



INDIAN CULTURE

Pinnacle of Human Civilization



PREFACE

Dr. Pranav Pandya

Indian culture happens to be the oldest culture prevailing on the globe and it has all those qualities which make man a divine being. Because of this it has also been named divine culture “Dev Sanskriti”. It encompasses all tenets of human religion or spirituality. It is useful today too when we are leading toward ascending decades of the 21st century. Scientific discoveries have dazzled mankind extensively in the last 50 years, especially in the development of IT, Medicine and electronics. They have totally transformed the lifestyles of citizens today, who are now called citizens of a global village.

Youngsters of today have been influenced and benefitted mostly by these developments of science. But science alone leads to stress and strains

rather than boon. We start getting lost in our journey of this birth due to being entangled in the web of the modern world. This is what is happening today to the youth all over the globe. Our children who have been born and brought up in countries other than India or who reached there in schooling days are deeply impressed by modern scientific achievements in western and eastern developed countries. The management system in the western countries, being soulless, does not incorporate values in life. At the cost of values they think of materialistic development and achievement at any cost.

Indian spirituality teaches us how to incorporate both science and spirituality in proper proportion and blend them with Indian culture, our age old value system and heritage. To appraise the youth of

today in developed countries and in megapolis of India (they too are getting westernized) we, here at Gayatri Pariwar, thought of bringing age old wisdom in scientific perspective as envisioned by its Founder Poojya Sri Ram Sharma Acharyaji (1911-1990). He has written about 3000 books, around 500 comprise of subjects we are talking about. It is impossible to read such voluminous work in one's lifetime. We thought therefore, that we should provide as a curriculum, in a nutshell, all those modules which lead to spiritual development of the Self. This model is being presented in a format of teaching-training language for our youngsters of 13-18 year age group, which are the most sensitive period.

In present curriculum we have tried to present a profile of spirituality, our cultural heritage and a profile of India as a future leader of all countries. It also includes the steps one should take to inculcate spirituality in day to day life. Rituals are not everything. Today religion has become synonymous with rituals, while it is not so. Our younger generation tends to further themselves from something which they fail to understand. Nobody is explaining this to them in scientific terminology or with common sense added to it. An attempt has been made in this curriculum, which can be practiced in a 7 day camp or a month long weekend based teaching schedule, to present a practical outline of art of living, yoga, how to be fit physically as well as mentally and how to worship regularly. The language has been kept

simple. A sensitization program has also been prepared for parents so that they understand the problems of children.

I am hopeful that a lot of suggestions will come from our youngsters, their friends and their parents. Hard labor has been put forward by the staff of our University Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya and many others. Special efforts have been put forward by Ms Mamta Bhatnagar, who has collected all the data and material and presented them in this format. I am obliged for her untiring work. I tender my thanks to my Vice Chancellor Dr. S.P. Mishra, who has been leading the curriculum making committee. All our parijans abroad too need patting on their back, as they showed us the urgent necessity of such type of presentation. In the end, with anticipating feedback from all of you, I seek blessings of our *Gurusatta*, without patronage of whom this task would have not been possible. May the Almighty illuminate our intellect on the righteous path.

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The Indian culture is described as "Sa Prathama Sanskratirvishvaavara" the first and the supreme culture in the world. It is honored as a divine culture. Today, when the world is undergoing haywire transformations on cultural front and facing cultural diversion and adulteration the influence of western civilization and commercialization has over shadowed the way of life of even those who vaunt for the great cultural heritage of India. It has become more important to review the original form and expansion of the Indian culture, analyze its foundation-principles in a scientific light and present in detail its different aspects, which deal with the day to day life of people and which are useful for the righteous progress of the world.

The core of Indian culture, as shaped by the revered Rishis (saints), revolves around the principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" treating the entire world as our own family, which reflects universality of serene love, altruism, sharing of responsibilities and caring for all beings.

The central theme of Indian cultural development has evolved from the Indian philosophy of continuity of life and realization of the soul as a manifestation of divine impulse. Successive refinement of human consciousness by elimination of animal instincts and evil tendencies of the mind and enlightenment of its inner cores was therefore given maximum importance by the Rishis. The system of *shodash sanskars* was devised by them for this purpose.

The *shodash sanskaras*, performed at different stages of human life, aim at continuous refinement and escalation of the individual self. The methods of performing these *sanskaras* and adoption of associated disciplines in personal and social life constitute an important component of the Indian cultural system.

It is this type of culture which produces true saints, altruist social reformers, martyrs, great personalities, intellectuals, scientists and spiritual masters similar to Rishis, who, like angels, bestow the world with divine grace through their noble deeds and ascetic characters. The purity of intrinsic faith and arousal of inner sentiments are regarded most important for the realization of divinity existing in the inner self. The methods of *upasana* prescribed under

the Indian cultural principles lend excellent support in this direction. The source of aspirations, happiness and the ultimate core of sentiments of the inner self gets refined too. It is also charged by the devotional practices of *upaasanaa* to experience absolute peace and blissfulness.

The principles pertaining to (i) ascetic control of mental tendencies; (ii) adoption of honesty, generosity, mutual trust, healthy cooperation, morality and integrity of character and deeds; (iii) altruist service; (iv) sincere fulfillment of responsibilities towards the family, society, nation and the world; (v) courageous attitude and endeavors to fight against injustice, immorality,

“सा प्रथमा
संस्कृतिः
विश्ववारा”

exploitation, superstition, communalism, castism and similar kinds of negative tendencies and effects in the personal and social domains; and (vi) concrete efforts for healthy maintenance of the ecosystem and purification of the environment of life, etc are fundamental to the creative practices propagated under the banner of Indian culture.

How can the above mentioned 'virtual idealism' be naturally assimilated in the activities and behavioral transactions of our daily life? This has been the focus of what constitutes the 'traditions' of the Indian culture.

The word "culture" is a literal translation of the word "*sanskriti*" in Sanskrit language. According to Sanskrit grammar, the word "*sanskriti*" means that action, method or system which has (or which pertains to) virtuous tendencies. Restraining of the agile mind and cultivation of virtuous tendencies is emphasized in the *Bhartiya Sanskriti* (Indian Culture) because the mind is the sole source of orientation of one's attitude, deeds and character. The subtle impulses of consciousness are expressed in the intellect, thoughts and sentiments via the medium of the four inner layers of mind namely *mana*, *buddhi*, *chitta* and *ahankara*.

Because of its sound footing on the in-depth knowledge of human psychology and science of spirituality (science of consciousness), the Indian philosophy adequately deals with unlimited expansion of different aspects of human life including those at the most personal to those at the global levels. Because, Nature and every form of existence has also been treated as a manifestation of universal consciousness, the materialistic domain of the world and the nature, functions and activities of the gross body too fall within the consideration of this

philosophy. The original structure and relevance of the Indian culture is therefore regarded as universal.

The systems of *varna* and *ashram* prescribed by the Rishis are often subjected to the criticism of rational thinkers and intellectuals of the modern age. This is because, the popular interpretations and the information available on these aspects of Indian culture indicate them as nurturing castism, social discrimination, evasion from responsibilities, etc. Param Poojya Gurudev Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya has paid special attention to these important issues. He has cited excerpts from the original scriptures and given authentic references and explanation of what is exactly meant by the terms Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra described as the four *varnas*. The fundamentalists, the orthodox scholars and the advocates of castism will not find any reasonable counter-argument to reject his interpretations and adept analysis.

Gayatri—the origin of all Vedas, Guru—spiritual mentor, Ganga—the holy Ganges, Gau—(cow) and Geeta are the five fundamental elements which lie at the core of the development and practices of the Indian culture. It is through these roots that the stout tree of divine Indian culture had blossomed in the ancient times of yore and has maintained its 'greenery' age after ages despite turbulent fluctuations in people's faith, convictions, cultural values and modes of living.

This curriculum is designed to provide information on the life transforming aspects of Indian culture and the constructive efforts inspired by the patron founders of Yug Nirman Mission, Shantikunj Haridwar for the revival of the divine Indian culture.

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