

SCIENCE, SPIRITUALITY AND TOURISM

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Abstract:-

Since time immemorial, India has been known for its spirituality, religious tolerance and its secular character. India is called the "yogabhoomi" and the gateway to the heavens. Innumerable saints and seers, in their quest for knowledge, have contributed largely to the development of various religious monuments. Over the years the science and technology has changed the life style of human beings. However, Indian spirituality has remained the central stage for the quest of moral value at global. The aim of the present philosophical discussion is to examine the relationship and relevance of science and spirituality in the present day of global society of science & technology and its impact on the development of tourism.

Key words: spirituality, science, tourism, moral values.

INTRODUCTION

In today's volatile world there is a growing concern about ever increasing pollution of the environment such as air pollution, water pollution, soil pollution, radiation pollution, noise pollution etc. unfortunately, the most significant pollution, which is the seed of all types of pollution, is mental pollution and is totally ignored in all studies. It is a universal fact that every verbal directive and physical action is essentially preceded by thoughts originating in the mind. A polluted mind conceives polluted thoughts, which are then translated into polluted and contaminated words and actions. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to study the relationship between science, spirituality and tourism to increase the awareness towards true nature and develop the spiritual, humanize moral values among the masses.

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

The term "Spiritual" is not a well defined, but literature shows that a number of knowledgeable authors have developed the opinion that a spiritual essence exists and can be understood cross-

culturally (Ferrer,. 2000; Forman, 1997; Randrup, 1998; Smith, 1987 and Underhill, 1965). In fact, this view with its philosophical ramifications is often called the "Perennial Philosophy". Some authors believe that the cultural differences are more fundamental (Katz, 1992), but all seem to agree that every mystic or spiritual person expresses or has expressed him/herself in the language and general frame of reference of his/her own culture.

Spirituality can comprise both inner growth, changing oneself as one changes one's relationship with the external universe, and the outer process of transforming the physical reality around oneself as a result of the inward change (Masters and Spielmans, 2007). Some authorities connect the two, suggesting that outer change arises through the inner realization that all is oneself; whereupon the divine inward manifests the diverse outward for experience and progress (2007).

Science and spirituality have been undergoing a profound transformation over the last century and one of the significant sources of this transformation has been the cultivating of a non-dual mode in both ontology and epistemology, overcoming unhelpful and binding dualism (Ananta, 2006). Science and spirituality are the two most dominant forces of humanity in the search for the ultimate meaning of life and world. In any discussion on 'Science and Spirituality', first of all, we ought to have a clear idea of science and spirituality and what they actually stand for.

The Philosophy of Science is described as attempted clarification of the basic concepts, pre-suppositions, and postulates of sciences and the revelation of the empirical, rational or pragmatic grounds upon which they are presumed rest. This aspect of the philosophy of science is closely related to the foregoing but, includes, in addition to the logical and epistemological subject matter, a large portion of metaphysics. Roughly, the task here is two folds. On the one hand, it involves the critical analysis of certain basic notions, such as quantity, quality, time, space, cause and law which are used by the scientist but not subjected to the examination. On the other hand, it includes a study of certain pre-supposed beliefs, such as the belief in an external world, the belief in the uniformity of nature and the belief in the rationality of natural

processes (Dagobert, 2004). According to the new Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Science is the knowledge about the structure and behaviour of the natural and physical world, based on facts that you can prove, by experiments (2005.) Analysis of spiritual qualities in science faces problems — such as the imprecision of spiritual concepts, the subjectivity of spiritual experience, and the amount of work required to translate and map observable components of a spiritual system into empirical evidence

Spirituality, on the other hand, is very much opposite of limitation, fixation, and systematization. It is generally fulfilled through the freedom of power to expand and grow towards perfection by a law of one' nature. True religion, according to Śri Aurobindo, is the following of spiritual impulse in its fullness, and spirituality is the "attempt to know and live in the highest self, the divine, the all embracing unity and to raise life in all its parts to the divinest possible value" (Sri Aurobindo, 1952). This spirituality is the essential meaning of "Brahman" the Upanishadic goal of life. Religions are serviceable only so far as they are spiritual. When spirituality is missing, religion is a mere activity of men, powerful yet never a principle of guidance in his life.

From the above discussion, it is crystal clear that science is a systematic knowledge derived from hypothesis, experimentation, observation and explanation of the results to test the hypothesis. Spirituality can be thought of as the final, distilled essence of all religious principles. These principles embrace the highest aspects of human culture, the desire for sober and saner qualities of life including morality, truth, forgiveness, compassion, humility, love and respect for all living beings.

Secondly, the basic tenants of science and spirituality are acceptable to all, in their true sense but unfortunately it is the human attitude and behaviour which become responsible for their wrong projections and interpretations from time to time. The traditions of science and technology, religion and morality are deeply rooted in our culture and heritage for centuries.

In contemporary time, the modern science has achieved enough and given to mankind all materialistic comforts even a good looking and cheapest car in Rs. One lakh only which was a dream of common man but has failed to cultivate morality, compassion, sense of co-existence and discipline in man. It is also true that science alone can solve the problems related to hunger, poverty, illiteracy, environmental pollution, illness and unemployment but then through the process of spirituality one can achieve compassion, love, honesty, peace, tolerance, discipline and humanism without which the very existence of mankind will be at the stake.

Both science and spirituality want to remove the sufferings of mankind at large. Even the scientists and spiritualists of the western countries too have started the feeling that there cannot be any peace and tranquility of mind without following the certain ideals of spirituality and religion. India has experimented the non-violence for thousands of years and even today her top ranking religious and spiritual leaders have shown this to the entire world through the deep study of religion, spirituality, meditation and yoga by interacting with the modern science.

The necessity of such an interaction is very much required more than ever before in the present materialistic age of science and technology. Therefore, in the present paper, it has tried to prove the relation and relevance of 'Science and Spirituality' for perfect (ideal) living of human beings on the following grounds.

Science and spirituality are certainly the two most dominant forces that have shaped the course of humanity. In spite of an atmosphere of occasional rivalry, many eminent thinkers including scientists and theologians have deeply pondered over the close connection between the two disciplines (Sampooran, 2006). They felt the need for a synthesis between them to answer many complex problems of life. As a matter of fact, science was an integral part of spirituality itself for thousands of years ago and it is only during the last two decades that we have started talking in terms of modern science especially owing to its highly specialized and analytical approach with sophisticated instruments. It has been accepted by learned spiritualists and scientists that spirituality without science is lame and science without spirituality is blind. These great thinkers have been profoundly inspired by focusing on the synthesis. Re-searching the life and works of several prominent scientists and spiritualists both from the eastern and western side as well, such as Newton Planck, Pasteur, Albert Einstein, Schrodinger, Whitehead, Heisenberg, Huxley, Swami Vivekanand, Śri Aurobindo, B.Russell Niels Bohar, Vinoba and J.Krishnanmurti were those, who combined both science and spirituality in their life and thought their reflections are great assets to the synthesis of science and spirituality.

In recent times, there has been a substantial increase in the interest of many scientists on the topic of consciousness. This interest has been to a great extent catalyzed by the interpretational problems of quantum measurement. Neurobiologists have also begun to examine the mind-brain problem in an attempt to understand consciousness. Similarly, many scholars in the fields of psychology, cognitive science, philosophy, etc., are keenly investigating the nature of consciousness. Scientists like Roger Penrose are advocating the need for a new science to

satisfactorily explain the phenomenon of consciousness. It could well be that spirituality will be an important component of this new science. Consciousness' study formed a part of religious wisdom long before the recent scientific endeavors took place. In the ancient literature of India, such as the *Srimadbhāgavatam*, the topic of consciousness has been treated as one of the central issues. Thus, consciousness study can be a common ground for both science and religion.

The existing scientific views on consciousness are predominantly of two types. We have (1) the materialistic reductionistic theories where consciousness is assumed to be evolving as a result of sophisticated combinations of matter, and (2) anti-reductionistic theories, which are akin to religious views. It is also clear that we can admittedly find nothing in Physics or Chemistry that has even remote bearing on consciousness. Yet all of us know that there is such a thing as consciousness, simply because we have it in ourselves.

The combination of Science and Religion is very resolve Ethical Challenges. Ethics are the finer qualities of human life from which human actions can be judged. Moral issues have always been closely connected with religious traditions. On the other hand, ethical values have never been seriously considered as a part of science. This is primarily due to the emphasis on objectivity, reductionism and materialism in science.

We are all aware that although recent advancements in science and technology have brought tremendous benefits to humanity, they have also increasingly raised ethical concerns. Ethical values have not been able to keep pace with the explosive development in science and technology. This trend is a serious threat to humanity. Thus, there is an important need to generate ethical guidelines in our scientific research, especially in the fields of bio-engineering and bio-technology.

Today's ethical issues have become a meeting point between science and religion. Religion, therefore, without spirituality is merely an activity of men, yet never a principle of guidance in his life. Thus, the partnership of science and religion going to bring a more universal justice to the ethical issues in human actions participated by scientific progress. Many ethical problems have been generated in medical science involving legal, social and spiritual issues such as organ transplants, euthanasia, abortion, test tube babies, cloning etc. Many politicians are also making far-reaching decisions on issues of moral significance such as biological and nuclear warfare, deforestation, strip mining and so on. History has shown that many of these decisions have not always been beneficial to society at large. Indeed, many concerned people will agree that in every field of human activity an

ethical standard is essential for a meaningful life. It indicates that although domains of spirituality and science are quite different yet unification between them is also possible. Some thinkers, who have genuine concern with spirituality, argue for the unification of spirituality and science (Dowsett et al, 1997).

Further, many studies show that Spiritualism is used in religious terminology to emphasize the direct influence of the Holy spirit in the sphere of religion and especially to indicate the teachings of St. John's Gospel that God is spirit and that worship is direct correspondence of spirit with spirit (Dagobert, 2004). Being ignorant of the true nature of his own self, the modern man is incapable of making a correct diagnosis of his sufferings. He considers himself to be nothing more than a psycho-physical organism. All sufferings of this organism are due to the non-fulfillment of its psychical and physical needs. Thus, the fulfillment of these needs have become the main concern of modern man. Artha (worldly possessions) and kāma (gratification of desires) are the only ideals of his life. Morality (dharma), not being conducive to quick and undue fulfillment of artha and kāma, is discarded by modern man as an ideal of life. Moksha, in his view, is nothing but a Utopia, which is of no use in practical life.

Thus, the ignorance of the true nature of his own self has distorted the value-concept of modern man. Consequently, he has become de-spiritualize, de-humanized, and brutalized. Bereft of moral values, he behaves like an animal (2000). The downfall of modern man does not stop here; rather it goes further degrading him to a level lower than that of animal. The animals have a natural control over their instincts, and they adopt only natural ways and means to satisfy these instincts. But de-humanized person presses his intelligence into the service of his instincts, and thus, he gets demonized. Consequently, he becomes victim of the evils of hatred, jealousy, slander, violence, intriguing, etc. to which he resorts to satisfy his uncontrolled instincts.

Several attempts have been made in the West to solve the problem of human sufferings. The scientists are of the view that man's affliction can be to a great extent, if through the application of scientific means, nature is controlled and its resources are properly utilized. These psychoanalysts are of the opinion that man can attain happiness, if the complexes in the unconscious level of his mind are brought to the conscious level through psycho-analysis and are there after resolved through the process of rationalization. The communists maintain that human sufferings can be removed only if the socio-economic system is modified in accordance with Marxist philosophy.

But these attempts do not succeed to remove human agony, because their proponent's diagnosis and treatment of the malady of sufferings are erroneous. The empirical means, (200 A.D.) adopted by them to solve the problem of suffering, fail to remove suffering with certainty and for ever (200 A.D.). On account of being based on a wrong notion of man as only a psycho-physical organism, the empirical means do not have access to the highest aspect of human personality, i.e., the spiritual aspect, which is the abode of eternal happiness or bliss. Here, spirituality comes to our rescue. The means (i.e., self-realization), which it propounds for the removal of human suffering is free from the defects of empirical means (200 A.D.). It removed human sufferings with certainty and for ever. Thus, the traditional Indian spiritualism is very much relevant to contemporary age of science and technology.

All schools of Indian Philosophy, with the exception of Cārvāka, take Moksa or liberation to be the summum bonum of human life (param puruṣārtha). It is the supreme ethical ideal which functions as a beacon light to guide a person rise from animality to humanity and from humanity to divinity or spirituality. The ideal of Moksa is conducive to the moral elevation of human personalities.

The true spirit of traditional Indian spiritualism does not consist in the separation of Paramārtha (Supreme Reality) from Vyavahāra (empirical reality) but in the integration of the two, Vyavahāra can evolve into Paramārtha only because Paramārtha is already involved in Vyavahāra. Or Vyavahāra is replaced by Paramārtha only because the former appears only on the ground of the latter. Through the integration of Vyavahāra and Paramārtha, traditional Indian spiritualism can function as a sound philosophical basis for a humanistic socialism. There can be no better metaphysical foundation for the ideal of class-less society than the monistic Indian spiritualism. Thus, traditional Indian spiritualism is very much relevant to contemporary age of science and technology. Spiritualistic monism alone can bring about a moral regeneration and thereby an all round amelioration in contemporary society. So long as the distinction between oneself and others persists, it is not possible for a person to be completely free from immortality. But as soon as it is realized that one and the same Supreme Spirit is the ground of the appearance of all animate and inanimate worldly phenomena, all empirical distinction of 'I' and 'thou', etc., vanish and consequently, there remains no room for any immoral act.

SPIRITUAL TOURISM

The concept of 'spiritual tourism' has been used in a very narrow sense. Many authors think that it

is all about visiting temples and other holy sites. Spiritual tourism today has emerged crowd-puller to India and other culture-rich countries. India has always been perceived as the communion of many beliefs, universal truth-finder's path and a land of inherent spirituality. This perception has been reinforced by the many thousands of foreign tourists to the country who return with fond memories and individual sanctification of their weary souls having stepped on the many legendary Indian worship sites and pilgrimage centers. Furthermore, India's been the hot favorite of many a global gypsy feet owner with a penchant for rediscovering their lost faith or simple spirituality-scouting for inner peace since the many attractions of our Yog-bhoomi (land of yogic science) has found many takers in solace-seekers (Kaur, 1985). The main reason is that the ancient wisdom of Indian spirituality has been made world-famous by famous youth icons like Madonna, Bruce Springsteen, Sting, Meg Ryan and other public figures. Closer home, Shiv Khera, Swami Ramdev, Deepak Chopra and such motivating speakers and proponents of spirituality have also worked their verbose charms in attracting spiritual tourism to India with the unique marketing of brand India in discourses, seminars, public appearances and other related outreaching measures for educating and reviving interest in our home shores (Singh and Das 1991; and Ministry of Tourism, 2007).

In fact, India as an example of a multi-cultural and multi-religious secular state that gives equal respect to all the many faiths that are honored, be it Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism or Christianity (among major religious sects) we will arrive upon the obvious knowledge that this thread of common brotherhood and tolerance is the reason behind the peaceful co-existence of their respective monuments and tourist spots for spiritual tourism. Abundant temples, architecturally splendid and awe-inspiring mosques; grandiose or downright simple in elegance gurudwaras, British, German or Goan style churches, Jewish synagogues bearing regional touches and various other diverse spiritual centers, all offer their own brand of spiritual release simply by being different in form and similar in spirit (2005).

Significantly, Religious diversity and spiritual unity of a country responsible for economic boost to popularity of pilgrimage tours: secret of successful spiritual tourism lies in variety of insight and varied. Thus, we find that spiritual tourism includes religious absorption of a country's core philosophy of spiritual wisdom as well as communion with nature that could well be a much-needed break for your soul from the travails of routine life. After all, who wouldn't want to find an inner sanctuary for the soul's release and be able to carry back the essence of a journey to divinity back

home with them experiences it offers to the global tourist.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, spirituality is not only essence of the cosmos but also of the individual. This spiritual truth has been expressed in the Upanishadic Mahavakayas – ‘Aham Brahman Asmi,’ ‘Tattvamasi’ etc. Spirituality is also treated as the most important characteristic of all religions. Religions are serviceable only so far as they are spiritual. In the evolution of religion upon Earth, Hinduism, according to Śrī Aurobindo, has opened the largest and the profoundest spiritual possibilities to man (Sri Aurobindo, 1964). It is this which makes Hinduism a true religion as distinguished from sectarianism, dogmatism, narrow mindedness etc. In the words of Śrī Aurobindo, “True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, in what is beyond the intellect, beyond the aesthetic and ethical and practical being of man, and to inform and govern these members of our being by the higher light and law of the spirit (Sri Aurobindo, 1950). Thus, spirituality is the essence and criterion of religion.

In fact, a deeper insight into the problems, attitudes, activities and conclusions of science and spirituality shows that these are complementary to each other. For example, even science and spirituality both aims at a better and richer life. Science deals with external worldly progress of the individual beings, whereas spirituality deals with inner development of the individual beings. Though, search of truth for the sake of truth has its own importance, but the ultimate meaning and truth of life can be achieved by the co-operation of science and spirituality. Therefore, synthesis between them is essential for the betterment of the present day global tourism industry.

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