with starting their career in music.



From 2011, the center, under the professional leadership of Ferenc Snétberger, Liszt and Kossuth Award winning guitarist of Roma origin, gives opportunity to 60 talented, 12-20 years old Roma youngsters every year to further develop their musical skills. The state of the art building complex which is the home of the Snétberger Music Talent Center is located in Felsőörs, on the north shore of Lake Balaton, on the site of a former youth camp. The programme enjoys great national and international attention and recognition: the investment was financed by 2.7 million euros from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and by 0.5 million euros from the Hungarian State. The Open Society Institute gives significant help to the center both professionally and financially.

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