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## Lokasangraha: The Welfare of the Whole World: A Hindu Vision of a World Order

Francis X. D'Sa, SJ

**Abstract:** The phenomenon of Hindutva might give the impression that it belongs to the canonical part of the Hindu traditions. Not only does it not belong there; even the word Hindu finds no place there. By no stretch of the imagination can they be understood as belonging to the same category. Whereas Hindu has functioned as a Sangam for a class of traditions that share in some common or similar beliefs, doctrines, attitudes and values, Hindutva is a label that stands for a communalistic, fascistic and fundamentalistic movement that uses religion, religious deities, customs, and places apparently for promoting religion and its interests but in actual fact for sheer power political purposes. Hindu and Hindutva are as different as religion and politics. Hindu still belongs to the world of religion and religious experience; Hindutva has not only nothing to do with authentic religion, it is in essence anti-Hindu both in style and in substance. Admittedly, Hindu is a late arrival in the consciousness and self-consciousness of the traditions in question but it has been so accepted by all of them that it has now become part of their identity. Not so Hindutva. The latter, a recent phenomenon, has emerged from a social and political situation that is very new. That of course is no reason for rejecting it. The reason why it cannot enter the Hindu canon is that it goes against the very grain of Hindu spirituality and religion.

**Keywords:** Lokasangraha, Welfare of the Whole, Hindu vision, World-order

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# **Lokasangraha: The Welfare of the Whole World**

## **A Hindu Vision of a World Order**

**Francis X. D'Sa, SJ**

*Dept. of Systematic Theology, JDV, Pune*

### **Introduction**

The phenomenon of Hindutva might give the impression that it belongs to the canonical part of the Hindu traditions. Not only does it not belong there; even the word Hindu finds no place there. By no stretch of the imagination can they be understood as belonging to the same category. Whereas Hindu has functioned as a Sangam for a class of traditions that share in some common or similar beliefs, doctrines, attitudes and values, Hindutva is a label that stands for a communalistic, fascist and fundamentalistic movement that uses religion, religious deities, customs, and places apparently for promoting religion and its interests but in actual fact for sheer power political purposes. Hindu and Hindutva are as different as religion and politics. Hindu still belongs to the world of religion and religious experience; Hindutva has not only nothing to do with authentic religion, it is in essence anti-Hindu both in style and in substance. Admittedly, Hindu is a late arrival in the consciousness and self-consciousness of the traditions in question but it has been so accepted by all of them that it has now become part of their identity. Not so Hindutva. The latter, a recent phenomenon, has emerged from a social and political situation that is very new. That

of course is no reason for rejecting it. The reason why it cannot enter the Hindu canon is that it goes against the very grain of Hindu spirituality and religion.

Sadly, the difference between Hindu and Hindutva is slowly but surely being glossed over, not only by the fanatics, not only by some well-meaning but misguided faithful from these traditions, but, alas, also by some insecure "non-Hindus". Hindutva, for these, is gradually coming to refer to a cap that fits all "Hindus". This is dangerous. Fortunately, at least for the time being, the cap does not fit the vast and overwhelming majority. The "non-Hindus" cannot afford to overlook, neglect or forget this important fact. If they do, then the consequences could be tragic. Something of this is in the air at the moment. We have in Maharashtra the Shiva Sena that unashamedly champions Hindutva and its coalition partner, the Bharatiya Janata Party, that ashamedly supports Hindutva. The latter who are ruling at the Centre are now being forced to show their true colour because of symbiotic relationships with the Hindutva hinterland of the Sangh Parivar.

The effect all this is having on the gullible public is that subconsciously

the impression is being created that what these rightist political movements are projecting is a genuine Hindu vision of society.

As we shall see from what follows, nothing could be farther from the truth. The Hindu traditions are based on insights into the reality of the world that, in my view, are still very valid today. We shall briefly sketch these insights on the basis of which the Hindu vision of an ideal world could be worked out. The underlying argument is this: The insights from which the world vision is being presented is such that all the traditions that call themselves Hindu would accept it without any condition. Indeed any tradition that would repudiate it would run the risk of excommunicating itself from the common fold.

The world order that is being referred to here is really a vision and, like any vision, it cannot be reduced to a formula, much less can it be articulated definitively. That is the reason we find that it has been repeatedly reformulated and reinterpreted, differently at different times and in different situations. A world-vision is not a description; it is a symbolic world that refuses to be encapsulated in any one expression. A symbolic world is just that, symbolic; it is symbolic of a world that is experienced and understood differently from diverse perspectives. Such a world is neither purely objective nor merely subjective. This factor makes description impossible. Symbols are worlds within worlds where only the language of metaphor, not the language information, is operative because it alone is at home there.<sup>1</sup> A world that is whole and holis-

tic cannot be described because the describer is also part of the whole. The real cannot be described, precisely because the describer is part of the real whole. The real is symbolic of the whole; or the other way round, the whole is symbolic of the real. Real and whole are mutually inclusive expressions.

## 1. Yajña: The Sacrifice of Reality

Yajña in the Vedic world stood for what we Moderns call reality.<sup>2</sup> For anything to be real, it had to be part of the cosmic Yajña. For heuristic purposes we can translate Yajña as sacrifice but inevitably that will tend to create a misconception, especially in Judaeo-Christian circles where sacrifice is understood in the context of the belief in a personal God. But we could just let sacrifice stand as a working-hypothesis with the caution that it could possibly be misleading. We need, however, to complement it with another [more relevant] translation, namely, reality. However it must be noted that the word reality has the disadvantage that it does not evoke the image that Yajña connotes, an image that is indispensable for a correct understanding of the direction of its meaning. If we take Yajña as sacrifice and connect it with the added meaning of the real, then we are less inclined to misunderstand what Yajña is, means and stands for.

Yajña refers both to world-process and to world-reality. A world-process is a world that is a process, and only what is part of and promotes the world-process is real. Whatever is not part of and does not promote the world-process is not real.

The image that is used for the world-process is that of sacrifice. The sacrificial fire consumes and creates. Because it consumes it is also able to create; and it creates in as much as it consumes. Destruction is one side of the coin of sacrifice; the other side is creation. Concretely, the world of Yajña is one in which things die and are dissolved, but it is also the world in which things are born and grow. Birth and death, creating and consuming are, in this view, interdependent. If there were no death, there would be no birth, and if there would be no birth there would be no death either. The idea of recycling is but a modern secular version of Yajña. Energy cannot be destroyed; it only takes on a new form! Energy is changed from one form into another. The happening of reality is a sacrifice, the sacrifice of one form in order to give birth to another.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, the invaluable insight of Yajña is this: Yajña is a world where everything is interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent.<sup>4</sup> Interconnection, interrelation and interdependence are different aspects of all that is real (*sat*). Whatever is not interconnected, interrelated and interdependent is not real (*asat*). The real, in this world view, is relational, the related.<sup>5</sup> To try to break up relations is to attempt to become less real; the more and deeper the relations the more real one becomes. Realizing one's relationships (not only to the world of persons but also to the world of things) is to become more and more real, that is, really real. ("From the unreal lead me to the real!") The really real then is the whole that is wholesome. Sanskrit *sarvam* is

etymologically connected with the Latin *salvum*!<sup>6</sup>

The Yajña insight enlightens us about the fact that all reality is indeed interconnected, interrelated and interdependent.<sup>7</sup> Whatever world-order we may dream of or proclaim, it cannot afford to overlook the insight that all reality is a relational reality, that is, if the respective world order is to be built on rock, not on sand.<sup>8</sup> Any system that ignores this fact carries within itself an in-built bug that is bound to cause the system to crash sooner or later.

The first Sutra for a sound world order is this: All beings emerge from the one source and therefore are relatives; and so every thing and every one is related.

## 2. Purusha: Consciousness is the Atma of the World

Yajña, the word that the Vedic age employed for reality, received in the course of time an intensification when another name came to be connected with it, namely, Purusha<sup>9</sup>. If Yajña highlighted the fact that everything is related because it is real and that it is real because it is related, the image of the Purusha now drew attention to two aspects which appeared to be neglected in the metaphor of Yajña: one, the interrelation obtaining in reality is of the nature of an organism, and two, the organism is vivified and animated by an omniscient consciousness. The image that Yajña projected lacked these two characteristics, and so it is understandable that in course of time it came to be complemented by the image of Purusha, which supplied what was missing. The

image of the Cosmic Purusha, that is, the Cosmic Person, brings in the components of the cosmic body and the cosmic consciousness. The Cosmic Person's body is said to be only one fourth of the whole reality, three fourths being invisible. This is probably the Vedic way of stating that the invisible aspect of reality is actually much larger than the visible aspect. The interesting thing about the cosmic body is that the whole universe including the past, present and future and the whole of human society is said to emerge from the sacrifice of the cosmic body. The notion of sacrifice is brought in in order to stress the original idea of the interrelationship of every single thing and happening within reality. The cosmic sacrifice is the basic structure of reality that is constituted by the interrelationship between creating and consuming, between birth and death.

To complement this the overarching concept of consciousness is added. The whole cosmic body, that is, the cosmic sacrifice (that is, reality!) is not the primary aspect of Purusha. The primary aspect is the all-pervading consciousness that is really the essence of the metaphor of Purusha.<sup>10</sup> In Indian anthropology it is the body that is in the Atma, unlike in Western anthropology where the soul is in the body. For us the implication is that it is the Atma that is the directing principle: the Atma directs the organism and not the organism the Atma. In the metaphor of Yajña there was no clarity as to the directing principle; with Purusha this doubt is set aside. Within reality Purusha directs the world-organism. Behind the interconnection, interrelatedness and interde-

pendence operates the World-Atma. Reality is not a blind reality, an "It," but one that is *anima*-ted by the Atma, by an absolute "I".

Hence our second Sutra: The source of all relations is the absolute "I", the Purusha, the World-Atma.

### 3. Dharma: The Network of Holistic Relationships

It is interesting to note how the Indian mind has travelled from Yajña to Purusha, that is from the external to the internal and from there to a Dharma, that is, to a level which is a combination of the internal and the external. Dharma makes thematic the ontological relations that obtain between the myriad aspects of Yajña/Purusha. Here ontological does not refer to metaphysical but to that level of reality where being and consciousness (but not self-consciousness) form one continuum, a continuum where to be is to be conscious. The Dharma of humans refers then to the mode of relationships that are both organic and conscious. Integrated humans, for example, are those who far from being alienated from their bodies are in fact in touch with their bodies. Such beings have reached the state of the real because they have realized their Dharma relationships. In the case of humans such relationships go beyond merely the physical and the psychological; the appropriation has to take place also at the ontological level.

Abstract as this may sound, the aspects of Dharma make us aware that to be really real such relationships have to come into their own and reach fulfillment. This happens only when

they become part of the conscious (not self-conscious) world. This of course is an ideal but a necessary ideal if the relationship between the absolute “I” and the rest of reality is not to turn into an “I”-“It” relationship. That is to say, Dharma introduces an element that was not apparent in the metaphor of Purusha, namely, the “You” aspect of reality. In Indian anthropology, humans do not have an “I” consciousness (though of course they have an ego-consciousness, the *Ahamkara*). What characterizes humans is the “Self” (*Atma*), the Self-consciousness. Humans are in a privileged position where Dharma is concerned. They are not like the relationships that exist between trees and rivers and mountains and valleys. Humans are humans because they inhabit a world, and it is part of their Dharma that this relationship enters their conscious world. But their relationships can come into their own and reach fulfillment only when they become part of their conscious world. Humans have to relate to the world in a conscious way if their own sense of identity is to become integrated.

Alienation occurs when humans ignore or neglect the world they inhabit and act like subjects that focus on mere objects. When this happens the real world is neglected and an illusory world is projected. In order to overcome alienation humans have to realize their relationship to the world they inhabit. Realization of this relationship implies that humans are not mere subjects. They are part of a world, but not like a part of a watch but in a unique way where the whole is reflected in the part and the part in the whole. Such consciousness

cannot be the absolute “I” consciousness of the Purusha but at the most a reflection of it. Humans cannot create their consciousness. They participate in a stream of consciousness which they modify every time they participate in it. Obviously the primordial consciousness is the “I” consciousness; the consciousness that suffuses humans is only a “Thou” consciousness. The absolute “I” alone can transform humans by addressing them as a “Thou”, a “You”, a Self. The Dharma of humans is to recognize this and realize that their very being-and-consciousness is wholly constituted by the “Thou”-ing activity of the absolute “I”. This of course is not the end of the story because a human is not a mere “Thou”, but an incarnated, incorporated, em-body-ed “Thou”. In the case of humans then Dharma brings out, albeit indirectly and implicitly, the “Thou” aspect of reality. This aspect comes into prominence in the *Bhakti* movements. And it is in the light of this development that the above reflection has been worked out.

Accordingly our third Sutra is: Human experience of reality is a rainbow of I, You and It consciousness.

#### **4. Lokasangraha: The Welfare of the World**

Yajña, Purusha, Dharma are the foundation on which the house of Lokasangraha, the welfare of the world, the welfare of all beings, stands. Lokasangraha is the logical, or more precisely, the Dharma-logical outcome of this trinity which does not, indeed cannot, permit any other alternative. In a world vision where Yajña and Purusha

are co-terminous with reality, and Dharma spells out in detail the interrelationships of all things, welfare cannot be any thing other than the welfare of all. Lokasangraha refers to the welfare of all the Lokas, that is, all the universes. The Hindu traditions do not and cannot have any other ideal. Because their world vision is cosmocentric, not anthropocentric, welfare is not restricted to humans alone, much less to some class of humans. Holiness in these traditions bears the hallmark of universal openness to all beings. (Ahimsa is to be understood within these parameters.) Anything and any one who promotes or propagates a narrower vision cannot remain part of the Hindu world vision. On the other side, holiness for the Hindus is an expanding universe that keeps on opening itself up to embrace ever more layers and levels of beings.

The expression Lokasangraha appears first in the Mokshadharma section of the Mahabharata and in the Bhagavadgita. What is of relevance to us is that it is associated with those who have reached the heights of Yoga. Only such Yogis are the practitioners of Lokasangraha. This is of a piece with the world vision in which Lokasangraha is to be found. Here holiness has to do with those who are in touch with reality, those who know reality as it is: the Tattvadarshins are the holy ones, they see things as they are (Bhagavadgita 2:16, 4:34). Seeing reality as it is means seeing not only the interconnectedness of all things but also realizing the source (Purusha) of this interconnectedness. The Tattvadarshins experience all reality as interrelated. That is why they work for the welfare of all.

What is particularly striking in the Gita, for example, is that it speaks consistently either of the All (sarvam) or of all beings (sarvani bhutani), rarely of humans as such. The wise, the discerning, the real Yogis are, for example, those who have no enmity towards any being (11:55), or they see all beings in the Atma and the Atma in all beings (6:29), or perceive the divine mystery everywhere and all beings in the divine mystery (6:30) [because the divine dwells in the heart of all beings (15:15; 18:61)], or work ecstatically for the welfare of all beings (5:25; 12:4).

Thus, inclusivism, not exclusivism, is an important characteristic of the Hindu world vision. That is why Moksha like Bandhana is not an individual phenomenon but a world phenomenon; both Moksha and Bandhana affect all because every thing is interconnected. Just as attachment spoils the whole enterprise of life, so too detachment saves the whole enterprise.

Our next Sutra could be formulated thus: Liberation, the experience of wholeness (objective genitive), is an experience of the whole (subjective genitive). And its corollary: An Individual is as much an illusion as individual liberation.

## 5. The Vision of a New World [Order]

Up till now what we have been reflecting upon is the way the Hindu traditions understand reality and ultimate liberation. The latter is intimately connected with the former. If we do not understand the real nature of reality we shall never reach ultimate liberation.

Our present world order sets on the pedestal modes of thinking and acting that instrumentalize the world. The result is that the values that are incorporated in its structures make it almost impossible to discern the chaff of illusion from the wheat of reality. Understandably then, to succeed in this world one has to function on the level of having, not on that of being. But this is to build on sand. For a world order which neglects or does not care about reality will itself vanish into nothing but not before causing a lot of unnecessary suffering. We are witnesses of this happening today: our epochal sicknesses (cancer and aids), our economies built on the arms industry, the ever-increasing number of the powerless and the poor, the redefinition of key values like peace (as the product of deterrents), love (as something that *we make*), progress (as the one-sided development of consumer goods), etc.

Conversely, the efforts to take serious note of the interrelatedness of all things is the path to a just and harmonious future. Today we are realizing as never before that justice and harmony cannot focus merely on humans; the world is equally, if not more, important. The self-understanding of humans is gradually progressing a step forward with the deepening awareness that humans cannot be humans without their world; the world is an integral part of their identity. The instrumentalization of the world which up to now we have been pursuing relentlessly is at long last making us have second thoughts about our science and 'scientific' temper. Whatever be the validity of scientific methods and however good its inten-

tions, science cannot be taken as the path to salvation. We are realizing today that it has a limited task; it cannot be taken to be the criterion of real knowledge. The real, as our reflections from the Hindu traditions have shown, is a matter of religion because it focuses on wholeness and wholesomeness, not that of science because science deals with only an aspect of the real.

That is the reason why genuine Yogis alone are the Tattvadarshins. Accordingly, a new world order must have in-built structures that promote a more *real-istic* approach to life, an approach that is founded on be-attitudes. Real-istic means taking the real in all its dimensions and responding to it accordingly. Reality is not merely an "It" but an organic trinity of "I", "You" and "It".<sup>11</sup> A world order that ignores or does violence to one or other dimension is surely not moving in the right direction.

Admittedly, the Hindu vision does not put before us a blue-print of how a world can be constructed, but it does offer insights that are as relevant today as they were when they were first formulated. A new world order cannot afford to leave out of consideration any aspect of reality, given the interdependence of all aspects of reality. Furthermore, the myth of the emanation of all beings from the Purusha proffered an insight that has been neglected till today. We are not just humans, not just earthlings, but, in the words of Thomas Berry<sup>12</sup>, we are worldlings. We have emerged from the world reality. Our real sense of identity will be short-circuited if we do not take cognizance



of this fact. The history of humans cannot be really written without the history of the universe; we cannot really understand humans if we do not understand the fact that humans have emerged from the same stuff as the rest of creation. Accordingly humans cannot anymore behave as if they were the crown of creation. A new attitude, a be-attitude, not a have-attitude of possessiveness, will have to animate humans. Detachment is not just a moral virtue but an ontological state of affairs which needs to be retrieved. As beings that are related, our possessiveness has to be exorcised because it does not take seriously our ontological state of relatedness.

We are all relatives, says Berry. In the Hindu vision of a new world order this means that there can be no second class citizens, no second class nations. Justice and equality among persons and nations will be the hallmark of such a world, precisely because we are relatives. Such a world should have no place for one nation to dominate the other and no place to exploit the other. All this will imply that there cannot be the kind of market forces that are biased in favour of some at the expense of the other, the kind of economies that are based on an arms-industry, the kind of agriculture that encourages monocultural products.

The family spirit, the cosmic family spirit, will turn the cosmic house into a home. It is the Cosmic Spirit which is [to be recognized as] the source of all relationships. Whether religious or secular, the world order cannot allow itself to be overcome by hybris, that is, overconfidence, that induces the belief

that humans can do anything, and that there is no limit to their capabilities. Dependence is the quality of all beings. To disregard it will spell disaster. Acknowledgement of one's dependence leads to an acknowledgement of interdependence of all. Interdependence requires sensitivity to the other so that the other may be free enough to be as much at home as the members of the household. The cosmic home has to be a home for all.

The relationships between different beings are not monotonous or monochromatic; each is specifically different according to whether the pole of relationship is an "I" or a "You" or an "It". However, no pole exists in itself or by itself; it is always related to another pole. The trinity of "I", "You" and "It" always go together. One does not exist without the others. A liberative experience is an integration of this trinity.

Such an experience cannot be merely "individual"; it has to be communitarian. A communitarian experience that is liberative presupposes that the [world-] community and its structures are liberative, personally, societally and cosmically. In a vision where every thing and every one is interrelated, the notion of an "individual" does not make sense. Though humans behave like individuals, they are ontologically persons, that is, they are constituted by relationships, whether they are aware of it or not. There are no limits set on the journey towards personhood which is an ever-expanding universe. The more one realizes one's relationships the deeper one journeys into the realm of personhood.

Finally, liberation is not only an experience of wholeness; the whole too has to experience liberation. Only then is liberation truly liberation. In other words, the process of liberation has its focus not so much on the individual (because there is no such thing as an individual) but on person. Now person is an organic part of a community, both cosmic and human. Liberation of a person presupposes liberation of all persons and this presupposes liberation of all creation.

Is all this a pipe-dream, a fantasy exercise? These are only the implications that are drawn out from the insights of the Hindu traditions. That these traditions have taken their insights – to some extent – seriously is shown by the fact that they have worked out a spirituality that is in keeping with this vision. The Bhagavadgita is a clear example of this. The way the Gita thematically exposes the different aspects of Yoga, the path to liberation, leaves no doubt about its vision of humans, the world and the Divine.

## 6. Jnanayoga: The Yoga of Insight and Wisdom

The goal of Jnanayoga is to meditate an insight into the two aspects of reality: the impermanent and the imperishable. Applied to the world reality of Yajña/Purusha Jnanayoga makes one aware that impermanence is undergirded by the imperishable, and that the values of the one are not to be mixed up or reduced to those of the other. Action and activity are not everything; both have to be led by the light

of wisdom (*jñāna-deepa*). Only insight into the nature of reality, its interrelation and interdependence is in a position to determine the right type of response. From the objective of this study, Jnanayoga is the path to viewing reality from a holistic perspective. “Whoso shall strive to win release from old age and death, putting his trust in Me, will come to know that Brahman in its wholeness, – as it appertains to self, the whole [mystery] of works, as it appertains to contingent beings, and to the divine, – and Me [too] as I appertain to sacrifice. And whoso shall know Me [thus] even at the time of passing on, will know [Me] with an integrated mind.” Bhagavadgita 7:29-30<sup>13</sup>

## 7. Bhaktiyoga: Loving God in all Things

This Yoga is even more cogent where wholeness is concerned. It focuses on the ontological relation between the part (*bhakta*) and the whole (*sarva*), in our terminology, between Thou and the I. Real devotion (*bhakti*) consists in acknowledging this relationship and appropriating it on the self-conscious level of freedom and love. “Who sees Me everywhere, who sees the All in Me, for him I am not lost, nor is he lost to Me. Who standing firm on unity communes-in-love with Me as abiding in all beings, in whatever state he be, that athlete of the spirit abides in me.” Bhagavadgita 6:30-31

## 8. Vibhuti yoga: Finding God in all Things

Closer still to our enterprise is Vibhuti yoga wherein one discovers the

One-who-is-the-All in each and every thing. The mystery of wholeness is to be found operative in every thing, giving it support, substance and style. "Of this whole universe the origin and the dissolution too am I. Higher than I there is nothing whatsoever: on Me this universe is strung like clustered pearls upon a thread. In water I am the flavour, in sun and moon the light, in all the Vedas [the sacred syllable] Om, in space [I am] sound, in men [their] manliness am I. Pure fragrance in the earth am I, flame's onset in the fire: [and] life am I in all contingent beings, in ascetics [their] fierce austerity. Know that I am the primeval seed of all contingent beings: insight in men of insight, glory in the glorious am I. Power in the powerful am I, - [such power] as knows neither desire nor passion: desire am I in contingent beings, [but such desire as] does not conflict with righteousness." Bhagavadgita 7:6-11

## 9. Karmayoga: The Yoga of Service and Commitment

The clearest of all the Yoga aspects is that of Karmayoga where one is called upon to work selflessly for the welfare of all. Both these attributes ensure that every sign of attachment to any group or ideology is weeded out. The least trace of any clannishness or sectarianism militates against the very essence of this Yoga. "Do works for Me, make Me your highest goal, be loyal-in-love to Me, cut off all [other] attachments, have no hatred for any being at all: for all who do thus shall come to Me." Bhagavadgita 11:55

## 10. The Challenge of a Vision

Unfortunately, the votaries of Hindutva appear to be ignorant of such a vision from their own traditions. But fortunately a vision like this cannot be restricted only to any group. Besides, it is relevant to any person of good will. Any vision when interpreted literally turns into an ideology. This is the contribution that fanatics make. A vision projects a world of symbols which can be kept alive not intellectually or merely through good intentions but through the practice of a Yoga like the one we have briefly referred to. The path of Yoga is not strewn with recipes; there is no guarantee that even after following faithfully the standard directions one's efforts will bear fruit. For in this area, it is in the last analysis a matter of grace and not merit. But there is the assurance of the Gita: "Thinking on Me you will surmount all dangers by my grace; but if through selfishness you will not listen, then you will [surely] perish" (18:58). The implication seems to be that the practitioner of Yoga has to keep one eye on his effort and the other on divine grace in order to reach the goal.

Working for a new society is also a kind of Yoga where human effort alone will not suffice. True, there has to be method in one's madness, but more than that there has to be in addition openness to the unknown and the unknowable. This acts like a horizon that keeps on receding as we approach it. A vision is the knowable side of such a horizon. The more we assimilate it the more remains to be assimilated. Though we can never exhaustively realize a vision its power to attract remains inexhaustible. Those who allow themselves

to be attracted by a vision are on the path to becoming Tattvadarshins, those who see reality as it is. Humans of the future will either have to be Yogis of the Tattvadarshin type or they will not be at all.

## Notes

1. See F. X. D'Sa, "Re-Searching the Divine. The World of Symbol and the Language of Metaphor," in *Interrelations and Interpretation*. Philosophical Reflections on Science, Religion and Hermeneutics in honour of Richard De Smet, S.J. and Jean de Marneffe, S.J. Ed. Job Kozhamthadam, S.J. (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications 1997), pp. 141-173.
2. Shatapathabrahmana III, 6, 2, 26: "All this, whatever exists, is made to share in sacrifice." And Rig Veda I, 164, 35: "This sacrifice is the navel of the world."
3. See R. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience. Mantramanjari*. An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration. Edited and translated with introductions and notes. (Pondicherry: All India Books 1976), pp. 348: "At the origin of every being there is a sacrifice that has produced it. The texture of the universe is sacrifice, which is the act par excellence which produces all that is."
4. A modern nuclear physicist F. Capra has the following to say in his *The Turning Point. Science, Society and the Rising Culture*. (Fontana Paperback, 1983), pp. 285-287: "The new vision of reality we have been talking about is based on awareness of the essential interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena - physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural... The systems view looks at the world in terms of relationships and integration. Systems are integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to those of smaller units... Every organism - from the smallest bacterium through the wide range of plants and animals to humans - is an integrated whole and thus a living system... All these natural systems are wholes whose specific structures arises [sic] from the interactions and interdependence of their parts. The activity of systems involves a process known as transaction - the simultaneous and mutually interdependent interaction between multiple components... Although we can discern individual parts in any system, the nature of the whole is always different from the mere sum of its parts."
5. See Panikkar, op. cit., pp. 352-352: "Sacrifice is that which preserves the universe in existence, that which gives life and the hope of life. The universe in its totality does not repose on the shoulders of any extracosmic reality; if it did, it would not be the whole universe, but only an appendix to it. Reality has to include all that of which we can be aware. Neither God nor the Gods can be excluded from it. Now this universe is neither reposing on another Ground, nor reposing on itself, as it were must a 'mechanical' or 'automatic' Being, as if freedom - and thus the freedom to cease to be - were not at the very core of reality. The universe does not repose on anything other than itself and its own structure. This ultimate structure is not to be regarded as 'another' or 'deeper' 'thing' or substance; it is in fact sacrifice, which, is precisely, the internal dynamism of the universe, universal *ṛta*, cosmic order itself. This order, this sacrifice, obviously cannot be a static result of an already performed action. Sacrifice is the act that makes the universe. It does it, not through an external agent, but by the self-cooperation of the universe itself. Men alone cannot accomplish this, and the

Gods left to themselves are equally impotent. The highest God, the supreme Being, is equally incapable of perform this act alone, for he is not God for himself but for the 'creatures'. In point of fact he is never alone; he is relational and belongs to reality, in spite of all the provisos and distinctions that a thinking philosophical and theological mind is bound to make in order not to fall into an oversimplified monism or an unsustainable dualism."

6. J. Gonda, "Reflections on *sarva* in Vedic Texts," in *Selected Studies II*, Leiden 1975, pp. 1-31.
7. Thomas Berry, a self-confessed "Geologian" says this in his *The Dream of the Earth*. (San Francisco: Sierra Book Club 1998, pp 163-165): "The universe expresses itself in the blazing radiance of the stars and in the vast reaches of the galactic systems. Its most intimate expression of itself, however, is in this tiny planet: a planet that could not exist in its present form except in a universe such as this one, in which it has emerged and from which it has received its life energies. The planet presents itself to us, not as a uniform global reality, but as a complex of highly differentiated regions caught up in the comprehensive unity of the planet itself. There arctic and tropical, coastal and inland regions, mountains and plains, river valleys and deserts. Each of these regions has its distinctive geological formation, climatic conditions, and living forms. Together these constitute the wide variety of life communities that may be referred to as bioregions. Each is coherent within itself and intimately related to the others. Together they express the wonder and splendor of this garden planet of the universe... The air and water and soil and seeds that provide our basic sustenance, the sunshine that pours its energies over the landscape – these are integral with the functioning of the fruitful earth. Physically and spiritually we are woven into this living process. As long as the integrity of the process is preserved, we have air to breathe and water to drink and nourishing food to eat."
8. Thomas Berry's remark is pertinent here (*The Dream of the Earth*, pp. 194-195): "Our immediate tendency is to seek guidance from our cultural traditions, from what might be designated as our cultural coding. Yet in this case our need seems to be for guidance that is beyond what our cultural traditions are able to give. Our cultural traditions, it seems, are themselves a major source of our difficulty. It appears necessary that we go beyond our cultural coding, to our genetic coding, to ask for guidance.

We seldom consider going to our genetic coding for guidance in our cultural development because we are generally unaware that our genetic coding provides the basic psychic and physical structure of our being. Our genetic coding determines not only our identity at birth; its guidance continues also in every cell of our bodies throughout the entire course of our existence, a guidance manifested through the spontaneities within us. We need only to listen to what we are being told through the very structure and functioning of our being. We do invent our cultural coding, but the power to do so is itself consequent on the imperatives of our genetic coding.

Beyond our genetic coding, we need to go to the earth, as the source whence we came, and ask for its guidance, for the earth carries the psychic structure as well as the physical form of every living being upon the planet. Our confusion is not only within ourselves; it concerns also our role in the planetary community. Even beyond the earth, we need to go to the universe and inquire concerning the basic issues of reality and value, for, even more than the earth, the universe carries the deep mysteries of our existence within itself.

We cannot discover ourselves without first discovering the universe, the earth, and the imperatives of our own being. Each of these has a creative power and a vision far beyond any rational thought or cultural creation of which we are capable. Nor should we think of these as isolated from our own individual being or from the human community. We have no existence except within the earth and within the universe.”

9. See the Purusha-Sukta, Rig Veda X, 90.
10. The Purusha-Sukta begins thus:  
A thousand heads had Purusha,  
A thousand eyes, a thousand feet:  
Encompassing the earth on every side  
He exceeded it by ten fingers' [breadth].
11. See Panikkar's remarks on this in endnote no. 5 above.
12. See *The Dream of the Earth*, pp.132-133: "The story of the universe is the story of the emergence of a galactic system in which each new level of expression emerges through the urgency of self-transcendence. Hydrogen in the presence of some millions of degrees of heat emerges into helium. After the stars take shape as oceans of fire in the heavens, they go through a sequence of transformations. Some eventually explode into star dust out of which the solar system and the earth take shape. Earth gives unique expression of itself in its rock and crystalline structures and in the variety and splendor of living forms, until humans appear as the moment in which the unfold universe becomes conscious of itself. The human emerges not only as an earthling, but also as a worldling. We bear the universe in our beings as the universe bears us in its being. The two have a total presence to each other and to that deeper mystery out of which both the universe and ourselves have emerged... The most notable single development within science in recent years, however, has been a growing awareness of the integral physical-psychic dimension of reality."
13. The translations are from R. C. Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-Gita. With a Commentary based on the Original Sources.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1969).