



# This Time the Center is India:

## Return of Global civilization to the heart of Asia

*‘And perhaps, in our own day, such a time for the conjunction of these two gigantic forces (Indian and Greek principles) have presented itself again.*

*This time their center is India’.*

**Swami Vivekananda**  
*Problem of India and its solution*

*‘India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken **her last creative WORD**; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human peoples.’*

*‘And that which must seek now to awake is not an anglicized oriental people, docile pupil of the west and doomed to repeat the cycle of the occident’s success and failure, but still the ancient immemorable SHAKTI recovering her deepest self, lifting her head higher towards the supreme source of light and strength and turning to **discover the Complete meaning and a vaster form of her Dharma**’.*

**Shri Aurobindo**  
*The Foundations of Indian Culture*

### The three earlier phases and the present time

Over the ages, the Indian spirit has gone beyond its geographical borders to embrace the frontiers of humanity at a spiritual level. Such dissemination has happened in three distinct phases as highlighted by the three books:

1. From Indus to seine
2. Thunderbolt strikes Alexandria
3. Alberuni arrives at Chandraketugarh

To have a recapitulation of what has been sequentially described in the books, three discussionare forwarded:

- First, in times of extreme remote antiquity, such an intermingling founded the basis of World’s first civilizations – that of Ancient Persia and the ancient Romans. The making of the forefathers of the Persian Achaemenid and Sumerian Empires, the Etruscans, the Sabians and their Romaic counterpart in both sides of the Aegean sea – Egypt and Anatolia. The predominant center of this explosion was West Asia. The great tides were the message made by Prophet Zoroaster, the First Patriarchs of Mesopotamia and others

like Orphism, Mithraism and the very closely interlinked chthonian imageries of Adonis-Sabazius-Dionysus-Bacchus-Osiris. That was **Phase One**.

- Subsequently, with the decay and degeneration of these West Asian civilizations the wave proceeded westbound. It led to the culmination of civilizations in the Eastern Mediterranean, when the two forces met again after the invasion of Alexander the Great. The ancient wisdom was re-newed and the new order of Indian spirit – the Gospel of Buddha met the minds of Ionian and Milesian philosophers and sects in Alexandria, then the most prominent trade-outpost. The wave of Judaism was old and ossified and looking for renewals. The great tide that was born of such confluences filled the gap and the new wave was Christianity. The Gospel of a new Messiah, symbolically and then historically had begun to flood the new epicenter of civilization – the Eastern Mediterranean. This is **Phase two**.
- Finally, More than a thousand years later, there was a time and a need of another renewal. Western Europe was coming out of its Dark Ages and her barbaric invaders from the North were slowly absorbing the fruits of a more materially and culturally advanced conquest of the Mohammedans in the Western Mediterranean. The conquest led to another great intermingling of the two great forces. The rise of Arabia and the resurrection of ancient Persia facilitated such intermingling of Indian wisdom with the Jewish and Moorish culture that flourished in Iberia. Islam was the chief driving and socially liberating force. This time, the center was West Europe and the new urges were born through which ancient centers of Florence and Venice was reborn and Europe was then born. Moorish navigation and engineering skills inspired new Europe to cross her western frontiers and discover the new world – the Americas. On these new soils the Western Euro-American civilization has flourished and evolved to a Modern Age till date. The modern world is born with its principle carrier – the materialistic Western civilization. This was **Phase Three**.

Today we stand at the terminal gateway of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is perhaps a new dawn. The center of development has rolled well beyond the West, the very continental masses of an older Europe and the Americas as an intermediary, which all have reached a material apex of cultural saturation and thus reaching a turning point. The primacies of civilization have now begun to shift well beyond the western coastlines of Americas and they have crossed even the Pacific to touch the shores of Asia Pacific. Events like the rise of Japan in the 1970s to the rise of China, of late, are the stronger indicators. The strongest is yet to reveal.

Conforming to our natural understanding, the roll of development has followed the movement of the sun and has made one whole circuit.

### **Between Phase three and Phase Four**

We are at crossroads. The tools and avenues of current modern material civilization is facing challenges and apprehensions that are bringing entire humanity to the verge of an economic, environmental and ecological collapse. There is a growing feeling of uncertainty in every sphere of material knowledge. Uncertainty in Global economies and interrelated issues of underdevelopment linking basics like distribution of wealth-related access to health, education and opportunities are in awing proportions. The increasing superficial issues of ethnic, racial and 'developed-underdeveloped' conflicts are major hindrances to a healthy human world.

The new Agenda called 'The Overview Effect', first drafted by the Club of Rome is a serious pointer to the degree of lopsidedness in the current materialistic development processes with extremely detrimental impacts on climate and interrelated ecological biota of our planet.

As evidence, modern scientific theories and proposals have begun to grope in its inability to cater to holistic needs of target population and in its shortcoming to address the uncertainties of mechanisms of simulation, projections and accurate predictions. Chaos theory and Theory of Complexity have brought in the matter of unpredictability and energy imbalance in a system at the very center stage of scientific research.

*'.....the predictability of science has been thoroughly questioned, and this has led to a more holistic approach to thinking about the world and about relationships and systems with it.'*

Sophia and Stephen Behling, *Prestel*

*A New Agenda – The Overview Effect: Sol Power: The Evolution of Solar Architecture (1996)*



### Crisis of reductionism

For the last three centuries, with the rise of the 'Machine Age', scientists have used 'the **reductionist** approach' more and more. They have based their ideas on the Newtonian approach and the scientific philosophy advocated by Sir Francis Bacon. Human psychology has been based on the carnal material principles of Sigmund Freud. The spirit of reductionism has in effect produced a great crisis, an inconvenient truth, and a great price of rising inequality across civilization. The crisis is put forward by Carolyn Merchant, a renowned Historian of Science at the University of Berkley, California:

*'In investigating the roots of our current environmental dilemma and its connections to science, technology and the economy, we **must re-examine** the formation of a world-view and a science which, by re-conceptualizing reality as a machine rather than a living organism, sanctioned the domination of both man and woman. The contributions of such founding 'fathers' of modern science as Francis Bacon, William Harvey, Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes and Isaac Newton **must be re-evaluated.**'*<sup>1</sup>

Page xvii, 'The Death of Nature'. New York, Harper and Collins (1980)

## Recovery of the ancient wisdom: the need

Therefore there is a need of a resurgence in values, in the moral, ethical and deep ecological order of humanity in the context of a planetary consciousness. This can be called a making of a cohesive strategy based on the micro-macro co-evolutionary perspective.

Neurologists Robert Livingston<sup>2</sup> suggest that the evolution of life is a selection process acting on the **basis of behavior**. System theorists Erich Jantsch puts it further that in the history of human living, **the coevolution of macrocosm and microcosm** is of great importance. Eric Jantsch also says that conventional account of the origin of life usually describe the building of higher life forms in microevolution and neglect the macroevolution. But the two are complementary and part of the same evolutionary process as he points out. This is what chemist James Lovelock and microbiologists Lynn Margulis means by the 'mind of Goddess Gaia' – where individual minds are embedded in the larger minds of social and ecological processes, participating further in the universal mind of the Cosmos – symbolized by 'Gaia's mind'. Four transformations are evident:



### Gaia's Hypothesis: The Seat of Delphi, Greece

#### 1. Ecology and Bio-sciences

A realization based on 'deep ecology' is an idea of integral ecological economics and the need of an energy-sensitive processes holding a sustainable world.

#### 2. Bio-Environment and Ecology of Planetary Sciences

The 'over-view effect' initiated by the Club of Rome and later by NASA scientists, leads us to an interconnected web of planetary consciousness in terms of human activity and global climate in relationship to the Sun, with deep involving interactions between earth's meteorology and atmospheric physics.

#### 3. Bio-Chemistry and Bio-Physics

The 'ideas of dissipative structures', 'complexity' and 'Chaos Theory' have further augmented a deeper understanding of an integrated micro-bio-chemical and physical worlds; the concept of 'non-linear dynamism' and 'bifurcations' in current studies of bio-informatics and genetic engineering.

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<sup>1</sup> Page xvii, 'The Death of Nature'. New York, Harper and Collins (1980).

<sup>2</sup> From 'Sensory processing, perception, and behavior' (1978), New York: Raven Press

#### 4. **Bio-Nature and Participatory Quantum interconnectedness**

In effect, the shift is aiming for long-term wisdoms than short-term knowledge packaging. The very basis of 'quantum interconnect-ness' in emerging macro-physics and relativistic sciences is beginning to explain the cosmos in inter-connected 'non-local' orders and flexibilities not known before to material science so far.

#### **The Evolving Green Order**

We are now in the end of the third phase. This phase is characterized by excessive materialistic consumerism, philosophical and ethnic confusions and ceremonial hedonisms. In these excesses the basic purpose of human life is nearly lost. Perhaps it is time to realize this plight of the present and seek appropriate changes.

Our physical and associated mental worlds have crossed normalcy; they have become an unhealthy stage of mental idiosyncrasies; they are lopsided material excesses; they are filled with urges of competitive and comparative exploitations and comparative flamboyances. The stage of a simple minded approach to enjoyment and life has had taken a back seat. Humanity now has to revert back to normalcy – to a stage of simple and humane observations of watching life and this universe as a poetry of rhythm, cooperation and an ever-growing love for each other in the universe. Then only can bliss and peace be restored thus seeing the differences and variations of our existence not in opposition to each other but as verses of grey scales, singing steadily and quietly with inner rhymes and rhythms and mutual respect and they are then ever-written in a spirit of infinite bliss in the eternal book of truth.

#### **The required shift**

The present humanity has to under the larger scheme of cosmology, and position human evolution in it. This is the required shift in our planetary consciousness. The present plight and the ways to the required shift is evident in the words of the Swami Vivekananda:

*'Who enjoys the picture, the seller or the seer? The seller is busy with his accounts, computing what his gain will be, how much profit he will realize on the picture. His brain is full of that..... that man is enjoying the picture who has gone there without any intention of buying and selling and these foolish ideas of possession will be ended.'*

The money-lender gone, the buyer gone, the seller gone, this world remains the picture, a beautiful painting.

*I never read of any more beautiful conception of God than the following:*

"He is the great Poet, the Ancient Poet: the whole universe is His poem, coming in verses and rhymes and rhythms written in infinite bliss".

In such ascents of humanity, spirituality is the final goal taking material civilization not as a denial but as its outermost sheath. Spirituality is seen as a summit of harmonious relationship of the evolving human mind. The poet realized this 'completeness by forwarding this holistic pattern of spirituality which is seen not as a distant abstruse truth but as the innermost truth of existence'. In the words of that great poetic mind, Rabindranath Tagore, we hear the hopes of that return:

'I believe in a spiritual world – not as anything separate from this world – but as its innermost truth. With the breath we draw we must always feel this truth that we are living in God. Born in this great world, full of the mystery of the infinite, we cannot accept our existence as a momentary outburst of chance, drifting on the current of matter towards an eternal nowhere.'

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