

GURUKULA NETWORK



Newsletter of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes affiliated with Ananda Marga Gurukula

Issue 31 November 2010

Celebrating 20 years of Ananda Marga Gurukula!

*We will establish the Gurukul.
We will dye each and every bud with the
light of knowledge. No one will stay away.*

*We will bind everybody with the thread of
love and create a Garland of incomparable
beauty.*

*No one will stay behind; none will
be thrown at the bottom. All
will exist with kith and kin
with their minds full of
sweetness and
tenderness
for all.*

Sávidyá yá vimuktaye - Education is that which liberates

Gurukula Network

**Newsletter and Journal of
Neohumanist Schools and Institutes**

**Gurukula Network is published by the
AMGK Global Liaison Office**

Two yearly issues, published November and May, serve as a means of communication for Neohumanist projects around the world.

This issue celebrates the 20th anniversary of Ananda Marga Gurukula

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VISION OF ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA

The Sanskrit word "Gurukula" (pronounced gurukul) has the following etymology: Gu: darkness; ru: dispeller; kula: an institution. Gurukula is an institution which helps students dispel the darkness of the mind and leads to total emancipation of the individual and society at large.

Ananda Marga Gurukula is engaged in creating an international network of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes to hasten the advent of a society in which there is love, peace, understanding, inspiration, justice and health for all beings.

OBJECTIVES OF ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA

- To serve humanity with neohumanist spirit and to acquire knowledge for that purpose.
- To establish a strong base in Anandanagar and around the world in order to carry on the legacy of its founder for the benefit of future generations.
- To provide a sound and conducive environment for students for their physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual well-being.
- To promote ethical values in individuals and implement these values in the management of projects, schools and institutions.
- To establish and maintain schools and special academic institutions around the world as well as a cyber-university.
- To initiate teacher education programs to improve and upgrade the quality of education on all academic levels.
- To promote Tantra, Neohumanism and PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) as the foundation for building a universal society.
- To initiate intellectual dialogues and research for all-round renaissance of society.
- To facilitate the placement of volunteers across cultures to help build meaningful relationships and to support community and social change projects.
- To support the building of a global eco-village network (Master Units)
- To encourage the development of micro-enterprises for sustainability of social service projects.

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Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar inspired the establishment of Ananda Marga Schools in 1963 out of which grew an international network of schools and the Neohumanist Education system. In 1990 he founded the Ananda Marga Gurukula University. Ananda Marga Gurukula also serves as the Board of Education for Neohumanist Schools and Institutes around the world. These Neohumanist Schools and projects, some of which are featured in Gurukula Network, are managed by the Education Relief and Welfare Section and Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga.

NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION

Universal Love and Values
Holistic Development
Astaunga Yoga
Ecological and Social Consciousness
Academic, Practical and Personal Skills
Knowledge of Self and World Applied for Universal Welfare
Joyful Learning through the Arts
Culturally Sensitive Approach
Integrated Curriculum
Exemplary Role of the Educators

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Education and Neohumanism

By Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

25 May 1985, Calcutta. Published in: A Few Problems Solved Part 5



You know, it is the inherent nature of all living beings to expand their physical arena, and for this purpose, rather, because of this fundamental characteristic (this trait is nothing but a sort of fundamental characteristic), they exploit others, they forget the interest of other living beings. Just now I said that this is the inherent nature of all living beings, both humans and animals. But human beings have another characteristic, another inborn instinct, and that is to expand their psychic arena also. So unlike other animals, human beings have the opportunity to divert their physical longings into spiritual longings, into spiritual aspirations. Other animals do not have this opportunity. But because of this psychic characteristic human beings exploit others on the psychic level as well as on the physical level, and this exploitation on the psychic level is even more dangerous than on the physical one.

So that there may not be any intellectual extravaganza or any physical subjugation, human beings require proper training both physically and mentally. And this is what is called education – properly training the physical and also the psychic existences. Because of the lack of such a training at the proper time, there is no perfect coordination, no happy adjustment, between one's inner being and outer being. Sometimes people seem very sincere to hear them talk, but there is not an iota of sincerity in their inner world. And this is what happens in the modern world: both individual and collective existence has become one-sided, it has lost its balance. Thus what we require most is a proper system of education.

Just to show their sincerity of purpose, just to show that they are developed human beings, sometimes people speak of disarmament. They say that there should be a check, a control, over the manufacturing of deadly weapons. They express this idea vocally, but internally they surreptitiously are prepared for even worse weapons, even more deadly weapons, just to keep others under their servitude in the physical sphere. This is nothing but the worst type of brutality. Once a certain leader said, "Keep the prospects of peace alive, but keep your powder dry." That is what is happening today. This physical longing should be diverted towards psychic longings; but if it is diverted towards psychic longing by proper mundane education, that will not suffice. In that case there still remains the fear of psychic subjugation. So the remedy lies elsewhere.

Yes, people should be motivated by human feelings, human sentiments, human ideas. No doubt it would be good if human feelings could serve as a moral check in this competition of weapons, but don't take this prospect as the last word: human feelings cannot check the infighting prevalent among human beings. For this purpose we should have a two-fold approach. For the purpose of training this turbulent mind, what should be done? We will have to educate the mind properly, along the lines of Neohumanism. This Neohumanist education will impart proper training to the mind. And at the same time there should be spiritual practice for proper psychic transformation. This is what we require most. There is no alternative.

Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar was the founding President of Ānanda Mārga Gurukula. From his early childhood in Bihar, India, where he was born in 1921, Shrii P.R. Sarkar has been attracting others by his deep love for humanity and guiding them along the path of self-realization. Adjusting the ancient science of Tantra Yoga to meet the needs of this age, he developed a scientific and rational philosophy and a system of practical disciplines for physical, mental and spiritual development

In 1955, while still leading a normal family life as a railway official, Shrii P.R. Sarkar formed the organization Ananda Marga for "self-realization and service to humanity". Starting in 1963 he spearheaded an educational movement for all round development. This began with the introduction of the Education Relief and Welfare Section which grew to an international network of schools. In 1990 this work culminated in the founding of Ananda Marga Gurukula University with its links to several hundred Master Units (self reliant eco villages projects) throughout the world.

In the field of ecology and environmental awareness, Shrii P.R. Sarkar propounded the philosophy of Neo-Humanism, extending the spirit of humanism to include love and care for animals, plants and the inanimate world.

In the realm of philology and linguistics, Shrii P.R. Sarkar wrote volumes on the Bengali and Sanskrit languages.

In the field of science, Shrii P.R. Sarkar introduced the theory of Microvita and struck at the heart of conventional physics and biology, as he points out that the basic building blocks of life are microvita -- emanations of pure consciousness.

In the field of music, literature and art, Shrii P.R. Sarkar urged artists to create art for service and blessedness and not merely "art for art's sake". Shrii P.R. Sarkar not only wrote long philosophical treatises, he enriched us as well with children's stories, fiction, comedy and drama. His most dramatic contribution is the 5018 songs known as Prabhat Samgiit (Songs of the New Dawn) which he started giving in 1982 until his departure on October 21st 1990. These beautiful songs express the universality of the human spiritual heart.

For the collective welfare of the entire society he propounded the theory of PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory), which stands for the maximum utilization and rational distribution of all the resources and potentialities of the world -- physical, mental, and spiritual -- and the creation of a new, humanistic social order of harmony and justice for all.

The Power of an Idea

Marcus Bussey

Twenty years has passed since Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (1921-1990) proposed the integrated system of education we call Ananda Marga Gurukula (AMGK). Typically Shrii P.R. Sarkar chose to use the ancient and culturally layered term Gurukula to describe a new blend of educational practice. Shrii P.R. Sarkar's entire focus had been on integrating the ancient wisdom of Tantra, India's spiritual energy, with an entirely modern and Western approach to knowledge and its generation. At the heart of this work lies a new vision of the human being – one who feels connected to her surroundings, the entire universe, and is energized with a vision of human cultural renewal. In this sense the word kula, meaning home or residence, points to our cosmic home and guru, meaning teacher or one who dispels darkness, points to the role of the expansive consciousness that fosters this connection to „home“ in all students who enter Gurukula to become more fully connected to this vision of a new humanity.

For me, AMGK is like a message in a bottle. Shrii P.R. Sarkar has left us a great task and when we look at his sketch for Gurukula we read so much of what he saw in potentiality for our future. The curriculum he set out is a great example of this. He clearly sees the role of education as a cultural practice and much of Gurukula's work in India is about cultural recovery following colonial domination. So, although he wished English to be the lingua franca of study, he placed a great emphasis on the study of Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali and other local tongues. Similarly, he pushed for a focus on Rastrology, Indian history and sub continental archaeology. Such work is aimed at reclaiming the lost identity of India and its peoples. This is clearly a political and emancipatory project of central importance. It is also a road map for the development of Gurukula projects elsewhere in the world where local traditions, knowledge, memory and identity have been lost due to colonization.

Yet, Shrii P.R. Sarkar was also thinking globally. AMGK, as a global movement, moves well beyond the Indic context of cultural renewal and weaves a powerful mixture of empirical and intuitional work to suggest that learning in the future will be a mixture of inner and outer practice. Learning will be a mix of practical work relating to agriculture, medicine, science, engineering, IT, etc. along with imaginative and cultural explorations in history, literature, music, art and astrology. It will also embrace the moral sciences of philosophy, politics, metaphysics, law and economics, while engaging the intuitive sciences in research into alternative medicines such as Ayurveda and Homeopathy as well as emergent understandings relating to microvita and subtle energy work.

Shrii P.R. Sarkar was thinking even beyond all this when he framed AMGK. Ultimately Shrii P.R. Sarkar's educational vision is Cosmic in nature. He saw the potentiality of humanity as limitless and sought to awaken the thirst for limitlessness as a result. The moral imperative is summed up in his theory of Prout and fully expressed in the philosophy of Neohumanism. The goal of education is liberation of intellect. This is a grounded and pragmatic goal because intellect here refers to the entirety of human experience not simply the cognitive capacity of the brain. To reach our potential human beings need to be educated for an entirely new future. This future will enable all to fulfill their potential at the physical, intellectual and spiritual levels of their being.

This vision needs to be reflected in our socio-cultural practices so all oppressed and marginalized groups are targeted by AMGK for special attention in the educative project. This is why Shrii P.R. Sarkar stressed the importance of gender equity and the empowerment of those who are socio-economically disadvantaged and culturally diminished. A future in which human potentiality is clearly an asset is a future that needs to address gross inequality at the local, global and Cosmic levels.

This local, global and Cosmic trajectory is embedded in the framework of AMGK. It gives meaning to work at all levels and provides referents for all of us working today and in the future to contextualize what we are doing and where we are going. This is the wonderful flexibility of the idea. Thus though Gurukula work is clearly institutional, it is also clearly cultural. AMGK poses the possibility of other ways of approaching education that are more culturally (i.e. locally) appropriate, civilisationally aware and Cosmically aligned. It requires of us all a value shift so that the institutional face of AMGK does not simply replicate the psychology, operational rationality and cultural blindness of the past. This future of limited outcomes lies all around us today. We see it in national curriculum and in all other modes of human ordering. To steer AMGK towards a more expansive future we need to work on our own consciousness, to seek to ground this powerful idea in the choices we make for a richer and deeper future that transcends boundaries that keep us locked in limited positions and unlock the possibilities always inherent to the present moment.

As I noted above, this idea is a message in a bottle. And that bottle is sailing on the ocean of time and possibility into the future. The idea is a powerful one: “To serve humanity with Neohumanist spirit and to acquire knowledge for that purpose”. The act of service brings to our work in AMGK an awareness of relationship. We can serve when we feel connected to the one being served. Western universal education has been largely at the service of the State. AMGK wishes to place it at the service of humanity and the Cosmos that sustains us. Educational challenges to the State-centric system we currently support have been around for a long time. What is new in AMGK is the link between self and other that underpins the entire process. Thus liberation of self, our conditioned habits of heart, is a prerequisite for service and simultaneously true service facilitates our liberatory inner practice.

AMGK can be a vehicle for profound cultural change. It can facilitate an entirely new cultural process in its unique configuration of the local, global and Cosmic scales and in the cultural patternings that emerge as localities reclaim their memory and identity and the spirit of place long denied by colonialism. It challenges us to set aside the pseudo-futures inherent to the cultural conditioning that underpins our sense of limitation.

Much of this vision can be lost if we only look at the scaffolding Shrii P.R. Sarkar left us. As a profound teacher he challenges us to see the message in the bottle (i.e. structure) he supplied. We need to question why he wishes a global educational movement to sponsor the study of local languages and histories? The answer, it seems to me, is to remind us of human scale learning and the postcolonial challenge to reclaim identity. We need to ask why is it that AMGK is committed to the study of alternative medicine, parapsychology, astrology, palmistry etc.? The answer is that not all knowledge is to be accessed through standard empirical routes that privilege a cultural lens that favours a few at the expense of the many. Similarly, we need to ask why is it that he links the deep past with the deep future. The answer lies in the fact that education as a social process is all about continuity and change and the balance between the two. Such questions arise when we contemplate the possibilities before us twenty years on from AMGK’s founding.

We have made a small beginning in the midst of the creative flux and confusion of emergence. We have the form in the institutional map Shrii P.R. Sarkar left to us, and we have the message in the creative spread of faculty subjects and the pointers Shrii P.R. Sarkar gave for these, but we must continue with the work of consciousness expansion so that we can read Shrii P.R. Sarkar’s message clearly. This is still largely a personal task for each of us as we strive to realise a degree of Neohumanist spirit in the present; yet, as Shrii P.R. Sarkar consistently maintained, our personal work is a service to the collective. So the work of AMGK is linked to our local tasks, and it is here that we will see the bright future Shrii P.R. Sarkar predicts take flight.

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The system of education prevailing today was formulated or evolved long ago, mainly with a view to suit the needs of the capitalist class. For the last three to four thousand years, the same type of education is being imparted. The main purpose behind this sort of educational system is to create persons with slavish mentality: this sort of education is fundamentally defective.

A new educational system must evolve to produce sadvipras: we have to thoroughly revamp the entire educational system. But it must be remembered that unless and until a new system is developed, we cannot demolish the old one, in spite of our aversion to it. Until you catch hold of a new branch, you cannot let go of the previous one. But it is certain that this type of education which serves the capitalists’ interests is not at all suitable. This sort of education creates obstacles in the evolution of humanity.*

Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

** “a person who is a moralist and a spiritualist and who fights against immorality”*

IS NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION PLAUSIBLE?

The Alternative Futures of Neohumanism and Neohumanist Education

Sohail Inayatullah

Is Neohumanist Education a plausible future? The weights are certainly stacked against an alternative future that challenges the *status quo* of student preparation for global competitive capitalism or national economic development and identity creation. Indeed, that education can successfully prepare students for any future other than the conservatism and standardization of the feudal and industrial templates remains questionable.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Education, as Foucault and many others have argued,ⁱ while claiming to prepare for the future is essentially about social control, creating disciplined bodies and ordered minds to reinforce the present. Even where there is change in other aspects of society (such as new technologies), education lags behind. It does so as education has multiple stakeholders attempting to influence its content, process and structure—parents (who remember the good old days when they were students), principals, teachers, ministries, the press and students. As Milojević argues, summarizing Larry Cuban, schools “are multipurpose, many-layered, labor intensive, relationship-dependent and profoundly conservative”.ⁱⁱ

THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

The context for education, currently—the Global situation—does not look promising either; four areas of concern are pivotal:

- (1) environmental catastrophes (mass species extinction; global warming with a possible Ice Age to come; massive pollution and congestion in large global, particularly Asian cities);
- (2) instability in international relations, with the relative decline of one hegemon—the USA—and the rise of another—China—with all the ensuing tensions and deep conflicts this is likely to create;
- (3) a move to the political Right throughout the world, with the ‘other’ increasingly being the object of fear (the politics of the gaze where those who look different are blamed for social ills); and,
- (4) politics moving toward border and boundary protectionism—with the nation-state as fortress.

While neohumanism and neohumanist education seeks openness and expansion; in opposition are four types of protectionism. These are: (1) economic protectionism, the fear of the rise of India and China and thus loss of jobs; (2) social protectionism, the fear of the migrant; (3) spiritual protectionism, the Left’s fear of a post-secular world; and (4) religious protectionism—fear of other religions and the assumption that one’s own is the best.

In contrast, neohumanism seeks to break out of current borders and boundaries creating a softer self (and a dialogue of inner selves) and an ethics of love and devotion for all the inanimate and animate beings of the universe. It seeks to protect only the tender dimension of what it means to be human, to help create a gentler society, in the words of Elise Boulding and Ivana Milojević.ⁱⁱⁱ Indeed, the founder of neohumanism, Sarkar has argued that love/devotion is not just a sentiment but a way of knowing the world. Neohumanism Education seeks to create a pedagogy of partnership and cooperation in a world where recent memory is “survival of the fittest.”^{iv} A partnership society is certainly a tall order in a world where hyper-masculinity has become more of the norm.

RESISTANCES TO CHANGE FACED BY NHE

Neohumanist thought thus runs counter to dominant history but certainly not counter to what is required for a successfully meeting the environmental, economic and cultural challenges outlined above. But why has Neohumanist Education yet to be broadly taken up in school/university settings globally?^v The reasons are varied but they include:

1. Educators (in common with other fields) have strong disciplinary boundaries and resist information that they did not help create. Why then would they accept anything as personally challenging as neohumanism (challenging religion, secularism, humanism in favor of spirituality and universalism)?
2. The future is discounted, and educators are overwhelmed. They seek how-to workbooks not dramatic changes in ethos. And those who do change ethos still have to negotiate the treacheries of governmental bureaucracies and university hierarchies.

3. Education infrastructure, both physical and in terms of imagined/envisioned development, is still from the nineteenth century. Classes are still designed with the image of teacher as a fountain of information and student as empty glass or as clay to be molded by authority. Mutual co-evolutionary learning, as in neohumanism, is considered too difficult to achieve as it requires inner reflection and expanded responsibility by all learners (students, teachers, administrators and parents).
4. The digital era may have begun, but our organizing principles are still from the industrial era; which, while a few hundred years old, still remain dominant. Thus, even with digital technologies the structure of the classroom —desks all in a line—remains intact. And even when digital technologies are used the pedagogical culture remains industrial (strong hierarchy, standardized and uniform). If the digital revolution is considered challenging, how will neohumanism find a home (as it is Gaia spirit tech—sustainability, spirituality plus digitalization)?

But let us take some words of inspiration from Fred Polak^{vi}

Many utopian themes, arising in fantasy, find their way to reality. Scientific management, full employment, and social security were all once figments of a utopia-writers' imagination. So were parliamentary democracy, universal suffrage, planning, and the trade union movement. The tremendous concern for child-rearing and universal education ...and for garden cities all emanated from the utopia. The utopia stood for the emancipation of women long before the existence of the feminist movement. All the current concepts concerning labor, from the length of the work week to profit-sharing, are found in the utopia. Thanks to the utopianists, the twentieth century did not catch [us] totally unprepared.

Yes, the structure of resistance to change is deep but alternative images beckon.

A HISTORICAL SHIFT

As Oliver Markley^{vii} argued many decades ago, we are in the middle of an historical shift where the image of the future leads.

The image—at least one image—is more and more about sustainability instead of industrial expansionism; global governance instead of the nation–state; gender partnership instead of male domination; respect for and the rights of nature instead of man over nature; spirituality instead of religion; communication and understanding as central to solving problems instead of the search for the techno-fix; and technology as embedded in nature and evolution instead of as a neutral tool. And most significantly, it is the move from a feudal model of the self to a gestalt holistic model of identity. In the feudal model, the ego is king and other identities are expected to blindly follow. In the gestalt model as developed by Hal and Sidra Stone^{viii}, there are multiple selves. Some may be mature and developed, while others may be traumatized and hidden. Moving the identities together toward bliss becomes the new identity constellation of the future.

However, our current reality remains feudal and industrial—it is this tension between the aspirational (the future we can almost see) and the unnecessary brutality of what we have that creates our current anxieties and despair.

Thus, while history weighs us down and globalisation, digitalization, geneticization, global demographic shifts push us into the unknown, alternative images of the future fight for our attention. Will global digitalization qua capitalism succeed? Will the current nation–state system, with education for national development and skills to compete, continue its dominance? Will we revert back to the religious protectionism of the Caliphate or the Church, or will neohumanism or other similarly different futures based on spirituality and sustainability transform the world?

The future is uncertain. One way to understand what might be is to consider alternative futures. They can assist in understanding the multiple possibilities and trajectories.

FUTURES OF NEOHUMANISM

What then are the alternative futures of neohumanism?

Profound change

The first and most hopeful one is that a profound paradigm change leads to neohumanism becoming the norm. Neohumanist Education would thus become desired—the yardstick by which other educational systems are measured.

Visible signs of neohumanism at schools would be that instead of a national flag a Gaian flag would be prominent or there may not even be a flag at the school entrance. Education would not be about identities being so easily captured by the nation-state.

At the systemic level, the school would be electronically linked to other schools. However, instead of separate computer room, communications technology would be invisible, embedded in the culture. Perhaps there would be webcams in the eco-gardens helping monitor the organic vegetables. Technology would not be defining—communication within, between girls and boys, between students and teachers and between students and others around the world would be far more important. Calm dynamism might be a term to describe the school.

The dominant worldview would be spiritual—not ascetic or religious but an understanding that each person has a unique relationship with a deeper dimension of themselves or the transcendent. The spiritual self, however, would not be domineering but guiding the other selves within each person's gestalt. There may be morning meditations or prayers or

perhaps just silent time for reflection. Yoga, tai-chi, martial arts would likely be part of the school as well. As would sports—sports may be traditional but generally they would be far less competitive, games designed that produced individual and collective partnership and excellence. The body, mind and spirit of each person would be the focus.

The underlying myth of the school would be a garden of many individual cultures—with teachers part of the garden, their practices perhaps analogous to nutrients, perhaps to water. Parents too would be part of this garden, as supporters not slayers of innovation. The world economy would be far more cooperative (leaving out the middle man) and far less corporatist or state economy run. Productivity would flourish as individuals would be true stakeholders. Meditation would enhance efficiency as would the green-nature design of buildings.^{ix} The Ministry of Education would only be one node focused on encouraging innovation and creativity not on command-control risk management.

Niche elite school

A second future is that neohumanist education becomes a niche system. Particular communities prefer this type of education, but generally, the state and national levels focus more on broader secular (or religious) education. Education continues business as usual activities in support of the nation–state and global capitalism. Neohumanist education is a niche for the different (intentional spiritual communities) and for the cultural creatives,^x those desiring a different softer world. It is expensive and only the select few can manage it. Capitalism continues but there are pockets of different measurement regimes including Triple Bottom Line (profit, social inclusion and environmentalism). The process of change is slow and painful but over time Neohumanist Education filters through to public schools.

Backlash

A third future is where neohumanist type schools (Steiner, Montessori, Ananda Marga, for example) are considered detrimental to national development. They are seen as promoting values that create a fifth column, that do not train young boys and girls (but especially boys) for the tough world of capitalism and even the tougher world of a planet in strife (terrorism, ecological wars and catastrophes, China-USA wars, for example). Moreover, they challenge the national religion, be it Christianity, Hinduism, Islam or ... Alternative education is seen as dangerous. Funding is not denied but systemic blocks are created so that funding is nearly impossible. Realism remains defining; after all it is power that matters most!

WHICH FUTURE?

Is then neohumanism plausible? Yes. But. Practitioners will need to move from the idealism of neohumanism to the day to day practice of neohumanism. Along with practice, there will need to be a worldview transition from feudal-industrialism to Gaian sustainability.

Fortunately, there is some data that suggests that the profound change alternative future is possible, at least in parts of the world, especially the USA, Northern Europe, Japan and Australia. Focused on values that predict future actions, Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson have noticed a shift away from traditional values (socially and religious conservative) going from 50% in the 1960s to less than 25% now.^{xi} They argue that their – the traditional - ferocity in public debate is based on the loss of numbers. Moderns – those focused on personal success and financial gain – have moved from around 50% to around 40%. Health challenges – climate change, in particular – account for this loss of numbers.

The group gaining momentum are the cultural creatives, who have gone from a few percent in the 1970s to the mid twenties in the 1990s to over 40% by 2008 in the USA.^{xii}

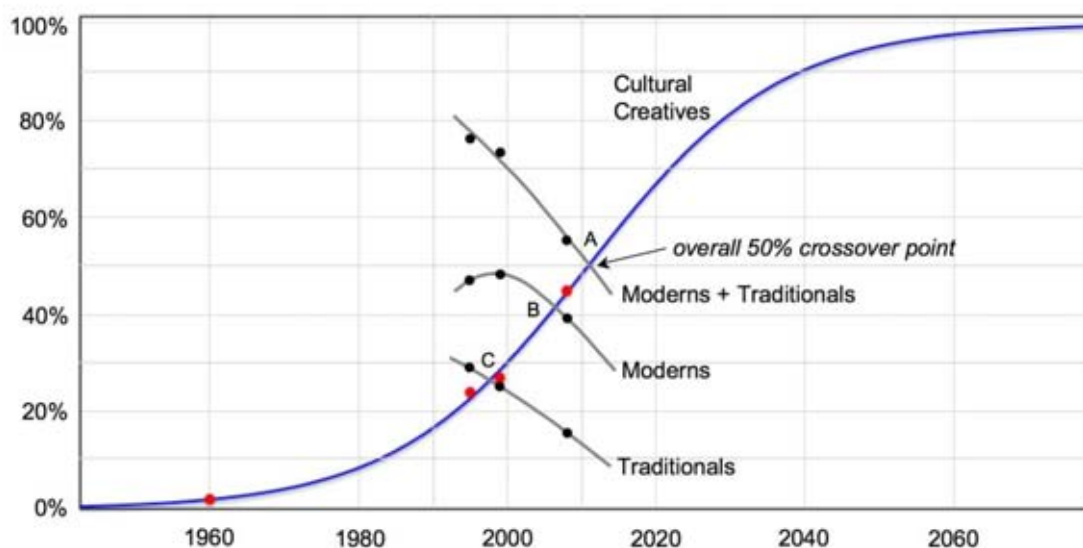
Year	Cultural Creatives	Moderns	Traditionals	Total
1995	24.0%	47.0%	29.0%	100%
1999	27.0%	48.0%	25.0%	100%
2008	44.9%	39.7%	15.4%	100%

Writes Ray,^{xiii} –Their [cultural creatives] most important values include: ecological sustainability and concern for the planet (not just environmentalism); liking what is foreign and exotic in other cultures; what are often called 'women's issues' by politicians and the media (i.e., concern about the condition of women and children both at home and around the world, concern for better health care and education, desire to rebuild neighbourhoods and community, desire to improve caring relationships and family life); social conscience, a demand for authenticity in social life and a guarded social optimism; and giving importance to altruism, self-actualization and spirituality as a single complex of values.”

Also important is their link to new technologies: Writes Ray,^{xiv} "The other major influence on their growth has been the growing information saturation of the world since the 1950s. In fact the Cultural Creatives are simply the best informed people. They take in more of every kind of information through all the media, and are more discriminating about it as a result.

Many successfully blend their personal experience with new views about how the world works, and why—their new values and commitments have rather organically grown out of their synthesis of all the information.”

And: two key dimensions of values are more important to Cultural Creatives than to others: (1) having green and socially responsible values, and (2) personal development values, including spirituality and new lifestyles



Hardin Tibbs in his interpretation of Ray’s data suggests that there could be a shift in values by around 2020 as cultural creatives become the majority in certain parts of the world.^{xv}

If Ray and others are correct, then this demographic shift could lead to a politics wherein Neohumanist Education moves suddenly from being marginal to centre stage. By 2020 the backlash would have diminished in intensity as the numbers of who support the traditional would have declined.

Neohumanist Education is thus a driver of this alternative future and it is dependent on a broader shift in the world as we know it.

Neohumanism succeeds as it offers a way forward but not based on a particular ‘ism’, but rather as it provides a new narrative that can meeting the challenges the world is facing.

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ⁱ See Ivana Milojević, *Educational Futures: dominant and contesting visions*, London, Routledge, 2005, 10. See Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, New York, Pantheon, 1980.

ⁱⁱ Milojević, *op cit.*, 10. L. Cuban, *Oversold and Underused: Computers in the classroom*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2001.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Ivana Milojević & Sohail Inayatullah, ‘Feminist critiques and visions of the future’; www.metafuture.org. Also in *Futures Research Quarterly*, 14(1), 1998, 35-46.

^{iv} See the works of David Loye and his re-reading of Darwin. www.davidloye.com Accessed 29 September 2010.

^v Jenny Gidley, Debra Bateman & Caroline Smith, *Futures in Education: Principles, Practice and Potential*, Melbourne, Swinburne University, 2004 /

^{vi} Fred Polak, *The Image of the Future* (Trans. Elise Boulding), San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1973, 137-138. For more on utopianism and futures studies, see Milojević, *op cit.*

^{vii} O.W. Markley, ‘Changing Images of Man, Part I and II’, *Renaissance Universal Journal*, 1(3 & 4), 1976.

^{viii} Hal and Sidra Stone, *Embracing our selves*, Novata, CA, New World Library, 1989.

^{ix} It is estimated that gains from worker productivity in green buildings will be up to 160 billion dollars. Robert Ries, Melissa Bilec, Nuri M.Gokhan, Needy Mehmet, and Kim LaScola [Engineering Economist](http://www.engineeringeconomist.com) Fall, 2006

^x see www.culturalcreatives.org. Paul Ray & Sherry Anderson, *The Cultural Creatives*, New York, Three Rivers Press, 2000.

^{xi} Paul Ray, *The Cultural Creatives: The Potential for a New, Emerging Culture in the U.S.*, 200, 8 <https://www.wisdomuniversity.org/CCsReport2008SurveyV3.pdf>. Retrieved 19 August 2010. Also: Paul Ray & Sherry Anderson, *The Cultural Creatives*, New York, Three Rivers Press, 2000.

^{xii} Hardin Tibbs, *Changing Cultural Values and the Transition to Sustainability*. *Journal of Futures Studies* (Forthcoming, February-March), 2011.

^{xiii} Ray, p. 7.

^{xiv} Ray, p. 8

^{xv} Hardin Tibbs, *Changing Cultural Values and the Transition to Sustainability.*, *Journal of Futures Studies* (Forthcoming, February-March), 2011.

Landmarks in Education, Scholarship, Medicine, and Universities: From Ancient to First Millennium to Medieval to Modern Times

by Ac. Dhanjoo N. Ghista

The history of Education and University is the history of teaching and learning. Each generation, since the beginning of human evolution and writing, has sought to pass on cultural and social values, morality and religious (or spiritual) values, economic development and governance, medicine and healthcare, science and technology to the next generation. The totality of all these disciplines constitutes knowledge.

I. The Gurukula System of Education

In the first millennium BC, formal education in ancient India originated with the Gurukul system. The Gurukula was residential in nature with the shishyas (aspirants of knowledge) associated with the Guru to get enlightened, as part of his extended family. At the Gurukuls, the teacher imparted knowledge of Religion, Scriptures, Philosophy, Literature, Warfare, Statecraft, Medicine, Astrology and History. The students made their guru as their role model. The guru imparted this knowledge to his disciples through his own example. The guru was supposed to be of flawless character, and he imparted the same flawless character to his students through his constant association.



II. Medical System and Education in Ancient Egypt, Babylonia, India, Persia, Greece

Egypt: Ancient Egypt developed a large, varied and fruitful medical tradition, as early as 3000 BC. Egyptian medicine developed a practical use in the fields of anatomy, public health, and clinical diagnostics. Imhotep in the 3rd dynasty is credited with being the founder of ancient Egyptian medicine and with being the original author of the Edwin Smith Papyrus (1600BC), detailing cures, ailments and anatomical observations.

Babylonia: The oldest Babylonian texts on medicine date back to the Old Babylonian period in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC. The most extensive Babylonian medical text, however, is the Diagnostic Handbook written by the physician Esagil-kin-apli of Borsippa, during the reign of the Babylonian King Adad-apla-iddina (1069-1046 BC), which introduced the concepts of diagnosis, prognosis, physical examination, and medical prescriptions.

Ayurveda Medical System in India: In the first millennium BCE, the world's first scientific system of medicine emerges known as Ayurveda, literally meaning the science of life. Ayurveda is the literate, scholarly system of medicine that originated in post-Vedic India. Its two most famous texts belong to the schools of Charka (born c. 600 BCE) and Sushtra (born 600 BCE). Both these ancient compendia include details of the examination, diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis of numerous ailments, and various forms of surgery, including rhinoplasty, the repair of torn ear lobes, perineal lithotomy, cataract surgery, and several other excisions.

Education & Medicine in Persia: The ancient Persian city of Gundishapur, located in the country's southern province of Khuzestan, was founded in 271 BCE by the Sassanid king, Shapour I. King Shapour II chose the city as his capital and built the world's oldest known medical center, which also included a university and a library with an estimated 400,000 books. The Academy of Gundishapur was a renowned center of learning, and offered training in medicine, philosophy, theology, science, astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, military commandship, architecture, craftsmanship, agriculture and irrigation, and geometry.

Greece: The first known Greek medical school opened in Cnidus in 700 BC. Alcmeon, author of the first anatomical work, worked at this school, and it was here that the practice of observing patients was established. A towering figure in the history of medicine was the physician Hippocrates of Kos (460 BC 370 BC), considered the "father of modern medicine." Hippocrates categorized illnesses as acute, chronic, endemic, and epidemic. Herophilus of Chalcedon, working at the Medical school of Alexandria placed intelligence in the brain, connected the nervous system to motion and sensation, distinguished between veins and pulsating arteries, and developed pulmonary physiology wherein air is drawn by the lungs into the heart and is then pumped by the arteries throughout the body.

III. Education and Medicine in the First Millennium and Middle Ages

In India: The first millennium and the few centuries preceding it saw the flourishing of higher education at Nalanda, Takshashila, Ujjain, and Vikramshila Universities. Amongst the subjects taught were Art, Architecture, Painting, Logic, Mathematics, Grammar, Philosophy, Astronomy, Literature, Buddhism, Hinduism, Arthashastra (Economics & Politics), Law, and Medicine. Each university specialized in a particular field of study. Takshila specialized in the study of medicine, while Ujjain laid emphasis on astronomy. Nalanda, being the biggest centre, handled all branches of knowledge, and housed up to 10,000 students at its peak.

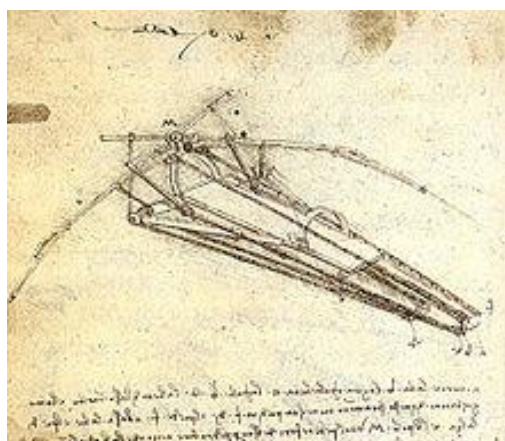
Education and Medicine in Islamic Middle Ages: The Islamic civilization rose to primacy in medical science as Muslim physicians contributed significantly to the field of medicine, including anatomy, ophthalmology, pharmacology, pharmacy, physiology, surgery, and the pharmaceutical sciences. Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi (865-925) became the first physician to systematically use alcohol in his practice as a physician. The Comprehensive Book of Medicine was written by the Iranian chemist Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi, wherein he has recorded clinical cases of his own experience and provided very useful recordings of various diseases. Avicenna, considered among the most influential medical scholars in history, wrote The Canon of Medicine (1025) and The Book of Healing (1027), which remained standard textbooks in both Muslim and European universities until the 17th century. In 1242, Ibn al-Nafis was the first to describe pulmonary circulation and coronary circulation, which form the basis of the circulatory system, for which he is considered the father of the theory of circulation. He also described the earliest concepts of metabolism and developed new systems of physiology of pulsation, bones, muscles, intestines, sensory organs, bilious canals, esophagus, and stomach.

IV. Formal Education and Universities in the Medieval Period

The first medieval institutions generally considered to be universities were established in Italy, France, and England in the late 11th and the 12th centuries for the study of arts, law, medicine, and theology. The University of Salerno alongside the University of Constantinople in the 9th century were the first institutions of higher education in Medieval Europe. The first degree-granting university in Europe, and the world, was the University of Bologna (established in 1088). The first universities in Europe were University of Bologna (1088), University of Paris (1150), University of Oxford (1167), University of Modena (1175), University of Palencia (1208), University of Cambridge (1209), University of Salamanca (1218), University of Montpellier (1220), University of Padua (1222), University of Toulouse (1229), University of Orleans (1235) and University of Coimbra (1288).



University studies took six years for a Bachelors degree and up to twelve additional years for a master's degree and doctorate. The first six years were organized by the Faculty of Arts, where the seven liberal arts were taught: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music theory, grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Once a Bachelors of Arts degree had been conferred, the student could leave the university or pursue further studies, in one of the three other faculties law, medicine, or theology-- in which to pursue the masters degree and doctorate degree.



It is noteworthy to mention Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci (April 15, 1452 May 2, 1519), who was an Italian polymath: painter, sculptor, architect, musician, scientist, mathematician, engineer, inventor, anatomist, geologist, cartographer, botanist and writer. Leonardo's journals include musical instruments, hydraulic pumps, reversible crank mechanisms, finned mortar shells, a steam cannon, as well as plans for several flying machines, including a light hang glider and a machine resembling a helicopter.

Anatomical study of an arm (c.1510) and A design for a flying machine (c.1488) Institut de France, Paris

VI. Research University Concept

Under the guidance of Wilhelm von Humboldt, a new university was founded in Berlin in 1810, which became the model for a Research University. A Research University, according to the 1994 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, is deemed to engaged in extensive research activity, offers a full range of academic programs, and is committed to providing graduate education through the doctorate

Top Research Universities rankings are based upon:

1. Quality measures: National Academy membership, prestigious faculty awards, doctorates awarded, postdoctoral appointees, and SAT scores of entering freshmen;
2. Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index: books published, journal publications, citations of journal articles, honors and awards.

Cambridge University, in the category of Research Universities, ranks as one of the world's topmost universities, having a record number of 87 Nobel Laureates. Most of all, the university is renowned for a long and distinguished tradition in mathematics and the sciences. Many of the most important scientific discoveries and revolutions made at Cambridge include: understanding the scientific method, by Francis Bacon; the laws of motion, by Sir Isaac Newton; the discovery of the electron, by J. J. Thomson; the splitting of the atom by Ernest Rutherford, and of the nucleus by Sir John Cockcroft and Ernest Walton; the unification of electromagnetism, by James Clerk Maxwell; the discovery of hydrogen, by Henry Cavendish; Evolution by natural selection, by Charles Darwin; the Turing machine, a basic model for computation, by Alan Turing; the structure of DNA, by Francis Crick and James Watson; pioneering quantum mechanics, by Paul Dirac; Cosmology concepts by Stephen Hawking. Other Cambridge academics include major economists such as John Maynard Keynes, Thomas Malthus, Alfred Marshall, Milton Friedman, Piero Sraffa, and Amartya Sen.



VII. Universities for Social Transformation (the modern theme for university in society)

We are living in an era of significant socio-economic-political turmoil, as everyone is taking a critical look at the role of governments in socio-economic security and happiness factor for its people. In this phase, the University takes on a very important role, in taking a leading and constructive role in the social transformations of our times. Today, universities face significant challenges to their traditional position in society, as contemporary knowledge systems are becoming more distributed and learning ubiquitous. Where does this leave the university - as a historically specialized and privileged place for development and dissemination of knowledge and learning? This is the challenge facing modern universities all over the world, to make their surrounding regions to become environmentally and socio-economically sustainable, and to provide templates for local and regional sustainable peace.

VIII. Ideal Modern University

So now taking into account the concepts and roles of universities from ancient times to present, let us define our concept of an ideal university, as one which:

1. emphasizes heightened values of living: in personal living and in interactions with societal members;
2. imbibes neohumanist ideals in educational programs;
3. promotes the development of society according to: Samgacchadhvam samvadadhvam Let us move together, let us sing together; Samvomannamsi janatam let us come to know our minds together;
4. incorporates the concept of Gurukula, wherein the faculty members are dedicated to foster the holistic development and enlightenment of students, and are role models for students;
5. is a comprehensive research university, having all faculties: humanities and social sciences; physical, biological sciences, and environmental sciences; engineering sciences, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences; management: of business corporations and sustainable communities; medicine and health sciences; law and governance; agriculture and forestry; veterinary science and medicine.
6. is socially conscious of serving the regional community and promoting its social transformation

This is the model university that we should promote in Ananda Marga Gurukula, to catalyze a new civilization!

Ac. Dhanjoo Ghista is Vice Chancellor (Upakulapati) of Ananda Marga Gurukula. Professor Ghista's academic professional background, research and publications span engineering & biomedical sciences, humanities & social sciences, cosmology & evolution, health sciences & health care administration. Readers may find it interesting to read his book, Socio-economic Democracy and World Government, which deals with (i) grassroots economic & governance systems, civilian democracy & world government, for (ii) poverty alleviation, human rights promotion, and template for sustainable peace. His visionary perspective is for Gurukula to delineate the ideals of a progressive society in all fields of human thought and endeavour through its education and research programs, towards the evolution of a global neohumanist society".

Why I Love Tantra

Ramesh Bjornes

Tantra is a spiritual path which inspires people to walk their spiritual talk. That's why I love Tantra.

I also love Tantra because of its rich, ancient history. The prehistoric landscape of ancient India contained two separate rivers, one Vedic and one Tantric. The Vedic stream supplied the world and the Indian continent with philosophy and religious rituals, while the Tantric stream supplied yogic practices and Tantric meditation. Through the parallel flow, as well as the occasional commingling of these two rivers, the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of India became a reality.

I love Tantra, because it has not only shaped the world of yoga and Ayurvedic healing, but it has also influenced a whole tapestry of cultures and wisdom traditions throughout the world, including Buddhism, Taoism, Chinese medicine, and even Greek and Celtic culture and mythology.

In the old days, Tantra became known as Taota in China. Over time, this Chinese version of Tantra metamorphosed into Taoism. Tantra has also been linked to the Dionysus cult in Greece by eminent Indian scholar Alain Danielou, who, among others, claimed there was once a Tantra-oriented civilization that stretched from Spain to the river Ganges.

I love Tantra because it is a comprehensive body-mind-spirit tradition that includes the practice of physical yoga exercises, devotional dancing, mantra meditation and chanting, breathing exercises, visualization techniques, sacred cosmology and even alchemy and holistic medicine.

I love Tantra because it represents the true essence of Yoga, which has many names but actually is, in essence, the same tradition.

Philosophically, around 1500 BCE, Tantra was expressed by Maharishi Kapila in the form of Kapilasia Tantra, or more commonly known as Samkhya philosophy. It was in this philosophy that the concepts of Purusha (Cosmic Consciousness) and Prakrti (Cosmic Energy), the two integral aspects of Brahma (God), were first formulated. Two different expressions of the One Brahma, or God, Purusha is that Cosmic Consciousness which is inherent in all things, and Prakrti is that Energy which creates all things.

Hundreds of years later, nobody knows exactly the year or century, a great Tantric Yogi named Astavakra developed a form of Tantra called Rajadhiraja Yoga, a subtle form of yoga and meditation practice in which pranayama (breathing exercises) and dharana (concentration practices) with cosmic ideation was an integral part of the program. The same Astavakra is also the author of the Astavakra Gita, a sublime treatise on Yoga as spiritual non-dualism, or Advaita. Most scholars call this form of yoga Advaita Vedanta. However, Tantric authors, including Lalan Prasad Singh, reminds us that Rajadhiraja Yoga is Tantric in nature.

Hence, I love Tantra, because it appears that the practice of Tantric Yoga is the underlying inspiration behind all the various schools of Yoga, including the most recognized of them all, namely Asthanga Yoga, formulated by Maharishi Patanjali around 200 BCE.

Inspired by Tantra, Rajadhiraja and Samkhya philosophy, Patanjali systematized the eightfold path of Asthanga Yoga (also called Raja and Kriya Yoga as well as Seshvara Samkhya) in his famous treatise the Yoga Sutras. Many names and paths of Yoga, but basically the same path of spirituality.

If there is any significant difference between these paths, the main one, writes Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, is that Rajadhiraja Yoga is nondual, leads to Nirvikalpa Samadhi and is devotional in nature, while Asthanga Yoga is dualistic, leads to Savikalpa Samadhi and is intellectual in nature.

However, what they both have in common with Tantra is that they are based on the same eight limbed practices: (1) yama and (2) niyama (ethics), (3) asanas (physical exercises), (4) pranayama (breathing exercises), (5) pratyahara (sense withdrawal) (6) dharana (concentration), (7) dhyana (meditation) and (8) samadhi (spiritual ecstasy).



The Celtic God Cernunnus. The striking resemblance to the Pashupati seal has led some researchers to believe this God is inspired by the Tantric God Shiva.



Tantric God Shiva or Pashupati. Common seal found in the Indus Valley, ca 2500-3500 BCE.

So, I love this many-named, comprehensive tradition of yoga, which is often simply referred to as Tantra Yoga.

Most Western books on this subject, however, inform us that Tantra is simply some form of esoteric sexual practice. Indeed, most of the writings on *sex-tantra* have been lifted straight from the pages of the *Kama Sutra*, a Hindu text on lovemaking, which is neither part of Tantric nor yogic literature. Not surprisingly, more and more people are searching for a more authentic and holistic experience of Tantra. This search was reflected in the article “Tantric Sex” in *O: Oprah Magazine*, where its 14 million readers learned that Western Tantra has been “overly sexualized.”

I love Tantra because it is about finding balance in all aspects of our lives. In its essence, it is about seeing and realizing that everything we do can become a sacred, spiritual act.

As yoga writer Vimala McClure reminds us, Tantra is the “yoga of everything.”

So, while Tantra signifies the various, ancient yogic paths and their particular history, the practice of Tantra—a Sanskrit word that literally means *the practice that leads to spiritual liberation*—can also be loosely characterized as the universal quest for union with God in all the world’s wisdom traditions.

I love Tantra, because, Tantra simply means spiritual transformation, the path to inner liberation. Irrespective of religion, the spirit of Tantra is reflected in all genuine *spiritual practice*. For Tantra is not based on religious faith or belief; it is based on empirical practice.

I love Tantra, because Tantric yogis embrace both unity and duality, both wholeness and opposites. They have realized that these opposites dissolve in Brahma, in Spirit, and that the inner essence of all life and all things is bliss and love.

That is why Tantra is often called *the path of ecstasy, or the path of love*.

The Essence of Tantric Spirituality

I love Tantra because of its notion that everything is Divine. This essential realization—that every form, particle or atom of this universe has an inherent capacity to reveal the Divine. That everything is, at its core, God, that is the essence of Tantra.

I love Tantra because of its straight-forward spirituality. Tantra realizes that there is no free spiritual lunch. We must engage in a sustained spiritual effort (*sadhana*) in order to realize this inherent Divinity. No weekend seminar in Hawaii will give you instant enlightenment!

In order to experience sacredness in everyday life, we must practice spirituality—hatha yoga, meditation, prayer and chanting—diligently. We must walk our spiritual talk. It’s that simple.

In other words, daily spiritual practice is essential in achieving results on the path of Tantra.

I love Tantra, because it signifies a spirituality that is vigorous and fearless, a spirituality that encourages and enables us to overcome limitations, phobias, worries and egotistical tendencies head-on.

I love Tantra because of its alchemical use of energy, its ability to transform desire into bliss, and violence into peace.

For the Tantric understands that all dualities, all conflicts and opposites, all forms and energies are different expressions of God that ultimately dissolve in a state of nondual unity and peace.

I love Tantra for its adherence to nondualism; its ability to see the oneness of everything. In India, both Tantrics and Vedantists are nondualists—they both believe in the Oneness of existence—however, where the Tantrics see the world as Divine, the Vedantists see it as an illusion.

It is perhaps this holistic and practical attitude—that Divinity is everywhere and that sacredness can be realized anywhere—that makes Tantra so appealing to contemporary seekers. At least that is why I really and truly love Tantra.

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The Supra Aesthetic Science of Kiirtan

Dr. Jyoshna La Trobe

Kiirtan is not only *samgiit*, i.e. song, instrumental music and dance, it is also “a way of worshipping god through singing”¹. Though kiirtan is known as a vehicle for reaching ecstatic heights (Rouget, Slawek, Henry) the actual kiirtan *music* has never been documented, to my knowledge, yet is essential to an understanding of *how* kiirtan „works“ or the mechanics behind its ability to take one highest for the longest period of time. In this article I will highlight some of the traditional „formulas“ that for centuries have been instrumental in creating a successful kiirtan performance. An investigation into the previously unknown kiirtan *music* has taken me to Rarh, (the region primarily in West Bengal and the border lands of Jharkand and Bihar), the homeland of the kiirtan tradition (Sarkar, Slawek), to unravel the musical components of this supra-aesthetic science.

Firstly I shall discuss relevant aspects of the aesthetics of kiirtan, not delving into aesthetics in general, which is beyond the scope of this essay and aspects of Indian philosophy that have been well documented, but to unravel specific structural components of the kiirtan performance. This is followed by a brief discussion of various meanings of the term *supra*, in a kiirtan context. On the term „aesthetics“, Sri P.R. Sarkar writes,

*“While trying to analyse the nature of this dynamism, one is bound to conclude that aesthetics is surely a science, for it moves according to fixed and self-created rules. But the realization of aesthetic feeling is not a science, rather it is a high-grade art.”*²

Just as Tantra is “a science or systematic process that liberates one from the bondage of dullness or lethargy”³ so too the aesthetic science of kiirtan, as one aspect of Tantra, embodies a “systematic process” that can assist one to reach their spiritual terminus. Science is the “study of the physical and natural world, and phenomena especially by using systematic observation and experiment” (Encarta Dictionary UK), and is relevant to an investigation of kiirtan *music* also. In *astaunga* yoga, it is common knowledge that yogis observed the postures and physical characteristics of animals to ascertain the possible effects these same postures could have on human beings. Their experimentation led to a system of yoga postures called *hatha* yoga. Similarly *kiirtaniyas* (kiirtan musicians) observe the effects of certain sounds upon themselves and their environment, to ascertain which talas/ragas are most effective in arousing devotion and creating ecstatic heights in communion with the Deity. Various practitioners of Shiva and Vaisnava Tantra (practitioners of devotional feats in worship of Shiva and Krishna/Radha) throughout the ages, such as Jayadeva (11th century), Candidas (14th century), Caitanya Deva (15th century), Narottama Das Thakur (16th century), have composed kiirtans in specific ragas and tala (even though many of these are unintelligible to us today), and developed kiirtan *music* to its present state of sophistication. Narottama Das Thakur for example, at the festival of Kheturi (1572 approx.) instigated a new form of kiirtan called *lila* kiirtan that began with a *Gauralap* (invocation to Gaur Caitanya) that *kiirtaniyas* in Rarh still perform today.

According to Sri P.R. Sarkar, there are three primary factors in the science of aesthetics, something that “*imparts joy to people.. I love those flowers..I like their decorative arrangement.. I appreciate a particular style of expression..*”⁴ i.e. it must uplift others, have a systematic arrangement of song melodies or ragas, and be performed in a particular style that is appropriate to kiirtan. Some of these musical pieces, would “*move(s) according to fixed*” and others to “*self-created rules*” (Sarkar, 1984).

Based on empirical data gained through investigations in the field (Jan.-June 2006, Jan – March 2007, Jan.- Feb 2008, Feb to April 2009, June 2010), intensive observation of musical performances and interviews of kiirtan experts in Rarh, as well as musical analysis, I uncover some of kiirtan aesthetics “fixed” and “self created rules” as exhibited by Rarhi *kiirtaniyas*.

My methodology in the field is comparable to local ethnomusicologist, Dr. Binapani Mahato’s, who states,

I have to listen, very carefully.. when I count the mātrās, [beats] and listen properly, very devotedly I listen, the way it sounds, like the ektāla rhythm, I hear that these are kīrtan bols [mnemonic syllables]. So I ask guruji, I say, I think this is ektāla bols and he confirms it, because they are the masters, usually they don’t like to tell everybody, they don’t like to sell off their wealth you see, this is their treasure. (2007: Pers.comm.).

In my research, I also watched attentively many performances before beginning to recognize some of the more distinctive kīrtan melodies that were sung. After learning the local musical terms, I could then ask relevant

questions of the kīrtan experts, who responded positively, understanding I had a genuine interest in their music. Aided by my research partner Sanjay Mahato, we created musical graphs plotting the rise of intensity in the kīrtan performance and made audio visual recordings for later analysis. The work in the studio was a solitary task however, involving hours of transcription and analysis of the musical data as well as video editing and the writing up process.



Sri Jagaran Mahato

In an interview with Jagaran Mahato, kīrtan expert who has been teaching kīrtan for seventeen years, he says

*“Kīrtan is not only singing, it is also the worship of God through singing, so it has some rules since ancient time. First you have to worship Sri Caitanya or Gauranga through the Gauralap, then the worship of the instruments coming together in the jhuran, and after that the kīrtan starts”.*⁵

In other words, there is a traditional musical sequence when performing kīrtan, each piece having a particular significance for the musicians and audience. Though kīrtan may appear to be a wild cacophony of sound to unfamiliar ears, it is in fact a highly structured performance, as seen in the chart below. In Rarhi kīrtan I have uncovered a systematic arrangement of specific kīrtan talas/ragas which form the central corpus of the tradition, while on the periphery there are *rang*, lit. „colour“, songs which in a kīrtan context refers to popular song melodies such as folk *jhumur* or more contemporaneous melodies such as Hindu film music. Lying somewhere in between the central corpus of kīrtan talas/ragas, and *rang* melodies are the mystical Baul melodies and selected traditional Hindustani ragas such as Shiva Ranjani which have cultural as well as spiritual significance to the local people.

Another key finding from my investigation is that the kīrtan performance structure drives towards higher and higher peaks of intensity in ever increasing, yet subtle increments. To give an example, the performance opens with the *Gauralap*, the riveting „opening call“ or „invocation to the Deity“, sung to Gaur or Caitanya, the 15th century Vaisnava saint who propagated kīrtan extensively throughout Bengal. It is then followed by an instrumental section called *jhuran*, performed in honour of the traditional kīrtan instruments, which increases in rhythmic intensity as it progresses. The traditional instruments are the khol drum, believed to symbolise the eyes of Radha, crying tears of longing for Krishna, and the handheld cymbals, called *kartal*, with their scintillating sounds that resonate with ever deepening states of meditation (although other instruments such as harmonium and clarinet have recently been an addition to the kīrtan ensemble).

After the *jhuran* the travelling or *patha* songs are performed along the village path, before the *kiirtaniyas* enter into the temple (*mandir*), where they begin with a powerful rhythmic crescendo, then embark on the *alap* (unmetered section) of Daspera, the first kīrtan raga/tala in twelve beat cycles (*matras*) called *ektala*. The *alap* leads directly into the introductory metered section of the raga that ends with a drum solo or *katan*. In between two major kīrtan tala/ragas is interspersed an interlude, usually consisting of a popular melody *rang* or in the case of the Kostuka group, a *ragini*, as well as a kīrtan *rang*. The interlude provides a diversion from the profundity of the kīrtan raga adding more „colour“ (*rang*) to the performance. Other significant kīrtan talas/ragas follow such as Pakachuta in seven *matras*, a very comprehensive raga, with at least five melodic parts and an extensive *katan* and Sohni, a very popular kīrtan raga/tala, also in seven *matras*.

The performance may end with Jhorchuta, a very precise yet compelling raga/tala, in three and a half *matras*, before the *kiirtaniyas* leave the *mandir* and meander joyfully towards the house of the „headman“ of the village, where their journey began, singing a *liila* (Radha/Krishna) kīrtan song. Thus their kīrtan performance concludes *outside* the *mandir* where it began and their spiritual journey is complete as the next kīrtan group enter into the *mandir* and sing Hari’s name in a continuous stream of sonic devotion.

Secondly, through interviews and analysis, I have deduced that Rarhi kīrtan has a unique musical infrastructure, a strategic arrangement of melodic and rhythmic parts within the raga, organised in a systematic way to create mounting intensity, leading to ecstatic unity. The infrastructure includes the *la* „introductory melodic and rhythmic „part“ or „repeated refrain“, similar to the *sthayi* in classical *dhrupad*, followed by melodic improvisations called *udara mudara tara* in a higher tessitura than *la*, similar to *antara* of *dhrupad*, culminating in a combination of *la*



Sri Jagaran Mahato and group sing the *patha* songs on the way to the *mandir*

and *udara mudara*. The rhythmic texture that weaves in and out of the raga melody provides a powerful juxtaposition to the melodic parts, and creates in equal measure a fervour-like intensity of musical and devotional

expression. Moving from *la* fixed rhythmic pattern, and introductory *bols* to medium tempo called *duni*, or double time, to four times the original tempo, or *cho duni*, they reach a climactic rhythmic part called *matan*.

Similarly to a classical *dhrupad* structure with the cycle leading back from verse to refrain, is maintained only up to the point of the *matan* when it reverts to a traditional „through composed“ structure, with the inclusion of another section called *katan* or „skilled playing“ where a *bol* recital is performed simultaneously while playing. Hence rather than a purely cyclic structure the kiirtan performance encapsulates a „through composed“ or „narrative like“ structure at the *katan* and concludes with a mighty climax called the *katan matan*. This musical infrastructure is repeated in each of the kiirtan talas/ragas and in each kiirtan performance there are approximately three or more traditional kiirtan talas/ragas performed, with *rangs* interspersed between them, and at the end.



to *cho duni* „four time“ to *matan* „rapid, climactic“ to *katan* „drum composition“ that increase in acceleration and drive the kiirtan towards a pyramidal structure, as seen above.

Dance is another essential component of kiirtan as demonstrated by the performance of *lalita marmika*, the traditional i.e. “fixed” kiirtan dance, as well as “self created” choreography. The traditional occupation of the Rajwar kiirtan group for example is that of a soldier, hence their dance movements reflect their martial arts with a mixture of wild ecstatic devotion and military like precision. The traditional occupation of the Mahato „head men“, another indigenous and relatively wealthy group of Rarh, is agriculture, and hence their movements are a combination of fierce devotion (reminiscent of the ancient Shiva cult that is prevalent throughout Rarh) and classical composure. The Brahmins, situated at the top of the social hierarchy perform only *lalita marmika* as their position and beliefs in the purity of the Brahmanic culture necessitates their role as keepers of the status quo, setting them apart from other groups whose creative expression is accommodated within the kiirtan performance.

Location:	Outside the mandir 'temple'	Inside the mandir 'temple'
Raga/Piece	I. The <i>juran</i>	II. Daspera raga:
Music Section:		II. 1. <i>Gauralap</i> II. 2. <i>la</i> II. 3. <i>katan</i>
Music Parts:	I. A. <i>juran</i> 'joining' instrumental introduction I. B. <i>guru vandana</i> 'invocation to the guru' I. C. <i>juran</i> instrumentals - 1/2/3 rhythmic changes I. D. <i>Gauranga</i> song titled <i>Eso He</i> I. E. <i>patha</i> or 'path' song on the way to the mandir.	II. 1A. percussive climax x 2, with <i>alap</i> . II. 1B. percussive rolls/strikes x2 around the mandir. II. 2A. <i>la</i> , Melody = 1 II. 2B. <i>udara mudara</i> 'higher register section', Melody = 2 II. 2C. Alternation of <i>la</i> and <i>udara mudara</i> Melody = 2+1+2+1.. II. 2D. <i>matan</i> 'climax' Melody = 1 II. 3A. <i>katan</i> introduction in <i>ektala</i> , or 12 <i>matra</i> Melody = 3. II. 3B. <i>katan bol</i> compositions 1-7 recitations with playing + melody = 3. II. 3C. <i>katan duni</i> 'double time' with <i>udara</i> , higher register section + melody = 3. II. 3D. <i>katan cho duni</i> four times the original rhythm 'udara', high register section + melody = 3. II. 3E. <i>katan matan</i> grand finale, melody = 3.



The Mahato Kirtan group of Bagra

Hence one can ascertain from the musical materials gathered and analysed above, that there is an aesthetic science behind kiirtan both on the macro level of performance structure as well as the micro level of musical infrastructure. Another significant way of exhibiting aesthetic science is presentation of the kiirtan performance, both in terms of personal appearance and the beautification of the kiirtan *mandir*. The *kiirtaniyas* take great care in their clothing, and their selection of colours to wear is symbolic of the sanctity of the kiirtan performance. Their clothing is usually: white, beige, gold, rose or orange colours of purity, devotion and renunciation. The men's cotton *dhoti* (a cloth tied around the men's waist, falling to the ground) sways in the movement of their dance steps, and they also wear garlands of flowers on special occasions. The kiirtan *mandir* is often decorated with paintings of Radha/Krishna and the Indian epics including the altar upon which various ceremonial articles are placed. Each of the households in the village offer sweets, fruit, and flowers to the Deity which are sanctified by the sound of God's name and distributed during and at the end of the performance by the Brahman priest as food „made holy“ by the Deity (*prasada*).



The Karandhi village kiirtan group with kholas and Chorus girls dancing *lalita marmika*

The above musical materials and observations demonstrate aspects of the aesthetic science behind kiirtan, but what of the *supra*? As stated above, “the realization of aesthetic feeling is not a science, rather it is a high-grade art.”⁶ Similarly “that state of Supreme Bliss does not come within the scope of aesthetics; it comes within the scope of supra-aesthetics, that is, in the world of the absolute above the domain of relativity” (ibid).

*This quinquemental world has been born out of joy, is being maintained in joy, and into sacred joy will melt. This is the self-same joy which human beings realize out of love for ar ama uru a . This joy is the aesthetic enjoyment of the supra-aesthetic Entity.*⁷

One can enjoy the supra „transcending“, „above“ (Encarta Dictionary) aesthetic entity when devotion is aroused through the repetition of God's name and the systematic arrangement of song, dance and instrumental music, creating such a heavenly environment that one loses oneself,

“In aesthetic science there is no scope for sorrow; and when the vibrations of happiness become straightened, it leads to anandam; happiness is transformed into bliss. When this undulating movement is directed towards anandam and the waves get straightened, it falls within the scope and jurisdiction of aesthetic science. When the waves become totally free from curvature, when they become fully and finally straightened, this falls within the scope of mohana viji na [supra-aesthetic science]”⁸.

What is the relationship of the Rarhi *kiirtaniyas* with supra aesthetic entity. How do they experience Hari when singing his name? From interviews it seems that the predominant relationship is one of *sringara* rasa, the lover and beloved, as in *madhu* or Radha *bhava*, where they feel that they are Radha and Krishna (Hari is one name of Krishna), is the only male in the universe. In this devotional relationship the *kiirtaniyas* embody Radha's emotions, they experience emotional abandonment and absolute devotional surrender to the Supreme, as expressed in the original kiirtan song, the *Gitagovinda* by Jayadeva. There are also examples of this in Prabhat Samgita as shall be discussed at a later date. When one attains *ragatmika bhakti* and wants only to give pleasure to the Supreme, “I love Parama Purusa because I want to give Him anandam. I don't care whether or not I get anandam. My only desire is to give Him joy through my love”;⁹ when the love is so deep that one cannot remain separate from Hari, where there is no Him and I, there is only Him, then the *supra* aesthetic entity has been attained, as when the salt who goes to measure the cosmic ocean, merges into Him.

Jyoshna La Trobe completed her MA at the University of Auckland in 1997, after which she taught at the School of Visual Arts at Manukau, Auckland University. She completed her PhD in Music from SOAS, London University this year, and is the first in the world to document the Rarhi kirtan music tradition. The Rarhi Bangla Kirtan Collection is now deposited in the British Library World Music Sound Archives for future generations. She is also a prolific composer of kiirtans and has produced many albums of original and ethnographic material. See jyoshna@jyoshna.com

¹ Jagaran Mahato, 2006: Personal communication.

² Sarkar, 1984: *A Few Problems Solved Part*

³ Sarkar, *ubh ita a graha a rt 12*

⁴ Prout in a nutshell Part 10.

⁵ JM, 2006: Pers.comm.

⁶ Sarkar, 1984, *A Few Problems Solved*

⁷ Sarkar, 1981, *am mi Kr asundaram*, rajagop la and Aesthetic Science, Discourse 25.

⁸ Sarkar, 1981, *am mi Kr asundaram*, rthas rathi Kr a and Aesthetic Science Discourse 26

⁹ Sarkar, 1981, *Namami Krsnasundaram*, Vrajagopala and Aesthetic Science, Discourse 25

The Future Model of Eco-Villages

By Ac. Shambhushivananda Avt.

with Khun Krisada Kampanatsanyakorn and Khun Piriyahep Kanchanadul

It is common knowledge that the way we live our lives today is highly unsustainable. As the population of the world increases even further, the stress on the eco-system is leading us towards an even greater uncertain future. Ananda Marga Gurukula supports a progressive application of ecological principles in order to rebuild habitats in cooperation and in synergy with the natural environment.

This new approach towards eco-villages/master units makes renewable energy and free access to information as the cornerstone of an affluent sustainable future. We shall continue to live in insecurity as long as we steer away from the bounties of nature. The closer we align ourselves in harmony with nature, the greater is the likelihood of inviting abundance into our lives. The path to affluence is : Restraint and proper choice of sustainable lifestyles; Renewable Energy; Recycling of all waste streams , and Regeneration of life-forms.

Khun Krisada Kampanatsanyakorn, Chairman, Cellenium, and Khun Chaikiri Srifuengfung, Cellenium, (Bangkok, Thailand), have worked for years to establish a working model of a sustainable eco-village. They have now proven beyond doubt that aesthetics and innovation can be combined for an optimum and progressive utilization of scarce resources of the planet. The goal of an eco-village should be to create a viable, sustainable community that generates a surplus of food, fuel and fertiliser with the least water-footprint, says Khun Krisada Kampanatsanyakorn. Khun Krisada's pioneering team at Cellenium has developed many alternative technologies needed to redesign habitats and to solve the key bottlenecks in moving towards a renewable energy age. The innovative technologies developed by the Thai team offer a practical solution to the problems of clean water; increased access to renewable energy; free access to information; soil enrichment ;organic farming; complete recycling of all waste-streams viz., solid, liquid and gas; use of regenerative life forms like algae; and use of dry construction methods for quick building of comfortable habitats. These capabilities would maximize the degrees of freedom for inhabitants of these master units or eco-village communities. The basic premise of this approach is that by designing for an increasing access to free renewable energy and information, productivity can be enhanced and wealth can be gained. Surplus and Sustainability go together. We cannot have sustainability without generating and harnessing surplus-energy.



At Horse-Shoe Point near Pattaya, Thailand, renewable energy technologies such as solar, bio-mass and electricity storage, among others, are all tangibly being applied. Very Small Power Producer (VSPP) projects at HSP aim to generate an excess supply of electricity for the occupants to sell back to the grid. Water in the HSP Eco-Village is being captured, cleaned, used, treated and recycled. Fertilizer, bio-char and carbon dioxide derived from solid waste generation and from bio-mass to power processes are captured to enhance the further growth of bio-mass. All of these taken together create powerful regenerative forces that can sustain and enhance our bio-sphere.

Some innovative technologies being applied to the HSP eco-village projects are:

1. Vanadium redox flow electrical storage and power conversion system
2. Energy saving design and simulation process for house construction
3. Pre-fabricated, insulated, panelized and dry construction
4. Solar PV systems
5. Solar-thermal; systems
6. Thermal storage
7. Bio-mass energy conversion- bio-gas, wood-gas, charcoal to electricity
8. Vertical algae bio-reactor for sequestering carbon and maximizing bio-mass production
9. Aerobic and microbial water purification system
10. Soil enrichment using high-value organic fertilizer
11. Etc.

The houses and buildings in HSP-EV (Horse Shoe-Point Eco-Village) are designed aesthetically for energy efficiency and comfort. Solutions have been created to remedy normal practices that result in poorly insulated building shells and

excess electricity usage for domestic cooling, lighting and appliances and hot water heating. There is maximum use of energy saving architectural features, the right choice of materials for insulating the building shell, and the prudent integration of renewable energy and energy storage technologies.

Sustainable Living is the desired motto for many progressive organizations and governments today. This is also being propagated enthusiastically by all international agencies including ESCAP(United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific) , UNEP, UNESCO, World Bank etc. However, there are very few examples of an integrated approach towards building Sustainable Eco-Villages around the world. Khun Krisada and his team have shown that if sufficient resources are directed toward solutions proposed by them, renewable energy can be harnessed; carbon can be captured; complete recycling of all waste-streams is possible; and problems of nutrition can be tackled easily. In fact, the agricultural sector becomes one of the major beneficiaries of the distributed paradigm (i.e., electricity, water, and fertilizer). Recently Khun Krisada and his pioneering team also demonstrated use of Vanadium Redox Flow batteries for electric bicycles and other modes of transportation. Clean electricity lies at the hub of all such mobile applications. Sustainability becomes alive and real only when there are genuine attempts to make maximum utilization of all scarce resources and a rational distribution of accumulated wealth. This is one of the first models of futuristic eco-villages that puts Progressive Utilisation Theory (PROUT) key principles into action.

The demonstration units in Thailand have attracted the attention of His Royal Highness The King of Thailand and the Crown Prince HRH Frederik Andre Herik of Denmark, among all others who are also scouting for technologies to help us move towards a Renewable Energy and Information Age.

A special seminar on these technologies is being planned for the summer of 2011 in Thailand. Those who wish to attend this and wish to explore the purchase of these innovative systems may contact Dada Shambhushivananda at: kulapati@gurukul.edu.

Ac. Shambhushivananda Avt. is Kulapati (Chancellor) of Ananda Marga Gurukula, received his PhD in Business and Applied Economics from the University of Pennsylvania. He also serves as Shraman, (CTS-Central Training Secretary) of The International School of Social Service -ISSS (aka Prashiksana Matha) in Ydrefors, Sweden; one of the seven original institutions set up under the direction of Shrii Prabhat Rainjan for training yogic monks and nuns.

What do people do to meet their growing needs for agricultural lands, for industries, etc.? They bring about large-scale deforestation, but no one bothers to think about the creatures that live in those forests. So the tigers and elephants haunt the villages, kill the people and demolish their houses. Why? Out of their instinct for self-preservation. We have destroyed their natural habitat, the forests, but we never bothered to consider any alternative arrangements for their shelter. We have recklessly destroyed large areas of forests without caring to think that thereby we are destroying the ecological balance among the human, plant and animal worlds. And we never realized – and still do not – that this wanton destruction of the animal and plant worlds will be of no benefit to human beings. Rather it will be a great loss for human society, because each and every living entity, whether plant or animal, has two types of value: one, its utility value, and the other, its existential value.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

Pseudo-Humanism (Discourse 8), 22 March 1982, Calcutta published in: The Liberation of Intellect: Neohumanism

From the point of view of Neohumanism the arena of our service should be ever-increasing, ever-expanding, and should include both the animate and inanimate worlds.

What will our policy be in order to bring justice to the inanimate world? First, we should go beyond the human world, then beyond the animal world, then beyond the inanimate world. Plants are less developed, animals are more developed and human beings are still more developed. The Neohumanist approach includes everything – it includes both the animate and inanimate worlds within its jurisdiction.

Human beings have not taken proper care of the inanimate world. For example, human beings have damaged and destroyed many hills and mountains. You should not destroy the mountains and hills, otherwise the rainfall will be affected. You should not use subterranean water or encourage the use of deep or shallow tube wells, because too much reliance on these types of wells causes the level of the water table to go down, which in turn causes the soil to dry out, killing the plant life. It is best to use rain water, river water and reservoirs to collect rain water instead of subterranean water.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

Prout and Neohumanism, 25 October 1989, Calcutta published in: Published in: Prout in a Nutshell Part 17

Every person must understand that for the maintenance of any organism, there must be a close cooperation between each of its component parts. Humanity is not inert, and the relationships between human beings depend on more than mere cooperation. This cooperation instead of being based on a master-servant relationship must be constructed in a warmly cordial atmosphere of free human beings. It should be a coordinated cooperation and not a subordinated one.

There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly with one wing.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

Bird flying free...

Creating our progressive future together now

By Avtk. Ananda Ragamaya Ac.

Sitting by the wind-swept sea, watching the waves leaping and colliding with the rocks and feeling the blustery breeze dancing across my face as the sea birds sing and play with the invisible force that keeps them air born, I am lead to ponder...

As I observe these hardy birds seeming to know quite naturally what to do and how to maneuver in all weathers with the help and support of their wings, I reflect on the analogy of our society being like a bird that can only fly when both wings are healthy. In this context, the two wings being representative of the male and female members of the society... bearing in mind of course, that regardless of gender, we all have both male and female qualities within us.

And as I reflect upon the current state of our world...
...and where we really would like to be,

I am moved to share a few questions with you
...and invite you to play along with me ...



As we consider the current situation of the world in which we live with regards to men and women, their relationships, educational opportunities, the field of work, housing, the family situation, the roles of mothers and fathers, health care, judicial systems, religion and so forth ... I ask, "if we were to continue with this way of operating, what would the world look like one year from now?" Maybe there would not be much perceivable difference? How about if we were to look 5 years from now? What would that look like? How would our lives globally be affected and the lives of those we love? How would that affect where we want to go to as humans striving to make the world a better place for all?

So, let's expand a bit further and look at 10 years from now... 20 years.... even 30 years.....???? By continuing in the same way, what would the world look like 50 years from now (if we happen to still be alive)? Would we be any nearer to achieving our personal and collective missions on this earth? What legacy would we be leaving behind for the future generations?

Is this what we want our future to look like?

My guess is that, if we look into the future in this way, it is distinctly possible that we may come to realize that "NO", we do not want our future to read this way!

So, now my question comes... "What do we want our future society to look like?"

P. R. Sarkar mentioned the importance of a society where all have equal opportunities and everyone's fundamental needs are provided for; being education, health care, housing, clothing and food (which is sadly, far from today's reality). He also emphasized that for the survival and growth of a healthy society, there must be coordinated cooperation (as opposed to subordinated cooperation), where everyone counts regardless of their age, race, religion or gender.

Bird flying free....

Lyrics by Didi A Ragamaya

A bird cannot fly on one wing
It needs both of them to bring
Balance to humanity
Thrown off track by disparity.

A bird cannot fly, a bird cannot fly, no a bird cannot fly,
only on one wing...

In an age of disharmony
Women have entrusted their rights,
Lost their dignity,
In a few moments of sentimentality.
Aggression rules and so-called rationality
Competition and intellectuality
Suppression of subtler qualities
Tenderness, compassion and sincerity.

A bird cannot fly, a bird cannot fly, no a bird cannot fly,
only on one wing...

Peacemaker, soothing stormy seas
Working day and night selflessly.
Mother, bearing life with sacrifice
A pillar of support a loving wife.
Woman gracious, enduring mountain
Endless love, an ever-flowing fountain.

No time to point fingers and blame
Things are as they are
It's up to us to change
Take back our power from whence we were estranged.
Create unity amidst diversity
A brighter future for humanity
Bring harmony back to society
Both wings outstretched bird flying free

A bird cannot fly, a bird cannot fly, no a bird cannot fly,
only on one wing...

So let the bird fly free and sing
Let it fly free and sing...
Let it fly free and sing (voices must be heard)
Let it fly free and sing (down with sexual slavery)
Let it fly free and sing (break those chains)
Let it fly free and sing (no more prostitution)
Let it fly free and sing (need new global mental constitution)
Let it fly free and sing (women are awakening)
Let it fly free and sing (stand up and be heard)
Let it fly free and sing (fly free as a bird!)
For the joy of living ...

Both wings outstretched bird flying free....
Both wings outstretched bird flying free....
Both wings outstretched, both wings outstretched, both
wings outstretchedflying free!

So how does this future, progressive society look to us?
What would we be doing differently in the future than we are now? What qualities would we be expressing and how would we be living our lives? What values would we be living by in order for us to create an even brighter future for all? What skills and capabilities would we be using to support this positive forward movement? What would we be doing to contribute to the progressive onward development of our society so that all can really shine in their full potential and give back naturally to an even healthier and more vital community?

In this way who benefits?

Everyone! Men, women, children, families..... the planet
.... Everyone!!!

So, play along with me if you will, and take yourself to our new world in the future. In this place everyone has their needs met and the time to explore their spiritual journey as they express their Divine gifts on this earth. A place where all are making a positive, progressive and lasting difference, where communities flourish and women and men are working together with respect and harmony. A place where synergy abounds and creativity delights the air! Be here where all are welcome to thrive and flourish as beautiful flowers in this very unique and colourful garden.

As we allow ourselves to really enjoy the experience of fully being in this new world, I invite you to take a look back at the journey of reaching this hallowed place. If you were personally to look at three things that you did to contribute to this beautiful reality, what three things did you do to support the positive forward movement of our society? What three things did you do to make a lasting difference in your life and the lives of others?

And as we draw our "playtime" to a close, I invite you to commit to living these three things as of now... What can you begin to begin to do as of this very moment, this very breath?

So, as I leave the rocks and the sea and the birds flying free.... And take them with me.... I feel heartened to have been graced with these precious moments in nature to reflect and commit to being part of the radiant future that awaits us all and to know that we are together on this journey. The changes we want are happening right now! I am also aware of a grave sense of urgency, that there is no time to lose! ...

So... let's spread our wings and launch into the crimson dawn as we shine in our light and truly fly together for a better world for all.

Didi Ananda Ragamaya, a yoga and meditation teacher, musician, progressive educator and facilitator is passionate to make a difference in the world. She has worked extensively in Europe, India, the Americas and the Caribbean over the last 20 years and is currently based in Jamaica developing programs for women and children with WWD.

Biopsychology of Dreams

By Ac. Sid Vishvamitra Jordan

Introduction

According to P. R. Sarkar “true dreams” emanate from a “surging vibrational flow which comes out of the fountainhead of the unconscious mind and vibrates the subconscious mind”. These dreams represent unfulfilled samskaras or unfinished business related to urgent matters that are at the center of our current emotional life. The more prevalent and less meaningful dreams consist of the disjointed thoughts of everyday life that are the results of agitated nerves or overeating. Carl Jung had referred to the former as “big dreams” full of meaningful symbols and the latter as “little dreams”. Sarkar states that the all-knowing causal or unconscious mind “can awaken in the calm conscious and subconscious minds of a person in deep slumber those visions and premonitions of past, present or future events which may deeply involve or overwhelm the person.” Dreams that come from this source are referred to by Sarkar as “supramental vision”. These dreams of supramental vision occur rarely in the average individual but more often in the calm mind of a spiritual aspirant. Sarkar suggests that allowing the pranendriya, the yogic psycho-physical sixth sense and source of subtle discrimination located in the center of the heart, to pause with our breath (pranayama) allows the mind to join with the ocean of consciousness to experience the “supramental stratum”. It is perhaps in this paused state during sleep that the pranendriya serves to connect us with the supramental dream and to discriminate for us the happiness, sorrow and divine nature reflected therein. This article will explore how Sarkar’s intuitional science of biopsychology serves to transform our dreams into higher consciousness.

“Realizing our dreams” is a commonly stated desire for all of us. Perhaps if we take this more literally understanding not only our day dreams but mining the meaning of our night dreams could bring us closer to following our bliss - a kind of awakening from slumber. What follows is a plunge into individuals’ dream work transformed through the lens of biopsychology integrated with Gestalt therapy dialogue. This approach gives us insight into how our passions and devotional sentiments serve us and the world simultaneously. There is a modern trend of yoga therapy to heal individuals’ physical and emotional imbalances. While biopsychology heals at a physical and psychological level, it serves to unite us with the universal in the ordinary and ultimately with our divine nature.

“Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.” - Howard Thurman

Fundamentals of Biopsychology and Gestalt Dream Work

Sarkar created biopsychology, which integrates the Eastern kundalinii yoga of ancient Tantric and intuitional science with modern western sciences of anatomy and physiology. This synthetic science of biopsychology provides basic knowledge and practices of the path of kundalinii yoga psychology. These practices involve raising the latent spiritual force in the first chakra at the base of the spine to the crown chakra, uniting the individual soul with the cosmic soul.

For an introduction to the fundamentals of this biopsychology read Yoga Psychology, a collection of P. R. Sarkar’s writings on biopsychology and dreams. This article will focus on dream work which is based on biopsychology integrated with Gestalt therapy dream work.

Gestalt dream work involves creating a dialogue among all elements of the dream, animate and inanimate, seen as projections of aspects of the dreamer. The dialogue may also include parts of the dreamer’s body (fast breathing or tension in a muscle group) and significant others related to the themes that emerge using the “empty chair technique” (alternating role playing self and other). This Gestalt dialogue approach helps promote the individual’s re-ownership of what has been projected onto others. Gestalt work bears a resemblance to the concept of brahmacharya, seeing all things as an expression of the divine and feeling that the divine is the voice speaking to us through all of our experiences.

Awakening

People by nature are attracted to the Great. The first chakra in biopsychology is the seat of physical, psychic, psycho-spiritual and spiritual desires. The dharma or true nature of human life is to goad all these desires towards union with the Great, our own true selves. Astanga yoga, eight limbed yoga, entails the systematic methods that transform all the qualities of the individual towards the Great or Cosmic Consciousness.

This article tells the story of how individuals accessing their dreams tread this journey towards the heights of spirituality. While the higher chakras reflect more subtle spiritual qualities, the lower chakras provide the juice of motivation, creativity and conflicts resulting in the dynamism for change and positive transformation to a higher level of consciousness. As biological and social evolution is dependent on this dialectical process of clash and cohesion of positive and negative

forces, so goes the psychic and spiritual transformation of dreams. As Sarkar reminds us, “Obstacles are our friends”. *Va’dha” sa” yus”ama”na” shaktih sevyam” stha”payati laks”ye*: Obstacles are the helping forces that establish one in the goal.

Levels of the Mind

The windows of opportunity for individual growth can be entered on different levels of the mind, referred to as kosas in biopsychology. The five kosas of the mind are operating at the first five cakras associated with different anatomical and neurophysiological sites in the body. Dreams of deeper symbolic meaning occur when strong positive and negative energies (images and emotions) flowing from the unconscious mind of the *atimanas kosa* (navel *cakra*) vibrate the subconscious in the *manomaya kosa* of the *svadhisthana cakra* (second *cakras*). These psycho-physical centers, referred to as *cakras*, are defined by mental and emotional qualities at the psychic level and a plexus of endocrine glands at the physical level. Long before dissection of the body and the identification of our anatomical and physiological workings, sages of old identified these qualities of the body-mind as associated with 50 sounds emanating from different parts of the body. These 50 sounds became the basis for the Sanskrit alphabet. These sounds are associated with the qualities that corresponded to the different kosas or levels of the mind. Mantras for meditation and chanting utilize these sounds to help raise the *kundalini* or spiritual force to higher *cakras*.

The access and expression of these different kosas is affected by an individual’s inherited *samskaras* or qualities of the mind that are results of previous lives’ actions. There are also acquired *samskaras* brought about as a consequence of our volitional actions in the present life. The third category is the imposed *samskaras* resulting from association with family and culture. When our conscious defenses are loosened as we sleep, dreams become windows to view *samskaras* and their allied emotions that are most currently active in our lives. Sarkar states that, “the seeds of reactions (unserved *samskaras*) remain accumulated in the unconscious mind. Just at the end of sleep the subconscious mind, and almost with the conscious mind, get awakened through the influence of mutative principle. This we call waking up from sleep, the subconscious mind gets awakened but the conscious mind does not, the unit dreams according to his or her *samskaras*. Such a dream, generally not being due to any physical disturbance or disease, and its preceding state being immersed in the unconscious mind, is often found to come true. That is why people say, “True comes the dream that takes place in the last portion of the night.”

Our work while on this brief sojourn on earth is to attain liberation from the attachments that result from these *samskaras*. Tantric yoga, reflected in biopsychology, is the science of intuition that provides the methodical practices and speed to attain liberation. Whether individuals are conscious or not they are moving on this path of attaining liberation and uniting with the Divine. Dreams, when explored through journaling, *asanas*, *cakras*, meditation and a dialogue of images, body and meaning, serve to make us more conscious in facilitating the burning of our *samskaras*. When we adopt these practices we accelerate the speed of our journey towards greater self knowledge revealed in our dreams and waking positive intentions. Sarkar in his treatise on dreams confirms that “to have prescience of truth through the medium of dreams, it is necessary to have some control over one’s conscious and subconscious minds.” Besides the benevolence of our thoughts, words and deeds, the degree of control over our conscious and subconscious mind is greatly affected by what we do with our sensory and motor organs in a waking state. If we over-indulge in longing for the physical and mundane objects then we create crude psychic projections that become reflected in superficial and sensual dreams. We come to realize that life is short and requires moral courage to make maximum spiritual utilization of our moments waking, sleeping and dreaming.

One must not forget that while the range of self knowledge of dreams is greater than wakefulness, and the range of sleep, though static-like in nature, is greater than dreams, that these three states are relative truths. Only the fourth state of *turiya* represents the absolute truth of spiritual truth of non-duality, attained by the *sadhana* (meditation and service) of total self surrender.

Dreams: Windows to Passion and Devotion

What follows are examples of individuals identifying and serving the “voice” of their intuition guided by the illumination of their dreams through the science of biopsychology and Gestalt dialogue.

DREAM 1

Jill, 45 year old mother/yogiini: Jill shared a dream in which she saw herself outside around the deck and yard of her home associating with neighbors on the patio. She sees these large cats in her yard. She was asked to close her eyes and enter the dream recounting it as though it was happening in the present; speaking in the present tense. “There is this big cat, carnivorous cat. I am very afraid. As I look up, Oh no! There was a big cat finding its way into our backyard and it’s going to eat someone; I look up and there is a whole line of carnivorous cats, like in Africa, some striped. One comes up to me with his nostrils and sniffs my left hand. I want to pet that soft space on his nose - no fear, maybe a moderate amount of fear. The other cats are short, tall, fat, thin, different shapes, exotic. I feel vulnerable. Wow! It is really cool that this cat can be here sharing this space but not harming me. They say nothing to me. Their demeanor is full of

dignity. They don't need to say anything." What do you say in your mind to the big cat? "When the big cat nuzzles my hand, I say, „That is far enough. This is good“." "Implying what", I ask? She says, "Good boundaries; I am happy with my territory; my home and family. I don't need to go beyond here to find happiness."

She was then asked to repeat the image in the present tense and observe what she felt in her body when she first saw the cats. She related that she felt tension and fear mostly in her chest and slightly in her stomach, not knowing whether she would be eaten or not. As she was asked to give a voice to what the cat was saying to her she said the cat was saying "You are OK, I'm just curious about you". When asked what she felt in response to this message from the cat, she said she became more relaxed and less fearful. When asked what she wanted to say to the cat, she replied instantly, "That is far enough," (laughing nervously). Asked what she felt in her body at that moment, she replied, "Breathing more easily, curiosity and wonderment about this cat." "Curious like the cat", I observed. "Yes, we are both curious but it is about good boundaries, safe boundaries."

Jill reasoned that fear, anxiety and good boundaries in relationships were part of this dream's messages and the voices were coming from within her, in that all parts of the dream were her creation and under her direction. She acknowledged that she overcame her fear when she set good boundaries and re-owned the power she had projected onto the cat. She identified with the cat's curiosity and power to let her actions speak louder than her words. The cat she thought represented the path of self reflection, the power and the fear of self discovery, the divine inside that we don't own.

To further balance the emotions of fear and anxiety, (adrenalin and breath control issues) surrounding her boundaries in relationships she agreed to practice heart cakra asanas (padahasthasana, cobra, camel, bow, and brave pose) and explore meditative affirmations of the capacity to love others in a sensitive manner with good boundaries even in the most challenging of relationships. To deal with the nihilistic fears of being devoured ("eaten") by forces within her or from without, she was asked to practice second cakra asanas - yoga mudra, cows head and head to knee. It was also suggested that she journal and create a dialogue among all the animate and inanimate entities in her dream; i.e. the patio, the backyard, the neighbor, her left hand that was sniffed by the cat, her chest (dialogue with her hand to chest/chest to hand); extending this dialogue to her closest relationships around unfinished business; first with journaling then direct conversations that practiced satya (benevolent truthfulness) and ahimsa (non-harmfulness). For owning her own voice and balancing the thyroid output associated with nervousness and sleep issues brought up, she was instructed to practice the shoulder stand and fish mudra.

DREAM 2

Ramesh, 55 year old sadhaka (spiritual aspirant)/writer: Ramesh shares a dramatic transformational dream. "I am bitten by a large, dark snake on my right hand while lying in bed. I sit up and realize I've been bitten and see these two holes on the fleshy part of my hand between the thumb and forefinger. I fear having been bitten by a poisonous snake; then realize that it may not be a poisonous snake; it may be a non-poisonous black snake; I calm down and try to look around to see what kind of snake it was. Then I see a large, shining silvery snake, like a cobra standing up high. This powerful king of snakes is surrounded by many other small black snakes. I first have the emotions of fear and concern; then realize the snake probably is not poisonous. When I see the shiny, silvery color of the large snake, the feeling of fear gives way to a feeling of fascination and awe."

Ramesh recalls the dream and speaks the voice of the large snake in the present tense: "I am my creativity, innate power, kundalini, fearlessness; there's always been an element of not following your dream or creative process; going from danger to fascination; idea of following your bliss, the creative process; shining silvery color represents rising of kundalini and fulfillment." Black snakes represent doubts, fears and dispersion of energy.☐

Let the right hand with two holes speak. The hand says: "I have been bitten. I have two holes in my hand. I may lose my hand, die, not be creative anymore; not use this hand anymore. I see that there is no blood on this hand. It may not be a poisonous snake; it is painful but I can survive this time."

"I have been asleep. This snake is saying: "I bit you because you have been asleep with your creative power, your writing. You need to wake up. You need to be more disciplined with your creative activity, your writing. It is not a dangerous bite. It is a wakeup call! I had to do this."

"It is my deeper I, deeper spiritual self. There has to be oneness between thinking, feeling and action. I have to put all my creative dreams into action."☐ Ramesh smiles the smile of calm closure and completion.

He then thanks the facilitator for guidance in this dream work and as if compelled to share, recalls a lucid dream (aware of dreaming while in the dream) of being with his guru, Shrii Shrii Anandamurti:

"I am in a room with other meditators with my Guru giving a discourse. I think to myself, I don't care what others feel, I am going to touch his feet. I rush forward and do sastaunga pranama (prostration pose) taking his feet in my hands, and I hear this sweet male and female voice from above me singing, "We love you, we love you, we love you". It feels as if Shiva and Shakti, the primal forces of the universe are singing. Then Baba, (affectionate name for his Guru) puts His hand on my head, and I feel and see this golden light going through my spine and whole being; a psycho-spiritual explosion occurs from within. As soon as it happens, I am awake and sit up doing sadhana (meditation). This experience of kundalini continues as I'm doing sadhana; there is no effort, no mantra, no attempt at meditation, complete flow, lasting for a long time; the alarm clock goes off, breaks this energy; I get up to take a shower. I am staying in a friend's house; walked out in the yard, sat under a cherry tree--everywhere is translucent; with eyes closed I see cherry tree; when eyes open everything is translucent; I have deep desire to always remain in this state; I close my eyes and meditate with a mantra; I meditate for several hours; for the next few days I remain in a telepathic state of mind; I return to my friend's house and my friend proudly introduces me to his girlfriend, and I immediately know they are going to break up; later that afternoon she slips a note under the door saying she wants to break up because she can't deal with his new spiritual practices, his new lifestyle." He relates; "All of this lucid dreaming and waking flow state was in part influenced by the fact that my friend and I had stayed up telling stories of our spiritual master hour after hour that night before going to bed."

Afterword

The elements of biopsychology utilized above to elucidate the meaning of the shared dreams involved imparting an understanding of cakra's psycho-physical nature connected with different parts of the body, meditative visualization on the spontaneous images of the dream, concentration on cakras, layers of the mind (kosas) and related body parts, living in the present in recreating the dream in the present tense and dialogue within aspects of the dream guided by a facilitator well versed in biopsychology and guidance of emotional work. It is the pause of the breath in pranayama that allows the yogic sixth sense, the pranendriya to deliver the content and meaning of the dream in both the sleep and waking states. The facilitator encourages the recall of the dream in the present tense in slow motion images (slow breathing with pauses) to support this sixth sense revealing the deeper meaning of the dream. The practice of pranayama increases the frequency of occurrence and the understanding of our true dreams.

With dreams that involve re-living intense trauma, more guidance is required to incrementally assimilate and transform the emotional nature of the material into friendly and palatable obstacles. These examples of dream work involve two individuals who are consciously on the spiritual path. Those with less calm minds may exhibit more chaotic dreams and may require more structured guidance. However the mind is insistent on healing itself and finding the guidance of the Beloved within. We are mediums becoming translucent vessels for universal love to fill us and pour this light into the world.

This dream work is inspired by the contributions of Fritz Perls Gestalt dream work in Gestalt Therapy Verbatim, Akhter Ahsen's Eidetic Imagery, Carl Jung's individual psychology and largely by P. R. Sarkar's Biopsychology in Subhasita Samgraha Part 2, Idea and Ideology and Yoga Psychology. The space for this article limits discussing many details of the therapeutic process and psychophysiology foundations of the work. The author is available for further exchange with those interested in pursuing the content and process.

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Mysticism

I exist, my Lord exists, and my search for His glamour, my search for His grandeur, is never-ending. I am moving unto Him, moving along a never-ending path. This search for the Great by the little is called mysticism. The fundamental point of spirituality depends on this mysticism. And when this mysticism, this outward existence of mysticism, coincides with the inner spirit of mysticism, the goal is reached: the unit becomes Cosmic.

And for the attainment of this status we have come here. We have come to this world, so our lives are not meaningless. Our everything is meaningful; and by our knowledge, by our action and by our sincerity, we will be increasing our meaningfulness from unit to Infinite.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

2 June 1990, Anandanagar, Published in: Ananda Vacanámrtam Part 30

Visual Thinking

By Mariah Howard

When was the last time you found yourself drawing or painting? Did you love to doodle and paint just for fun when you were a kid? Some of us were lucky enough to make art throughout our primary school years, painting with our fingers, drawing with crayons, and cutting shapes out of colorful paper. Many kids raise their hands without hesitation when asked, “Who’s an artist?” Sadly, the proud title of artist doesn’t last very long; before we reach our teenage years, most of us no longer feel comfortable calling ourselves artists. As soon as reading is introduced into most traditional curriculums, the paints and crayons are stored away and the lined paper gets the full attention of teachers and students. Drawing gets relegated to art classes only. While many children adapt to the prioritization of linear forms of communication like reading and writing, quite a few of us have a hard time with the switch. We might feel more expressive drawing or dancing, expressing our thoughts using more than words. What happens to the visual thinking kinesthetic students? Grades are affected as well their ability to appreciate their visual learning style. It may be decades before some visual and kinesthetic students pick up the crayons and markers or dance again, which is a loss to them and to our society.



All of this is not to suggest that reading and writing aren’t critical and there’s certainly no risk of those foundational skills being left out of curriculums around the world. But I want to wonder with the students, parents and educators of the world: What might happen in classrooms where we continued to practice drawing, painting, pottery and collage, while learning the art of reading and writing? What innovative thinking and solutions to challenging, systemic problems could emerge from the students who continued to embrace their creativity throughout their educational experience? Paintings, drawings and symbols are powerful tools for communication and innovation, especially when paired with the written word; education could fully embrace the whole brain and teach to the full potential of all the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners in the room. Such a classroom makes me wonder what a generation of these students might do to transform our workplaces and government institutions.

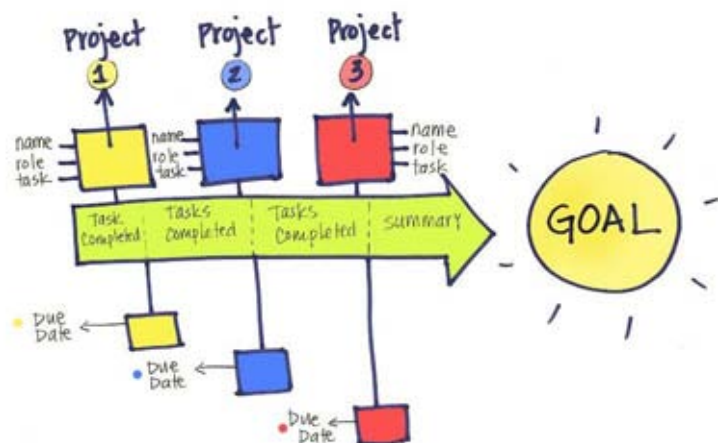
The classroom (and workplace!) I’m advocating for is one where Visual Thinking is embraced and welcomed. Visual Thinking is a way of taking notes and sharing ideas using pictures, symbols, color and words. Visual Thinking “combines both visual (right brain) and verbal (left brain) ways of operating with interaction and physical movement” using the motion of drawing itself, so kinesthetic learners get to engage their bodies as they draw and take notes. (Sibbet, “Visual Meetings”)

Both individuals and teams can use Visual Thinking to express their ideas: students can take notes during class using mind maps (see examples below) or charting their lesson by clusters and themes instead of using lined paper. Groups can put up a large piece of paper in a meeting and work together to create large maps, posters and graphics that represent their collective ideas. Planning a new project is a great way to use Visual Thinking: make a big poster that helps everyone see clearly what steps need to be taken and who is assigned responsibility for each step (see examples below). Meetings can become more colorful and engaging as well as classroom presentations. Visual Thinking asks us to consider what an idea looks like along with the words we use to describe our ideas; this encourages us to think more systemically, fleshing out more fully all the nuances and aspects of our idea. We can solve problems and collaborate at new levels when we draw simple pictures or map out complex systems using mind maps or diagrams.

As you first try on the skill of Visual Thinking, the most helpful thing you can do is to adopt an attitude of play as you start mapping, drawing and thinking in non-linear ways. Many of us will find that our drawing abilities are right where we left them – in primary school – and that’s all that’s required to practice Visual Thinking. Stick figures representing people and circles connected with rectangles as trees are all perfect; as long as we know what the drawing represents we can express our ideas and share them too. Author Dan Roam suggests that “any problem that we have the ability to articulate at all, we have the ability to articulate abundantly more clearly through the use of pictures.” Roam believes that if you can draw squares, circles, stick figures, and arrows, then you can draw any picture you’ll need. (Roam, *Back of the Napkin*). As you play with Visual Thinking, you’ll soon find that the simple images are the most compelling.

Next time you’re about to make a grocery list or write a paragraph, try engaging your whole brain and using Visual Thinking to make a mind map instead. It’s a great gift to encourage the children you know to continue to draw and

express their ideas visually as they learn in more traditional ways in school. Why not create a mind map with the kids you know? They're great teachers of art and creativity! Even if you stopped drawing when you were a kid, you can still enjoy Visual Thinking; it's not about how beautiful the drawings are or how the map looks – it's about engaging your whole brain, using color and imagery along with the written world words. Bring out the crayons and markers and see what happens...you might be surprised at how much the artist within you appreciates the time spent using Visual Thinking.

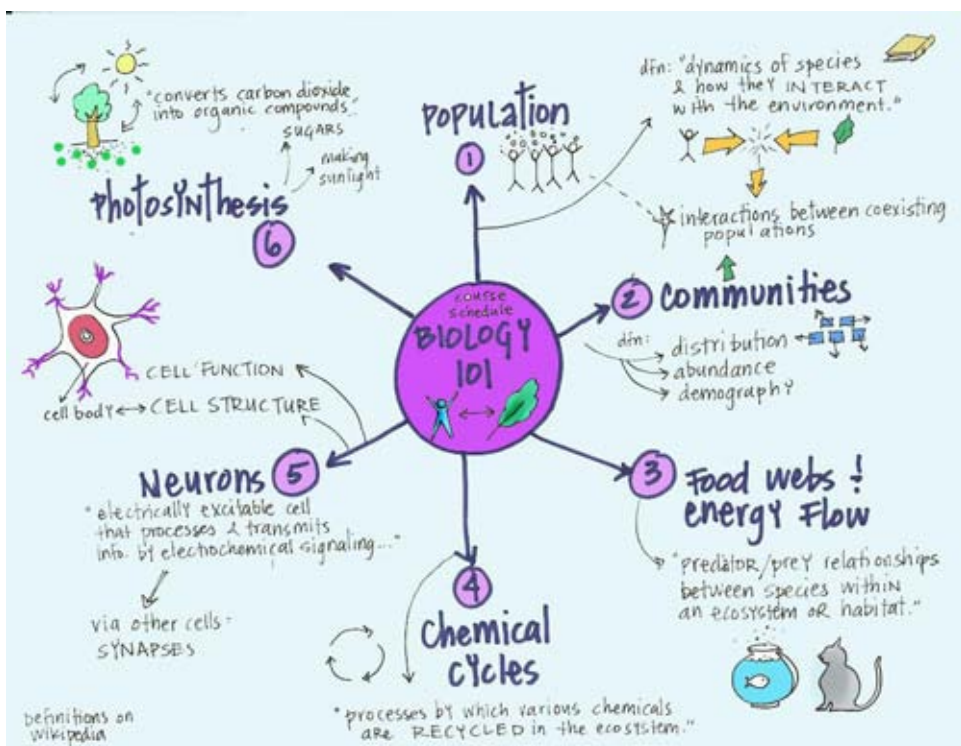


How to make a mind map:

The first step in creating your mind map is to consider what it's going to be about: I mapped the syllabus for a Biology 101 class but you can map any subject– anything you'd usually write on lined paper – you can map instead. All you need is unlined paper (8.5x11 or larger is best), a few colored pens or markers, and the content of your map.

I started my map by drawing a medium sized circle in the center of the page. Next I added my title to the circle, „Biology 101“. It's great to use lots of color and add symbols wherever you can, like the stick figure person and leaf that you see in my sample map. After the symbols and color were added to the title, I drew a series of lines connected to the center circle like spokes on a wheel (population, communities, etc). These spokes represent ideas that are connected to your subject/title – one spoke for each main idea. I drew 6 spokes to represent the subject being taught during each week of the Biology class. Try using bold, clear lettering to help highlight the main idea on each spoke. After I put a title on each spoke I added arrows like branches on a tree that are connected to each spoke. Sometimes the arrows are connected directly to the spoke and other times they're next to the title of the spoke. I chose to use the branches to define the subject being taught each week, for example, the definition of „neurons“ is right below the word. Your branches can contain any additional information that relates to the main idea of each spoke. After I wrote the arrows, I added a few related symbols for each spoke, like a tree and sun for photosynthesis.

If you feel uncomfortable drawing, remember that a simple image is best - try looking online for an image and copy it yourself. You also cut out magazine images or print clip art to add to your map. Once you've drawn your spokes, branches, and symbols, take a final look at your map and see if there are ways to connect the spokes or branches. Looking at my map, you see a green arrow connecting the spoke „Community“ week 2 with the (dotted line) branch from Population week 1; the concept of interaction is related to both spokes. A student using this Biology 101 map could add in the highlights from each lesson or any questions she might want to ask about the subject being taught. It's easy to see where new information can fit into a map. Once you've completed your first mind map consider hanging it up – it will help you think of new creative connections and ideas that are related to your subject – and – it's a great example of your creativity at work! Feel free to email me with questions or ideas, and I'd love to see your next Mind Map.



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Composite Medical Pathies - A Need of the Hour

By Dada Shambhushivananda

with inputs from Dr. Jitendra Singh, Dhanjoo Ghista and Dr. Shantatman Siekkinen

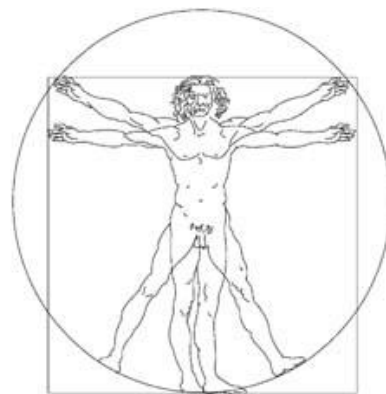
The human body is one but the approaches of bringing it into ease (free from dis-ease) are manifold. We have yet to discover a comprehensive model of the human body which will reveal the limits and efficacy of different therapeutic modalities. Shrii P.R.Sarkar encouraged the approach of composite medical-pathies. Under such a system, every hospital or clinic will be equipped with treatments stemming from different medical systems. In this way, the patients would be able to receive the unique benefits of an appropriate therapeutic modality. The welfare of the patients has to be the paramount consideration in the choice of the treatments.

"The oldest form of medical science was Ayurveda, and also folk medicine (country treatments) that were in vogue in different corners of the globe. Regarding different therapies, the approach should be synthetic. We will try to bring all these therapies on a common platform or faculty. But regarding their specialties, they should be of synthetic order." (P. R. Sarkar, "The Evolution of Indian Languages", Prout in a Nutshell, part 17)

Thus, the different systems should not be seen as competing with one another. Rather, they should be seen as varied tools available to human wisdom in order to provide quick and satisfactory recovery to the patients. At times, they may be used in conjunction while at other times, they may have to be used in isolation.

Some of the developed therapeutic modalities are:

1. Allopathy
2. Ayurveda
3. Unani
4. Homeopathy
5. Naturopathy
6. Traditional Chinese Medicine
7. Chandsi
8. Yoga Therapy



1. Allopathy - This system treats the disease only. In allopathy, surgery is very developed. Today, we have a very well developed system of allopathy that has saved the lives of millions.

2. Ayurveda - This system of medical science treats the disease considering the three factors: vayu, pitta and kapha. It has been in existence since pre-Shiva time (almost 7000 years) but Shiva systematised it and called it Vaedyak Sha'stra, Tantra oriented medicine. He brought about a happy blending between Vaedyak Sha'stra and traditional Ayurveda. Surgery (consisting of dissection, surgical operation, stitching etc.) had also been part of Vaedyak Sha'stra since its inception. Shiva's contributions brought about significant improvements in the alchemy, chemistry and the medico-chemistry of Central Asia. Around 500 AD, Sacedinian Brahmins from Tashkent area brought some significant improvements in Indian Ayurveda.

3. Unani - Unani is a form of traditional medicine widely practiced in India and the Indian subcontinent. It refers to a tradition of Graeco-Arabic medicine. Unani medicine is very close to Ayurveda. Both are based on the theory of the presence of the elements (in Unani, they are considered to be fire, water, earth and air) in the human body. According to followers of Unani medicine, these elements are present in different fluids and their balance leads to health and their imbalance leads to illness.

4. Homeopathy - Homeopathy system was popularized by Samuel Hahnemann but was not started by him. Rather, it was developed by him. One of the founding principles of homeopathy is the law of similars, otherwise known as "let like be cured by like" (Latin: similia similibus curentur). Hahnemann believed that by inducing a disease through use of drugs, the artificial symptoms empowered the vital force to neutralize and expel the original disease and that this artificial disturbance would naturally subside when the dosing ceased. It is based on the belief that a substance that in large doses will produce symptoms of a specific disease will, in extremely small doses, cure it. Homeopathy incorporates the so-called visa-cikitsa which was practiced even 3500 years ago during Mahabharata period of India. During the time of Hippocrates, in Greece both allopathy and homeopathy co-existed but Galenos, one of the other founder-fathers of Western medicine, preferred allopathy.

In the Ayurvedik, Unani, and homeopathy systems medicine is applied to bring about a balance of different factors in the body. So the symptoms and not the disease are treated. Furthermore, medicine is applied in the subtle form. In homeopathy, the more subtle the medicine, the more effective is the result on the crude disease.

5. Naturopathy - These systems treat the patient without any internal or external medicine. Naturopathy uses the power of water, air, earth, sunlight etc to accelerate the healing power of nature. The use of natural elements can cure disease by encouraging the dormant or healing power of nature.

6. Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) includes a range of traditional medicine practices originating in China. Although well-accepted in the mainstream of medical care throughout East Asia, it is considered an alternative medical system in much of the Western world. TCM practices include such treatments as Chinese herbal medicine, acupuncture, dietary therapy, and both Tui na and Shiatsu massage. Qigong and Taijiquan are also closely associated with TCM.

7. Chandsi- Chandsi is the folk medicine of India.

8. Yoga Therapy - Yoga therapy relies on the practice of yoga postures, Mudras, Bandhas, Pranayama, massage, sentient diet and other do's and don'ts of healthy living habits. These help a person to utilize the curing capabilities inherent in the human body.

The treatment modalities may be placed in two categories:

1. Those which have predominant orientation to body and secondary effect on mind (physico-psychic)

- a. Allopathy
- b. Ayurveda
- c. Unani
- d. TCM (other than acupuncture and meditations)
- e. Chandsi

2. Those which have predominant orientation to mind with secondary effects on body (psycho-physical)

- a. Homeopathy
- b. Naturopathy
- c. Acupuncture
- d. Yogic medicine

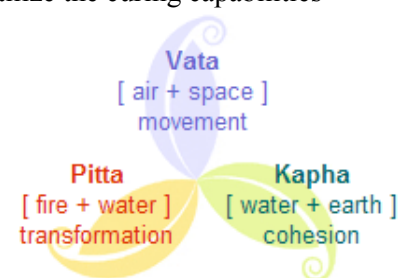
The diagnostic tools and machinery in allopathic medicine today has given it an added advantage over all other medical systems. Yet in many cases, the complexity of physical and psychic diseases eludes cures through the allopathic approach. Furthermore, the side effects of allopathic crude pills do not mitigate the real sufferings of the patients.

It is the need of this hour to develop a comprehensive model of understanding the subtle and crude functioning of the human body. Hopefully, the development of subtle microvita science as propounded by Shrii P.R. Sarkar will revolutionize modern medicine and pave the way for deeper understandings. Once we have a complete (near perfect) understanding of the human body and mind interactions, we may become closer to discerning the effective modalities for each set of persons, symptoms and diseases. Each patient is unique - their body and samskaras (reactive momenta) are unique and therefore, they require an individualized attention to deal with their problems.

It is also the need of the hour to enhance the research of alternative medical therapies so that it comes at par with the resources invested in traditional allopathic modality.

We may also need to look for ways to enhance the complementary nature of diagnostic tools to gain a deeper understanding of the imbalances existing in the human body and mind. Another potential of research is the undeveloped field of bio-psychology. As we begin to understand the functioning of human brain and mind, we may be at the threshold of a newer understanding of human sufferings and its causes. Biopsychology is not a system of healing. Rather, it is a science of intricate phenomena of body and mind interaction. It has the potential of forming the basis of all modalities of healing in future.

Finally, the future of medicine lies in training the generalists, as opposed to specialists, with the unified knowledge of health and disease rather than fragmented composite.



Celebrating Neohumanist Education Around the World



History of Neohumanist Education and AMGK

By Avtk. Anandarama and Arete Brim

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (1922 - 1990) in his early teenage years occasionally mentioned to his younger brothers Himanshu and Manas that he intended to start an organization one day through which he would open service projects, such as schools, children home, medical clinics, and other welfare projects.

In 1955 the Ananda Marga organization was duly registered in Jamalpur and in 1962 the headquarters were established at Ananda Nagar. The first school was established in 1963 in Laharia Sarai followed by the next one at Ananda Nagar on the instructions of Shrii P.R. Sarkar. This was also the year when a new wing of the organization, the Education, Relief and Welfare Section (ERAWS) was created to oversee the development of the various projects. Shrii P.R. Sarkar directed that the education should focus on the all-around progress of the individual. It should be as cheap as possible and extend to the village level so that the children will not have far to travel and there should not be any distinction between rich and poor.

The Education Secretary was given the priority of opening new schools all over India with a team of educators under the constant guidance of Shrii P.R. Sarkar who would visit the new schools on his tour of India.

Families from Patna and other cities started sending their children to live in hostels and study at Ananda Nagar, alongside the village children who would stream in each day from the surrounding area. For most of the village children it was their first opportunity to get an education. Classes began with grades one through four, and later they were extended to grade eight.

After six month Shrii P.R. Sarkar visited Ananda Nagar and laid the foundation stone for the technical college called AMIT, Ananda Marga Institute of Technology. He also chose the spots for a future liberal arts college, veterinary college, naturopathic and ayurvedic clinic, agricultural research centre, various cottage industries, and offices.

Within two years in 1964 the projects had grown to include the primary school, high school, degree college, technical college, hospital, children's home, students hostels, invalids home, leper asylum, academy for the handicapped, printing press, central offices, and extensive agricultural projects.

In the early 1970 the first schools outside of India started in Nepal, Africa, Philippines, Europe and USA. The schools were designated as AMSAI (Ananda Marga Special Academic Institutes) and AMJAS (Ananda Marga Jagrti Schools). Both had the same curricula but AMSAI was with tuition fee and AMJAS was free and attached to the local jagrtis or ashrams for disadvantaged children.

Shortly after launching the cultural ideals of Neohumanism in 1982, Shrii P.R. Sarkar expanded the underlying philosophy of education to be infused with Neohumanist principles and thus the Neohumanist Education term evolved for Ananda Marga schools. By 1990 there were over 1000 schools and children homes in over 50 countries as well as several higher learning institutes including a Degree College at Anandanagar and a Polytechnic College in Malur.



Ananda Marga Gurukula

On September 7th, 1990, at about 7 pm, Shrii P. R. Sarkar, called a meeting at which Ananda Marga Gurukula was introduced. He began by dismantling the existing “Ananda Marga Board of Education” and replacing it with a new body which he called “Ananda Marga Gurukula”. Over the next few weeks detailed plans were chalked out for a University at Ananda Nagar and a governing Steering Committee and Academic Council that would oversee the academic standard of all educational institutions from Kindergarten on up. On October 20, 1990 at 11 pm, his last Prabha'ta Sam'giita was dedicated to Ananda Marga Gurukula: number #5018 "Amra Gore Nobo Gurukula". (see side bar).

Anandanagar in India is the Headquarters of Ananda Marga Gurukula, where a global campus was procured and the modest beginnings of an international Neohumanist University system started to take shape as well as the beginnings of administrative quarters. A Global Liaison Office was later established in Ithaca, NY, USA as well as an office in Ydrefors Sweden and a NERI office in Den Bosch, Holland. Higher learning Institutes also started developing around the globe.

Over the past two decades, Ananda Marga Gurukula, as the Board of Education of Ananda Marga Schools, has created a network of all existing NHE schools around the world and the Neohumanist Education Faculty of AMGK has provided a support base and guidance. Today, the NHE Movement is a dynamic movement spearheading the growth of new NHE schools, holding conferences and training teachers including in India, USA, Sweden, Netherlands, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, Ghana, Kenya, Brazil, Argentina, Haiti and other places.

The Faculty of Yoga & Intuitional Science initiated Tantra Vidyapiitha, Ananda Marga Association of Yoga Educators as well as yoga academies in Singapore, Russia, Italy and Sweden. Four annual conferences have been conducted on Rajadhiiraja Yoga and related subjects in Sweden since the summer of 2007, including Yoga for Kids.

Centres of Neohumanist Studies, CNSs, have been started in various locales including Prama Institute in Asheville, NC, USA, a College of Neohumanist Studies in Ydrefors, Sweden and a CNS Centre in Croatia.

Medical and Health initiatives include an Acupuncture College and Clinic at Ananda Nagar, Abha Light College of Natural Medicine in Kenya, Wellness Centre in the Philippines and an Integral Therapy Centre in Ydrefors, Sweden and a Centre for Alternative Medicine, Homeopathy and Yoga, in Bali.

MU-Forum has been initiated under the auspices of AMGK to consolidate and nurture our Master Units network. This network is focusing on sustainable and progressive community building, eco-villages and alternative renewable technologies.

A Music College has been started at Uma Nivas. Prabhat Samgiita Academies have sprung up in India and abroad to popularize and research the wisdom contained in Prabhat Samgiita. Song and dance events have taken place and especially the 25th anniversary of Prabhat Samgiita was colourfully celebrated in different parts of the world.

Prout College in Australia, Prout Research Institute in Venezuela as well as Prout Conferences and Seminars have been showing an alternative path in the current hopelessness of outmoded social, economic and political systems.

Microvita Research Institutes have sprung up in Kolkata, Amsterdam, Batu Gajah in Malaysia and MV workshops have been conducted at several places also.

Publications and Resource materials prepared by AMGK include a bi-annual newsletter and journal published since 1995, a web based resource data base for NHE educators as well as several books including: NHE Documentary, NHE Futures, Bio-Psychology and Foundations of Neohumanist Education.

In the following pages you will find academic articles from various faculties of NHE University as well as a small sampling of some of the NHE schools, Institutes and programs on each Continent.

Gurukula Song

*Ámra gare nobo gurukul
Jináner áloke ráungiye dobo
Pratiti kunri phul*

*Keha ná thákibe dure
Bájábo pratiti tare
Bándhibo priitiri dore
E maniháre atul*

*Keha ná thákibe piche
Theli ná kare o niice
Sabe átmiya biráje
Mano májhe doduldul*

We will establish the Gurukul. We will dye each and every bud with the light of knowledge.

No one will stay away. We will bind everybody with the thread of love and create a garland of incomparable beauty.

No one will stay behind, none will be thrown at the bottom. All will exist with kith and kin with their minds full of sweetness and tenderness for all.

*Song No. 5018 in Bengali, composed by Shrii P.R. Sarkar on 20th October, 1990 at 11 p.m.
This was the last song that he composed.*

The Ananda Nagar Odyssey

by Ac. Dhanjoo N. Ghista

Ananda Nagar, the land of ancient civilization, whose mystic beauty stands as witness for its human drama of existence

Ananda Nagar is situated in the north-eastern part of India, in the heart of Rarh. It is one of the most underdeveloped regions of India, covering Purulia and the neighboring districts of Bengal, Singhbhum and the adjoining areas of Bihar and Jharkhand. However, Rarh was the starting point of civilization and was once covered by dense forests. Its villages, named Baglat (meaning abode of tigers in creepers and shrubs), Singhagra (the roaring of lions), and Dimidiha (a place covered with eggs and where Siberian birds used to lay eggs), bear testimony to that glorious past.



A hill stands southwest of Ananda Nagar named Asthi Pahad (Fossil Hill), which contains ancient fossils, including those of dinosaurs. The great Maharshi Kapila was born in Pat Jhelda (23 kilometers southwest of Ananda Nagar) 3,500 years ago. Maharshi Kapila was not only the first philosopher of the world but also the inventor of algebra and geometry.

Visitors arriving by train, for the first time at Ananda Nagar (served by the quaint Pundag station), are often struck by the vastness of the panorama that opens up their eyes. The landscape is composed of rolling hills, ancient rock formations and winding streams lying in the shadows of the mountain range, whose history predates to many a millennium and is still the home of rare wildlife.

Local kids play while their mothers divert the river into their rice paddies, using just rocks and their sore backs. During the day, villagers can be seen moving serenely over the vast landscape performing the daily tasks that have been passed down in their tradition: the men driving their bullock carts to market and ploughing the fields; the women diverting the streams into their rice paddies and moving through the forests and fields collecting fuel for their kitchens and material to keep their houses in good repair.

Ananda Nagar is a land without time, a place where its sweet and mystic beauty stands as a witness for the human drama of existence. With their roots deep in a remote past, the people of Ananda Nagar struggle to find their place in the present world. Living in one of the forgotten areas of India, their lives move around basic rural activities. Most of the tiny villages lack electricity and have no clean water supply. Illiteracy is another problem that people in this area suffer from. There is yet no irrigation scheme to arrest the abundant monsoon water. A few wells, ponds, and springs are the main sources of drinking and irrigation water in Ananda Nagar. There is no substantial industry in the area, nor any established wholesale market. There are no telecommunication links, nor electricity (other than Gurukula Townships powerhouse) for all villages. There is only one functioning 36-bed hospital run by the Ananda Marga Mission, with minimal facilities for multi-pathy cure.

The nutritional and health status of the population is substandard. In fact, malnutrition, under nutrition, lack of proper hygiene, exposure to unclean water, and inadequate knowledge of preventive healthcare is the root cause of a dozen common diseases among the population. Diarrhea, malaria, dysentery, TB, typhoid, cholera, leprosy, skin diseases, chicken pox cough, polio, elephantitis are common. Infant mortality is also very high. Every year, 23 per thousand infants are born. Out of these, 25% are susceptible to diseases and die. Child mortality in Ananda Nagar is common. Those who do survive have no choice but to continue the cycle of poverty.

Ananda Nagar Development Project

Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar made Anandanagar the headquarters of Ananda Marga Gurukula with a vision to establish a Gurukula University and Township. The Ananda Nagar project is in fact an attempt to build an oasis in the midst of this desert caused by human neglect and non-caring mentality and is meant to constitute a pioneering approach to tribal cultural renaissance and socio-economic development. However, even beyond that, Gurukula University is designed to be verily the site of holistic learning: of learning to gain knowledge in all spheres of human living, and of learning for enlightenment !

In order to take Ananda Nagar and its neighbouring poorest districts of Bokaro and Jharkand out of the vicious cycle of poverty, attention has first to be given to guarantee the minimum requirements of life to the people, and to provide to them socio-cultural, healthcare, employment and economic security. This entails:

1. Food Production

2. Progressive Farming
3. Alternative Renewable Energy provision
4. Education
5. Industrial development, for providing employment
6. Cultural Development for Ananda Nagar renaissance
7. Healthcare and Medical Facilities
8. Women's Welfare: literacy, cottage industry, health and child care



Educational Projects in Ananda Nagar

As Ananda Nagar is located in one of the most impoverished and downtrodden districts of India, most students drop out of high school due to economic hardship and the literacy rate is extremely low. Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (also known as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti) had the vision to elevate the educational status and improve the standard of living through a comprehensive system of education. Since the 1960's primary schools and high schools were started for the local people provide education, where there were none before, and these continue to provide quality education to this day. There are also several children's homes. Medical initiatives such as a hospital and an acupuncture clinic provide free medical support to the local residents. There is a College, a Computer Literacy Centre, and a Music College.



Ananda Marga College

In 1966, Ananda Marga College was founded at Ananda Nagar to provide higher education to the poor communities of Purulia district. Ananda Marga College is affiliated with Burdwan University and offers Bachelor degree programs in the Arts and Science, and courses in the academic areas of literature and history, physics and mathematics, chemistry and biology, Bengali and English. There are current plans to expand the Honours programs and to also develop Masters Degree programs. Currently, there are more than 500 students studying at the College.

The College has been a great success, for having served more than 60 villages around Ananda Nagar over the years. Every year, hundreds of young students graduate from the College, after passing the Burdwan University examinations, and get job placements or go to pursue higher technical or professional education at different prestigious universities. The College has produced over one thousand graduates, who otherwise would have had no higher educational opportunity. These graduates have gone on to have successful careers in industry, government and education. In turn, their achievements have facilitated the improvement of the economic and living standard of the people around Ananda Nagar. The College has been granted special status in Burdwan University and the State, for the brilliant academic performance of its students and its dedicated service in this neglected part of the state of West Bengal. More information about the college can be found at: <http://anandamargacollege.org/>

Ananda Marga Gurukula: Catalyst for change, through holistic education for service & development

Today, Ananda Nagar is a dreamland the dreamland for seekers for peace and tranquillity, the dreamland of educators of teachers and education-conscious students and guardians.

As Ananda Marga Gurukula develops, this prehistoric landscape will reverberate with the neohumanistic endeavours of Gurukula educators and students, to bring about all-round renaissance in the civilization of its forgotten people, through agriculture and farming, engineering and mining, healthcare and education, literature and itihasa, linguistics and fine arts, all based on the foundations of supra-aesthetic and spiritual science.

Through its Colleges, Ananda Marga Gurukula will be involved in all aspects of Ananda Nagar development: (i) from farming to environmental development, (ii) agro-industrial development and manufacture of herbal medicine, (iii) primary-to-tertiary medical care and healthcare delivery (iv) women's welfare upliftment through education and cottage industry development, (v) community services of water supply, electrical power (with renewable energy technologies) and transportation facilities, and (vi) cooperative organization of work avenues, of management of production & distribution, (vii) education, healthcare, and employment for all.

Most importantly, the Gurukula will provide education to the young students of the region to become well qualified to take over the ongoing sustainable development of Ananda Nagar. The Gurukula Colleges and the community clinics will be located among the village communities, so as to enable the faculty and research students to inter-mingle with the community people, and make Ananda Nagar into a vibrant sustainable learning and living township.



NHE Teachers Training

Patna, India

A NHE teachers training programme was held at the WWD (Women's Welfare Department) premises in Patna from August 4th to 8th. Teachers from two Ananda Marga schools as well as local schools in the area attended for the full five days. All 58 participants enjoyed the twice daily routine of yoga-asanas and kaoshiki yogic dance-exercise, singing of Prabhata Samgiita songs composed by Shrii P. R. Sarkar, kiirtan and meditation. All the participants learned a personalized form of meditation.

This NHE teachers' training is a continuation of efforts to upgrade the quality of education in eight schools in Mainpura, Sisheshwar Nagar and Patna as well as to improve the quality of our Children's Homes which are attached to the schools. Regularizing the existing practices and focusing on sustainable NHE practices was the theme of the training program.

The training programme covered the basics of NHE philosophy and teaching methods, yoga for children (YES), ideas for ecology (ELF) and Student Volunteers (STUVOL). There was a public programme with presentations and competitions.

These local teacher training programmes help to equip the schools with modern teaching aids and implements. As a result of the training, one more hour was introduced into the daily curriculum as part of the regular course to include fine arts, music, classical and folk dance, gardening, regular physical training and parade with a band. New elements in the school flow are rhymes and stories, regular yoga-asanas, kaoshikii and meditation by all the students.

This NHE Teacher Training was facilitated by Didi Ananda Jyotirekha, Didi Ananda Snigdha Acarya and Didi Ananda Sujata. A certificate for attending the

programme was also distributed to the registered participants.

Renaissance Universal Symposium

Delhi, India

Renaissance Universal organised a special symposium on Shrii P.R. Sarkar's contribution to Philosophy and Science at Prachin Shiv Mandir, Chirag Delhi on July 18th 2010. Prof. Uttam Pati, Prof. of Biotechnology, JNU was the Chief Guest and spoke on Microvita. Dr. Ramnath Jha, Special Centre for Sanskrit studies, JNU, was the Guest of Honour and spoke on Shrii P.R. Sarkar's contribution to Philosophy. Shrii Shyam Bang, RU Secretary Delhi presided over the function.

In his talk, Prof. Pati discussed the concept of size and form of microvita, and there being a continuous conversion of matter into microvita and reversion of microvita into matter. Matter is made of microvita where as idea is the constituent of microvita. This symbolic shuttling is the definition of crude vs the subtle; ie life vs death. The question is does size matter if the manifestation could be realized in daily lives even in attempting to prove that it exists. If idea is the constituent of microvita, then this is enough for one to live in idea rather than to visualize or understand the importance of size. For example: mind has three entities: the extro- internal, the intro-external, and the movement of mind towards spirit. In the extro-internal state, the subject receives the information from the external world; in the second state, the subject transmits the internal idea to the external world. In the third state, one goes beyond the crude world to enter the subtle state and bring new wisdom to store in the second state.



Ananda Marga Kindergarten

Gopal Anandanagar, India

Nursery and kindergarten students from Ananda Marga Primary School at Gopal, Ananda Nagar are pictured receiving AMURT learning kits (slates and books) from Dada Ramananda. This is one of the 30 Ananda Marga village schools in Ananda Nagar. Ananda Nagar has 55 villages around its central headquarters. We are now running 30 schools in 30 of these 55 villages; these schools have 20 to 70 children each. There are no other government schools there, and so we are providing this basic education need. Plans are already underway for an Ananda Marga Gurukula Teacher Training College there so that our student teachers can teach in these schools while getting their B. Ed and M. Ed (Bachelors and Masters in education) with specialty in Neohumanist Education.



Ananda Marga Primary School

Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

Third and fourth grade students have just received prizes for sports competition at Anandanagar, pictured here with Dada Abhiramananda and Dada Nabhaniilananda.



Ananda Marga Kindergarten

Hyderabad, India

Children from the Nursery and Kindergarten shown planting trees and in lessons with their teacher.



There are hundreds of NHE schools in India, and we hope to be able to share more of their news in future issues.

Happy Hour Centre

Khar, Mumbai, India

Inspired by the ideals of neohumanism, the late Shrii L.C. Anand provided a permanent home for a school for children affected by cerebral palsy and multiple handicaps in 1994. The school is located at 47, Anand Kutir, 16th Rd. Khar, Mumbai. Currently the school is serving 50 children and prides itself to be one of the finest facilities in Mumbai. For every two children, there is one teacher. Physio-therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, a dietician and a doctor take proper care of the children. Mr. Pradeep Anand as the founding member of Anand Trust and current chairman takes full responsibility for the needs of all these children. There is a school bus that picks up and drops the children after school. Mrs. Ella D'Souza is the director of the project since its inception and is one of the leading specialists who was trained in USA and Germany. Her love for service to these children lies at the heart of success of this project. The facility at Khar also houses the meditation centre where Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiji stayed on several occasions during his visits to Mumbai in the early 1960's. It is a perfect memorial to his love for this educational service project.

NHE in Taiwan

by R. Taminga

Taiwan is a can-do nation: earthquakes and typhoons annually destroy houses, bridges even entire villages, but the Taiwanese people just stand up, look for a way out and go on with life. Much of the work of the NHE community has been inspired by this can-do spirit: step by step we have focused on practical ways to implement the grand vision of a yoga inspired education.



Aid for Developmentally Challenged Children

Two years ago, Miss Yang, opened a classroom for children with developmental problems. She applies a variety of teaching methods, but fundamentally makes her children do daily asanas, practice quiet time, follow a vegetarian diet and sing Kiirtan. This combined with many sensory integrating activities have transformed not only the lives of her students, but many of their parents as well. She is the originator of the Peace Mama program, whereby mothers take their yoga and meditation experiences to the classrooms and teach the children meditation and moral stories.

Little Star Kids Yoga

Lun I-huei is a professional kids yoga teacher. After typhoon Morakot in 2009 destroyed several entire mountain villages, she guided weekly meditation sessions to help children deal with the trauma of loss of family. Her ability to help children through silence get in touch with their deepest inner selves has encouraged the government to consider funding her future work. Together with Yang and several others, teacher trainings are held and in the past five years over 150 people have become qualified kidsyoga teachers.



Handicapped People

Lien Ching Fa has focused on encouraging the handicapped community with NHE inspired concepts. In spite of himself having suffered from polio in childhood, he tirelessly travels around the island to give classes, TV interviews and inspire others to teach handicapped people too. He recently formed an association which receives government funding for this amazing work.



Yoga for Teenagers

Melody Li has been organizing Peace Education through Yoga workshops for over one year. She focuses on the junior high school students and in winter and summer camps she offers them the chance to learn yoga and meditation, while the teachers have special camps to develop NHE concepts in their off time. She is also the organizer of the monthly Parents and Kids Yoga Touch workshops which are offered free of charge to parents of children with learning difficulties.



Publications and Training in NHE

Over the years the NHE working community has published several books ranging from story telling, character education songs, kids yoga, quiet time exercises, to further the public's interest in education. One company published an entire KG curriculum based on Circle of Love concepts and is currently preparing this for digital use throughout the country, with the hope that we can inspire many more schools to adopt NHE ideals.

Storytelling Workshops

One thing we have learned over the years is that if you want to teach NHE you have to be ready to learn to listen to understand the problems in the local education community, and see how from your NHE vision you can respond to them. One example is our work with the English teacher community. They wanted to learn story telling techniques. Luckily I have some interest in this and over the years have offered many workshops in this field, often inspiring the teachers for a different approach to education.

Schools

Moha Mukta has been the principal of a kindergarten with 80 children for the past fifteen years. The whole school is vegetarian. Through regular festivals, weekly kidsyoga and QTE (Quiet Time) she inspires her students and teachers for the holistic education vision of NHE. There are also regular parents meetings to inspire the parents for the same.

At other schools there are several programs and activities to promote NHE and moral education. Especially at Ananda School in Taipei, much wonderful work is being done.

All in all we see the gradual maturing of NHE in Taiwan's society. Several academics, government officials and professionals are taking notice of our work and with time we are developing a more and more professional skills to translate this deep inner vision into a practical reality!

NHE Publications in Taiwan

The essence of NHE is that the teacher does meditation. But even the elevated teacher needs teaching tools. In NHE we have some wonderful educational ideas based on which over the years some members have developed books and teacher guides. Some examples of the books published in Taiwan are:

Step Out: Based on the Circle of Love concept, Step-out is a nature science curriculum for self discovery. It consists of ten student books, each covering an aspect of the Circle of Love curriculum. After several years of hard work, it is going to be available on I-Pad in early 2011.

Superbunny: is a character building curriculum, suitable for KG and lower elementary school. It consists of ten stories and 35 songs.

Little Star Yoga Workbook: Over the years we published many kidsyoga books, like Animal Songs, Yoga Stories, which are sold in Taiwan and China. The Little Star Yoga Workbook consists of songs and drawing activities for children.

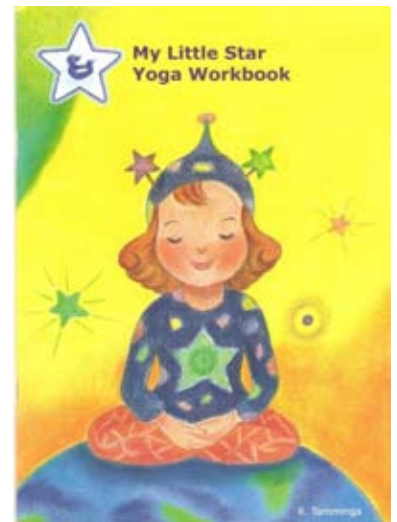
YogaTouch: a book on the therapeutic use of yoga for children with developmental problems.

Pssst! It's Quiet Time!: a book filled with practical ideas for silence games with children.

Learning foreign languages is part of the NHE curriculum. On the one hand learning a second or third language opens one's mind to other cultures. On the other hand it activates new parts of the brain. In Taiwan English is taught as a foreign language from KG onwards. In **How to Read**, we have developed a unique spelling method that allows the Taiwanese children to read simple English story books before they enter elementary school. This system is based on the American reading program Distar.

We also have a lot of NHE inspired story material, some of it published (Why the Sun is Yellow, Mama I don't want to sleep and The Walking Fish). It is interesting how other authors pick up these stories and weave them into their own work!

Currently we are preparing a new edition of Morning Circle 1-6, a story based language learning program that has already served thousands of children. Attached to these publications, are many training programs. In this way, many teachers have been directly or indirectly touched by the vision of NHE in both China and Taiwan.



MorningStar Preschool enters 22nd Year

Denver, Colorado, USA
By Mahajyoti Glassman

As we honor the 20th anniversary of Gurukul, here at MorningStar we also find ourselves reflecting upon our 2 decades plus 2 years at 1224 Washington Street. We have grown from a licensed day-care of 6 children to a full preschool with approximately 30 families, operating over 10 hours, 5 days a week, all year round.

Today we have the highest early childhood rating (4 stars) in Colorado. Located in an 1898 Victorian house, the school occupies the entire first floor of the house for women which is owned by Ananda Marga in the very center of Denver Colorado.

Once a year we sponsor a Back to School Nite for the parents of our 2 ½-5 year old children, including a pizza dinner and childcare while the staff introduce the parents to our program. Defining Neohumanist Education has been quite the evolutionary process for all of us in Ananda Marga across the globe. Taking P.R. Sarkar's discourses and bringing them into daily practice has been an enlightening adventure for all who embark on this journey!

So what is a yoga-based preschool our parents ask?

We offer active learning experiences that engage both hemispheres of the brain. For an education which is primarily academic in nature activates predominantly one hemisphere of the brain, activates only 50% of who we are. It is like a bird with one wing trying to fly.

In a yoga-based preschool we strive to extend –full brain” active experiences that nurture the fullness of who we are and who we can become.

Here we explore pre-writing, pre-reading, language and literacy through playful, fun and interesting discoveries. Through experimentation with various communication techniques, students learn the repercussions of cause and effect. With a little coaching from teachers and puppets, they learn to –speak out for justice” and to give kindness to others in words and deeds.

Math and science activities are interwoven into the fabric of daily adventures of delightful exploration and inquiry.

Yoga movement and breathing bring our peaceful natures bubbling to the surface and promote the development of confidence, inner courage, and positive self-image. These tools "iron out the wrinkles" of frustration, disappointment, and selfishness as well as addressing the needs of the body-mind for those who have "busy hands", "busy legs", or other sensory and gross motor demands. Asana and breath prepare the mind/body for better focus, learning, and emotional balance.

Daily meditation and kiirtan maximize our personal and spiritual potentiality, deepening the relationship with the Inner Divine Friend.

We honor all religions, cultures, and ethnicities.

Socio-emotional activities and games strengthen our foundation for living cooperatively in the world, guiding our interactions with members of our Earth family and friends with love, understanding, kindness, and selflessness, cultivating spiritual kinship with all Living Beings.



NORTH AMERICA

Music and other opportunities for creative expression encourage a very satisfying happiness of more subtler pursuits which hold the mind on a steady course toward harmony and homeostasis.

Frequent excursions outside and in nature remind us of our connection with the Creator and all things Beautiful.

The tender, loving and sweet caring of the teachers continuously embraces the children, letting them know that they are never alone, that they have nothing to fear, and they are always loved unconditionally and without judgment.

Laughter, tears, love and devotion. It is all as it should be for our MorningStar family – constantly feeling supported by Divine Love, constantly feeling Divine Presence... Baba Nam Kevalam.



Prama Institute Asheville, NC, USA

The Prama Institute is a seminar, research and retreat center located on the Ananda Marga Master Unit, Ananda Girisuta, outside Asheville, North Carolina, USA.

Inaugurated in the spring of 2007, the Prama Institute was co-founded by Dr. Sid Jordan, Dr. Howard Nemon, Pamela Nemon and Ramesh Bjonnes as a branch of the Ananda Marga Gurukula Network dedicated to organizing seminars on spirituality, sustainability, arts and culture.

The Prama Institute's Executive Director is Dr. Sid Jordan, Pamela Nemon is Director of Facilities, and Ramesh Bjonnes is Marketing and Program Director.



The inaugural program featured internationally acclaimed poet Robert Bly and Palestinian filmmaker Hannah Elias. More than 300 people attended the Robert Bly reading, in which he read from a collection of his own recent poems as well as his own translations of sacred poetry from many cultures, including, Rumi, Kabir and Mirabai. A poetry workshop led by Bly the following day was attended by over 50 people, and more than 100 people came to the two screenings of Hannah Elias's award winning film *The Olive Harvest*. This film—made with an Israeli crew and a Palestinian cast—has since then become an important educational tool in promoting peace in the Middle East.

Over the past 3 years, the Prama Institute has organized numerous public programs attended by several thousand people. These programs include: two popular Silent Yoga retreats, a sold out Day of Yoga program in collaboration with nearly a dozen local yoga groups, a concert with Grammy Nominated kirtan singer Jai Uttal, a popular Yoga Detox retreat with Acarya Dharmavedananda, three consecutive Ananda Marga Yoga Teachers' Trainings, as well as an environmental conference co-sponsored with Warren Wilson College and the Wilderness Society, and many more.

In addition, the Prama Institute hosts many locally and nationally known spiritual, yoga and holistic groups, who come to the center to conduct seminars and enjoy the green built facilities, vegetarian cuisine, and beautiful natural surroundings. We have hosted several yoga and music festivals, as well as groups who bring internationally known workshop leaders to the area.

Child-Friendly Spaces in Haiti

By Sarita Wolf

Michelene, a nine-year old girl now living with her mother and two siblings in an internally displaced persons camp in the middle of Port-au-Prince, softly slips her hand into mine and tugs me over to her table where she just finished painting a triangle tessellation. She beams me a huge smile as I hold her art piece up while the room monitor—a local teacher from the same camp—looks on approvingly. Michelene is just one of the over 4,000 children who currently attend integrated education and healing programs facilitated by AMURT-Haiti (Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team) in various camps and neighborhoods in Port au Prince. Her home was destroyed in the January 12th earthquake, and she was left homeless and traumatized by the tragic loss of two of her younger siblings. Four days after the quake, the family collected a few family treasures from the rubble and moved to the camp where they continue to live in a small shelter built with sticks, pieces of plastic and a tarp.



The January 12th catastrophe radically changed the lives of millions of Haitians living in Port au Prince and throughout the country. The devastation left in the aftermath of the quake continues to threaten the well being of hundreds of thousands of people. The most vulnerable of course are children like Michelene. Many of these children lack adequate food, water and shelter for survival, and the daily hardships they face and the on-going threats to their mental and physical well being continue with little respite. In the days immediately following the earthquake, it became clear to the AMURT-Haiti team that our efforts needed to focus on these most vulnerable members of the population. On a Sunday morning a few weeks after the quake, with some initial planning by both new and veteran AMURT-Haiti team members, the Haitian Ananda Marga community

came together after our weekly collective meditation to begin formalizing a plan to serve these children in a long-lasting, transformational manner. From this meeting, our Child-Friendly Space (in Creole Espas Zanmi Ti Moun or "EZT") program was born.

"Child-Friendly Space" is a term used in the international disaster relief community to describe a place where various types of support can be provided to children in a time of severe crisis. For the AMURT-Haiti EZTs, we defined our goals in an integrated way, striving to address the whole child by putting together various Neohumanist Education (NHE) elements centering around the needs of the particular communities of children. The programs were designed to respond to the educational, psycho-social, emotional and spiritual needs of those who experienced hardship by providing safety, security and a transition to normalcy. And like all AMURT-Haiti programs, our approach with these projects began with community engagement, carefully identifying needs, helping the community served define their own goals and resources, introducing NHE philosophy and principles, and then providing integrated solutions that are principally implemented by the community itself. The community helped identify and interview members of the team of community organizers, trainers, coaches and monitors who became the backbone of the program coordination. This coordinated team begins and ends all decision-making processes with community consultation, direction and involvement.

In mid-February, when we opened our first EZT at our AMSAI base in Delmas, the air filled with a rush of excitement. Well-dressed monitors, in crisply ironed skirts and shirts, arrived early to setup. Excited but tentative children arrived tightly clasping their parents' hands, and our training team scurried from tent to tent providing materials and coaching our monitors. In just a few days the school-yard, which had become AMURT's disaster relief logistical headquarters, was transformed from a drab dusty yard full of motorcycles, trucks, boxes and construction materials, into a colorful children's camp full of energy, smiles, love and hope.

Since the first EZT opened, we have inaugurated several additional sites. Working mostly in displaced-person camps throughout Port-au-Prince, we are currently running seven EZTs serving over 4,000 children between ages 4 and 12. The programs have been consistently featured on national and international media sources, and have been given as



NORTH AMERICA

examples of well-rounded and high-quality child-focused interventions in very difficult urban conditions.

A typical day at one of our EZTs starts with children gathering in their "home" space for the "Circle of Love", a special time that starts with a guided breathing exercise, and continues with community building activities such as learning new songs and "News Ball" - sharing of a greeting or a personal thought. Three monitors facilitate each "class" of 25 children. The children travel with their class, rotating through four tents housing different activities where they gain a balanced exposure to various types of NHE learning. Our primary goal is to provide the children with a feeling of safety and security, and this is achieved in part through team-building games, yoga and cooperative sports, partner sharing, quiet reflection and open discussion.



As the EZTs have progressed over time, and in order to prepare the children to a return to regular school in the months ahead, we have begun to introduce more literacy and numeracy skills through a variety of play activities. For example, children read stories together, then create play-dough characters, and finally perform a skit with the characters to extend the story. A typical numeracy activity allows children to string colorful beads for friendship bracelets to learn about counting and patterns. Each day children also pause from the energetic activities to do relaxing yoga asanas and guided breathing visualizations. Monitors have been trained to teach basic individual and partner poses to stimulate the child's inner strength. Children finish their day with another round of snacks and group sharing. Often they do not want to leave at the end of the session, pleading to have another round of activity. Modulating high and low energy activities in a deliberate way helps children learn strategies for dealing with their circumstances, stresses, and emotions in a constructive way.

Ongoing professional development is an integral component of a successful and transformational program. Our team has been providing ample opportunities for professional growth through rigorous training for all monitors and support staff of the EZTs, often focusing on various NHE elements. The program allows time for monitors to work collaboratively to create activity plans for different age groups that involve psycho-social, educational, and creative activities. Monitors receive regular support as on-site trainers circulate throughout the camp sites to model and do side-by-side coaching. They also receive special weekly training on topics such as activity planning, positive discipline, self-care, active listening, group norms, and play therapy. Our goal is to infuse the curriculum with loving and healing child-centered and experiential NHE activities that are easy to practice and replicate regardless of the difficult conditions. One of the indicators that the EZT program has been successful in doing this is the transformation noticed in children's art – vivid and joyful colors and elements have replaced the initially dark tones and themes.

Hopefully, the children who participate in the EZTs will look back at these past months and remember experiences and feelings that were positive and filled with light and love, and perhaps the scars of the loss and struggles they faced will begin to heal. As one of thousands of children served by the EZT program, Michelene will anxiously return tomorrow for another day of singing, painting, and especially playing with her new friends.

Note: Sarita Wolf left her teaching career within days after the earthquake to contribute to AMURT's relief work in Haiti, and has been coordinating all NHE-related child-protection activities there. The program has been widely praised for its efficiency and originality, and will continue into 2011 expanding into community-leadership, adult training, and afterschool activities.



The Progressive School of Long Island, USA

The Progressive School of Long Island was born in 1985, though the groundwork began in 1984. Originally called Ananda Marga School of Long Island, after one year the non-profit corporation was unable to rent any space. The following year the name was changed, and a rental was secured at a church on the south shore of Long Island.

The first school year began with just five kindergarteners, including the daughter of Dr. Steven and Shoshana Landau. The intent of the school was to reach the public by building a bridge between traditional education models and the ideals of Neohumanism. Though the early stages were rocky and filled with challenges, the school grew, and received numerous direct and indirect blessings from P.R. Sarkar himself.



4/2010 Eric Jacobson gets award for 25 years selfless service to the community from Dave Denenberg, Nassau County legislator (left). Next in order: Benay Deitman Administrator, Eric Jacobson, Evangelina Jacobson.



AT THE DOOR of the new Progressive School of Long Island to be located on Merrick Avenue, are the school's founding director, Eric Jacobson and his wife, Evangelina, who will also teach in the school. The elementary school, which will open early in September, will be in the former annex of Merokee Day School in a building at the Church of the Redeemer.

Dada Devashraddhanada and Bill and Janet Dorf were strong supporters of the project. Eric and Evangelina Jacobson were the founders, Eric still acting as educational principal today, and Asiima still acting as a part-time art teacher. Their children Amal, Prashanta, and Tara were born after the school was opened and all of them attended and graduated. Now Tara is teaching creative writing at PSOLI as an afterschool club.

From its inception, the school emphasized the practice of yoga, meditation, service, and morality. Through the medium of books, drama, games, simulations, and hands-on discovery, curriculum was developed that not only exceeded NY state requirements, but also introduced finer concepts of Neohumanism such as overcoming geo- and socio-sentiments, counteracting pseudo-culture, care for all creation, and putting learning into use.

Over the years, the school grew to 120 students. It continued to expose the philosophy, practice, and actional work of Neohumanism to an ever expanding degree. In its 21st year, a donation of the adjoining property was given, and a middle school was constructed there, allowing expansion to 150 students and 8th grade.

This past year, PSOLI celebrated its 25th anniversary, an event that was covered by the local media. Its accomplishments have reached into the public consciousness as its students have gone on to university and adult life. There are scores of stories of graduates dedicating their lives to service, achieving high academic honors at top universities, and finding spirituality in their personal lives. An ongoing look at these can be found on the school's website www.psoli.com in the news section of "about us."

Much of the work done at Progressive School in the areas of methodology, curriculum, assessment, and teacher training was groundbreaking. It is now a source of learning and inspiration for the entire NHE movement around the world. The school accepts visitors and trainees, and Eric travels the globe giving workshops to teachers and the public recently in Portland, Australia, and Sweden.



State Senator Charles Fuschillo joins PSOLI as they celebrate a Solar Roof on the Middle School, 9/2008

Neohumanist Preschool Caracas, Venezuela By Avtk. Ananda Amegha Ac.

The Neohumanist Preschool in Caracas, Venezuela, started in October of 2003 with one student, with the assistance of Niilima. We soon reached out to the area adjacent to the preschool where there are several barrios with low income families. Our education project soon turned into a social service project, when we realized none of the

parents from the barrios could afford to pay a regular private school fee. In the end we had 48 children attending our preschool, more than half of them free of charge. Nevertheless, it was a wonderful experience. We got a great director who implemented our neohumanist philosophy in the day-to-day interaction with the teachers, children and parents. Most of the teachers learned meditation and every day we did yoga and meditation with the children. We also had many artists volunteering activities with the children, such as dance, painting, theatre, etc. Over the years a lot of children, new teachers and parents have passed through the school, each one leaving their trace, and carrying with them the seed of Neohumanist philosophy and practice when they leave for a new destination.



Due to the political changes in Venezuela, there also have been many changes in the laws regarding education and private schools and due to the new laws, I had to let go of our excellent director, since her studies were in psycho pedagogy and not specifically in preschool education. Also economically it has become extremely tough to maintain the school. Due to the extremely high inflation rate in the country, the constant devaluation of the Venezuelan currency and a parallel economy which functions with a blackmarket dollar, most people cannot afford private education anymore. So every year the same question has arisen: Should we keep up a school that is incurring financial loss? And every year we have made the same decision: Yes, because Venezuela and the world needs more neohumanistic schools where children learn to become responsible members of society, with a universal outlook and love in their hearts for themselves and all creation.

This year is very special. It is a turning point in the history of our school. We have decided to buy the building where we run the preschool. This will enable us to repair and renovate the building so it is more suitable for the children. It also ensures that the project will continue for many years to come. I feel like we are embarking on a new and adventurous journey, and trusting in the divine providence, that if the goal is to create a bright future for the children and society, there surely will be the support of the universe in this mission. The fundraising to buy the building has just started. The total investment in purchasing the building is US\$135,000. The initial down payment is coming from the income of our Indian store here in Caracas, but we still have to raise most of the money needed. This last year we had 33 paying children; our goal is to reach self sufficiency of the school in the next few years.

Thanks go to all of our staff, our new director Gaorii, and our four teachers. They have all learned meditation and at present are receiving our yearly Neohumanist Education training. Madalsa is in charge of cooking all the delicious vegetarian meals. She is a solid rock when it comes to defending our vegetarian diet and neohumanist philosophy. The children and staff love her food. Harinath has been involved in this project from the very start and has donated endless hours in administrative work and helping to resolve any existing problem. Many thanks also to Steve and Peggy Baker who have over the years supported unconditionally both the Preschool and Master units we have in Venezuela, and to all the other supporters. This last year we had the contribution of two volunteers, Malinii from Sweden who cheered up everybody with her spontaneous positive energy, and Dharmamitra from Venezuela who is an environmentalist and established our recycling project. They were a driving force in maintaining our neohumanist standard. For more information, please write to: anandaamegha@yahoo.com



In Yaracuy, we have a Master Unit land of 2 hectares in Tartagal and another one of 16 hectares on top of a mountain called La Parre. Together with the Mayors office, we organized an activity with the children and people in the nearby community of San Pablo on the 22nd of March to celebrate the International Day of Water. 15 volunteers came from Caracas, several hundred people attended. The schoolchildren from the area participated and presented dances and different activities related to water conservation. In the morning we did recycling and art activities with the children and gave a talk about vegetarianism and in the afternoon we had a music concert with various groups and distributed storybooks which we had received from a government institution

Neohumanist Education

Porto Alegre, Brazil

By Avtk. Ananda Sushila Ac.

In Porto Alegre, Brazil, Ananda Marga runs six schools. Five are preschools and one a primary school up to 4th grade.

The first kindergarten was started in 1985 by Didi Ananda Lipika together with the help of members of Ananda Marga from Restinga Novo, a relatively poorer region south of Porto Alegre. The current director of that school is Kevalinii who has been working in the school since 1986. The school has always received very much appreciation from the parents and community. It now has 50 children. Due to the high demand from the community, Ananda Marga opened 3 more kindergarten in a nearby area; one is in Restinga Velha was started by Dada Sucitananda in 1988. The current director of that school is Viviane and there are now 43 children. Another school is in Barro Vermelho and was started by Dada Cittabodananda in 1992. The current director is Susanti with 70 children. The latest school was started in Restinga Nova, near the first school, by Didi Ananda Vandana in 1995. The current director is Ester who have been working in the school since 1996. The school now has 50 children.

Ananda Marga runs another kindergarten in Belem Novo, which is further south than Restinga Novo. It was a boys' home initially established by Dada Sucitananda in 1984 and later on it became a kindergarten in 1989, managed by Supriya. In 1994 Didi Ananda Vandana took over responsibility and improved it. The current director is Isabel, with 70 children.

With lots of requests from parents of the kindergartens in the Restinga area for further education in Ananda Marga, Didi Ananda Vandana opened a primary school, called Neohumanist Fundamental Primary School. The current director is Diipamala. This school has 272 students from 1st to 4th grades.

All the schools are working hard to establish Neohumanist Education programs. Regular classes include collective meditation with songs, yoga asanas, drama and storytelling in the library. There are also many yearly projects such as the values of Yama and Niyama, cultural programs, health food presentations, knowing oneself, art activities with creative movement and dance, etc.

Presently all schools projects are under the administration of Amurt/ Amurtel of Brazil. The President is Sudama. The pedagogical side of the schools is overseen by Dharmamitra.



NHE Schools in Paraguay

By Brcii. Sutanuka Ac.

Our Neohumanist School is in Toledo Cañada, Capiatá, a rural zone about an hour from Asunción in bus. It was started in 1993 by Didi Atmaprama with 32 preschool children. Today there are 286 students from preschool to 9th grade. It is the biggest school in the area. The official Paraguayan curriculum is complemented with the curriculum of Neohumanist Education. The children's

families are horticulture workers that live nearby. Many of them come from devastated families that live under inhuman conditions and whose parents have no energy or time to educate them. Thus they leave the children's entire education in the hands of the school. Despite that, our children are recognized to be the most respectful and educated in the area.

We allow the children to study inclusively even if they can't pay the fee of 1.5 dollars per month per child. The school is subsidized by the Paraguayan government and Ananda Marga pays the administrative expenses that include the salary of the director, secretary and the cleaning maid.

The school building has five rooms and an area for preschool and an office. All students perform meditation and yoga asanas with Didi Sutanuka who coordinates the project. The children have medical and psychological assistance too. There are workshops for the teachers and parents about universal love, solidarity and self-esteem. Ydalina, the director and one of our oldest teachers, is one of the witnesses of the constant growth of the school. The parents are grateful as they notice the results of the education we are giving their children.



The **Children Universe School** has 45 children and is located in the Central Market of Asunción, the biggest fruit and vegetable market of the city. The children sleep with their parents in the market and go to school while their parents work. The school is a paradise for them, as it is a big contrast with the noisy and contaminated surroundings of the market. The director, Anandamayii, with the help of Didi Sutanuka, leads the project using the Circle of Love curriculum and every day starts with the morning circle. Most of the children don't pay anything as the project is financed since 2002 by the city government. The school building belongs to the Central Market and was renovated by members of Ananda Marga. This school was started with Didi Giitika.

NHE Teacher Training

Florianópolis, Brazil

A NHE Teacher training was conducted in Florianópolis, Brazil, May 22 and 23, by Didi Ananda Sushila and local members of Ananda Marga and attended by 15 people from the community interested in learning more about NHE.

The program began with an introduction to Neohumanist Education based on the 6 principles of NHE and their application in the classroom. There were sessions on creative movements, yoga asanas for kids, circle dance and spiritual education. After the yoga for kids session, groups were asked to create their own yoga asanas presentation with dance, stories or creative movement. Everyone really enjoyed being like children, moving with their imaginations, creativities and dancing. For the spiritual education session, the students learned how to introduce and teach meditation to the children including the use of visualizations, reading of children's poetry, use of mudras, soft music and games. The program also included a presentation on story telling, a drama presentation by a theatre group and a session on sharing and exchanging experiences working with children. In the end everyone made one sun ray out of origami and wrote one word on it about how they felt. All rays were joined together to form a colourful sun of joy, peace, happiness, love, etc.



College of Neohumanist Studies

Ydrefors, Sweden

The College of Neohumanist Studies (CNS) has evolved out of Prashiksana Matha also popularly known as "The International School of Social Service" as a necessity to expand the existing curriculum of teachings in Yoga, and Intuition Science. Prashiksana Matha was originally set up in 1976 to offer an opportunity to those who wanted to devote their lives to self-realization and social service. The college is located in Ydrefors, Sweden in the tranquil natural surroundings of forests and lakes.

At present the college has the following faculties:

1. Faculty of Yoga and Intuition Science
2. Faculty of Neohumanist Education
3. Faculty of Sustainable Development (in development).
4. Prabhat Samgiita Academy

The curriculum provides academic training to those becoming Yoga and Meditation teachers and/or teachers of Neohumanist Education. CNS also has a collaborative relationship with the Commedia School, an international theater school in Copenhagen.

The summer and early Fall of 2010 saw CNS Sweden come alive with several lively programs. Among them were, the workshop on Neohumanist Education & Culture led by Dr Marcus Bussey; Insights into the Milky Way by Sister Indumati; Homeopathic & Public Speaking workshops conducted by Tony Carlyle and the hosting of 4th Annual Yoga Educators Conference. The power-point presented by Sister Indumati on the Milky Way received an enthusiastic response from all participants. Meanwhile, Sis Jyotiorekha continued with holistic healing sessions at the Integrated Health Centre in Ydrefors. Dr. Shambhushivananda also spoke at the International Womens Center in Stockholm on "Spirituality and Social Responsibility" on September 20, 2010.



Yoga in Schools

Bolzoni, Italy

By Christian Franceschini

In June, in one of the schools in Bolzano (South Tirol, Italy) where I teach Yoga, a whole morning was dedicated to a yoga festival. Alessandro Manzoni is a primary school which has 240 kids, and all of them took part in the yoga show. All the parents were invited and the 50 teachers and the school director were also there.

My father and my wife, Krsnapriya, helped me to bring and prepare an exhibition with posters, pictures, children's drawings, etc. on the levels of the mind, the benefits of kaoshiiki, asanas, how to do half bath, etc.

Each class acted out one part of the yoga program done during the year: some showed a few asanas, others surya namaskar. Eighty participated in a kaoshiiki competition (the winners got kiirtan CDs) and all 240 did kiirtan and meditation. The atmosphere was thrilling! The kids were excited and proud to show their parents what they could do. The weather was beautiful sunny and warm, just perfect for performing the different activities outside.

At the end we offered fruits to the children and answered the many questions coming from parents and relatives.



Centru Tbexbix - Malta

Centru Tbexbix is an educational and social service project in the heart of Cospicua. The project has been running for almost four years, and offers a place and programmes of quality education to children and families focussing on members of the community suffering from social and learning disadvantages. Centru Tbexbix provides a joyful learning experience for children from four years of age. It has become a safe place for different age groups to explore, to gain confidence, build friendships, to cooperate, communicate and to socialise free from the dangers of drugs and alcohol; a place where young people meet to learn, play, grow and discover their potential, how to achieve their personal best.



Programmes are offered free of charge so that all can participate regardless of circumstances. At present there are various programmes, among them the Sunrise English Club which provides innovative ways of learning English, emphasizing exposure to the language, playful learning and confidence building. Creativity classes help to explore talents and new skills, stimulate original thinking while having fun. Children experiment with different art media and gain confidence in expression beyond language.

Weekly athletics sessions under the coaching of a professional trainer provide a challenge in perseverance and personal achievement; stimulate self-discipline and healthy lifestyle choices. Yoga is also an integral part of the programmes.

Summer Club is held during the school holidays. For three hours in the mornings the children enjoy various activities of the programmes above mentioned, including crafts, play, English, drama and yoga. Working together and sharing these hours together has brought a sense of family among the children beyond their age and peer group feelings.

The number of children benefitting from these programmes has increased over the three and a half years of operation. The number enrolled for the last summer club ending in August 2010 were 50.

Yoga Shoots is a recently inaugurated morning programme spanning through the scholastic year, bringing the yoga experience to children of primary schools and first year of secondary schools around Malta. From December 2009 till May of this year, once a week without exception and sometimes twice, a class of around 25 children accompanied by two teachers participated in a session of yoga for kids, as well as an intercultural presentation and creativity session. A short

session on food sense introduced the children to a vegetarian meal prepared by the project staff.

As a follow up to the intercultural presentation, the children were encouraged to exchange messages and drawings with children from schools in Europe. In all about 25 classes took part in this project.

Centru Tbexbix is registered as a non-government organisation and is run by the Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga Malta. Didi and Kamala manage the project and a number of volunteers whose activity is funded from various sources, take an active role in planning and implementing different activities according to their skills and qualifications. Till now 26 such volunteers have worked at Centru Tbexbix for periods of from 3 to 12 months. Ongoing training ensures that in spite of the continuous substitution of human resources, the essence of Neohumanistic Education is retained in all the programmes.



'My First Book'

Contest for Children to Write and Illustrate their Original Story in its Seventh Year in Croatia

By Avtk. Anandarama Ac.

My First Book is a successful national contest in Croatia for children ages 6 to 15. It challenges them to write and illustrate their own story and for seven years now an average of 300 books are received yearly. The best winning stories are published. So far 44 books have been published and a collective work by children – Pazi Mine! (Watch Out. Mines!) was commissioned and distributed to 30,000 children in Croatia and Bosnia. This year 433 books were received and 10 printed.

This contest engages children in a meaningful end-product of their own making that supports the school objectives of basic communication skills such as: reading, spelling, grammar, listening, speaking and illustrating. It encourages students to exercise rational thinking, judgment, self-expression, creativity and sustainable practices. The final products can be proudly examined, discussed, displayed and are not only inspirational to the participants but also to other children who read the books of their peers at exhibitions, in schools and libraries.

The writer and illustrator has to be the same person as this contest is primarily about supporting the creative self-expression of the individual child. They have to keep in mind that their story book is meant to be interesting and exciting for children of ages four to 10. Especially older children need to be reminded to write the book for the benefit of younger readers as usually they get lost in long texts of melodrama.

The Karlovac City Theatre "Zorin dom" hosts the colourful yearly prize-giving ceremony and exhibition of the books. Students come from other towns for an all-day excursion with sightseeing, picnic and workshops on „How to Improve your Book.“ This event is well attended by students, teachers and parents. We invite special needs children, children's choir or band and the children's ballet to participate in the performance and add more colour and pageantry.

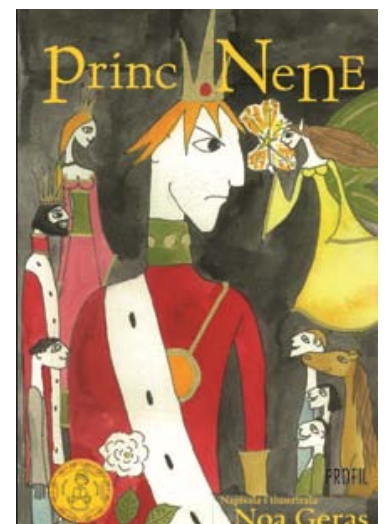
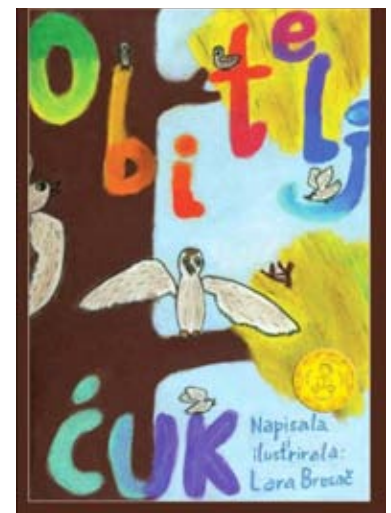
We found that children grow with this contest; they express their thoughts, imaginations, sustainable way of life, creativity and their art. Children who see the work of other children are encouraged „to do even better“ in making their own book. They cherish their book as a finished product of hard work and continuous effort even if it does not get published. Good writers and illustrators were motivated and continued to submit one new book each year. Every year they improved and set a high standard for others. We gave scope for their books to be awarded special recognition and found sponsors for publishing them but we keep reserving the chance for new contestants every year to win. At times parents or their own local libraries or their schools support the publishing of their books.

With the help of the professional jury, designers and editors we have kept the standard of the books very high which helps the esteem of the contest. We have looked out for the values inherent in the stories published to be meaningful, uplifting and positive to the authors and the readers.

Popular children authors Sanja Pilic and Tito Bilopavlovic are not only on the jury but have become closely associated with the contest. Two dozen volunteers give about 40 workshops throughout the year and Vanja Kiseljak and Romana Leko manage the project on a part time basis.



New Poster



Neohumanist Education in Romania

Hidden Treasure coming to Light

By Didi Ananda Devapriya



In December 1989, the oppressive communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaucescu fell. Soon following the revolution and the parting of the Iron Curtain that had isolated Romania from Western Europe, AMURT and AMURTEL volunteers crossed the borders to bring in humanitarian aid. After initial assessments of the situation, one of the first projects that Didi Ananda Sugata set up was a Neohumanist kindergarten in an impoverished neighbourhood in the north of Bucharest. The holistic, interactive, creative and joyful atmosphere of the kindergarten was in stark contrast to the rigid, authoritarian style of the public educational system that had developed under Communism. In fact, during that period of deep transition, a representative from the Ministry of Education had made a written request to Ananda Marga to revamp the educational system of Romania. When Dada Shambhushivananda brought the letter to Shrii P. R. Sarkar while he was in the hospital, he was very pleased and went on to say that he had much more to say about education. Shortly afterwards, he was released from the hospital and called a meeting of His workers one evening, announcing that he was scrapping the current board of education and forming a new organism called Ananda Marga Gurukula.

Meanwhile, in Romania, aid was pouring in to provide relief in the appalling and inhuman conditions that the world was shocked to discover existed in the Communist State Children's homes. Ceaucescu's grand schemes for a powerful Romania included increasing the population by restricting all forms of birth control and penalizing women that did not produce children. As a result, families had more children than they were able to provide for, and many families were forced by poverty and circumstances to abandon their children in these state institutions, where they believed that they would receive better conditions. However, the disturbing reality was that children were severely neglected, physically, emotionally and even sexually abused, malnourished, and otherwise traumatised in such institutions.

In 1995, with the help of the Swedish Infant Massage Association, AMURTEL opened a second kindergarten, designed to model the inclusive education of children with special needs in a mainstream setting. People with special needs had been socially marginalized and excluded from society during Communism. Communism was supposed to have solved all the society's problems, so entire professions, such as psychiatry and psychology were disbanded, and parents of children born with disabilities received no support to raise their children but were rather pressured to abandon the child. Such children were then whisked away to special institutions in rural areas deliberately removed from contact with the rest of the population. Children's homes for children with disabilities were known as institutions for the "Irrecoverables", and the conditions there were the worst of the worst, resembling the horrors of concentration camps. As "Gradinita Rasarit" (Sunrise Kindergarten) was among the very first in Bucharest to integrate such children within a mainstream group, some of the parents had had literally no contact with special needs and were afraid that diseases such as cerebral palsy may be contagious and affect their own children.

I arrived in 2005, and was immediately impressed by the vision of the Didis that had previously run the projects, as they had been designed in such a way that the Didi's role was more of an overall coordinator, rather than a micro-manager of the administrative details of a single project. I soon came to appreciate the dependable team that the Didis had formed, and learned the art of coordinating and supervising.

In the summer of 2006, I met a vibrant Croatian margii sister named Hemavati. I was fascinated as she told of her experience in Croatia, setting up a PCAP campaign that ended up winning national attention, as well as her experience in the "My First Book" program. She challenged me to expand my mind and take on a bigger target "How can you bring NHE to all of Romania?"

As I worked with our staff in projects, I soon realized that we had some very valuable jewels. We had the extraordinary gift of a talented and dedicated core staff with more than 15 years of experience that had embraced and internalized Neohumanist education in a very personal way.

However, the kindergartens were hidden treasures that only the few parents and children that had directly come into contact recognized. Although we had developed a model of inclusive education with the intention to have an impact on



Mural by Didi Ananda Devapriya, Mihai Bravu Kindergarten, Romania

the traditional system, Neohumanist education was still an invisible actor on the stage of educational reform. I began researching and contacting NGOs involved in children's rights and early childhood education, and discovered that the issue of shifting the educational paradigm to one of social inclusion, rather than isolating special needs children in "special schools" and institutions, was still extremely relevant. Though legislation had changed in a positive way, there was remained a lack of practical examples of inclusive education.

As I further researched, I was also surprised to discover, that another NGO, called Step by Step, had entered Romania only ten years ago, with the specific objective to influence the development of the society towards democratic values and principles by focusing on child-centred early childhood education. Through their focused advocacy efforts on the national level, they had already had a significant impact on the mainstream Romanian curriculum, conducting trainings, producing materials and setting up their own model kindergarten. As a direct result, a new early childhood education curriculum had been developed, synthesizing some of the best educational practices from other European countries, and it was actually quite holistic in vision. Again, implementation remained problematic as teachers continued to be entrenched in their previous habits and due to the lack of contact with practical models and examples.

Within this context, I sensed that Neohumanist Education could have a significant role to play, especially considering the wealth of practical experience accumulated by our teachers in holistic and inclusive education. But what had prevented this from happening so far?

I realized that in order for NHE to be able to have any significant impact on education in general in Romania, it was imperative to authorize the kindergartens, so that they could enter into dialogue with other institutions, and overcome the isolation in which they had existed until then. In order to do that, we would need to have qualified staff. So the first step was to sign up two of our key teachers for a university degree in early childhood education. AMURTEL sponsored their tuitions, and in three years they finished their degrees. In the meantime, we also began the long and arduous bureaucratic process of obtaining authorization. One of the pre-requisites for authorization from the Ministry of Education was also to obtain various authorizations certifying the building as adequate as a kindergarten – which were different standards than those applied to day-care centres. This involved major renovations and restructuring of the spaces to meet all of the requirements. It also required extensive amounts of managerial plans, procedures and documentation. When the Ministry of Education arrived for the authorization inspection, the process lasted 12 hours – from 9 in the morning until 9 in the evening. They systematically went through every detail of our management systems according to a checklist and after this exhaustive process, we were at last granted authorization.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 53



Al Kahira Centre

Cairo, Egypt

The Centre has in focus sustainable educational practices for self-development, children's literature and creative learning in after school programmes. The Centre is offering courses in yoga for good health and well-being for adults, pregnant women, youth, and children in three areas of Cairo. Courses for Yoga Teachers Training are also offered to local and international interested persons. Workshops on Teaching Yoga to Children are offered along with the recently published book "I Love Yoga."

This year we had an educational exhibition "Voices of the Desert" of paintings of endangered wild life in Egypt by neohumanist artist Lesley Whiting at the El Sawy Culture Wheel in Cairo. Her related three story books for children were published by Shrouk Publishing a leading publisher in Egypt and are available in bookshops. There are ongoing Mandala Art workshops with children as a form of collective therapeutic and creative activity.

Ghana Life Centre

Sinai, Egypt

Ghana Life Centre is an afterschool activity at the oldest Bedouine village of Mezina on Sinai with Keith who is a fulltime volunteer from UK with the main focus to teach the children English. Learning English will give them opportunities for employment in the future. Other fun activities are painting, craftwork, sports and singing songs, whilst teaching basic skills like cleanliness, hygiene and behavioural skills. We aim for this project to grow into a sustainable life project.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 52

The 2009-2010 school year was thus the first year in which the schools had to operate under the quality standards of authorization. We were required by the standards to hire a director with a minimum of 5 years of experience and a special "Grade 1" test. None of our staff was able to satisfy these requirements, but our new educational director, Magda proved to be another jewel – as she was able to synthesize her 30 years of experience in the state system as a director, with the intuitive resonance she felt with the NHE system. She offered valuable support and guidance for our teachers in meeting the required standards while preserving the NHE spirit.

She came together with one of our main teachers, Madhavii, to the ETC held in Holland in February 2010, and there she expressed to me "We really should authorize the NHE curriculum as an alternative curriculum- you will lose too much of its uniqueness trying to blend it with the national curriculum". She also felt concerned that our teachers were getting frustratingly bogged down in all of the excessive documentation required by the national curriculum. In June 2010, I set aside a week, which then extended into many more, in which our core staff gathered together with Magda and myself and we began an intensive process of articulating a coherent and unique NHE curriculum that would accurately reflect NHE principles. We systematically covered everything from how to design the educational environment, a planning framework, partnership with the family, inclusive practices, etc in a document that ended up being about 55 pages long. Philosophical concepts such as Vistara, Rasa, Seva as well as Yama and Niyama are woven throughout the entire curriculum giving it depth, while maintaining a professional and accessible language that avoids sanskrit terminology.

In September we submitted the curriculum to the Ministry of Education and already received an initial response after it was analyzed by a commission of experts. The response was encouraging and positive. We have been asked to reorganize some of the chapters and further clarify our teacher training process, as well as some other details. In the meantime we have requested a temporary authorization to apply the system in our kindergartens this year, and are awaiting a response. The seed of Neohumanist Education is continuing to unfold and bloom in Romania in a beautiful and exciting way.





Ananda Marga Academy of Kiembeni Mombasa, Kenya

By Avtk. Ananda Gitiika Ac.

Situated 15 km north of Mombasa Island, the Ananda Marga Academy of Kiembeni strives to provide a holistic education to children from nursery through the eighth year of primary. The school was founded in 1990 and had, as its initial aim, to offer a good pre-school foundation for the children of the orphanage, which is located on the same compound.



The vision and scope of the school grew in manifold ways; it began with about fifteen children, and currently educates 460 children of the estate and surrounding villages. From pre-school, it expanded to eight years of primary school, which was registered by the Ministry of Education in 2003. From having two small classrooms, the physical structures expanded to the current twelve classrooms, one learning resource center and library, one hall/canteen and administrative offices. It also grew to incorporate special features which are not commonly found in the Kenyan public or private schools; namely:

The school is completely nonprofit, assists parents of lower income; fees are affordable, and some children are sponsored by the school.

The school distinguishes itself in its policy of accepting all children, regardless of whether they are „slow“ or „fast“ learners. In these competitive times, private schools often have an entrance threshold in order to show high grades on exams, especially the exam at the end of primary years. Ananda Marga Academy recognizes and appreciates that each child has special gifts and talents, which need to be developed. The school rises to the challenge of „education for all,“ through fostering learning experiences and inspiring many forms of self expression such as drama, art, music, debates, and games—thus developing different forms of intelligence and creative thinking.

The nursery and kindergarten programs encourage children to explore their environment and learn through play. Self directed activities in a calm environment stimulate creativity and concentration.

In the primary section, extracurricular activities and clubs are incorporated into each term's activities so that children gain an idea of the wider world. Volunteers also contribute creative ideas and help children appreciate the world family.

Nature activities, visits to nature parks, art utilizing natural things, as well as gardening, compost making, solar cooking & tree plantation are integrated into the Kenyan curriculum in order to foster love for the natural world. A recent addition of a multimedia system also attracts interest in the world's oceans and wildlife, and stimulates discussions and dramatization.

The feeling of the school is like being in a family, where children and adults speak together freely and help one another.

Finally, it may be said that the school is a work in progress; i.e. the staff and administration recognize that there is very much yet to do—to

bring children to their fullest potential and to actualize the school motto: "Truth is Light."



Neohumanist Education in West Africa

By Ac. Pramananda Avt.

COTE D'IVOIRE

Groupe Scolaire Ananda Marga

This school was started back 1982 as Jardin D'Enfant, a three classroom Kindergarten with an office and attached children's home and principal's residence. Didi Ragini and Didi Anupama started the school and Didi Anupama managed it for 10 years. For the past 8 years Didi Ananda Liilamaya is the principal running the school with the help of a local committee. The school has received Primary School authorization from the government and there are now 10 classrooms with all grades of primary level. The school year 2009 – 2010 had an enrolment of 345 students. The school has 15 teachers and staff plus 5 teacher



trainees. Night classes are held for remedial as well as high school students. The school is popular and famous as one of the oldest schools in the community run by 'orange missionary nuns' as the local people and parents usually say. Last year one of our graduate student teachers got a job in one of the biggest schools in the community that has a high school. She got promoted to high school teachers due to her academic work. Many teachers learn from our well-known neohumanist school. The photo on the right is from the annual Madri Gras festival. The school participates in the parade, during which all children put on costumes.



GHANA

Neo-Humanist International School (AMSAI) - Ejura

This is our largest school in the region with approximately 450 students from KG through Junior High School. Our senior Dada Shiveshvarananda has been in-charge of the school since 1999. In the past year a computer lab was arranged for the students. Many volunteers from Kids World Wide assist this school and the Lotus Children's Centre.

Lotus Children's Centre (AMJAS) - Soko, Accra

Didi Ananda Shanta manages this small KG along with a children home with presently 10 girls and young women ages 5 to 25 years. The Centre also has a library for children. Approximately 25 are currently attending the school.

Ananda Marga International Nursery School (AMJAS) - Korle Gonno, Accra

Started by local fulltime volunteers (LFTs) in 1987, this Kindergarten and nursery serves low income people who live near the Accra jagrti. Approximately 40 children attend regularly. Pamkaj has managed the school since 1998 and will soon leave to work with Dada Daneshananda in Lagos, Nigeria. The Accra Diocese Committee is in the process of arranging his replacement. A new school committee will then also be formed.

Cosmic Academy (Private) - Kasao (near Accra)

Jayaliila started this school which is located in an upcoming suburb and with her many years of experience, Jayaliila strives to impart a high quality of education.

TOGO

Ecole Neo Humaniste (AMSAI) - Ananda Ratna MU, Lome

A humble kindergarten was started perhaps 8 years ago with classes held in the garden of the jagrti. Now our school has 10 classrooms (KG and Primary) and plans to build a secondary school in the years to come. Enrollments are over 200. Dada Tanmaya is the Principal and guiding light. AMURT Italy has adopted the project and finds much support for its continued improvement.

There are seven Neohumanist Schools running in West Africa: one in Ivory Coast, one in Togo and five in Ghana. More information can be found at: http://www.gurukul.edu/west_africa

Ananda Marga Yoga Academy Singapore

The Ananda Marga Yoga Academy was initiated in Singapore by Dada Shankarsanananda in 2007, and has since then successfully been conducting certificate and diploma courses in Yoga Science, Lifestyle and Practices. The certificate courses are conducted over 6 months while the diploma courses are conducted over one year. The objective of the school is to bring Ananda Marga yoga to an academic and scientific level.

The courses cover all the important aspects of yoga and tantra science and practices such as: yoga history, philosophy, yoga science, anatomy and physiology, yoga and society, yoga and creativity etc.

Renowned teachers such as Dada Dharmavedananda, Dada Shiilabhadrananda, Dada Liilananda, Dr. Jitendra Singh and Prof. Dhanjoo Ghista are found among the schools lecturers.

A maximum of 14 students are annually accepted into the course.

The project was successfully incorporated on September 30th and was approved by the Ministry of Education on 6th October 2010. It is the only school of its kind in Singapore.

Directors: Rohita Rasida Aini, Jyoti Sng Chu Kiat, Dada Shankarsana'nanda

Principal: Dada Shankarsana'nanda

Website: <http://amyogaacademy.org.sg>

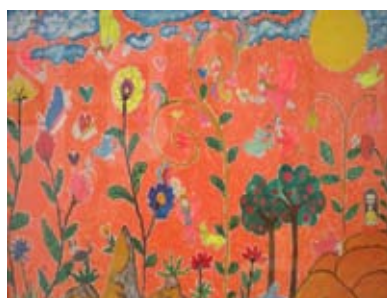


Art Exhibition "For the Most Beloved" Baan Unrak Primary School Sangklaburi, Thailand

An art exhibition held in Bangkok was organized by Didi Ananda Carushila for Baan Unrak Primary School as a promotion and fundraising for the construction of an atelier or "Art House" at the school. The exhibition was opened by the educator and artist Raphee Sakric Ph.D. who also contributed his art and performed his music. Several artist including senior citizens, two Didis and Devi from Baan Unrak school contributed to the show. Lectures were given on „Ecology“ and Ethics“ by Dada Shiilabhadrananda and on „PROUT and the Future of Thailand“ by Dada Shambhushivananda.



For further information on the "Art House" contact Didi Ananda Anuraga at Baanunrakschool@gmail.com



AMSAI SCHOOLS

Davao Diocese, The Philippines

By Brcii Rainjita Ac

AMSAI Preschools were started 21 years ago in Davao City by Dada Cidananda and Didi Ananda Supriti. The first school was started in the Ananda Marga Wholetimer Training Center and the trainees were the first teachers. Later on more AMSAI preschools opened in different locations.

At present there are four schools in Davao Diocese, namely, AMSAI Palm Drive, AMSAI Spring Valley, AMSAI Cabantian and AMSAI Digos. All together there are eleven teachers, 2 assistant teachers and 225 students in these schools. There are also many other schools in the Philippines such as the two AMSAI schools in General Santos City on Mindanao Island, AMSAI Atis and AMSAI Mateo, managed by Didi Amita for about 80 students.

Two AMSAI elementary schools were just started 3 years ago by Dada Mantrajapananda and Didi Ananda Carushila in Cabantian and Digos. Since then new classrooms have been constructed each year to accommodate students being promoted into the next grade. Currently these schools go up to third grade.

AMSAI Cabantian is located on the Master Unit in the same compound where the Whole Timer Training Center is. The location is a semi-rural area close to Davao City with a beautiful intense green environment and a view to some distant mountain ranges. The project when started by Dada Cidananda was a pre-school operating in a very simple structure made of bamboo walls and a thatch roof. At present there are three buildings made of concrete and there are plans to build some more to expand the activities of the primary school. The morning circle is part of the daily routine at the school. The teachers are acquainted with Neohumanist Education concepts and take part in seminars and workshops given by the local acaryas. As has been the tradition since the time of Dada Cidananda and Didi Ananda Supriti, every year Ananda Mela is celebrated.



The AMSAI schools in the Philippines are having a positive impact on the community. The curriculum emphasizes the moral principles of Yama and Niyama, yoga postures and meditation, relief collection and vegetarianism. Parents and teachers alike have gotten interested in yoga and many have joined yoga classes. The academic standard is high. Many preschool students in AMSAI Digos got promoted to a special section in the public elementary school when they took the entrance exam for Grade 1.



Child Centers

Myanmar (Burma)

By Ac. Laliteshananda Avt.

At present in Myanmar there are eight Child Centers (pre-schools) operated by AMURT-AMURTEL. The first four child centers started in August 2008 and the other four January/March 2010.

The projects started as Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) to provide relief and protection to children after the cyclone Nargis which devastated the Myanmar Delta region in May 2008, leaving 140,000 people dead and 6 million affected.

The CFSs were intended to run only during the 6 months of the emergency period. After evaluating the positive impact on the communities it was decided to keep operating them as permanent projects and upgrade the program from CFS to ECCDC (Early Childhood Care and Development Centers).

There are 400 children attending the activities at the Child Centers. The Child centers employ 42 local staff. This includes two coordinators who supervise the activities and look after the needs of the centers; two assistants for the coordinators; 36 local teachers and 2 boat pilots.

The activities at the Child Centers are focused on child development through games, art, music, dance and storytelling. There's an introduction to reading and writing to prepare the children for the transition from pre-school to primary school. The children age groups are from 3 to 5 years.

The teachers receive regular training by the coordinators and also take courses on early childhood organized by the government and by other NGO's. The teachers have already been introduced to Neohumanist concepts.

The Child Centers comply with the minimum ECCDC standards established by the Myanmar government and UNICEF. The standards are reviewed periodically.

Before the cyclone, pre-school education was almost unknown in this area. Apart from providing education the Child Centers provide a livelihood for the teachers who live in the same communities where the projects operate.



Taw Ka Man ECCD



Teachers Training At Kwin Pone



Dancing at Tha Aye Wa ECCD



Passel at Kwin Pone ECCD

Being a social service program, attendance at the Child Centers is free of charge. The centers also function as community centers, where the villagers can have meetings and courses.



Yoga Class At Kan Su ECCD

Buwan ng Wika AMSAI Las Piñas, Philippines

The AMSAI Las Piñas celebrated the Buwan ng Wika (Language month) for the whole month of August. This year's theme was "Sa pangangalaga sa wika at kalikasan, wagas na pagmamahal talagang kailangan" (Taking care of the language and environment; an honest love is needed).

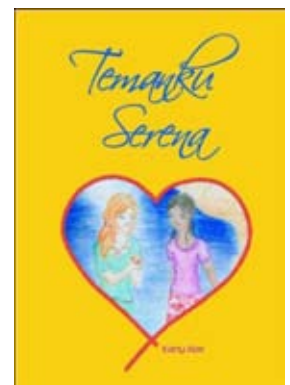
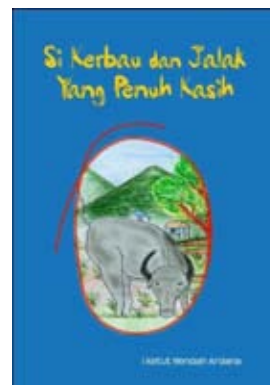
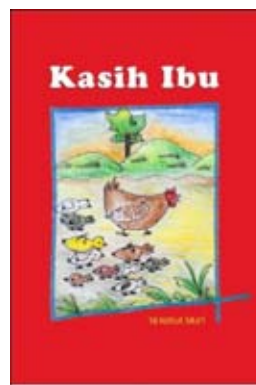
Maharlika (Philippines) has been colonized by different outside forces for many centuries and this was an opportunity to integrate Filipino culture especially the Filipino language in the classroom activities throughout the month of August. We introduced poems, songs, danced the local dances and talked to the children in the local language. August 31 was the day when all the children from Nursery to Kinder all dressed in their Filipiniana (Maharlikan local costumes) and enthusiastically presented their talents in the presence of their parents and relatives, all faces glowing with joy.

The children performed yoga and dance and in the final chorus the children used different musical instruments like drum, xylophone, maracas, guitar and other instruments to the delight of the cheering crowd. The program ended with the induction of the AMSAI officers for the Year 2010-2011 by Didi Ananda Kala', followed by a collective lunch of vegetarian local delicacies. The parents really appreciated the program and the effort to make the beautiful stage decorations and make this program successful.



My First Book Bali Indonesia

The Buku Pertamaku (My first Book) contest for the year 2009 was initiated by the education section of Yayasan Sewa Dharma (Sewa Dharma Foundation) Bali. The people involved are I Made Oka, Ida Ayu Sri Widhiani and Maya Pagandiri. Around 700 posters were sent out to primary and secondary schools around Bali and a few workshops were held. We weren't sure what to expect but were really happy to receive 67 books and from these we chose 3 winners. It took quite a long time to pull this through but at the beginning of September of this year, the winning books were printed. The award giving ceremony will be held this October and at the same time the second cycle of Buku Pertamaku book contest will begin. Last year, around 1400 people attended the 4 days events. This year we expect to attract more.



Ananda Marga River School

Maleny, Queensland (Sunshine Coast Hinterland), Australia
on the Ananda Kamala Master Unit

The Ananda Marga River School opened in 1994. It currently has 200 children from 2 ½ years of age to 13 years of age. Prabha Demasson is the director.

Our 15th year has been a year of great changes and amazing improvements for an already thriving school. Due to over \$2 million in government grants we are currently in the process of building four new buildings: a large gym/performing arts building, new administration and staff room building, library and tuck shop (canteen), plus two new classrooms. We're also able to add two new large play areas, a vegetable garden, and a parking lot. We're upgrading some existing buildings as well, so we'll be able to double our early childhood classes (2 ½ and 3 ½ year olds) as there is increased demand for these.



During this year also, we continued our growth as a leading school in sustainability, as we installed 15 solar panels (from a grant), and put in four new water tanks (as all of our drinking water comes from the roofs, and our waste water is processed through sand filtration on site. All hot water is from solar.). We continue to have an organic, sentient vegetarian, whole foods canteen three days a week and hope to expand this, plus all school lunches from home and at school events are strictly sentient, whole foods vegetarian.

We are also on the leading edge of technology, with individual laptops for all children from year 2, interactive white boards in all classrooms, and in seventh grade, each child has their own ipad! This all fits in well in our 25 acres of rain forested land, with a beautiful, swimmable creek running through it.



Winning the trophy at the interschool soccer competition

The school has specialist teachers for art, music, yoga and meditation, performing arts, ecology studies and special education. All children learn marimba (tuned percussion), plus recorder and have the option of private lessons in strings, piano or guitar. The school is also leading the region in sports, especially in track and field, swimming and soccer. This year, the River School for the second time, won the district soccer championships, despite being the smallest of eleven schools competing. The school also recently won a slew of prizes in the Hinterland Junior Art Awards, including overall school award, first prize in the junior primary and five encouragement awards (again, as the smallest school.)

We continue to innovate and improve our focus on Neohumanism. Each term (four per year), teachers submit their plans to the director, and must include in their theme a clear Neohumanistic statement and activities. For example, if year 7 has a theme of Science, they also teach "Mad Science" experiments that they have planned and organised, to the Year 1 class. Year 6 goes to Brisbane to serve a hot lunch at a large homeless shelter. Other classes raise funds for overseas service, study global relief organisations, visit adults in aged care, and many other activities. The school follows a "virtues" program throughout the year.

Each class practices meditation daily in their classroom and have one specialist yoga and meditation session weekly. This year our yoga and meditation specialist teacher was also teaching performing arts. She had the excellent idea of combining the two: each class does 1.5 hours of yoga and meditation combined with performing arts. This has had the effect of the children really looking forward to their weekly session because they love the performing arts; and it has also led to more deeply Neohumanistic themes in drama, as it comes after their internal focus.

We have seen that AM River School children continue to excel after they leave the school. This year, typically, at the large local public High School, both of the elected school captains are River School graduates.



For more information, please visit: www.amriverschool.org

'Love to Love': The OPEN HARTStory

By Tara MacPhail and Doug Skipper



OPEN HARTS is a registered charitable institution based in Australia. It is a part of the Global Neo-humanistic Movement that aims to cultivate a sense of universalism throughout the planet. The OPEN HARTS vision is 'a world where all beings live with an open heart'. Its mission is to 'support all beings in awakening and expanding their consciousness so that they align with their true purpose and contribute to society in a way that is of maximum benefit to themselves and others.'

OPEN HARTS is an acronym representing the fields of passion within the organization: **O** - Oneness, **P** - Planet, **E** - Education, **N** - Networking, **H** - Health, **A** - Arts, **R** - Rights, **T** - Transformation of **S** - Self and Society. The word HARTS is spelt differently as it symbolizes the importance of questioning what is commonly accepted as given, and to acknowledge different perspectives.

OPEN HARTS was formed in 2009 by a small group of people who shared a passion for making a difference in the lives of others and who recognized the power of an open heart. It also arose from the need to live a meaningful and service oriented life. The organisation has been in an early phase of development and is now ready to take the next step in its evolution.

A large part of the OPEN HARTS ethos is supporting people in aligning with their passions and deeper purpose in creating the life they envision. By connecting with our heart and following it's guidance we align with the 'Universal flow', and generate an energy field where our personal dreams come into resonance with the collective well-being of society.

OPEN HARTS is committed to networking with others and creating alliances to bring about change in a collective and co-operative way. OPEN HARTS has officially endorsed the Earth Charter, which is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a universal society. It recently partnered with the Australian branch of the global Earth Charter Initiative in its tenth anniversary festival.

With its global outlook, OPEN HARTS operates within Australia and internationally. The guiding philosophy of OPEN HARTS is Neo-humanism, and its attitudinal principle can be summed up in the phrase 'Love to Love'. For more information visit www.openharts.org or email admin@openharts.org

The OPEN HARTS Objectives:

- Promote the holistic development of young people through education
- Facilitate self discovery, self empowerment and autonomy of people by the provision of educational resources and programs
- Encourage and support people in aligning with their passions to bring about positive changes in themselves and society
- Maximise young people's health and well-being by providing psycho-social support and encouraging artistic expression
- Support vulnerable communities to relieve hardship and optimise well-being by implementing international aid and development programs
- Reduce the incidence and effects of poverty by the optimal use of resources so that people's physical, social, psychological and spiritual needs are met
- Create a culture of holistic sustainability by implementing sustainable practices and programs
- Foster harmony, peace and unity by enhancing understanding and acceptance of oneself and others
- Develop and strengthen cooperative and collaborative connections among individuals, groups and communities, through informal and formal networks

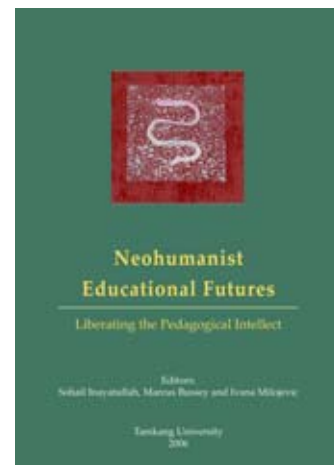
For more information please write to: doug.skipper@openharts.org

Neohumanist Educational Futures

Edited by Sohail Inayatullah, Marcus Bussey and Ivana Milojevic

Neohumanist Educational Futures breaks new ground by linking neohumanism with pedagogy and futures thinking. Inayatullah, Bussey and Milojevic, all educators, theorize the ethics of inclusion and exclusion; situate neohumanism in Tantric and transcultural futures; map out issues in neohumanist pedagogy (including education for world futures; from information to wisdom; social cohesion in South Africa; speciesism and vegetarian pedagogy in Sweden; alternative indicators for neohumanism; integrated intelligence, peace and non-violence, partnership education; and the politics of historiography) and provide case studies of neohumanist educational practice.

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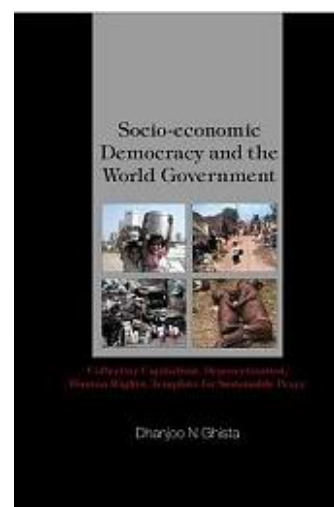
Socio-economic Democracy and the World Government

by Dhanjoo N Ghista

In developing an enlightened socio-economic-political environment, this book provides a new socio-economic-political system based on (i) Collective Capitalism (CCP) of cooperatively managed institutions and enterprises, and (ii) a Civilian Democracy (CDM) sans political parties, whereby the most qualified representatives of all the functional sectors of the community get elected to the local legislature. It also specifies a new economic-political structure in the form of autonomous functionally-sustainable communities (FSCs), within regional economic zones (REZs) and self-reliant regional unions (SRUs, such as the EU). This system of FSCs, REZs and SRUs will come under the aegis of (and collectively represented by) a World government, over-seeing the development of a comprehensive charter of human rights and social justice for all the people of the world. The neohumanistic integrated system of CCP and CDM, to be implemented within FSCs, will provide grass-roots socio-economic-political empowerment, contrary to the system of centralized economic and political governance.

This book serves as a valuable teaching, learning, knowledge and research resource for (i) a holistic approach to a sustainable living environment promoting collective welfare, and (ii) a multi-stage road-map towards a world government system for unification of all the communities of the world into one global cooperative. The combined system of socio-economic democracy (involving knowledge and conscientious governance executives elected by and directly representing the various functional sectors of FSCs) and world government will help transform the current undignified north-south socioeconomic order into a democratic and equitable globalization order, for collective social security towards achieving sustainable local and global peace.

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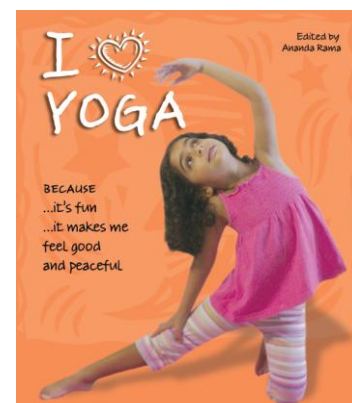


I Love Yoga

Edited by Didi Ananda Rama

This beautiful book contains a vast and varied collection of yoga poses especially adapted for children. Each posture is fully described and photographed to make it easy to teach and share yoga with children of all ages. This book also contains other useful sections including: Yoga Principles, Benefits of Yoga for Children, Science of Yoga, Yoga Methodology for the Developing Child, Breathing Exercises, Creativity in Yoga, Yoga Stories and Yoga Lifestyle Tips. All the suggested yoga activities are well tested in our classrooms. Mary Jane Glassman director of Morning Star Kindergarten in Denver, USA who is also a certified yoga instructor with experience teaching adults and children provided most of the text for the yoga poses.

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The Golden Lotus of the Blue Sea

by Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

72 pages with full colour illustrations by Bhaskar

The Golden Lotus of the Blue Sea, by Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, is a masterpiece of responsible modern children's literature. In every sentence of this fairy tale there is a wonderful attractive power – a crystalline simplicity and an open-heartedness. Through the storyline the author conveys to the child how life should be lived with purity and straightforwardness.

The Golden Lotus of the Blue Sea sets a refreshing new standard in children's literature conveying the essence of Neohumanist philosophy which Shrii P.R. Sarkar defined in short as 'the practice of love for all created beings.'

The fairy tale is child-focused from start to finish. The story itself starts with the children's keen sensitivity to nature alerting them that something was not right. The wise king has the ability to listen and respond to the children's grievances with decisive steps and thus the children are empowered and given due respect. Throughout the story the human children, along with the animal children, remain loyal to the noble hero.

The role of simple poor people is given prominence by attributing magical powers to them that are used in the service of a good cause. The story introduces the real world of exploitative rulers and the peoples' uprising in response, all the time maintaining the charm and fascination of the fairy tale.

The female role in the story is portrayed by the fairy who is magical, virtuous, innocent and spiritual in her unique lifestyle in her own realm. Her lapse is mended with the help of the hero and without guilt she asserts her inner strength and thus becomes part of the happy ending of the story.

Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar is a celebrated author of voluminous writings on a wide range of topics including some examples of good children's literature. His writings are revolutionary and refreshingly dynamic, setting a new trend of benevolent thought and psychology in all realms of human cultural life from the crude to the subtle and spiritually beautiful.

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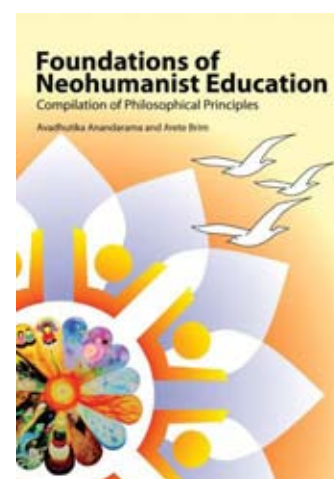
Foundations of Neohumanist Education

Philosophy, Principles, Practice

By Avadhutika Anandarama and Arete Brim

This publication fills a long-felt void by bringing together Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar's seminal ideas on education in a coherent introductory book. Avadhutika Ananda Rama and Arete Brim have both been dedicated and passionate coordinators of neohumanist education movement for over a decade and their love for the ideals becomes alive in this book. This book is written especially for aspiring directors and head teachers of Neohumanist Education. It includes the basics of NHE philosophy, principles and objectives; humans and their development; NHE methods of teaching; curriculum specialties of NHE; sensitivity to cultural differences; and importance of the teacher.

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Neohumanist Education



All molecules, atoms, electrons, protons, positrons and neutrons are the veritable expressions of the same Supreme Consciousness. Those who remember this reality, who keep this realisation ever alive in their hearts, are said to have attained perfection in life. They are the real devotees, the real bhaktas. When the devotional practice does not remain confined to a mere practice but instead is elevated to a devotional sentiment, a devotional mission, to the realm of devotional ideation - when the underlying spirit of humanism is extended to everything, animate and inanimate, in this universe - I have designated this as Neohumanism. This Neohumanism will elevate humanism to universalism, the practice of love for all created beings of this universe.

- Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

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