

# Some Problems of Human Rights Education

SHANKAR SHARAN\*

It has been said that the democracy is based on the rights of man; it has been replied that it should rather take its stand on the duties of man; but both rights and duties are European ideas. *Dharma* is the Indian conception in which rights and duties lose the artificial antagonism created by a view of the world which makes selfishness the root of action, and regain their deep and eternal unity. *Dharma* is the basis of democracy which Asia must recognise, for in this lies the distinction between the soul of Asia and the soul of Europe.

—Sri Aurobindo

It is time in the West to defend not so much human rights as human obligations.

—Alexander Solzhenitsyn

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## Abstract

*Human Rights is becoming a very significant concept in the contemporary world. At the same time its use and misuse is also a much contested area. Theoretical, political and juridical pronouncements on the subject are as diverse as are the countries in the world. In the event, the Human Rights education becomes a tricky subject. Various agencies, organizations and individuals interpret the very concept of Human Rights in hugely different ways, frequently contradicting each other. On the other hand their uses for covert and overt purposes in the international arena generate heated polemics. Therefore, we in India have to be careful while imparting Human Rights education through various channels and to a range of target groups. This essay tries to underline some of the essential issues in this regard. If the conceptual differences, political overtones and activist agenda are not carefully taken into account, the Human Rights education cannot serve a positive purpose in this country. Our teachers and educationists must care for all the nuances and should not be carried away by any one or other declaration on the subject.*

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\*Lecturer, DERPP, NCERT, New Delhi.

Human right is an oft repeated phrase these days. However, its intent and objectives are widely different for different people. Words and deeds of many activists here and abroad, demands of various NGOs, their political orientations, a systematic selection or exclusion of issues, their sources of financial support and inspirations – all these present a complex gamut of problems. Validating all kind of demands and posturing under an umbrella concept of human rights sometimes become a contradictory exercise. It would be in order, therefore, to first consider some pertinent points related to the concept of human rights.

(a) Every introductory discourse on human rights invariably mentions that the concept has been largely derived from the 'The Declaration of Independence' (USA, 1776) and the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen' (France, 1789). After these customarily comes the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Thus, almost all academic presentations on human rights underline the experiences, expositions and even the verbiage of the Euro-American history and agencies.

(b) The slogan of human rights came to acquire more prominence much after the Second World War, i.e. in the post-colonial era. It is surprising, therefore, that when dozens of Asian, African and Arab countries were under the colonial yoke – the same Western scholarship did never call human rights as a universal noble right. This was despite the fact that the aforementioned celebrated documents were already there for a long time. Hence pointing to those documents

as the *source* of human rights concept is a post-colonial wisdom, and not quite innocent. After all, one may ask: why so much concern for the human rights of those very human beings *after* they became free from the colonial rule of the Western masters? Is the concern genuine, or is it a new variant of the proverbial 'white man's burden'? The great historian Arnold Toynbee had rightly underlined the point by asking the West: "What entitles its culture, its science, its social organisation, finally its rationality itself, to be able to claim universal reality? Was this not a mirage associated with economic domination and political hegemony?"

(c) The concept of 'human' as well as 'rights' do not have any universal meaning. At least three major and fundamentally different formulations exist in the world. They are: the Western-Christian, the Arab-Islamic and the Indian-Hindu. Any standard discourse in these three thought currents proves it beyond doubt that each of them has fundamentally different notions of human beings, human society, etc. Therefore, it is not correct to pronounce some 'universal' human rights without first arriving at a genuine consensus with clear-cut meaning of the term.

(d) Though there are some valuable ideas generated in the historical development of the Euro-American democracies, it is still imperative to note that the experience of a Western observer may not tally with that of countries that are culturally and philosophically very different such as India or Japan. One has only to consult the classic writings of Lenin, Sri Aurobindo, Winston Churchill

and Ayatollah Khomeini, and it will be apparent at once that the very understanding of what a human constitutes and concepts like liberty, equality, democracy, progress, happiness, rights, duties, etc. has never been one and the same for different people. For instance, Sri Aurobindo says:

This was the weakness of European democracy and the source of its failure. It took its motive the rights of man and not the *dharma* of humanity; it appealed to the selfishness of the lower classes against the pride of the upper; it made hatred and internecine war the permanent allies of Christian ideals and wrought an inexplicable confusion which is the modern malady of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

With this profound view a comparison of those Western documents would reveal the fundamental difference on the whole issue. Then, one may ask, why force a *particular*, uniform meaning, citing the US, UN or other Western documents, on all people of the world? Especially on the young and innocent students of Asian nations who habitually trust their elders on points of knowledge?

(e) In a sense, the insistence to project something as 'universal' human rights is an extension of the Western dogmas. The well known British political scientist Ernest Barker has noted that the genesis of the humanitarian movement in the West was a fervent conviction "that the benefits of the Gospel belonged to all and must be extended to all ...whoever needed the comfort of recognition of his

common humanity and his common human rights."<sup>2</sup> It must not be glossed over that a similar evangelical sense pervades in those human rights organisations guided by Church missionary establishments. And they are numerous and well-connected in our country. So it should be recognised that by human rights they don't always mean what common educated Indian might assume. For a large section of international human rights organisations the universalism is the Church concept of universalism which has one closed concept of God, one dogmatic designation of the deity, one fixed form of faith, one regimented mode of worship, one rigid moral conduct, and one straight-jacket of culture. Accordingly the universalism of the prevalent view of human rights, too, is a dogma insisting on a Western-Christian notion of man and, therefore, equally counterfeit.

(f) Not only the dogmatic insistence is a forged universalism, but also this persistence on forcible uniformity, whether in religion ('Only True God') or in human rights, reflects an imperialist mindset that has been the root cause of civilizational violence for centuries. Even Western scholars are now coming to realise that the monotheistic creeds are the source of intolerance and violence. In a very perceptive article Jean-Pierre Lehmann has clearly held monotheism responsible for intolerance, violence, hostility and wars<sup>3</sup>. Professor Lehmann is a Professor of Political Economy at the International Institute of Management Development in Switzerland and the head of Evans Group, a global think tank

composed of government, industry and opinion leaders from Asia, Europe and the US. His is not an isolated perception. Andrew Sullivan, the former editor of *The New Republic* and currently a regular contributor to the *New York Times*, has also underlined it. He says, "It seems as if there is something inherent in religious monotheism that lends itself to terrorist temptation."<sup>4</sup> Taking yet another example, the widely respected *Time* magazine published a readers discussion on 'Christianity, Islam and the Pope'. In this discussion the *Time* gave the most prominent place to this view: "Monotheistic religions that lay claim to the one and the only possible truth are doomed by their very nature to end up in conflict"<sup>5</sup>. The very selection and the distinction given to it shows that the view is gaining ground in the Western discourse as well. With such perceptions it is inescapable to conclude that an insistence on a particular, Western-Christian understanding of human rights is another variation of the same monotheism. Thus, the Western notion of human rights, in as much as it is bandied as a universal remedy for many ills, is itself a source of intolerance for a large section of humanity. This must be taken into account if one is sincere about the rights of the human.

(g) To better appreciate the issue it would help to compare the Western-Christian concept with the Indian-Hindu concept of a human being. As Sri Aurobindo rightly observed:

There are very different conceptions possible of man and his life, of the nation and its life and of humanity and the life of

the human race.... Man has not been seen by the thought of India as a living body developed by physical Nature which has evolved certain vital propensities, an ego, a mind and a reason, an animal of the genus *homo* and in our case of the species *homo indicus*, whose whole life and education must be turned towards a satisfaction of these propensities under the government of a trained mind and reason and for the best advantage of the personal and the national ego. ... India has seen always in man the individual a soul, a portion of the Divinity enwrapped in mind and body, a conscious manifestation in Nature of the universal self and spirit.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, Sri Aurobindo was only reiterating the classical Hindu thought. The earliest definition of human being in Hindu tradition is to be found in *Upanishads*. The rishis who by employing yogic methods reached the farthest frontiers of the inner in human being arrived at the conclusion that human being have five faculties or sheaths (कोष), one within the other. These they enumerated as follows: (i) human body or the physical sheath (अन्नमय कोष), (ii) human desires and drives, or the vital sheath (प्राणमय कोष), (iii) human sense perceptions or the mental (मनोमय कोष), (iv) human intellection and intuition at their highest and most universal or the spiritual sheath (विज्ञानमय कोष), and, (v) human self-delight or the blissful sheath (आनन्दमय कोष).

Thus, a wise reflection on the Indian *dharmic* concept of human beings is of immense worth to evaluate the universalistic claims of the Western human rights discourse. The sense of human there does not go much beyond the first three sheaths and, consequently, limits a human being little more than an eating and procreating animal, even if a rational one. In common parlance, too, a human being in the current Western outlook is basically a free consumer and a taxpayer<sup>7</sup>. How can, then, it be accepted as the 'universal' viewpoint except by using propaganda and force?

(h) Apart from the fundamental philosophical difference on the concept of a human being, one should not underestimate the fact that the concept of human rights has been greatly different for the erstwhile USSR, South Africa during its apartheid, Saudi Arab and Algeria etc.<sup>8</sup> China today insists that the human rights issue is nothing but a stick in the hands of powerful Western agencies to threaten certain countries and make them subservient. Therefore, enforcing in our country a Western pro forma human rights discourse in education is both arbitrary and harmful. One must include the non-Western views on the issue to make the discourse meaningful. Refusing to do so will only prove the charge that the 'universalism' is forced and phony.

(i) For a balanced, comprehensive and meaningful understanding of what is 'human' and all concepts related to human society it is essential to study the views of at least the contemporary great Indians such as Swami Vivekananda,

Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Ambedkar, if not the classic philosophies available in the *Upanishads* and *Mahabharata*, for instance. In the Indian context there is no escaping from such a most valuable corpus of knowledge and understanding. If human rights organisations and activists in India are reluctant to study Sri Aurobindo or Gandhi as essential texts in order to understand human issues, they must answer: what they fear?

(j) In hectoring discourses on human rights in India a particular community is targeted for abuse or insensitivity to human rights. For instance, some 'untouchability' is always bandied, in almost every paper or seminar or educational programme, as an, nay the example of human rights issue. Untouchability is also directly or indirectly mentioned as a part of standard Hindu religious practice which is, of course, a concoction. But that is beside the point. The point is that nowhere in the human rights discussion the practice of 'triple *talak*' as a sanctioned and vigourously defended Islamic practice is mentioned as against human rights. Even while flaunting 'women rights' no human rights activist or institution ever bring up the recurring plight of Muslim women by all kind of mediaeval, barbaric practices not limited to triple *talaq*<sup>9</sup> but including many others like *Muta'h*<sup>10</sup> (temporary marriage), infibulations (aka FGC, FGM)<sup>11</sup>, forcible veil-wearing etc. Various *fatwas*<sup>12</sup> of Ulema and its actual implementation on several hapless Indian Muslim women have made tragic stories in media. But no human rights activist seemed even

to take note of it. Similarly, the treatment of *kafirs* (non-Muslims) in standard Islamic theory and practices are nowhere criticised as an abuse. In stark contrast to all this, despite being stray incidents of *dalit* maltreatment — that too not at all sanctioned or approved by the Hindu society — a war cry is being tried by some missionary organisations 'to liberate 160 million *dalits*' as a part of human rights movement. This selective badgering of the Hindu community and forcing it into a guilt sense is not fair. Why this discriminatory targeting and selective silence? Are some communities, to recall George Orwell, more humans than humans? Or is it something entirely else being tried under the garb of human rights education in India?

(k) There have been well-recorded reports, complaints and repercussions of missionary activities in India. The Niyogi Committees' detailed report (1956), the Wadhwa Commission report after the killing of the Australian missionary Graham Stains (1999) and various news appearing every year in India about fraudulent activities in mass conversions in tribal and distant, hidden areas are for everyone to see. Still the notorious practices by whom Mao called 'spiritual aggressors', of buying some poor or innocent man's faith by muscular and unethical 'rice bowl' methods is never taken up as a gross human right abuse. Why? Please note: no one has ever challenged the facts and findings of the Commissions about the fraud being committed by missionary organisations<sup>13</sup>. After every natural calamity like earthquake, tsunami and war-devastation news appears of

international missionary organisations eager to help the victims with the clear intent of 'harvesting souls'. The concerned organisations, too, never deny it, they only try to bury it under silence. So, why the fraudulent, unethical practices upon simple human beings are not taken up as human rights abuse in any human rights discourse?

(l) In all human rights documents, papers, memoranda, seminar only the state is presented as violators of human rights. Consequently all remedies, safeguards, solutions are addressed to it. In India, most human rights violations, tortures, killings and other atrocities on human beings are done by criminals, fundamentalists and terrorists. Therefore, no rationale can be found for the silence of the human rights activists over such huge number of violations as if the victims of non-state aggressors are less worthy humans! Besides, a democratic state such as India is subject to every type of control by people and institutions. To present a democratic state as the 'other' and an adversary does not indicate a healthy attitude on the part of human rights activists.

(m) The issues of rights and duties, particularly in the global context, do have political connotations often representing some selfish interest. Russian and Chinese scholars and governments have resented on occasions that the human rights issue has been used by some Western forces as a whip to control and punish some unfriendly regimes the world over. Other scholars such as Homi Bhaba, Gayatri Spivak or Edward Said have also underlined that many theorisations about the coloured (Negro,

black) people in the West is but one way of dominating its stranglehold on them. Our own observers have also noted the same:

There was a time when every "local tyrant" was in fact a client or a protégé of the West. What the white powers find most troublesome today is having to keep track of the fast-changing identities of friends and foes in a turbulent region like the Middle East. After all every outstanding nationalist leader in the area – Nasser, Ben Bella, Gaddafi, Assad, Khomeini – has taken on the appearance of a monster in the white man's eyes at one time or another. If none of them invited the kind of vengeance being wreaked on Saddam Hussein it is because, unlike the rest, the Iraqi leader has hit the white world where it hurts most.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, behind the concerns for Chechens, Palestinians, Tibetans or Bosnian Muslims and a willful indifference to the plight of Kashmiri Hindus, for instance, there have been covert and overt interests of some Western powers, both governmental and non-governmental. So we must learn to check the credentials of human rights enthusiasts and educators before giving them respectability and responsibility.

(n) After the 9/11 terrorist attack the Western governments have been scrutinising the sources for terror funding. In the process if a source is found funding a terror network as well as some

university programmes, the later also comes under close watch and necessary measures is taken. In the same way, in India, if a same source funds the spiritual aggression programme to 'Convert Asia' and the NGOs engaged in human rights activism, one must treat the latter in a similar way. The vigour to spread 'human rights literacy' may be a subterfuge to prepare ground for 'planting the Cross'. Or, alternatively, to work as public relation propaganda outfits for religious terrorism<sup>15</sup>.

One may recall that Shri K P S Gill, the former chief of the Punjab police, has time and again stressed that several human rights organisations active here are but the front for terrorist organisations. According to his long, first hand experience, "Such organisations are not at all interested in genuine investigations in human rights violations, they repeatedly reject offers to cooperate in sincere inquiry. Their sole purpose is to malign the security forces, and how to tarnish the image of the country."<sup>16</sup> Such warnings should not be brushed aside if we are sincere in our educational undertakings.

(o) Therefore, before accepting *any* thing as a human right, especially for the purpose of educational, training, 'sensitising' programmes, an open consensus must be made with the participation of hundreds and thousands of educational, social, cultural, political worthies of every stream as to what should and what should not include into the concept of human rights in India. A cogent, precise definition of human rights must come first before disseminating it.

(p) Basic texts for such educational and training programmes should include at least the contemporary Indian classics such as the *Chicago Speech* (Swami Vivekananda), *Ideals of Human Unity*, *Foundations of Indian Culture* and *Uttarpada Speech* (Sri Aurobindo), *Hind Swaraj* (Mahatma Gandhi), *On the Untouchables and Untouchability* and *The Great Conversion* (B.R. Ambedkar). It is hugely profitable to compare the ideas and ideals presented in the *Chicago Speech* and the *Ideals of Human Unity* with the celebrated Western documents like 'The Declaration of Independence' (USA) and the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen' (France).

It is worth recalling in the context of the Western documents that the maltreatment of black population in Europe and the USA continued under the reign of the very celebrated documents! Evidently there was no contradiction for the West treating its own black people and the subject peoples of the erstwhile Asian, African colonies heartlessly while at the same time claiming such declarations as the main, practically the *only* source of ideas related to human progress and liberation. Also, it is no coincidence that every totalitarian ideology of the twentieth century was manufactured in the West and bears the marks of its provenance. In any case, "The scientific, rationalistic, industrial, pseudo-democratic civilization of the West is now in process of dissolution and it would be a lunatic absurdity for us at this moment to build blindly on that sinking foundation"<sup>17</sup>.

All this boils down to the fact that the ideas and ideals presented by Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Gandhi

and Dr Ambedkar are more humane, faultless or pertinent for the purpose of understanding and training around the subject human rights. Therefore, in any educational course, syllabi and essential reading materials as well as for training, sensitising programmes precedence should be given to the thoughts of these Indian great thinkers. Only then our students and officials can fully appreciate the Western documents in perspective. Then they will be more realistic, wise and confident in the matters related with human rights.

In any case, a vague, sectarian and selfish concept of human beings and human rights cannot serve as a good foundation. It is essential that the concept be suitably understood for the purpose of education and training of officials, administrators and educators. Without having a comparative understanding of the nature of human beings and the consequent scope of what is being perceived as human rights, especially for our country, various institutions and agencies might be working to dissimilar purposes and to their own narrow, sectarian and concealed intentions. Without this understanding our policy makers, administrators, officers, students, teachers and educational institutions might feel bewildered very soon as to what is behind the idea of human rights sensitisation. Is it to make people more humane or bitterer? Is it to make them more lenient to all kind of imperialist ideologies and terrorism? Is it to make people kind or more selfish, more dutiful or more right oriented, more social or more indifferent? We all must find out,



with an open mind, free from pre-fabricated constructs and given dogmas, and free from the 'moral' pressure generated by vested interests. We must continue our search and discourse keeping in mind what Sri Aurobindo had called the difference between the spiritual and mental view of existence: "The spiritual view holds that the mind, life, body are man's means and not his aims and even that they are not his last and highest means; it sees them as his

outer instrumental self and not his whole being." Always keeping this difference in mind can we make any social science discourse more relevant and thought-provoking? Losing it will make our entire academic exercise, as it has largely been, just a pathetic repetition of frequently changing (and often serving a particular 'national' interest) Western doctrines and theories. It has not made our social science academics respectable on the world arena.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 SRI AUROBINDO, "Asiatic Democracy", *Bande Mataram*, March 16, 1908.
- 2 ERNEST BARKER, *Principles of Social and Political Theory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 242-43.
- 3 JEAN-PIERRE LEHMANN, "The Dangers of Monotheism in the Age of Globalisation" in *The Globalist*, (online daily), Washington, March 30, 2006.
- 4 ANDREW SULLIVAN, "Is this a religious war?" in *Span*, the journal of the US Embassy in New Delhi, March-April 2002.
- 5 CAROLYN D. LEWIS in *Time*, New York, Dec. 25, 2006/January 1, 2007.
- 6 SRI AUROBINDO, "A Preface on National Education" in *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2004), thirteenth impression, pp. 14-15.
- 7 GANDHI'S *Hind Swaraj* has a small chapter on the 'philosophy of civilization' where Gandhi very perceptively analysed the lopsided view of the human being in the Western discourse.
- 8 See, for example, SAMUIL ZIVS, *Human Rights: Continuing the Discussion* (Moscow: Progress Publishers), 1980. Representing the erstwhile Soviet ideology Zivs has presented an understanding of human rights which is very from the Western notion or that represented by Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch etc.
- 9 Citing instances of women being summarily divorced, over phone and through telegrams, noted lyricist Hasan Kamal calls it "a heinously irresponsible act which cannot be challenged in court because our personal law says it is fine. Would you believe, some men have actually divorced their wives because they were displeased with the meal prepared by them?!" (*Indian Express*, online edition, 13 Sept 2004). However, in general Muslim representatives do not speak about it. They also want others to keep mum since they regard it as an internal affair of Islam. Therefore, not open under human rights or any other consideration. According to Tahseen Usmani, for instance, "Whether triple talaq in one sitting is valid or not cannot be decided by discussions, arguments and counter-arguments in newspapers and TV channels. This sensitive issue could only be solved by ulema, muftis and religious scholars belonging to different schools of thought within the limits of Shariat." ("Why media is worried about triple talaq" by in *The Milli Gazette*, New Delhi, October 16-31, 2004).

10 *Muta'h* is a fixed-term marriage contract according to *Shariat* (Islamic law). The duration of this type of marriage is fixed at its inception and is then automatically dissolved upon completion of its term. The duration can be of any length, even few minutes or hours. By its very nature its intent is questionable.

To exemplify, an incident in Hyderabad: "In ten minutes of one another, Afreen (17), Farheen (20) and Sultana (19) were married. To a stinking rich 60-year-old sheikh from the Emirates named Mohammed Baquer Khan. He paid the parents of the Rs 10,000 each and promised another Rs 10,000 each plus visas for their families to move to the UAE." (*The Telegraph*, Calcutta, 15 August 2005). The girls filed a complaint with police that the sheikh had disappeared after spending several days with them at a city lodge. This is not an isolated incident. For its frequent occurrence it has got a particular name in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala: 'Arab marriage'.

To take another example, in Kashmir numerous foreign jihadis used it at will to satisfy their lust. Noted columnist Varsha Bhosle wrote, "Under Mutah, a militant could enter into a contract marriage for, say, a period of two years with a girl of his choice, and on completion of that period, the marriage stood automatically annulled. Thereafter, the girl is left to her own fate, with the burden of social stigma and the responsibility of single-handedly rearing the progeny of the union for the rest of her life." ('Human Rights Violations in Kashmir', *rediff.com*, 25 January 2000).

11 Infibulation is also known as female genital mutilation (FGM), female genital cutting (FGC) etc. The UN documents use the terminology of FGM. For a brief description, see the "Female genital mutilation", Fact sheet N°241, May 2008, by World Health Organisation.

In Islamic texts it is referred to as *khafd* or *khifad*. FGC is practiced in mostly Islamic countries. Especially in Middle East and Africa. As a result, according to World Health Organisation, every year two million young girls die of sepsis or loss of blood. (Oriana Fallaci, *The Force of Reason*, (New York: Rizzoli International, 2006), p. 220).

For a detailed exposition of the problem and horror see Marianne Sarkis, "Female Genital Cutting (FGC): An Introduction" (<http://www.fgmnetwork.org/intro/fgmintro.php>). To raise awareness about this barbaric practice the United Nations has declared February 6 as "International Day Against Female Genital Mutilation".

Also see, "Female Genital Mutilation: Report of a WHO Technical Working Group, Geneva, 17-19 July, 1995." World Health Organisation: Geneva. 1996.

The renowned author Ayaan Hirsi Ali has described it in her famous book, "Infidel" (New York: Free Press, 2007), pps 112-113,143. This is useful to understand the feelings of a hapless victim of FGC.

Still, Islamic scholars defend the practice. In 1994, Egyptian *Mufti* Sheikh Jad Al-Hâqq argued that the procedure may not be banned simply on grounds of improper use. Al-Azhar University in Cairo had issued several *fatwas* endorsing FGC, in 1949, 1951 and 1981. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Female\\_genital\\_cutting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Female_genital_cutting)). Similarly, Sheikh Musa Mohammed Omer, a member of the Executive Committee of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Ethiopia explained and defended the practice. During the sub-regional conference on female genital mutilation in February 2005 in Djibouti he explained (in an interview, given to IRIN, an UN information network) the position of Islam in relation to FGM and why he continues to support certain forms of the practice

Q: Why is the practice of female circumcision important in the Muslim religion?

A: Our Islamic scholars believe that female circumcision is different from male circumcision. They have a strong view that female circumcision is allowed, and that there is no evidence from Islamic sources prohibiting female circumcision, unless it is pharaonic

(for full text of the interview see <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=15&ReportId=62475>).

- 12 See, "Text of the Question and fatwa on Imrana" in *The Milli Gazette*, New Delhi, 6 July 2005.  
 Imrana Case: The woman was raped by her father-in-law. However instead of proceeding under the criminal courts for action as a first recourse, a Fatwa was issued by Dar – Ul – Uloom [Deoband] stating her marriage with her husband to stand nullified and directing her to marry her father-in-law.  
 Gudia's case: Her husband went missing for 7 years which entitled her to consider the marriage dissolved according to Islamic laws. She contracted a second marriage. During her pregnancy from the second marriage her first husband returned. The religious leaders [of Deoband] pronounced a fatwa declaring her second marriage as void and directed her to return to her first husband without any consideration of the woman's choice. (Indira Jaisingh, "Working with the legislative, judicial and legal system to end institutional gender bias in the administration of justice and promote gender justice in the informal and parallel justice institutions", 18th-20th July 2007, Expert Group Meeting on CEDAW UNESCAP).
- 13 The Wadhwa Commission found that Graham Stains was not only a social worker but also a jealous missionary committed to spread of his faith and converting the tribals into Christianity. This resulted in group conversions of poor tribals, which is illegal in law. This was the root cause of anger among a section of the local Hindu population. About the Wadhwa Commission's findings the *Times of India* in its editorial (9 August 1999) commented, "This, however, is not to suggest that the [Wadhwa] report must be unreservedly welcomed. Some Christian organisations, for instance, have pointed to what certainly seem like discrepancies." Use of the word 'discrepancies' is a reluctant way to admit the truth of the report.
- 14 SHAM LAL, "The White Man's Burden" in *A Hundred Encounters* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2003), p. 206.
- 15 Some people object to the term. They should note that our National Security Adviser, one of the highest responsible official in our country, Shri M.K. Narayanan not only uses the term 'religious terrorism' but also consider it 'the greatest challenge' to the country. See *Dainik Tribune*, Chandigarh, 30 Nov. 2006.
- 16 From the speech delivered at a book release function held in New Delhi, Sept. 9, 2006.
- 17 SRI AUROBINDO, "A Preface on National Education" in the reference no. 6 above, p. 11.