# CONFERENCE ON WORLD RELIGIONS

ACCOMPANIED BY

### INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL PROGRAMS

AT THE COLDEN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

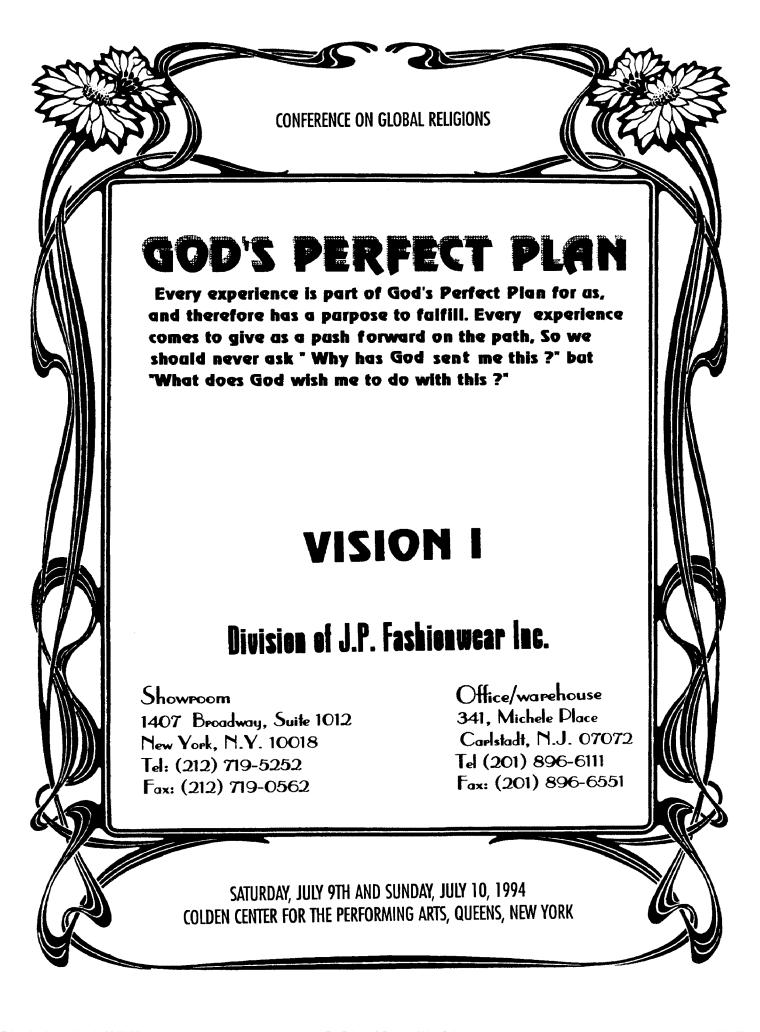
Queens, New York

SATURDAY, JULY 9th and SUNDAY, JULY 10th, 1994
ORGANIZED BY THE COUNCIL FOR THE CONFERENCE ON WORLD RELIGIONS

(A Non-Profit Organization)



"As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, varies though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee"



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#### THE COUNCIL FOR THE CONFERENCE ON WORLD RELIGIONS

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#### NOTES ON PARTICIPATING RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND SPEAKERS

#### Father Luis M. Dolan, C. P.

Director, International Programs and U. N. Representative, The Temple of Understanding; member of Congregation of the Passion, works at St. Emeric's R. C. Church in Manhattan; originally from Argentina, lives in New York; has worked in over 70 countries in community development and interreligious dialogue; conducted a major program on treatment of drug and alcohol addiction in former Soviet Union.

#### Sri Chinmoy

Founder and spiritual leader of centers all over the world dedicated to meditation and service; global ambassador for peace; author, lecturer, artist, musician, sportsman; in New York City since 1964; since 1970, has conducted peace meditations twice weekly at United Nations headquarters. Native of East Bengal, grew up at ashram in southern India; recipient of many honors and awards.

#### Kusumita Pedersen

Executive Director, Project on Religion and Human Rights, a new, independent organization; former executive director, Temple of Understanding; doctorate in religion from Columbia Univ., specializing in Buddhist studies; student of Sri Chinmoy since 1971.

#### Dr. Michael Tobias

Ecologist, author, film maker; most recent book, World War III, examines the impact of human population on bio-diversity; most recent novel, A Naked Man, concerns the life of Mahavira and the spirit of Jainism.

#### Rev. Irvine Breyer

Pastor, Queens Christian Life Center; Program Director, Southeast Queens Scatter Site Housing; member, Black-Jewish People to People Project, Queens College; active in intercommunal reconcilation, e.g., Howard Beach and Rosedale

#### Goswami Mathureswarji Maharaj

Descendent of Sri Vallabhacharya, one of five classical Hindu acharyas (teachers); scholar of Hindu scriptures; proponent of Sanatana Vedic Dharma; Pushtimarg school of Vaishnavism; renowned worldwide for religious discourses; inspired and guided the establishment of several Hindu temples in U.S.A. and other countries.

#### Rev. Guo Yuan

Representative of American Buddhist Confederation; Vice-President, Ch'an Meditation Center, Queens; trained under Master Sheng Yen in Chinese Mahayana tradition; trained as a monk at Nung Ch'an Monastery, Taiwan. Studied Theravada Buddhism in Thailand.

#### Muni Kirti Chandra Vijayji (Bandhu Truputi)

Internationally known teacher of meditation; at age eleven, received spiritual initiation from Jain master Prem Suri Maharaj; intensive studies in Jainism and world religions; research scholar in Jain meditation, yoga and Indian philosophy.

#### Jonathan Granoff (Ahamed Muhaiyaddeen)

Spiritual son of H. H. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen. U. N. Representative of Lawyers Alliance for World Security; Chairman, International/United Nations Committee of Temple of Understanding; Vice President, NGO Committee on Disarmament at U. N.; Secretary, Society for Interreligious Intercultural Dialogue.

#### Dr. William Vendley

Secretary-General, World Conference on Religion and Peace/International, largest international multi-religious organization committed to peace and shared, effective action. Has done path breaking work on the role of religions in creating peace. Former dean and professor of theology, R. C. Major Seminary, Huntington, L.I.

#### Dr. Daniel Gomez-Ibanez

Executive Director, 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions, Chicago; Founder, Peace Council; Trustee, The Millenium Institute

#### Mother Teresa

Winner of Nobel Peace Prize. Founder and Mother General, Missionaries of Charity. Lives in Calcutta.

#### Dr. Anand Mohan

Secretary-Treasurer, Council of Hindu Temples of North America; on Queens College faculty since 1967, teaches philosophy and political science.

#### Al-Hajj Muhsin M. R. Alidina

Co-chair, Council for the Conference on World Religions; lexicographer, University of Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania; educational consultant and teacher of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Imam Al-Khoei Foundation, New York.

#### Dr. Arvind Sharma

Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University, Montreal. Editor of *Our Religions*, published 1993 by Harper Collins in connection with Parliament of the World's Religions. Has written extensively on modern Hinduism and Swami Vivekananda.

#### Dr. Harnam Singh Shan

Project investigator for University Grants Commission, New Delhi; Senior Fellow, Indian Council of Historical Research; former head of Departments of Panjabi and Sikh Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

#### Swami Tathagatananda

Leader, Vedanta Society of New York; senior monk, Ramakrishna order; educated in Calcutta; joined the order 1955; took final vows 1964; worked in several educational centers of the order in India before coming to the United States in 1977; author of several books on Vedanta and other subjects.

#### Dr. Mohammad T. Mehdi

Secretary General of National Council on Islamic Affairs; Ph.D. Univ. of California at Berkeley; specialist in U.S. constitutional law; author of ten books on international relations between U.S. and Muslim world; civil libertarian, active in interreligious affairs.

#### Pravrajika Bhaktiprana

Senior nun, Ramakrishna Order; associated with Vedanta Society of New York from 1945; from 1954 with Vedanta Society of Southern California, where she joined the Order same year; took final vows 1965; active in Interreligious Council of Southern California.

#### Gurudev Chitrabhanuji

Founded Divine Knowledge Society of Bombay, which provides humanitarian and educational assistance; first Jain master to leave India, coming to Europe in 1970, the U.S. in 1971; founded World Fellowship of Religions in America. Author of many books on Jain philosophy; leader, Jain Meditation Center, New York.

#### Nana Apeadu

First woman chief of a tribe in eastern Ghana. Masters degree in cultural anthropology from Queens College. Sociologist, specializing in human rights and justice. President of Pan-African Human Rights Council, Inc., New York City.

#### Swami Purnatmananda

Senior monk, Bharat Sevashram Sangha, Hindu religious organization specializing in social service.

#### Rabbi Lori Forman

National Interreligious Affairs Program Specialist, American Jewish Committee. Member, first rabbinical school class of Jewish Theological Seminary which included women. Received Master of Hebrew Letters and Rabbinic Ordination 1988. Founding editor of *Ramah: The Magazine*.

#### **Brother Imran Hosein**

Director of Islamic Studies for the Joint Committee of Muslim Organizations in New York. Born Trinidad, educated in Egypt, Pakistan, Switzerland and West Indies. Academic background: religion, philosophy and international relations.

#### Sister B.K. Mohini Panjabi

Primary representative of Brahma Kumaris to world conferences; founder of numerous meditation centers; lecturer and administrator for Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University for over 30 years.

#### Shah Sufi Mohammed Nural Alam

World Peace Envoy and Permanent Representative to United Nations; Secretary General, World Spiritual Assembly; Secretary General, International Organization for World Peace, Disarmament, Development and Human Rights; Khalifa, Dayera Sharif and Co-Founder, Dayemi Complex, Bangladesh.

#### Bernard Tetsugen Glassman

Abbot of the Zen Community of New York; founder of Greyston Mandala, a community development network; Co-chair of the Temple of Understanding and Sarvodaya USA; board member of national and local service organizations.

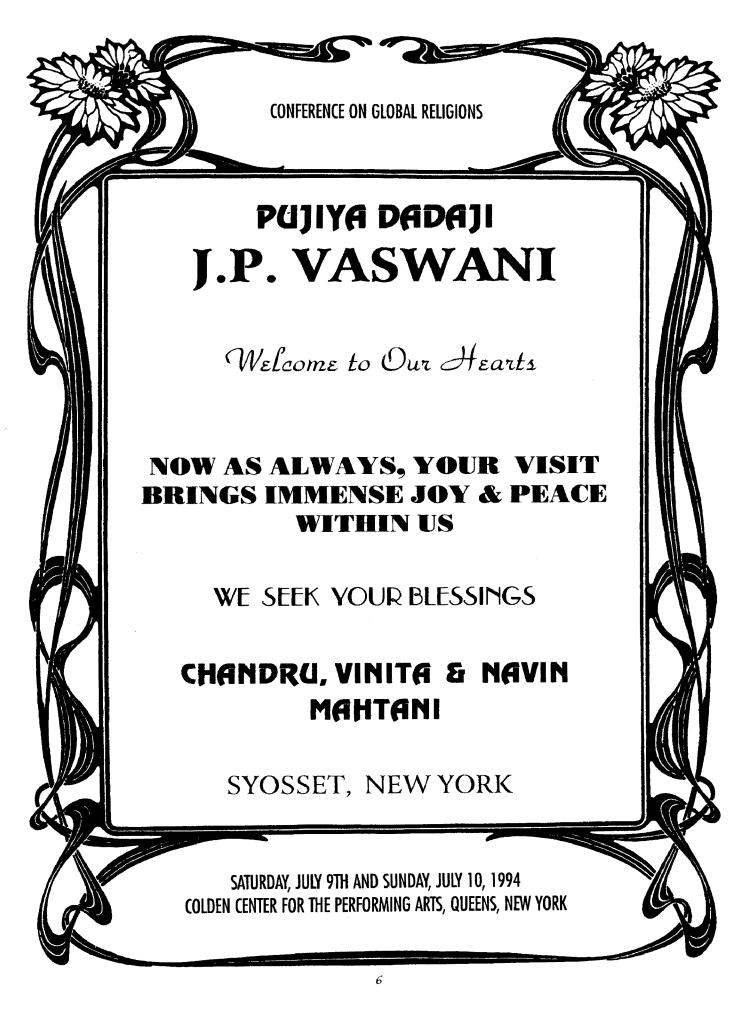
#### Rev. Ruben Ayala

Minister, Hutterite Church, Rifton, New York.

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At Last Sprots Wear, Inc.	\$1	,500.00
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Garden State Cultural Association	\$	200.00
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Also we have received donations of various amounts from many of our friends. We regret that due to space restrictions we could not publish all names. We sincerely appreciate all the donors and advertisers.



#### CONVOCATION OF GLOBAL RELIGIONS

Colden Center for the Performing Arts, Queens College, New York

#### **SCHEDULE**

#### SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1994

9:40: Musical Prelude: Songs and chants: Shikshayatan Cultural Center

#### 10:00--12:30: OPENING PLENARY SESSION:

Opening procession of religious leaders and other speakers Musical accompaniment: Shikshayatan Cultural Center and Vedanta Society Choir.

Welcoming: Dr. Brajadulal Mukherjee

Lamp lighting ceremony

Meditation: Sri Chinmoy

Overview of the Convocation: Father Luis M. Dolan

Addresses by civic leaders

Introduction of keynote speaker: Kusumita Pedersen

Keynote address: Dada Vaswani

Blessings of spiritual leaders

Homage to Acharya Sushil Kumarji: Father Dolan

Special music for the Convocation:

The New York Concert Singers and The Vedanta Society Choir

Convocation Hymn: The World We Seek

#### **CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND LECTURES**;

#### 12:30—2:45:

Mrs. Rama Kanjilal—songs of Meera Bai

**Speaker: Dr. Michael Tobias**Gitanjali Talukdar—Bengali song

Rachna Sarang Academy of Kathak Dance (first segment)

Speaker: Rev. Irvine Breyer

India Cultural Center—songs

Speaker: Mathureswarji Maharaj

American Buddhist Confederation—chanting and song

Speaker: Rev. Guo Yuan

Rachna Sarang Academy of Kathak Dance (second segment)

<u>2:45—5:00:</u>

Speaker: Muni Kirti Chandra Vijayji (Bandhu Truputi)

Mrs. Ranganayaki Sreenivasan and group—Karnatak classical music

Speaker: Jonathan Granoff: Ahamed Muhaiyaddeen

Mrs. Beena Menon and group, with Mrs. Lekha Sreenivasan—dances (first segment)

Speaker: Dr. William Vendley

Ebony Ecumenical Ensemble—African and African-American songs

Speaker: Dr. Daniel Gomez-Ibanez

Mrs. Beena Menon and group, with Mrs. L. Sreenivasan—dances (second segment)

<u>5:00—7:00</u>

Speaker: Mother Teresa

Savitri Ramanand and group—Karnatak classical music

Speaker: Dr. Anand Mohan

Mrs. Lekha Sreenivasan and group—Candle Dance

Speaker: Al-Hajj Muhsin M.R. Alidina

Mrs. Chandrika Kurup and group—classical dances

*7:00*—*9:00* 

Speaker: Dr. Arvind Sharma

Ms. Rajarajeswari and group—classical and folk dances

Speaker: Dr. Harman Singh Shan

Natyalaya: Asian Indian School of classical and folk dancing

Speaker: Swami Tathagatananda

East-West School of Dance—Satya Narayana Charka

#### **SUNDAY, JULY 10, 1994**

9:45: Musical prelude: Sipra Banerjee and group—Bengali songs

#### **CULTURAL PROGRAMS AND LECTURES**;

<u>10:00—12:00</u>

Sri Chinmoy, flute; group singing

Speaker: Dr. Mohammad T. Mehdi

Innergy Dance Company, with poetry of Sant Darshan Singh

Speaker: Pravrajika Bhaktiprana

Mrs. Chander Ahuja and group—chanting

Speaker: Gurudev Chitrabhanuji Swati Bhise and students—dances Speaker: Chief Nana Apeadu

12:00-2:00

Shikshayatan Cultural Center—dances

Speaker: Swami Purnatmananda

Natya Anubhava: Nalini Rao and group—dances

Speaker: Rabbi Lori Forman

Avodah Dance Ensemble with Cantor Bruce Ruben—Biblical stories

**Speaker: Brother Imran Hosein** Gujarati Samaj—Krishna Dance

2:00—3:30

Jain Center of New York—songs and dances

Speaker: Sister B.K. Mohini Panjabi

Garden State Cultural Association—Songs on Vivekananda

Speaker: H. H. Shah Sufi Mohammed Nurul Alam

Kallol of New Jersey

A word of appreciation: Mr. P. N. Jain

#### 3:30—4:00: CLOSING PLENARY SESSION:

Interfaith prayer service



#### **CULTURAL PROGRAM**

## SHIKSHAYATAN CULTURAL CENTER INC. 146-29 Hawthorn Ave., Flushing, NY 11355

President and Director Smt. Purnima A. Desai

1. Recitation of Stotras, Shlokas, Mantras and Poem by

Purnima Desai Navina Shere Komal Desai Krupa Oza Dimple Parikh Tejal Desai Vasant Patharker Kaveeta Desai Tanya Bajaj Parag Oza Rashrea Boodhan Neil Bajai Vidya Misir Charita Boodhan Rohini Prabhu Vimal Shere Keeran Boodhan Rashmi Prabhu Nitin Varma David Taylor Shalaka Khare Praveen Gowtham Shaila Patharkar Manisha Srivastava Kavita Shreenivasan Sachin Varma Ravi Singh Anil Misir Shulabha Khare Kapil Varma Devi Misir Radha Prabhu

2. Group - Devotional Songs: Director: Smt. Purnima A. Desai

Music: Sangeetratna Shri Kamal Mishra

3. Group - Devotional Dances: Gayatri Vandana, Krishna Leela, Ganpati Vandan and Shiv Vandana

By: Komal Desai, Krupa Oza, and

Tejal Desai

4. Bal Ramayan: 1) Dimple Parikh 2) Kaveeta Desai 3) Tanya Bajaj

4) Rashrea Boodhan 5) Keeran Boodhan 6) Charita Boodhan

7) Rohini Prabhu 8) Rashmi Prabhu

#### RACHNA SARANG ACADEMY OF KATHAK DANCE

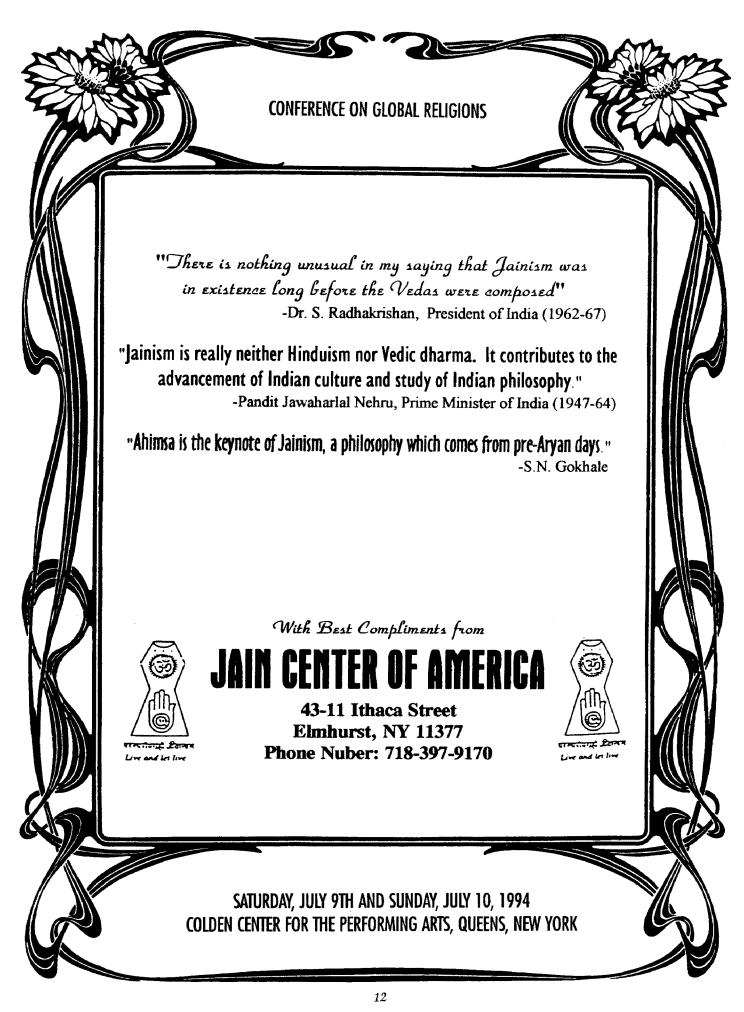
Director: Rachna Sarang

Participants: Kavita Shah Komal Pandya

Surarthi Jain Taruna Jain Ragini Shah Vaishali Anand Nina Thakur Anjali Chopra

Ekta Sancheti Shareta Kotawala

Trupti Sevak



#### EAST WEST SCHOOL OF DANCE R.D. 3, Box 141, Sapphire Road, Monroe, NY 10950 Tel: 914-783-7514 / 783-5575

ESTD: 1981

Founder:-

Shri Brahmananda Sarasvatt Udasina

Director and Choreographer:-Pandit Satya Narayan Charka

1. Shanti Mantra: "May There Be Peace On Earth"

Music: Pt. Ravi Shankar

2. Holi Celebration: North Indian Festival - Glory of Spring

Music: Smt. Maya Rao

3. Tarana Kalawati: Kathak Dance

Choreography: Pt. Birju Maharaj

4. Bahurang: Colorful Exciting Dance

Music: Pt. Ravi Shankar

Dancers:-

Sharmili Basu

Vandana Nagaraj

Amani Zamani

Rupal Pandya Mayura Casuba Apra Bhandari

Runa Bhattacharya

Malini Sur

Amy Parekh Swagata Biswas Aditi Shastri

Meera Malhotra

Anandita De Ashika Jain Amisha Ajmera

Supria Verma

Bhaswati Bhattachary Romani Kalicharran

INSTITUTE OF CHUNG-HWA BUDDHIST CULTURE

90-56 Corona Ave., Elmhurst, NY 1133

Tel: 718-592-6593

1. The Incense Anthem: By Monks and Nuns

Reverend Ji Ru

" Yi Chad

Reverand Yah Qi

Reverend Re Fa

Reverend .

Ji Ven

Guo Yuan

" Hong Vi

31 1 01

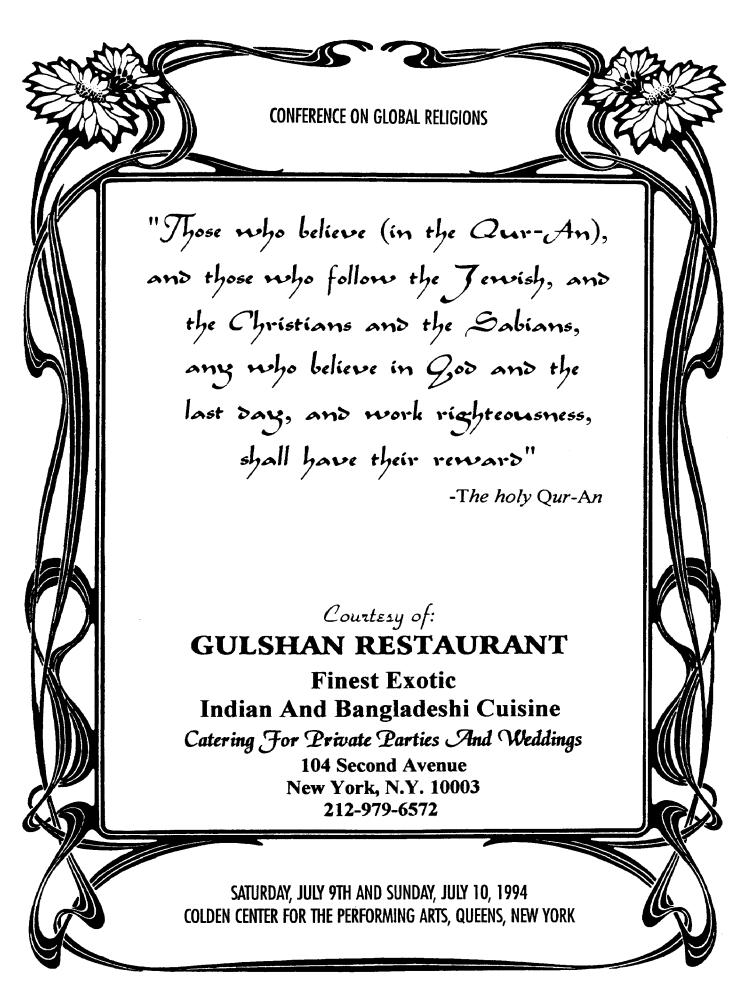
Guo i uan

" Zsi Ming

Chi Miu

' Chueh Shin

2. Song: "Blessed Refuges" by Jia Hao Xu



#### BEENA MENON AND GROUP W/ LEKHA SHREENIVASAN

1. Indian Classical Dance: Beena Menon w/ Mookambika Sthuthi, Leeki Nair, Maya Mohan, Preethp Nair, Nisha Pathickal, Betsy Jacob, Christina John, Tejna Thomas, Ashly Jacob

2. Cholketu: Beena Menon, Anita Mitra, and Maya Mohan

3. Burmese and Indian

Candle Dance: Lekha Shreenivasan, Shalini Goel, Vandana Gokhale, Bina Mistry, Nanditha Rodrigo, Radhika Wakankar, Rosemary Nicholas, Meenakshi Gogna, Aparna Vadhri

4. Shivaparvathi: Lekha Shreenivasan, Reena Menon, Rekha Sivdasan, Saira Banu, Maya Mohan, Anita Mitra

#### SMT. RANGANAYAKI SRINIVASAN

is an excellent singer, as well as veena player from Madras, South India. Srinivasan has performed South Indian music and dance in the U.S.A. and in Canada. She is a concert vocalist in the tri-state area and performs regularly at the Hindu Temple in NYC and other Indian Associations since 1971.

#### SMT. SAVITHRI RAMANAND

is a born artist. At the age of four she was invited into Indian classical Carnatic music. She is one of younger sisters amongst the popularly known "Bombay Sisters."

#### Participants:-

Savithri Ramanand Swapna Gopinath Vidya Kishore Sudha Menon Smitha Mohan Anu Nair Manju Nair Sangeetha Nair Runa Rajagopal Finny George Eldho Kuriakose Sujit Moolayil

#### MRS. CHANDRIKA KURUP

is a famous dance artist from Hyderbad, India. She has performed dances all over India and abroad several times. She is a winner of many awards, including the "Natya Kala Ratnam" award.



#### OUR PRIDE: RAJA RAJESHWARI

Raja Rajeshwari Ramanathan, "Prima donna of Indian Dance" began her dance carrier at the age of three. She completed advance study in Kalashetra style and has mastered in the Kuchipudi style. With her stunning personality and great performances, she has received the highest honor of being facilitated by the President of India. She is one of the best TV artist in India.

#### NATYALAYA 208 Powder Mill Rd., Morris Plains, NJ 07950

Asian-Indian school of classical and folk dance for over 17 years. Lakshmi Anand was awarded many prizes and was admired by Indian and American Presidents for best performance in dance.

Dance Director: Lakshmi Anand

1. Natanam Aadinar: Cosmic Dance (Tamil)

Participants: Amisha Parekh, Reema Mehta, Ripple Saraiya, and Sumita Lalwani

2. "Varnam" "Madhe, Malaye Dwaja" (Tamil)

Music: Muthayabhagavadhar

Participants: Anuradha Anand and Sumita Lalwani

3. "Thillana" (Sanskrit)

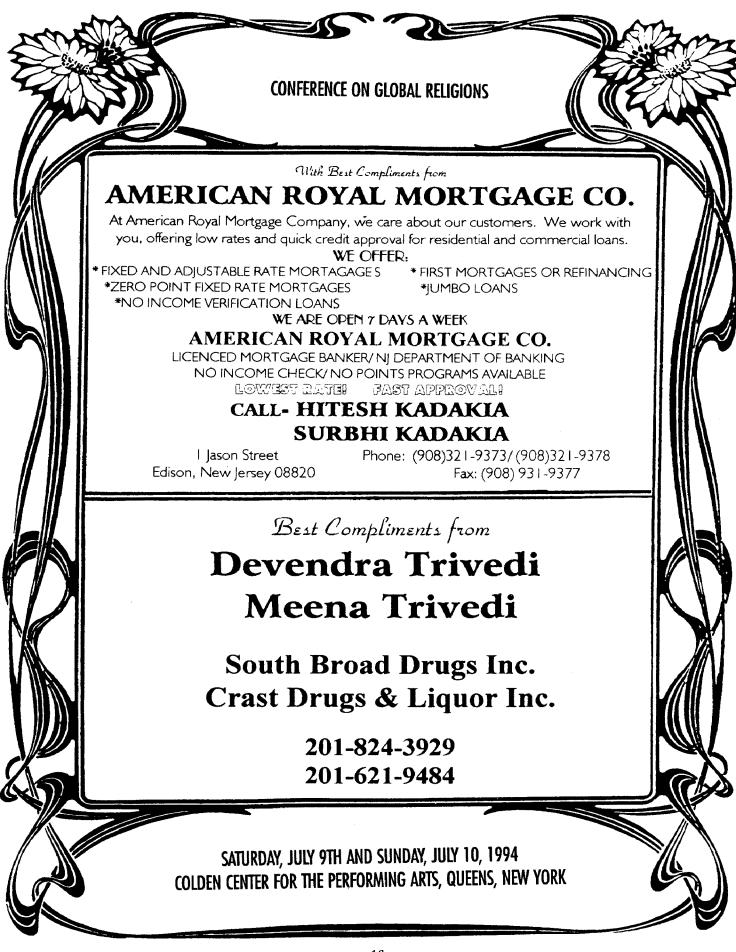
Participants: Amisha Parikh, Reema Mehta, Ripple Saraiya, and Anjali Patel

4. "Dolkar" Maharashtrian Fisherwoman Folk Dance

Participants: Amisha Parikh, Anjali Patel, Ripple Saraiya, and Gigi Vadakkedam

5. "Rumaal Dance" (Telugu Gypsy Dance)

Participants: Sumitha Lalwani, Sunita Alapaty, Sangeeta Abkari, Reema Mehta, Rupa Parikh, Gigi Vadakkedam, Neesha Kavi



#### 6. "Raas" [Gujarati Stick Dance]

Participants: Anuradha Anand, Sumitha Lalwani,

Amisha Parikh, Ripple Saraiya, Sunitha

Alapaty, Sangitha Abkari, Urvi Seth, Lina Shah, Sejal Patel, Archana Patel, Anjali Patel, Jyothi

Navani, Gigi Vadakkedam, Neesha Kavi, Rupa Parikh

and Reema Desai

#### DEBBIE ROTHWELL: INNERGY DANCE COMPANY

720 Monroe St., Hoboken, NJ 07030

Tel: 201-656-5600

Peotry by Saint Darshan Singh; focuses on the themes of Universal Love, Peace, and Human Unity - winner of Urdu Academy awards. James Rothwell is a classical singer and will do a combination of Indian classical music with instrumentation of the west by Smt. Harbhajan Kavr.

#### Dancers:-

Debbie Rothwell - Lost Soul Lisa Dondero - Cup filled with Ecstasy Bianca Bockman - Air Dancing in Ecstasy

#### Tresses of the Beloved:-

Crystal Roman

Shireen Aziz

Kate Shiel

Vanessa Rodriguez

Valerie Lanotte

#### SARASWATI KALA MANDIR

Founder and Director: Smt. Chander Ahuja

Participants: Smt. Chander Ahuja, Ashish Ankola, Piyali Bhattacharya,

Romit Bhattacharya, Neena Deb Sen, Shivani Mistri,

Bharat Patel, Rohini Raymurthy, Jay Patel

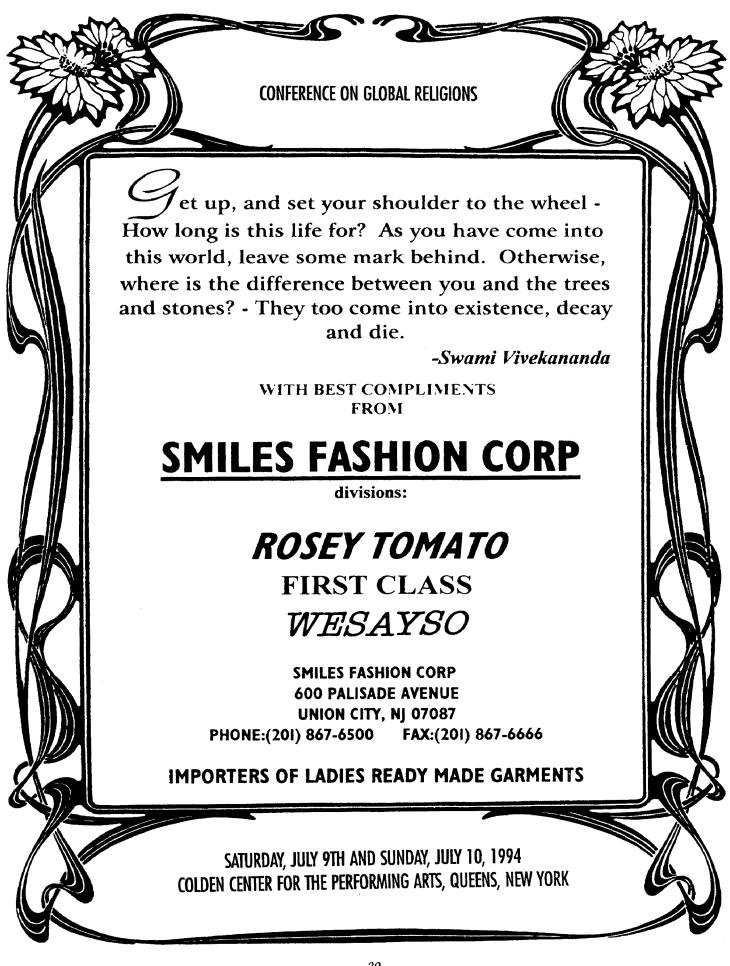
Dancers: Director and Founder of

Natya - Anubhava - Nalini Rau

Participants: Esha Dasgupta, Neena Debsen, Monica Dhar, Kalpana

Doraiswamy, Shalini Ghosh, Anjali Jagoda, Anita

Kalathara, Anjali Kar, Viveka Mandyan, Nina Parakadavil, Rohini Rau Murthy, Carol-Ann Stenson, Sonia Wendorf.



#### **SWATI BHISE** 101 West 81st Street, New York, NY 10024 Tel: 212-877-1450

Swati Bhise is a great dancer and concert performer. She has performed extensive art in Bharatnatyam and Indian Classical Dance in India and the U.S.A.

Director: Swati Bhise

Group Dance: Swati Bhise, Alarippu, Keertanam, Mandodarisavdam, Tillana

#### DR. NALINI RAO AND GROUP

Group Cultural Dance - Natya Anubhava Founder and Director - Dr. Nalini Rao

Dancers

Rohini Rao Murthy Monica Dhar Esha DAsgupta Nina Parakadavil

Neena Deb Sen Anita Kalathara Viveka Mandyan Shalini Ghosh Sonia Wendorf Anjali Kar

THE AVODAH DANCE ENSEMBLE 243 5th Street, No. 9, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Director and Choreographer: Joanne Tucker

Halleluyah: An interpretation of the 150th Palm

Dancer:

The Company

Music:

Beniie Ellen Schiller

Vocal Soloist: Cantor Bruce Ruben

M'Chamocha:

Dancer:

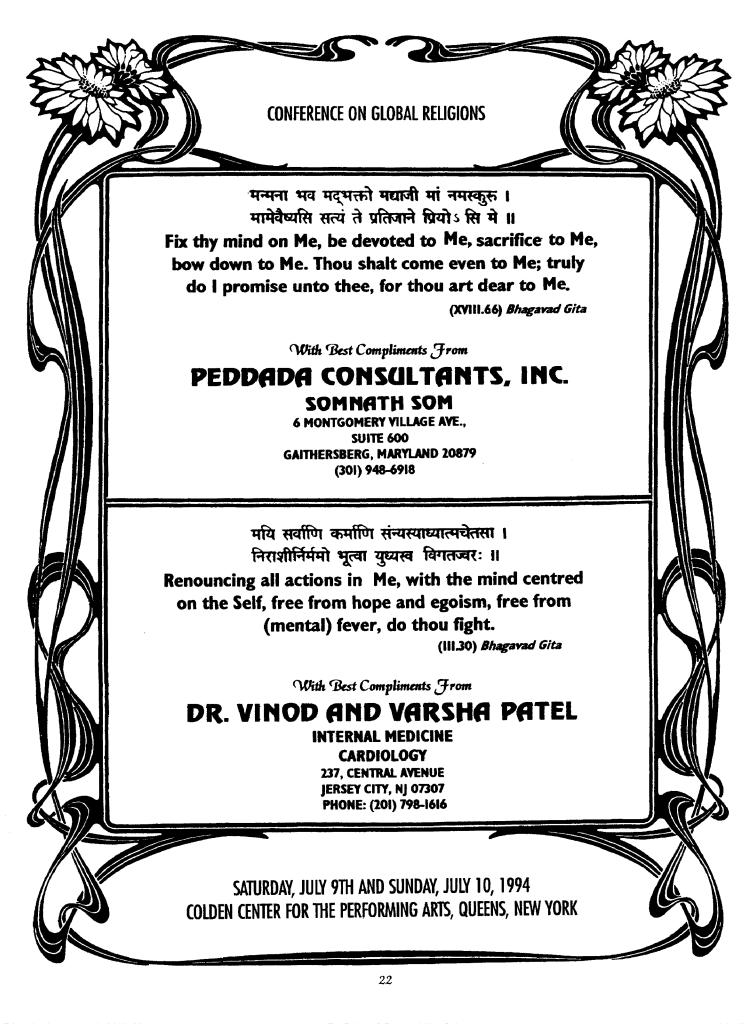
Beth Millstein

Kezia Glecknan Hoyman

Elizabeth McPherson

Music

Deborah Bedor



Binding:

Dancers: The Company

Developed by: Joanne Tucker

Rabbie Norman Cohen

Vocal Soloists:

Cantor Mark Childs Cantor Bruce Ruben

#### GUJARATI SAMAJ OF NEW YORK 173-15 Horace Harding Expressway, Flushing, NY 11365

#### Krishna Dance

Directors and Choreographers: Bharati Desai and Sweta Desai

Participants: Sweta Desai

veta Desai Gopi Desai

Shreya Patel

Shenna Patel

Deepali Shah

Roma Shah

Kety Patel

Sonal Patel

Toral Shah

Vibha Lakhani

Nisha Shah

Jalak Patel

#### JAIN CENTER OF AMERICA 43-11 Ithaca Street, Elmhurst, NY 11373 718-803-0195 ~ 718-397-9170

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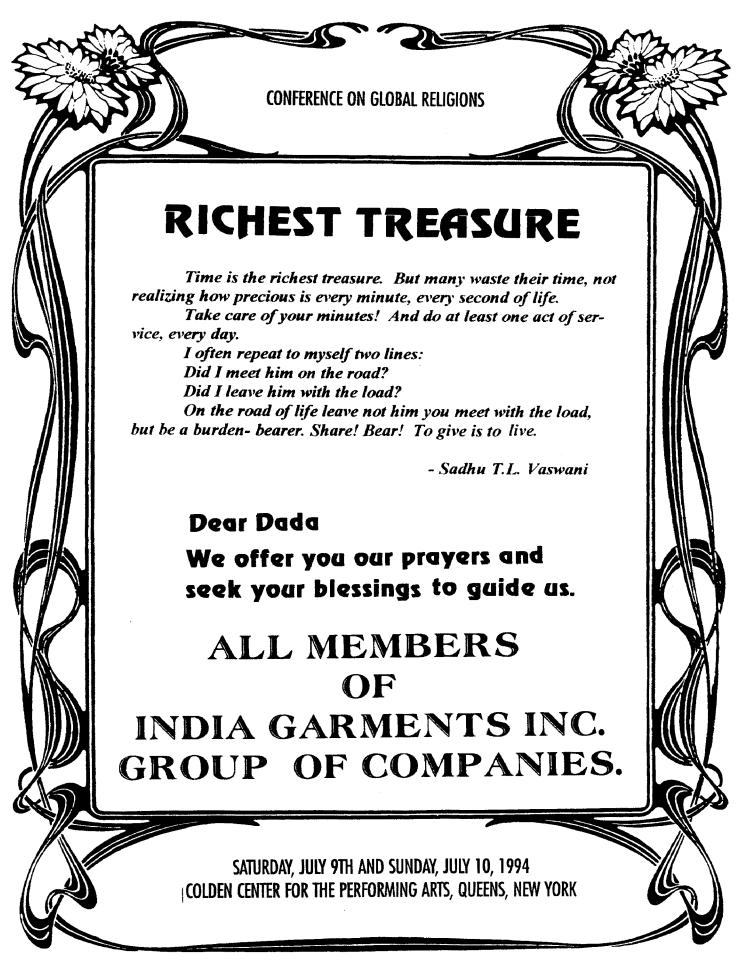
#### 1. Khichdee Taal

An excellent presentation of cultural harmony of all states in India with musical variety on exceptional pyramid view.

Directors: Abhay Mehta and Smt. Kirti Sanghavi

Participants:

Purvi Shah Toral Shah Dimple Vora Bijal Shah Monica Shah Archana Sanghavi Krupa Patel Minini Dalal Malvin Shah Dimple Sanghavi Mehul Shah Pami Shah Nikhil Karnavat Sandeep Sanghavi Paras Shah Akhil Karnavat Prashant Shah Kalpin Shah Samir Jain **Kunal Shah** Neal Mehta Ronak Tolia Neeshal Desai Pratiksha Mukhtiyar



#### 2. Gujarati Dance

Director: Vibha Lakhani

Participants: Nisha Shah, Nishita Shah,

Vibha Lakhani, Monica Panchamia

#### INDIAN CULTURAL CENTER

Principal: Tulsi Sengupta

Director: Anima Ray Chaudhury

Performers:
Gopa Basu
Madhumita Chaudhury
Ashok Chaudhury
Shyamal Sardar
Banti Sengupta
Ashish Sengupta
Manisha Gangopadhyay

<u>Tabla</u>: Tapan Modak

#### KALLOL OF NEW JERSEY

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#### EXCERPTS FROM SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S ADDRESSES AT THE PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS, CHICAGO, 1893

At the opening session, September 11, 1893:

....I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings:

"As the different streams, having their sources in different places, all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to Me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendent, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.

September 15, 1893:

I will tell you a little story. You have heard the eloquent speaker who has just finished say, "Let us cease from abusing each other," and he was very sorry that there should be always so much variance.

But I think I should tell you a story which would illustrate the cause of this variance. A frog lived in a well. It had lived there for a long time. It was born there and brought up there, and yet was a little, small frog. Of course the evolutionists were not there then to tell us whether the frog lost its eyes or not, but, for our story's sake, we must take for granted that it had its eyes, and that it every day cleansed the water of all the worms and bacilli that lived in it with an energy that would do credit to our modern bacteriologists. In this way it went on and became a little sleek and fat. Well, one day another frog that lived in the sea came and fell into the well.

"Where are you from?"



"I am from the sea."

"The sea! How big it that? Is it as big as my well?" and he took a leap from one side of the well to the other.

"My friend," said the frog of the sea, "how do you compare the sea with your little well?"

Then the frog took another leap and asked, "Is your sea so big?"

"What nonsense you speak, to compare the sea with your well!"

"Well, then," said the frog of the well, "nothing can be bigger than my well; there can be nothing bigger than this; this fellow is a liar, so turn him out."

This has been the difficulty all the while.

I am a Hindu. I am sitting in my own little well and thinking that the whole world is my little well. The Christian sits in his little well and thinks the whole world is his well. The Muslim sits in his little well and thinks that is the whole world. I have to thank you of America for the great attempt you are making to break down the barriers of this little world of ours, and hope that, in the future, the Lord will help you to accomplish your purpose.

September 19, 1893:

....The whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only evolving a God out of the material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them. Why, then, are there so many contradictions? They are only apparent.... The contradictions come from the same truth adapting itself to the varying circumstances of different natures.

It is the same light coming through glasses of different colors. And these little variations are necessary for purposes of adaptation. But in the heart of everything the same truth reigns.

....If there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahmanic or Buddhist, Christian or Muslim, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for, every human being, from the lowest grovelling savage not far removed from the brute, to the highest man towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity, making society stand in awe of him and doubt his human nature. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will



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recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centered in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature.

Address at the final session, September 27, 1893:

The World's Parliament of Religions has become an accomplished fact, and the merciful Father has helped those who labored to bring it into existence, and crowned with success their most unselfish labor.

My thanks to those noble souls whose large hearts and love of truth first dreamed this wonderful dream and then realized it. My thanks to the shower of liberal sentiments that has overflowed this platform. My thanks to this enlightened audience for their uniform kindness to me and for their appreciation of every thought that tends to smooth the friction of religions. A few jarring notes were heard from time to time in this harmony. My special thanks to them, for they have, by their striking contrast, made general harmony the sweeter.

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian would become a Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid.

The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, inspite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."



# In Religion's Name

The world sorely needs the vision upon which William Penn helped found Philadelphia; the Holy Experiment in religious tolerance. Since 1989, with the ending of the Cold War, there have been over 33 armed conflicts, each with casualties in excess of 1,000 people, many with millions of refugees.

"The extent of present religious ethnic conflict goes beyond the borders of sanity," says Professor Leonard Swidler of Temple University. Protestants and Catholics blow each other up in northern Ireland. Hindus and Buddhists massacre each other in Sri Lanka. Sikhs and Hindus terrorize each other in the Punjab. Orthodox Christians, Catholics and Muslims slaughter one another in former Yugoslavia. Hindus and Muslims attack each other in India. Jews and Muslims teeter on the abyss in the Middle East... We can't live as responsible people and ignore these tragedies.

#### 'Born in Bloodshed'

"The defining motive for conflict in the era ahead is ethnic conflict," says Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "and it promises to be savage. Get ready for 50 new countries in the world in the next 50 years. Most will be born in bloodshed."

Without addressing whether one side is right or not, the pattern appears the same for all combatants. It is us versus them. We are truthful and law-abiding, while they are deceitful and lawless. We defend ourselves, while they aggressively pursue tyranny. Our weapons deter, while theirs attack. God, of course, is on our side — not theirs.

People inevitably adhere to religious, ethnic, racial and nationalistic identities. With the demise of the Cold War, the passion of these loyalties has escalated and continues to fuel violence. Among these identities, however, only the religions contain a vision of humanity reaching its full potential by living in a manner based on compassion and harmony.

The vision of the perfected human, the

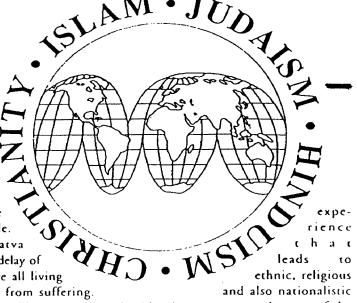
loving and compassionate helper of humanity, is embodied in each of the great religions. The Hindu greeting namaste proclaims the divinity of the light of life in all people. The ancient Boddhisatva Buddhist vow entails the delay of paradise in order to serve all living beings and relieve them from suffering. Judaism asserts the necessity of loving one's neighbor as oneself. Christianity says God is love and instructs mankind to love one's enemies. Islam is founded on peace (salaam) and faith in God, who is described as being mercy and compassion itself.

Although the religions are the trustees, protectors and nurturers of these values, each religion's history is laden with instances in which it has been used or abused to justify violence. Can religions analyze their histories, which have included violence, and affirm their universal principles based on love and compassion? Can they prevent their further use as sanctioners of nationalistic, racial, ethnic or religiously instigated violence? Can religions institutionalize a process to achieve unity, not with uniformity, but with an appreciation of diversity, so that the ethnic conflicts we see berween Pakistan and India, in Bosnia and in the Middle East can be put to rest?

#### In the Minds of Men

The United Nations Economic Scientific Cultural Organizaton charter states that, since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that we have to erect the ramparts of peace. In "Faces of the Enemy", psychologist Dr. Sam Keen, writes that images precede weapons, hatred precedes images, and the divisions among men precedes hatred. We think others to destruction long before we invent the battle axe or the ballistic missile.

The variety of human expression and



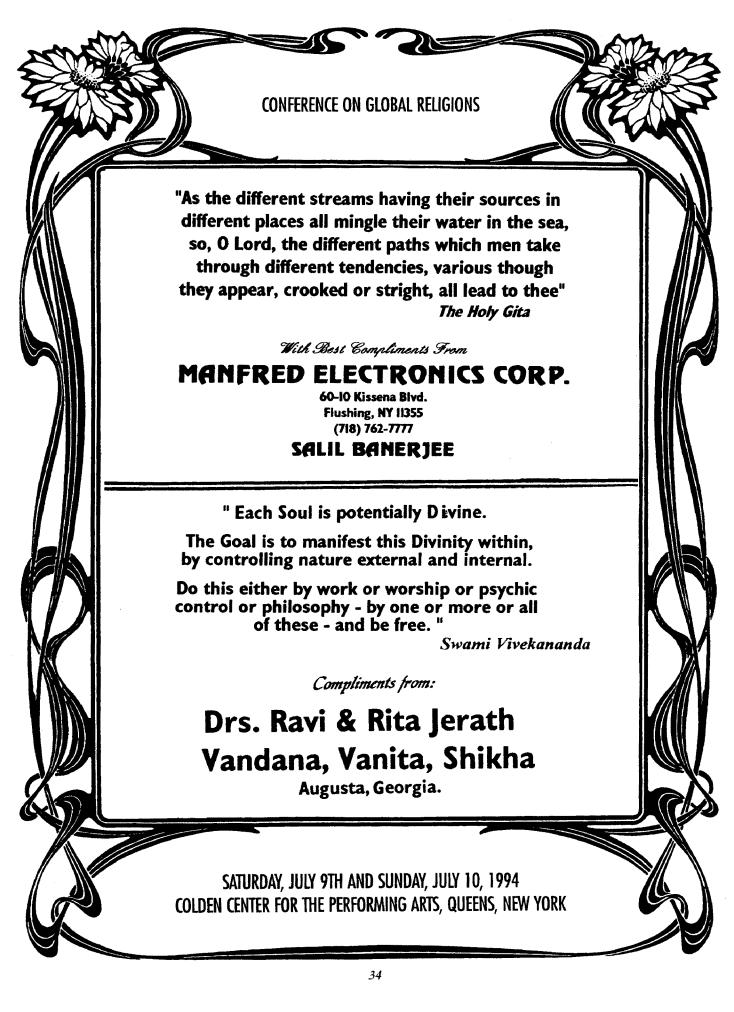
identities, is not per se at the root of the patterns that lead to violence. It is instead, ignorance, prejudice and fear.

The divisiveness of fear characterizes the pattern that leads to violence. Two characteristics of human potential fundamental to all religious traditions are fearless compassion and love. Fear rests upon intolerance and division, whereas compassion leads to tolerance and unity. It is to see oneself in another. It is to share another's joy and suffering as one's own.

Religious leaders in the world are now willing to address the fact that up to two-thirds of the world's armed conflicts are performed invoking the name of religion. At the Centennial of the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, September 1993, a momentous statement, "The Declaration of a Global Ethic," was signed by many of the leaders of the world's religions.

The declaration presents a challenge to all faith-based institutions, whether they be Christian. Jewish, Muslim or Hindu, to address whether they are part of the problem of devisiveness and violence in the world family or part of the healing process of tolerance, compassion and unity. It is time for the world to grow out of the adolescence of secturian divisions and into the adulthood of a true celebration of unity within diversity. Consider the alternative.

—Jonathan Granoff, Esq. President of LAWS, the Lawyers Alliance for World Security, Philadelphia Chapter



## A Brief Summary of Life and Mission of Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi

(August 25, 1864 to August 7, 1901)

It was the memorable day of September 11, 1893. The Columbus Hall of Art Institute of Chicago was overflowing with more than 3000 delegates of different nations and religions. It was the opening day of the Parliament of World Religions Conference, the first such conference ever organized in the history of mankind. The aim of the conference was to impart to the world, the knowledge of different religions, and to promote a feeling of fraternity between followers of diverse religious persuasion, and also to pave the way for world peace. The conference lasted 17 days.

Two young men among them with their Indian costume and turban drew special attention of the public - one was the world famous Swami Vivekananda, who represented Hinduism and Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi who represented Jainism. They made such an impact at the Parliament of Religions with their impressive speeches and personality that both of them were requested to prolong their stay in the U.S.A. and continued to give speeches atdifferent cities after the conference was over.

Shri Virchand Gandhi, a young man of twenty-nine, impressed the delegates not only by his eloquence, but also by the sheer weight of his scholarship. The impartiality of outlook and the oratorical skill of this man fascinated the delegates at the conference. An American newspaper wrote, "of all Eastern scholars, it was this youth whose lecture on Jain faith and conduct was listened to with the interest engaging the greatest attention."

Shri Virchand R. Gandhi was born on the August 25, 1864 in Mahuva, near Bhavnagar, Gujarat, India. After primary and secondary education at Bhavnagar, he joined Elphinstone College in Bombay. He graduated and took a B.A. degree with honors from the university of Bombay in 1884. He was probably the first graduate amongst the Jainas at that time. He was also a student of Buddhism and Vedanta Philosophy and also had knowledge of Yoga and Occultism. He had acquired knowledge of Christianity and Western philosophy. He also had made a comparative study of various philosophies which equipped him for talks on various subjects with confidence. He had the command of fourteen languages including Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali, English, Prakrit, Sanskrit, and French.

Shri Gandhi became the first honorary secretary of the Jain Association of India in 1885 at the age of 21. As a secretary he worked very hard for the abolition of poll-tax levied on pilgrims to Mt. Satrunjay, the most sacred place of Jain religion at Palitana, Gujarat, India. In those days to protest against the ruler was to invite severe punishment and even death. He prepared a case to compromise. He met Lord Ray, the governor of Bombay, and Colonel Watson, the political agent and made a strong representation

eventually abolishing the poll-tax in place of a fixed payment of Rs 15,000 per year to the ruler for looking after the safety of the pilgrims and the holy place.

In 1891 Mr. Boddam, an English man set up a factory for slaughtering pigs and making tallow out of them at Mt. Sametshikhar, another holy place of Jain pilgrimage near Calcutta, Bihar, India. Shri Virchand Gandhi went all the way to Calcutta to stop the killing of pigs at the holy place. He stayed there for six months, learned Bengali, prepared his case against the factory, and ultimately got this verdict issued: "Sametshikhar is a place of Jain pilgrimage and nobody else has any right to interfere there." He got the factory to close.

Shri Virchand Gandhi was a great social reformist at a very young age. He had fought against social evils and had succeeded in eradicating some. When his father died in 1890, he did not allow the primitive practices of wailing and breast-beating during mourning.

Shri Virchand Gandhi sailed to the U.S.A. along with Swami Vivekanand to attend the Partiament of World Religion Conference in 1893. He stayed in the U.S.A. for about two years after the conference and lectured in cities such as Chicago, Boston, New York, and Washington. He also visited England, France, Germany and other places in Europe. In foreign countries he wore a long and loose kurta, a white shawl on his shoulder, a golden bordered Kathiwadi turban on his head, and country shoes. This external appearance bore the imprint of India. He delivered more than 535 lectures on Jainism, Yoga, Indian systems of philosophy, Indian culture, occultism, and spiritualism. He qualified as a Barrister in London at one of the Inns of the Court but did not use his qualification for monetary gain.

Virchand Gandhi talked about the doctrines of Jainism in such a coherent manner that some newspapers published the text of his lecture in full. He had a most effective way of handling the otherwise difficult terminology of Jainism. He had an extraordinary ability to clarify his statements in a consistent and logical manner. At the conference, he made a brief but striking presentation on the fundamentals of the Jain religion. He expounded the Jain religion in its main aspects namely: Jain philosophy, Jain way of life, and Jain code of conduct.

Another special characteristic of Shri Virchand Gandhi's lectures on the Jain religion was that they did not deal in criticism of other religions. Free from sectarian preferences and prejudices, his impartial ideology is an apt expression of the Jain who practices non-violence (Ahimsa) in life and multiplicity views (Anekanta) in thoughts. His discourses convinced the elite of America of the fact that the Jain religion has an authentic and rational religious tradition. His speeches received extensive publications in several leading newspapers.

An American gentleman gave his opinion about Virchand Gandhi in these words: "In this religious gathering a number of philosophers, preachers, and scholars came from India and delivered lectures and each one of them presented a new element so as to convince that their religion ranks high with great religions of the world. Moreover their oratory and devotion presented distinct types and were full of wisdom and contemplation. Among them was an outstanding young man of Jain religion who gave new ideas about morality and philosophy. Though he is only a house-holder and not a monk or religious preacher, he can expound so well. Who must then be his Gurup His simple but striking philosophy of life is worth knowing, worth understanding."

His lectures demonstrated the fact that the study of Sanskrit and Prakrit languages alone is not enough for a proper understanding and exposition of Indian philosophy. It is absolutely necessary to assimilate and to understand India's past culture in its proper context.

Shri Virchand Gandhi was a great exponent of Indian culture and religion, besides being a brilliant scholar of Jainism. His speeches at the parliament echoed the true spirit and culture of India. There prevailed in America the belief that India was a country of tigers, serpents, magicians, and kings. Christian missionaries also presented a distorted picture of the people of India. Virchand Gandhi made a great effort as Swami Vivekananda did to give to the people abroad the true perspective on India. Explaining the importance of Indian culture to foreigners, he "It is an astonishing fact that foreigners have been constantly attacking India and in the face of all those aggressions the soul of India has stood vital and watch  $\mathbf{f} \mathbf{u} \mathbf{1}$  . Her conduct and religion are safe and the whole world looks at India with a steady gaze." He also added that "cultural distinctions, agriculture, art, artistic skill, literature, good conduct, means of knowledge, science, hospitality, feminism, love, and respect - all these are found in India in quite a different form. If that culture was purchasable, England could have purchased it, adopted it. But it has not happened, it cannot happen."

Shri Virchand Gandhi was not a dogmatic person. He spoke as a Jain but he forcefully defended Hinduism from the attack of Westerners at the Parliament. Above all, he was first Indian then Jain.

Virchand Gandhi was not only a philosophical thinker but he also had the welfare of the nation at heart. He collected a shipload of grain and about Rs. 40,000 cash for famine relief in India in 1896 while he was in the U.S.A.

In America Virchand Gandhi founded various societies, such as, The Gandhi Philosophical Society, The School of Oriental Philosophy, and The Society for the Education of Women of India. The secretary of the later institution was Mrs. Howard who had adopted pure vegetarianism, practiced Samayik daily, and other codes of conduct of Jainism. In England he founded the Jain Literature Society and taught Jainism there. Mr. Herbert Warren, a religious enthusiast, abandoned non-vegetarianism and adopted the Jain religion. He summarized Virchand Gandhi's lectures and published a book known as 'Herbert Warren's Jainism.'

Compiled by Pravin K. Shah



#### LOVE BEYOND THE FEAR OF DEATH

In the Name of God whose mercy and compassion are immeasurable. Without gender, beginning or end, form or formlessness, or any qualification or limitation of any kind or nature, He remains absolute, one, singular, omnipresent, all knowing and resonating infinite love such as brings indescribable bliss to those of pure heart. May all who read from here on come to experience this indescribable bliss that arises when the heart opens and permits the natural state of divine love to blossom.

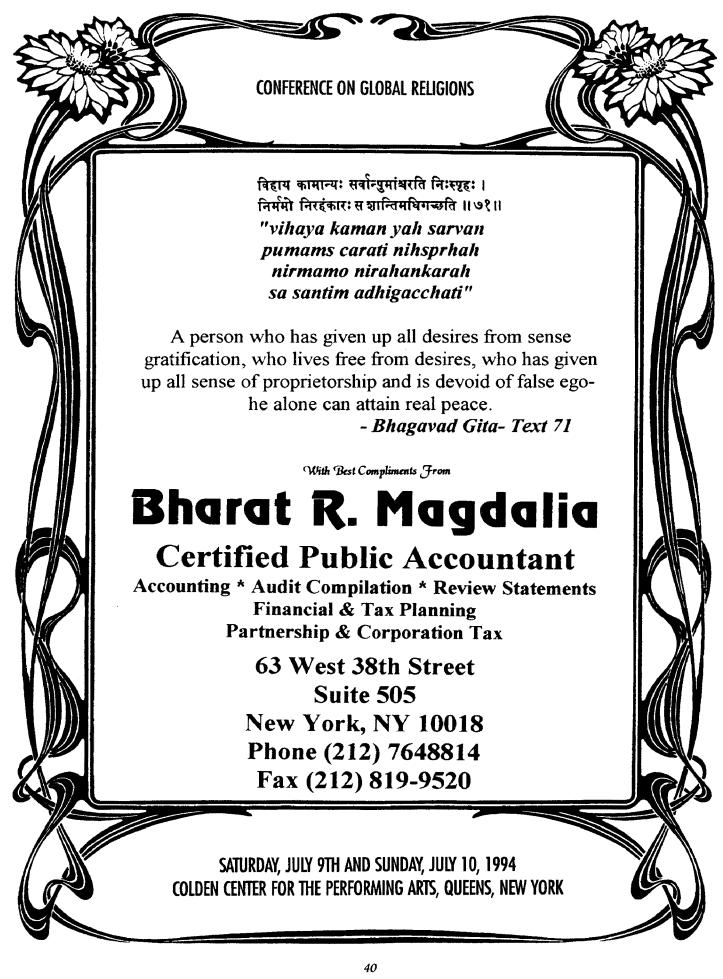
His Holiness Sheik Bawa Muhaiyaddeen whose service with the body ended on December 8, 1986, demonstrated the reality that contained within the finite appearance of the human being is the infinite wonder of God's love, the expression of God's unqualified reality. That unconditional pure and perfect love is God's intention. For a human to realize God, his intentions must coincide with God's, he must understand the reality that "God lives within man and man lives within God." A man's intentions must express the purity of goodness which is God's intention. A person in this State is in unity with God and thus with all of God's creation. His intentions are coincidental with God's. Hatred is met with love. His behavior toward his fellow human beings demonstrates God's intentions.

It is January of 1975 and I am with Bawa at his ashram in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. There is a cement floor and a roof which is partially corrugated steel and partially tiled. There is one large room and Bawa's bed is in the middle. One side is open, bordered by a three foot high plaster wall on the other side of which is a courtyard with a deer, turkeys, cats, a goat and other animals who gather around when Bawa sings.

It is a typical evening and people of all classes, religions, levels of understanding and intentions are coming to the saint's bedside to pour out their hearts or to receive the outpouring of God's heart. One tall, thin very energetic man aggressively steps forward brandishing a curved blade machete. He is raging that he will slit Bawa's throat. His knife is but a foot from Bawa's exposed neck and his leg is brushing against me as I sit at the side of the bed.

Bawa sits calmly on the bed. He is wearing a sarong, no shirt and some prayer beads. It is very hot and the man with the knife is screaming and working himself into a frenzy. Apparently he has suffered some personal tragedy and is blaming everything on the sage. He is yelling in Tamil and I cannot quite understand the specifics of his complaint but his intensity is palpable and the reality of intent unmistakable.

I am strong, athletic and weigh about 180 lbs. An unexpected upper cut would easily down the assailant. The conscience says, "Sit still, there will be a lesson of truth."



Bawa rarely demonstrated miraculous powers. In fact he would rarely even talk about himself. "When I am here, God is not; when God is here, I am not." He consistently lived by the assertion that God alone is the reality of every being and that no man is higher or lower than any other. He said we must separate from ourselves that which separates us from our fellow man and that the only miracle of any value is in changing our qualities -- changing from haste to patience, hate to love, selfishness to compassion, and illuminating consciousness into wisdom through this process of transformation. That grace awakened illuminated love infused consciousness that he called wisdom is capable of understanding to whom praise and prayer should be directed, the nature of reality and illusion, the discovery of that formless treasure of love in the open space of the heart and the truth that God alone exists. This process of realization that "I am not; God alone exists," is a miracle worth achieving. Yet, in this instance, what appeared to me to be a miraculous wonder occurred.

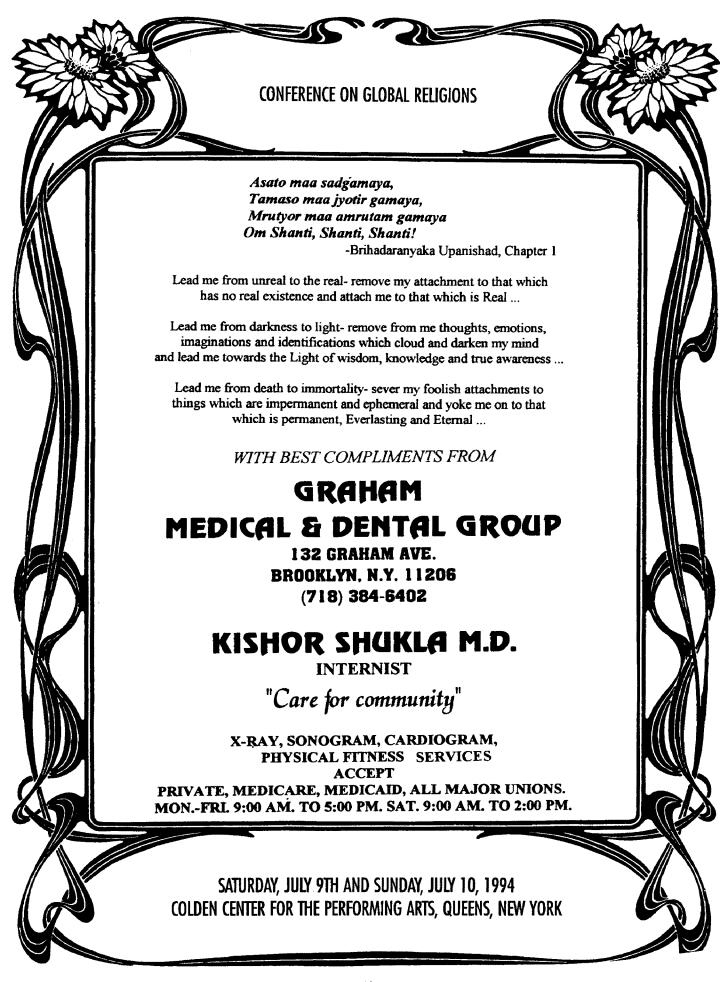
Bawa calmly, deeply and gently opens his arms and tilting his head, as if to expose his neck further, says "Will taking my life bring you the peace your soul is craving?" He offers no resistance at all and as he speaks he becomes increasingly vulnerable and open. He seems to grow younger and more innocent before my eyes.

And this is the wonder. There is a pronounced almost physical presence of divine love emanating from his tranquil smile and his open armed gesture. Bawa's entire being is emanating a purity of essence from the realm of essences. One can feel the area filling with love and comfort. Those who have gone into the heart know of this pure love. It is unbounded and without object, pouring forth on all objects.

The room fills with this love and it showers upon the man with the knife. His body appears to lose all internal power and energy. The knife drops from his hands and he collapses onto his knees next to me, his head resting on Bawa's bed. Bawa comforts him and tells him to attend to certain specific affairs and return later. The man leaves and Bawa continues his duties to the stream of visitors without a ripple, without carrying the event for one second.

Why? How? There was no one to be killed by the knife. The true Sufi is one who had died before death, died to the world and whose entire being is forever focused on and in God alone. I bear witness to having lived with a man who lived this reality and he stated its secret: "Love all lives as your own."

Respectfully and with devotion, love and thankfulness, from one upon whom a small drop of His beneficence has fallen, Ahamed Muhaiyaddeen (Jonathan Granoff)
The Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship
5820 Overbrook Ave., Phila. PA 19131 215-879-6300



#### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CALL TO A WORLD IN CHAOS 1

#### BY J. P. VASWANI

Swami Vivekananda! There is an inspiration in his name: there is a music in his memory!

He was a symbol of India's deathless culture which stands for the supremacy of the Atman, The Spirit. In his hands he held a torch. On his lips was the live coal of inspiration. He thrilled those that heard him He carried with himself a tremendous power of the Spirit. He was a man of fire. There was fire his words, in his heart and in his soul.

He appeared at a time when millions in Europe and America considered the Hindus to be heathens and condemned the Hindu religion as paganism. With the roar of a lion, Swami Vivekananda said to the Christians of America:--"Hinduism is the only religion which tells you that you are not a sinner, that you are not doomed to burn eternally in the fires of hell. It is a sin to call a man a sinner. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep. You are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal. You are not matter, you are not bodies. Matter is your servant, you are not the servants of matter." When he was asked:--"Swami, have you come to America to convert us to a new belief?" He laughed as he answered:--"In this country I do not come to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep your own belief. I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist, a Presbyterian a better Presbyterian, a Unitarian a better Unitarian."

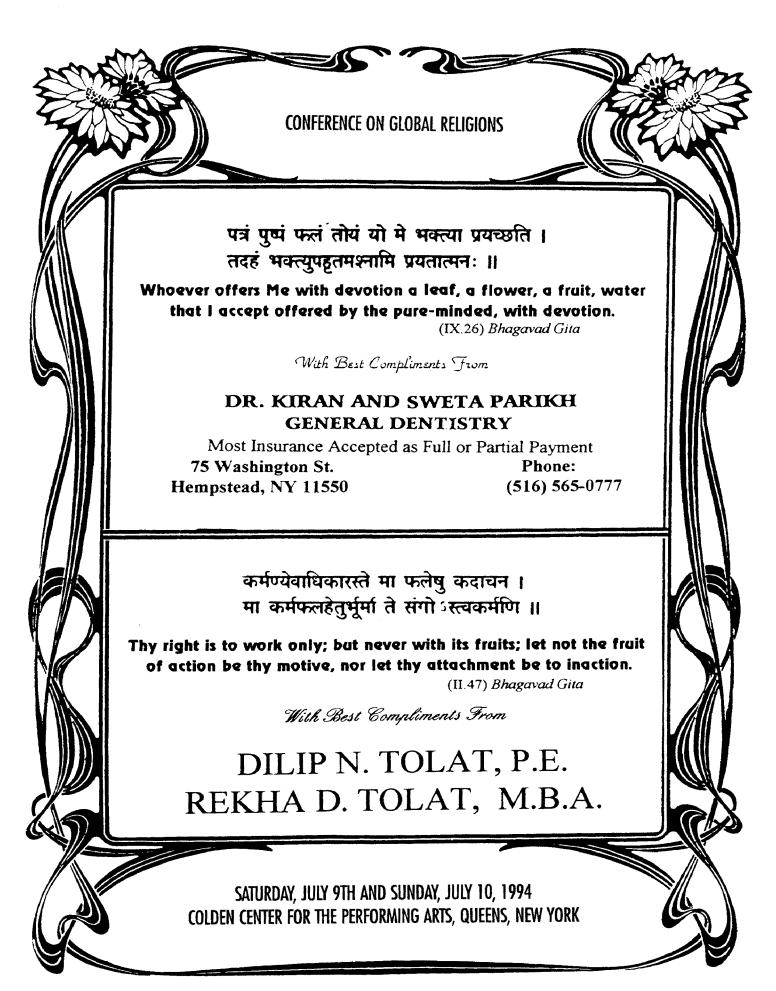
In the heart of Swami Vivekananda there was no sense of separateness. He recognized the great truths of world religions. In a lecture before the Ethical Society of Brooklyn, he said:-"We Hindus not only tolerate but we accept every religion, praying in the mosque of the Muslim, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrians, and kneeling before the Cross of the Christians, knowing that so many religions are but so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the infinite."

Swami Vivekananda understood the value of Islam and its message of social equality. He entered into the heart of the message of the Christ. Is it not also a message of spiritual adviata? "I and my Father are one, said Jesus. He also said:--"Ye are Gods!" and again:--"Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect!" Alas! The Jews of his generation understood him not. Has the West understood him yet? NO! To be able t understand Jesus, one must be imbued with the spirit of the East.

Above all, Vivekananda realized the value of Higher Hinduism. He called it Vedanta. He wished to make it a world-force.

Vivekananda said:--"With God, you can sail over the seas. Without God, you cannot cross over the threshold." With God, Vivekananda went over the seas. With God, Vivekananda crossed the continents and re-proclaimed the Wisdom of the Rishis. "Arise! Awake! And stop not until the goal is reached!" was his trumpet-call to the Hindus. Also to India, Europe and America.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Speech delivered by Dada J. P. Vaswani, at the Global Vision 2000, held at the Capital Centre, Washington, D.C. August 6-8, celebrating the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda's Universal Vedantic Message.



Today, man stands on a planet of limitless promise. Today, man has reached a zenith of technological brilliance. Man's rockets to flying past the distant planets. He has been able to station satellites in space. Yet is he confused as to his own real being and purpose. He is faced with a terrible loneliness, and his heart is stirred by a thousand fears which he cannot name. Man boasts that he has been able to control the forces of nature: when will he learn to control himself? Today, wherever you turn there is a passion for power, the lust for fame, the greed of gold. Today, there is the dance of desires. This dance of desires is the dance of death. And civilization has already begun to crumble beneath the burden of its own weight.

A new civilization is to be born. This new civilization must be built in something which is greater, nobler by far than mere secular socialism. Swami Vivekananda has been described as a socialist by some, by others as a humanist. Yet, what he practiced and taught cannot be called socialism or humanism. For these two schools of thought do not uphold the oneness of all souls and the solidarity of man. Swami Vivekananda urged that everyone is divine and that man must serve his fellow-men, beholding in them pictures of God, images of the Eternal. Swami Vivekananda gave a new Mantra to humanity: -"Atmano mokshartham jagaddhitaya cha." The words mean:--"Our own spiritual freedom and the welfare of the world." These twin ideals must not be separated from each other. These twin ideals must go hand in hand.

One's own spiritual freedom. Swami Vivekananda said:--"Freedom is the watch word. Be free! a free mind and a free soul! That is what I have felt all my life. I would rather be doing evil freely than be doing good under bondage!" And there can be no true freedom without spirituality. As one grows in spirituality, he will grow in self-knowledge. As one grows in self-knowledge, he will unfold the tremendous powers of the Spirit, that lie locked up within him. Within every man are these tremendous powers of the Spirit. Immense energies of the Eternal. They need to be released. Swami Vivekananda said:--"Power will come and glory will come, and goodness will come and purity will come as the sleeping soul awakes."

Yes, power will come, glory will come, and goodness will some and purity will come when the sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity. But this power and glory are not meant to be kept for oneself alone. Power and glory must be spent in service of the surrounding world--in service of the less fortunate ones, the poor and broken ones, the forsaken and forlorn, the lowly and the lost, the unwanted and unloved, who cry in this world of travail and pain. To Swami Vivekananda, service of man was worship of God. His was the religion of unity and love, of service and sacrifice. How true it is that religions are worth no more than a straw, if they do not teach man to love God and to serve the Godin-man. For within every man, howsoever poor he be, howsoever miserable, frustrated, defeated in life, there dwelleth God. Every man is a living tabernacle of God, a living, moving shrine, a living, moving temple of "God." This is true Vedanta I behold myself in my brother. I and my brother, are one! There is no separation. On one occasion, Swami Vivekananda said:-"Love every man as your own self and not as your brother, as Christianity teaches. Brotherhood should be superseded by universal selfhood. Not universal brotherhood, but universal selfhood is our motto."

This is true service--not service done as charity, not service done as <u>maharbani</u>, but service as though I am doing it to my own self, service done as worship of God who dwells in all.

I must not keep you longer. Let me close with the very words with which Swami Vivekananda closed the chapter of his life on earth. A little before he passed away, Swami



Vivekananda said:-"It may be that I shall find it good to get outside my body--to cast it off like a worn-out garment. But I shall not cease from working. I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God." May these words continue to ring in the hearts of some of us like a temple-bell:--"I shall not cease from working. I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God! <a href="Uttishta!">Uttishta!</a> <a href="Uttishta!">Jagrata!</a> Arise! Awake! and stop not until the goal is reached!"

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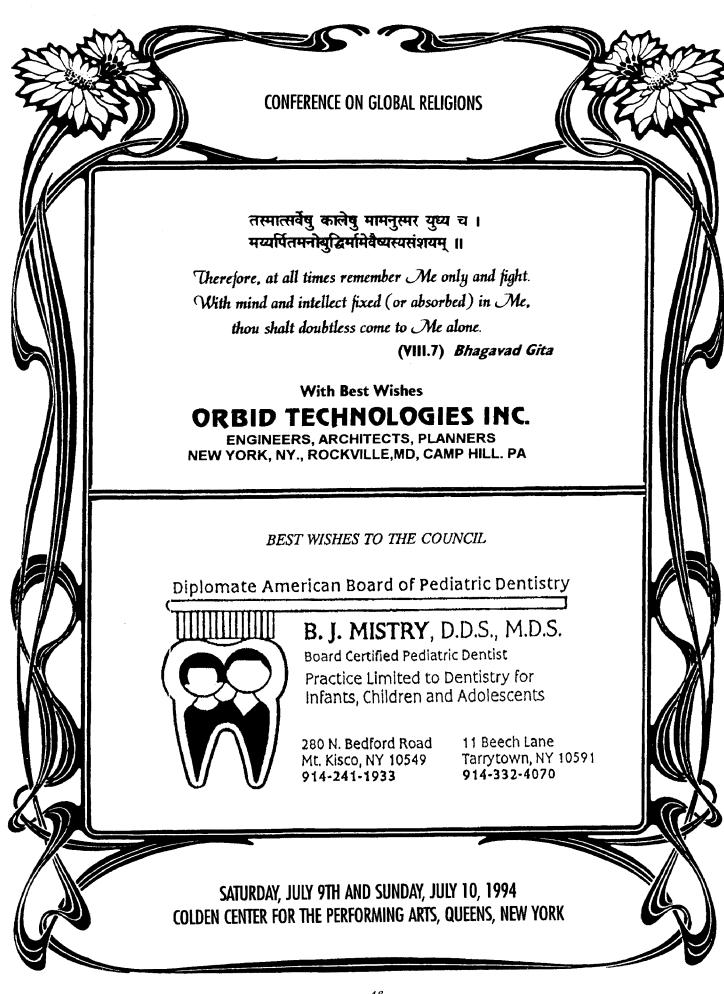


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## NON-VIOLENCE IN THE MODERN WORLD

## ADDRESS OF: HIS HOLINESS ACHARYA SUSHIL KUMAR JI MAHARAJ

## AT THE PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS IN CHICAGO ON SEPTEMBER 3, 1993

The Parliament of the World's Religions meeting in Chicago is a unique event of the 20th century. Never before has such a large and representative gathering of religious and spiritual leaders assembled to carry forward the 1893 vision of interfaith cooperation and harmony for promoting the welfare of humanity, survival of the universe and safeguarding the future of Mother Earth.

It is both a challenge as well as an opportunity for us to collectively go to the root of the crisis confronting humanity. It is a crisis arising not so much on account of material progress — which in itself symbolizes the miracle of human achievement. It is the simultaneous disappearance of spiritual content in our lives that has created a void - a vacuum - a gap which has brought about so much despair and disillusionment.

Exactly one hundred years ago speaking at the first Parliament of World's Religions, Swami Vivekananda had observed "Sectarianism, bigotry and its horrible descendent fanaticism have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair."

In one hundred years since Vivekananda spoke here in Chicago, the situation has worsened. Violence has become a way of life causing widespread destruction, bloodshed and suffering.

At the root of the disappearance of spiritual fervor is the faith in the power of Non-Violence. We have tried to solve our problems of mutual hatred, greed, exploitation and oppression through two world wars and any number of regional and national conflicts. Violence has been used to reply to violence. An entirely negative culture has developed which has adversely affected our values of life, our ethics, and the very integrity of the purpose of human life.

Progress of science in this century has been phenomenal. But human beings have abused science to produce destructive weapons, nuclear bombs, and a vast arsenal of instruments of mass destruction. What a tremendous waste of resources which could have been better used for education, health and removal of poverty. At this historic conference, let us therefore not merely discuss but decide with a spirit of conviction and commitment the following:

- Non-Violence should be put on the highest pedestal of human values, conduct, thought and behavior. As Jain philosophy says it should be restored to its position of "Supreme Religion" — "Ahimsa Parmo Dharma".
  - Non-Violence has to be all comprehensive, covering all our thoughts, deeds and expressions. That culture alone will help us to fight the poison of hatred, mistrust, suspicion and hostility that has vitiated the very purpose of human existence.

As a first step, let the preamble of the United Nations be revised to include a reference to promote Non-Violence in all sectors of human affairs including inter-state dealings. Secondly, let us establish the World Fellowship of Religions which will play a corrective role to guide Government, society and individual on the path of a judicious mix of spirituality and materialism.

Thirdly let us establish here an International Brigade of religious and spiritual leaders who will take the lead as social reformers and guides instead of confining themselves within the precincts of temples, churches, mosques and other places of worship. They should become social workers at the grass roots level.

2. Non-Violence is not only for relations among human beings. It must be for restoring natural harmony and balance between humans, elements of nature and all other living creatures. Jain religion's motto of "Live and let live" and "Paras Par Upgraha Jivanam" can inspire humanity in this direction. The United Nations Earth Summit held in Brazil last year highlighted the gravity of the environmental crisis which had brought the universe to the brink of disaster. The disturbance and upsetting of the nature's harmonious balance with all living creatures has come about due to human beings violent and abusive exploitation of nature's resources for destructive purposes. Nature's balance must be restored so that all forms of life can survive on the basis of mutually supportive and interdependent interaction and coexistence.

It has now been scientifically established that by misguided exploitation of nature's resources, human beings have endangered their own life quality, welfare and prosperity. The cult of violence and the instinct of trying to combat violence by greater violence is a self defeating culture which has eroded the very fundamentals of the civilization which human beings built up through hard work, ingenuity and creative instinct.

Therefore in the world of today Non-Violence is the sure and only durable answer to the crisis situation manifesting itself in every sphere of life.

Lord Mahavir introduced Non-Violence as a supreme religion. Mahatma Gandhi used it for political struggle. Now we must use it for saving the world from ecological crisis.

Non-Violence is incomplete without giving up greed, while non-attachment and non-possessiveness are important supporting factors.

We are now going to set up in New York an international University of Non-Violence. This is an important step forward in educating the world opinion in favor of Non-Violence. This would enhance worldwide awareness about the need for curbing violence and encouraging Non-Violent behavior in day to day life.

The dawn of non-violence shall usher in an era of peaceful co-existence, where the oneness of all religions becomes the foundation stone of the oneness of humanity.

— H.H. Acharya Sushil Kumar Ji Maharaj

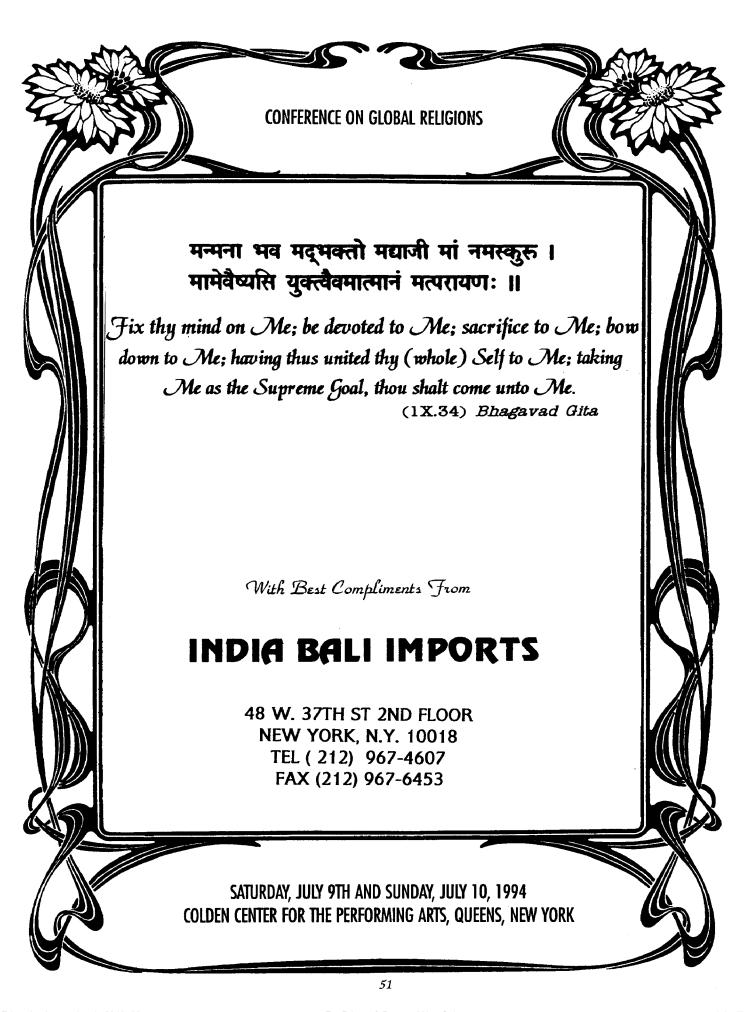
Tell the truth boldly. All truth is eternal. Truth is the nature of all souls.

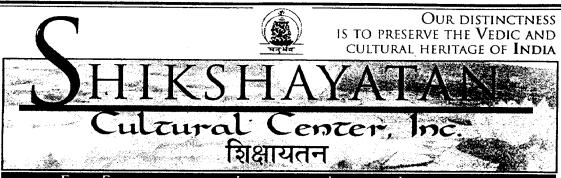
And here is the test of truth.

Anything that makes you weak paysically, intellectually and spiritually, reject it as poison. There is no life in it, it can not be true.

Truth is strengthening. Truth is purity, truth is all knowledge. Truth must be strengthening, must be enlighting, must be invigorating.

Swami Vivekananda.





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#### RELIGION AND THE SPIRIT OF HARMONY

By His Holiness Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji

My dear friends, brothers and sisters, and all spiritual leaders, We have met here from all four corners of the world, not to argue dogmatically over differences but to break the barriers of racialism and sectarianism, to learn something from one another, to see the same object from one another's point of view so that we can understand each other better and help one another in solving the problems of misunderstanding. The goal for each of us is the same, though the approach may be different.

There are so many religions in the world! Many people say, "With so many religions, how do we find the truth?" They think truth can be found only through religion, so they try to make one religion out of all religions. But if all religions were the same type, our world would seem monotonous and regimented. Instead, when there are varieties of plants and trees, bushes and flowers...then the world becomes a garden. Let every religion bring its own unique light, unique beauty, unique blessings of the fruits so all people may be nourished.

Each of us is unique. Each person needs to know that, "I am my own world, and I am a co-creator of the harmony of the world." When one sees one's individualization, that individualization gradually sees the individualization in another. And seeing this, we gradually come from here to there and there to here and become a bridge to each other rather than a wall. How can we build a bridge if we don't see the light within us? How can we give love if we don't experience love in us? How can we give peace if we don't have peace within us? Know yourself! Experience yourself! Be a friend to yourself! Come closer to yourself! You will then be a friend to the world, closer to the world, a blessing to the world.

#### **Practice**

With the practice of religion our sense of awareness increases and we develop ethical perspective and take normal responsibilities and gradually we create harmony in our thoughts and actions. In this way we evolve to heeding the inner voice of consciousness and to watching everyday behavior. It is not what we do for attention or ego in the presence of others that counts. It is what we do in the smallest of actions - whether we are in the privacy of our homes or on our own - that matters.

Furthermore, genuine ethical behavior has to be consistent. We talk of the dictate: "Thou shalt not kill," but how can we talk of the sanctity of life and at the same time violate life at other times, such as when we fight against brethren from other religions or we devour flesh on our dining table. True ethics shuns any hypocrisy.

So, the first practice for each to start with is in one's head, heart and hand, Gandhi was an Atma, a Soul. He practiced love, he practiced ahimsa, and he was known as Mahatma, which means Great Soul. We have the potentiality and through practice we become a higher Soul, Paratma. The spark has the capacity to become a big fire; it is a tiny thing but it can kindle the world. When we see the spark in us, that spark will see a spark in others. And the moment we see the spark in others, we don't want to hurt, we don't want to put down, we don't want to destroy. Our spark can kindle a world of brotherhood.



#### Power of Thinking

People worry about the emission of pollution. There is so much pollution already, there is no need to add pollution of negativity, which can be worse than the environmental pollution itself. We have a very powerful instrument within us which we can use either to pollute or to create harmony. We have not realized the power of thinking, the power of sending positive vibrations, the power of emanating that energy which can go farther than laser beams. Try to see the miracle of your thoughts in your business, in your relations, in your communications, in your personal life. and the blessings will emanate. As the seed blossoms - breaking the ground of the earth - in the same way our positive, loving thoughts are going to break all negative grounds and will bring forth fragrant blossoms. But it depends upon our intensity and sincerity of assimilation of **ahimsa**.

#### Coming Together

Coming together is the beginning. As we meditate we come closer to one another. This beginning brings harmony, and we start to create a garden where each religion is a flower or a tree. Staying together is progress and working together is success. When we work, we practice. We put into life what we are thinking.

People ask me how to get along with various kinds of people. I answer, "The secret of getting along with people is tolerance of their point of view and consideration of your view." Generally, we tend to impose our point of view on others. Instead, let them express their beliefs. Let them express their feelings. Let them see. Let them come out. That way we can get along with people and there will be a bridge. We become co-creators of harmony.

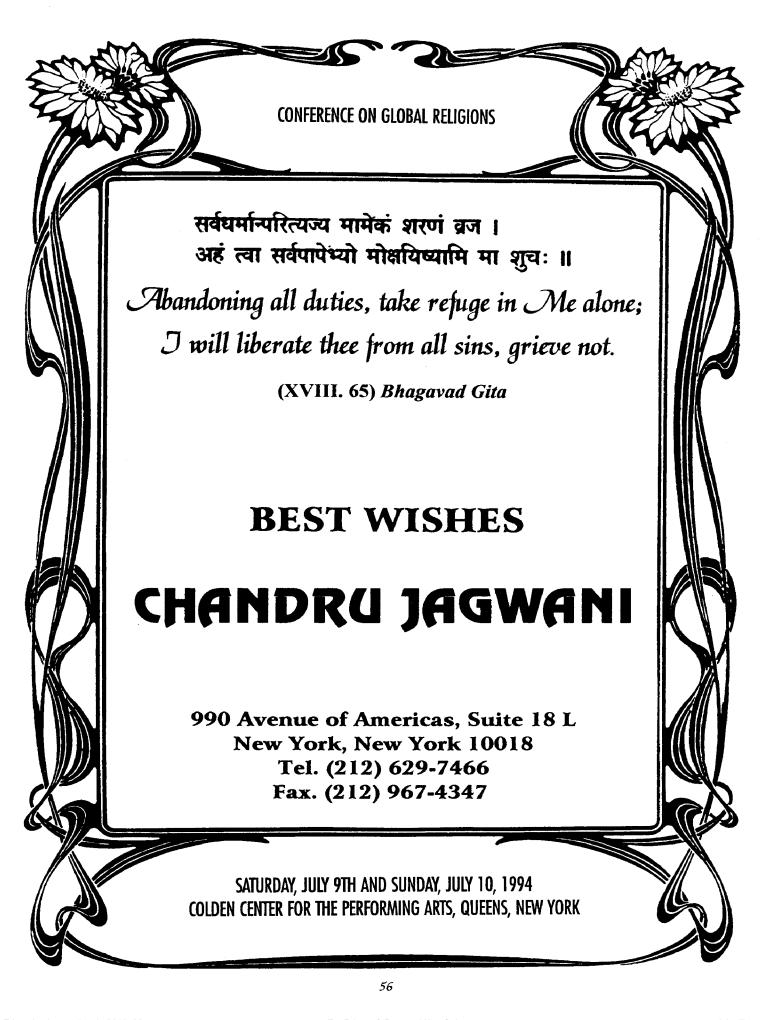
Anekantavada teaches that we have to find out in what we agree with people and not in what we differ with them. Mahavira mentioned one sutra Paraspar Upgrho, Jivanam. Paraspar means mutual, Upgrho means help, and Jivanam means soul or living being. We are all bound together by mutual understanding and interdependence. Just like the five fingers on our hand, which are all different: one is small, one is big, one is tall. But at the time of work and at dinner, they all come together; there is harmony among all five. This is the beauty of co-existence.

#### Link with All Living Beings

Also, it has to be our effort, our endeavor to kindle this warmth of harmony. Man has to identify with his fellow beings whether human or otherwise. He has to realize his link with the rest of creation. When we talk of **ahimsa** or nonviolence, we do not merely mean abstinence from violence. We must see the link between ourselves and the humblest of creatures. If we see this link, then violence against even the smallest of creatures means violation of a basic moral law.

That is why vegetarianism is important in our lives. Vegetarianism is not just a dietary fad; it is a moral imperative that follows our acceptance of the sanctity of life. If we believe in love and compassion, we cannot negate these principles in any area of life. For the sake of our food, for the pleasures of our palate, can we allow ourselves to be inconsistent? Those who want to lead a holistic life, a life of moral consistency, vegetarianism becomes natural.

When we try to transform ourselves, we have to ask, "Can I transform myself in a vacuum?" The enlarging of our consciousness depends not just on what we read or contemplate. It depends on what we do in practice. If we wish to be humane, we have to



be humane in practice. This means that we have to be humane to all creatures, big and small. Without such humane practice we can never get peace or happiness in life. We see this fact in more ways than one. Our violence to others leads to more violence. Our enemies retaliate. Even if they cannot, they bear ill-will toward us. They spread an atmosphere of distrust around us. Though animals cannot retaliate against us, we do suffer because of the vibrations of their suffering. Recently India decided to export frog legs. It was a decision that pained those of us who have valued the non-violent traditions of India. Why is it those of us who have valued the non-violent traditions of India. Why is it done? To earn foreign exchange perhaps. But what happened? Reports have already come in that because of the decrease in frog population, the number of mosquitoes has increased and malaria has become a scourge again. We strike against nature. Nature strikes back at us. This is a fact of ecology. This is a moral fact as well. Our violence rebounds on us. When we stuff ourselves with meat or fish or other food that is obtained with cruelty, we pay a price. It is not just cholesterol that our body accumulates, but also the vibrations of having caused pain to fellow creatures. Lord Mahavir had understood a basic truth of life: we cannot feel happy or be at peace unless we feel a sense of amity with all creation. To feel that sense of amity, we have to renounce violence and recognize our kinship with all fellow creatures.

#### Resolution

Take two minutes to feel that, from this moment, this head,, this hand, this heart is a bowl of peace, a bowl of love, a bowl of compassion, a bowl to share with all living beings. Feel unity, the unity of all souls and all the good qualities. As you practice, even your body will become sensitive to vibrations of pain or pleasure, your words the expression of peace, your eyes the light of love, and your brain and heart the essence of goodwill, peace and harmony.

I am sure that our collective efforts and sincere dedication here will bring peace to us and peace to the suffering life-at-large.

In the tall House of Mica on the River of the Rising Sun where all the nations of Mother Earth meet, I sing to humanity and its future peace and justice, I sing to the miracle of life, I sing to the beauty of the Earth. Oh may God and the people hear my songs!

— Dr. Robert Muller



#### All Yearning is Yearning for God

by Bill Davis, Vedanta Society of New York
Based on a talk to be delivered at the Bengali Studies Conference, May 28, 1994

A child can feel incredible yearning for a thing, feeling that it will give him unimaginable bliss. I remember the magic of the bicycle parade. Everyone decorated their bikes with crepe paper and rode in formation. In the eyes of a first and second grader it was pure unadulterated magic and joy. You had to be at least in third grade to participate. Well there we were. I was finally in third grade and we were assembled to receive instructions about the parade. I was beside myself with excitement and joyful anticipation. I was finally going to take part in this magic. The teacher asked us to be quiet. Then she threatened that whoever didn't stop talking could not be in the parade. Somehow it didn't occur to me that her words could apply to me. I and I alone was sent from that assembly banished from the parade. This was the most keenly felt disappointment in my life. To be robbed of that bliss was to me a tragedy of the first magnitude. My mother begged the teacher to relent, but an example had to be set. I participated in fourth grade but by then the magic had drained away.

I remember also the breathless anticipation I felt at 6 at the prospect of opening my Christmas presents. You see I'm Jewish and had spent the first five years of my life in a Jewish section of Brooklyn. We had just moved to a Christian community in St. Louis and here my parents decided to celebrate Christmas. I was so excited I could not sleep. But no real presents could live up to the outlandish hopes I had for them. They were nice but not in the joyous league I had imagined. As we get older we gradually learn, as a hedge against disappointment, to be realistic and tone down our hopes to a level that is pallid in comparison to that of a child. Even our nighttime dreams become more prosaic. However, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna, two great Bengalis and great world citizens, have proclaimed that no hope is too outlandish when it comes to God. We need outlandish hopes. But as adults we've virtually lost the capacity to have them since we've been disappointed by every single thing that we've ever attained. I used to think that there was something wrong with me that I was always being disappointed by things reputed to be great. For instance, winning. I remember how badly I wanted to win the race when I ran track as a youth. What bitter disappointment I felt when I lost. However, when I did win there was a momentary elation but that was all. In a little while I felt disappointment that winning did so little for me. It didn't solve anything -the elation hardly lasted at all.

The fact that we start life with unrealistically high hopes is a kind of proof for the existence of God -- for the existence of a god whose nature is bliss who we intuitively understand can be attained. We dismiss the hopes of childhood as childish but from where does this idea of incredible joy come? We experience thirst and to satisfy it there is water. We experience hunger and there is food to satisfy it. We experience lust and there is sexual gratification. Is the hunger for limitless joy alone without its suitable object?

The central idea of Vedanta is that there is only one existence and that is Brahman. That Brahman -- no one knows how or why -- has become all this, has become the world and each one of us. Since we are literally divine, since our inner nature is literally bliss -- although this is a fact that is hidden from our ordinary perception -- it would seem logical that we would feel a discontent in being estranged from the bliss that we must intuitively understand is our essential nature. Thus we crave that bliss and seek it in every way possible. Every yearning we feel for this or for that is actually that very yearning for divine bliss. Since our senses have been turned

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outward we tend to try to get that bliss by looking outside. However out imaginations can go either inward or outward, something we often forget as adults.

Children are actually very creative in finding ways to enjoy themselves and are not limited to the sense world. When I was a child my favorite pastime was to spend time in a world of fantasy that I found very sweet. I can no longer remember anything about that sweet world except my feelings about it. My parents and my teachers did their utmost to pull me out of that world into the everyday world of facts and more or less succeeded. It was a great sacrifice they were asking me to make, to give up that sweet world in exchange for the world of lessons and grades and chores. I remember that I was very halfhearted in my renunciation of that inner world. However, if I ever hoped to get and education and to make a living I had to learn to focus my attention outward. Well in the end I succeeded in focusing outward and now would like to be able to focus inward with the same relish that I could do it as a child.

I think what cemented my relationship to the outside world were the changes associated with puberty. I began to feel lust for woman and woman was very definitely a fact of the outside world. To get woman you had to be mindful of appearance and of success in various realms such as grades, athletics, and most important, the art of conversation. Oh Mahamaya, what a clever trick you played on me.

Once we've thrown our lot in with the outside world our ways of trying to get bliss fall into predictable categories. I became infatuated with love and thought that marriage might bring the kind of bliss I craved. But marriage is a very serious institution with heavy responsibilities. Even the sense pleasure fell far short of high hopes for infinite bliss. If we're lucky we are able to get enjoyment from our work.

People find a way back to a glimmer of that inner world of bliss through intoxicants. No work is required. It seems like a short cut to the kind of joy that we've been craving. As an aside, I find it interesting to try to understand how intoxicants give us pleasure. I have a theory that in many cases the chemical succeeds in temporarily breaking the spell that the world has over us and this is analogous to what happens in spiritual life. The only problem is that the bliss it gives is ephemeral and degrading. It makes you self-centered and selfish. Also it's like chasing a will o the wisp. The joy it gives becomes ever more elusive. It's interesting that AA prescribes a spiritual awakening as the antidote to addiction. People in recovery say that they are grateful to have suffered the degradation of addiction since through it they were forced to have a spiritual awakening as the only way to get out and now they treasure this awakening far more than they mourn what they have lost as a result of their addiction.

The relationship between the divine object and the little objects of the world is like the relationship between white light and light of various colors. Just as white light passing through a prism turns into red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet, so does the prism of Maya turn our pure yearning for God into all these various desires. The analogy is not perfect since white light is made up of different wavelengths, whereas it is a mystery how the pure urge for God is turned into worldly desire.

We have it on divine authority that there is no essential distinction between worldly pleasure and divine pleasure. Sri Ramakrishna says that in every worldly form of happiness there does exist a part of God's being. In fact Sri Ramakrishna says that the yearning for these things should not be eliminated but turned Godward. After all, if these urges all already divine we can use their energy rather than exhaust ourselves trying to suppress it. Thus we should seek intercourse with God; be greedy to possess Him the great treasure; be proud to be His child; want Him as a dear friend; want to have fun

with Him; be angry with Him for not revealing Himself; and whatever other desire we may have.

It's very hard to imagine infinite bliss. And how can we yearn for that which we can't even imagine. But just think of your most aching desire and know that it can not only be satisfied in God but that in Him our cup will run over -- and over and over. Ramakrishna says, "What joy is there in sex life with a woman? There is a billion times more joy in loving God." I imagine that the yearning we felt as children will finally be satisfied and then some. In getting a taste of God's bliss, how can we any longer run after the paltry satisfactions of the world? We'll be like the thief who knows there is gold in the next room and will do anything to get it. Or look at the gold rush. What privations people endured in the hope of finding gold.

But until we've had that taste we'll have to rely on the little bit of faith that we have. However, our faith that there is such an infinite bliss will gradually grow by doing spiritual practice such as japam, meditation, puja, reading holy words, enjoying holy company, doing work as service to God, and/or turning our passions and hopes toward God.



#### AN APPEAL TO HUMAN RELIGIONS

Every human being in this world follows some kind of religion. Some seek salvation in Christ, some in Buddha, some in Krishna, some in Allah, some in Jehovah, etc. Everyone's goal is the same, i.e. to realize GOD!

But the main question is: where is GOD? Where is HIS/HER abode? Does HE/SHE reside above us or below us? Does HE/SHE live with us or away from us?

Swami Vivekananda has a beautiful answer to this universal and eternal question. He said that God is within us. God resides in everyone and everywhere. Poor the God, rich the God, wicked the God, noble the God. God alone has become all living beings, the universe.

Since God dwells in everyone's heart and body, our only goal in life is to realize this living God. How to realize HIM/HER in this life? The only way is to love all mankind.

Swamiji said, Love binds, love makes for that oneness, you become one. The mother with the child, families with the city, the whole world becomes one with the animals. For love is existence. God, Himself, and all this is the manifestation of that one love. The difference is only in degree, but it is the manifestation of that one love throughout.

Therefore, with the words of Swami Vivekananda which he delivered in the final session of the Parliament of Religions on 27 Sept. 1893, we would also like to conclude:

Upon the banner of every religion let us write: "In spite of resistance", "Help and not fight", "Assimilation and not destruction", "Harmony and peace and not dissention".

Peace, peace unto us all.

Braja Dulal Mookherjee President

Swapan Gangopadhyay Vice President, Board of Trustees Council for the Conference on World Religions

# CONFERENCE ON WORLD RELIGIONS

ACCOMPANIED BY

### INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL PROGRAMS

AT THE COLDEN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS Queens, New York

SATURDAY, JULY 9th and SUNDAY, JULY 10th, 1994
ORGANIZED BY THE COUNCIL FOR THE CONFERENCE ON WORLD RELIGIONS

(A Non-Profit Organization)

#### Dear Friends:

On behalf of the staff of the council for the Conference on World Religins, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to this noble occasion. This program been has possible due to commitment and dedicaton of our trustees, our council members, our donors our volunteers and due to co-operation of their family members. This a is unique opportunity to work with people from all nationalities, religions, languages, cultures and faiths who broke the barrier of their individual identities and merged into a family of brotherhood and understanding.

Our hope and prayer is to extend this family of brotherhood thrughout the world and to make this world a single family of brotherhood and understanding.

May God's Blessings be with our hope and effort and with all of you.

Sincerely

Bandokherjee, President



