

In Search of Ideal Education

Ac. Shambhushivananada Aya.

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"Education is a part of cultural life. Education should be free, and education must be based on universalism".

-Shrii PR. Sarkar

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About the Author

Acarya Shambhushivananda Avudhuta, 46, is one of the early students of Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar--the founder of socio-spiritual mission Ananda Marga and propounder of the philosophy of PRO-U-T, a socio-economic theory presented as an alternative to capitalism and communism.

Acharyaji is currently the Kulapati (Chancellor) of a global education network called Ananda Marga Gurukula which has its headquarters at Anandanagar, 16 kms. from Bokaro Steel City and located in the remote, impoverished district of Rural Bengal.

Acharya Shambhushivananda holds PhD in Business & Applied Economics from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and has taught at University of Scranton, Drexel and Rutgers while also conducting research with other prestigious foundations. He is the author of several published works and has worked and travelled in over 80 countries. He is the recipient of International Mahatma Gandhi Award (USA, 1991) and Karalaya Shiromani Award (Indian Research Association, 1992) for his love and dedication to the cause of selfless service to humanity.

Swamiji is a celebrated speaker on "Yoga" and "Contemporary Problems" and also imparts individual instruction in Yoga and tantra sadhana.

In every age, place and culture, there have been endeavours to articulate an ideal educational system stemming from the differing world views of philosophers and people of those times. A variety of explanations were put forward concerning the nature of this universe, its origins, its purpose and the role of created beings in this cosmological order. Different theories were also propounded concerning the nature of mind, of truth, of knowledge, of morality, of aesthetics and the ways of this world. All these and the views on almost everything under the sun carried an imprint on the purpose, nature, means and ends of the educational processes of different times. Underlying all these attempts, we can discern myriad models of education. Here, we shall look at some most influential trends which of past or present contributed towards shaping the evolution of educational systems of homosapiens.

Some of the models reviewed in this volume are:

- (1) **Ancient Gurukula Model.**
- (2) **Religious Models.**
- (3) **Platonic Models.**
- (4) **St. Thomas Model.**
- (5) **Lockean Model**
- (6) **Naturalistic Views**
- (7) **Cooperative Learning / Pragmatic Models.**
- (8) **Montessori Model.**

- (9) **Cognitive Psychology Models.**
- (10) **Behaviourists Views.**
- (11) **Existentialists Views.**
- (12) **Waldrof Model.**
- (13) **Sectarian Models (Ethnic, Language, Political, Religion Based).**
- (14) **Marxist Centralist Model.**
- (15) **Self-Development Model.**
- (16) **Institutional Development Model.**
- (17) **Social-Change Model.**
- (18) **Bank Street Model.**
- (19) **Futuristic Model.**
- (20) **Distance Learning Model.**
- (21) **Environmental Education Model.**
- (22) **Home Schooling Decentralist Model.**
- (23) **Corporate Model.**
- (24) **Neo-Humanistic Model**

Above list is by no means complete but it captures the major trends-both past and present, which have shaped and are currently influencing the educational processes. While there are several common features that underlie the perennial search for an ideal education system, there have also been significant differences in the motivations, thrust or emphasis, in content and the means adopted by different models of education.

1. Ancient Gurukula Model: The features of the ancient gurukula system were:

(a) Education took place in the ashrams, forest-

- schools, located in the natural surroundings;
- (b) Education was free of charge and the admission of students was not linked with payment of fees;
- (c) The students had to stay with the teacher (guru) from age of five upto twenty five and learn from his example as well as precepts;
- (d) Simple living was stressed such as wearing a simple dress, living on plain food, using a hard bed, and leading a celibate life;
- (e) Moral values and scientific knowledge was imparted through the use of parables, rote memorization techniques and catechism- the pupils asking questions and the teacher discoursing at length on the topics referred to him;
- (f) The stress in education was on para-vidya, i.e. spiritual knowledge and a little aparavidya (mundane knowledge). This instilled in the students a high standard of behaviour, morality, reverence and modesty; and
- (g) The education system was tailored to the needs of each individual and his/her varna or class such as vipra (intellectual), Ksatriya (warrior) vaeshya (business) or shudra (labourers). Spiritual training was obligatory for all.

As we shall see later, Ananda Marga Gurukula system (hence forth known as Modern Gurukula System) has refined the ancient system by retaining its spiritual character, incorporating certain positive elements and discarding the weaknesses. The modern gurukula approach is based on universalism and does not merely attempt to create vipras (intellectuals) but sadvipras (moral, spirituo-intellectuals).

2. Religious—Model: In ancient India, the formalism and exclusiveness of the Vedic order gave birth to two religious orders viz., Buddhism and Jainism which spread as far as China & Japan. The educational system backed by religious orders set a precedent which was also followed by Jewish, Christian and Muslim religions. In the recent past, the Jesuits order started by Ignatius Loyala developed the most elaborate and comprehensive educational scheme. The common features of the religious models were:

(a) The goal of education was to either prepare the students as priests for a particular religious order or educate the young in the precepts and values of the particular religion;

- (b) Until the separation of religion and state in the late 19th century, the religions kept a strong control over the content, methodology, finances, and administration of educational institutions; and
- (c) The language or grammar or religious schools for children attached to the churches, mosques, synagogues and temples served as the predecessors for deeper educational involvement in the education processes.

While it is undeniable that religious orders contributed to the development of education particular humanities, they had also sown the seeds of conservatism and therefore, paved the way for a secular approach to education.

3. Platonic Model: Plato, a disciple of Socrates, like Confucius, had a great influence on the educational philosophy. Plato gave birth to a hierarchical system where the most adept at education would rule, those moderately adept would carry out the orders of rulers and the least adept would fill the lowliest worker functions in society. Patterns of schooling all over the world reflect the underlying influence of Platonic views where greater prestige is accorded to the study of

ideas and abstractions and the lower prestige given to the practical studies and manual work.

Both Confucius or Plato intended to create an 'Utopian' where the leaders would be wisest and most educated. While Confucius has continued to influence the Chinese system of education, Platonic view has been enormously influential in the Western world during the last 25 centuries. Aristotle, a pupil of Plato, established a school, the Lyceum, where from birth to age seven, a youth was to be physically developed, teaching how to endure hardship. From age seven to puberty, the curriculum would include gymnastics, music, reading, writing and enumeration. From puberty to age 17, student was to also explore grammar, literature & geography & finally in young manhood, only a selected few were to continue into higher education in physical & biological sciences, ethics, and rhetoric as well as philosophy. Thus, Aristotle's school was more empirical than Plato's Academy.

4. Thomist View: In the 13th century. St. Thomas Aquinas made a monumental attempt to reconcile faith and reason. He tried to synthesize

philosophy and theology, university and monastery, activity and contemplation, reason and faith. Thus, Aquinas gave birth to a scholastic approach, where a man would cultivate rational intelligence for the pursuit of moral excellence and realisation of God. For Aquinas, the primary agent of education was the learner, and his model was, thus, a person capable of self-education. Intellectually autonomous, one should be able to conduct one's own process of research and discovery. The scholastic approach was later institutionalized by Ignatius Loyola who founded Society of Jesus in 1534 and spearheaded a series of educational institutions throughout Europe.

5. Lockean Model: In the 17th century, John Locke, greatly influenced the notion of an educated person by infusing democratic, puritan and practical characteristics. Locke's notion of the mind at birth as a "tabula-rasa", a blank tablet devoid of innate ideas, gave enormous importance to the role of experience and sense-perception in the educational process. His four cardinal aims of education were virtue, wisdom, breeding and learning. Locke also called for a change in the attitudes of parental-care.

Locke emphasized habituation, practice, encouragement, respect and discredit as means to develop child's memory and good habits. He also felt that young children should be allowed to give vent to their feelings and should be restrained rarely; "the chief art is to make all that they have to do sport and play too".

While Locke's ideas have been developed further by all future thinkers, it cannot be denied that he paved the way for greater role of "individual freedom" exp. against the authorities of state and church.

6. Naturalistic Views: Thinkers like Rousseau, Comenius, Pestalozzi, Robert Owen and Friedrich Froebel-all contributed to the spread of naturalistic views. Even as early as 1762, Rousseau argued that children should be protected from the corrupting influence of society and attention should be paid to carefully nurture their natural and spontaneous impulses. Pestalozzi believed that the instruction should be adapted to child's need and based on child's natural development. He rejected the practice of rote-memorization as the base of learning. Owen recommended non-punitive environment. Child-choice and

spontaneous play as vehicles of learning. Froebel encouraged discovery, manipulation, inventiveness and spiritual values through stories. All these views created a movement of progressive education where earlier emphasis on discipline, authority and scholarship was tempered with freedom, simplicity, and subjectivity. As we shall see in a separate section, Maria Montessori carried this tradition forward.

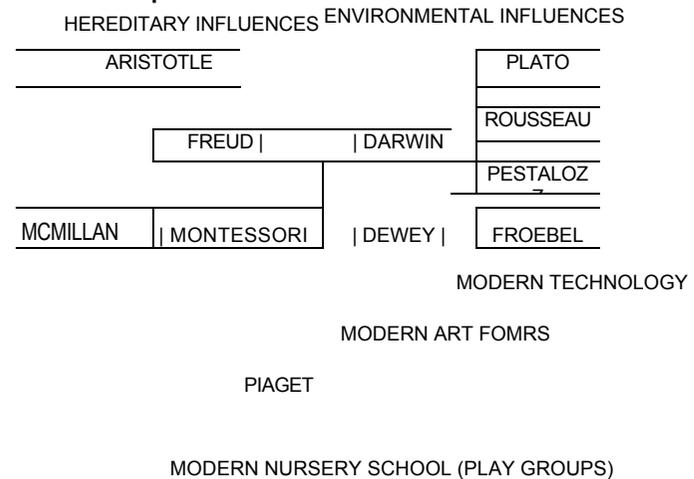
7. Cooperative Learning/Pragmatic Models: While Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine and many others recognised the need to build an ideal society and therefore an ideal educational system. It was John Dewey who made a practical attempt to build an educational philosophy & practise for infusing democratic values. Dewey argued that subject matter should consist of activities that will enable the child to reflect upon his social experiences. When subject matter preceded or was unrelated to the child's experiences, it was largely meaningless. It gained meaning through being made the medium for continued reflection upon, and reconstruction, of experience. According to Dewey, the energy required for action in the children derived from four main impulses: the social, constructive, investigative and expressive.

By recognizing them, and using them, energy and enthusiasm were generated which led to creative activity and learning. The role of the teacher was to guide but also allow the child's impulses to proceed unhindered. A series of thinkers since the time of Dewey have built upon his Ideas while preserving the basic premise that a society of reflective thinkers would be capable of improving itself and preserving the uniqueness of individuals.

The implementation of democratic methods of teaching has not been easy. The lack of instructional skills and cumbersome methods have been the main reasons for its limited use. The techniques of role playing, socratic-dialogue method and group investigations are some attempts to imbibe the spiriLof cooperative learning models.

8. Montessori Model: Though Maria Montessori owes an intellectual debt to the progressive tradition in education, she stands alone as the pioneer in elementary teaching system together with revolutionary teaching materials. Born in Italy in 1870, she had a distinguished career until she died in 1952 in the Netherlands. Her educational background and training in medicine, surgery,

psychiatry and experimental psychology gave her a deep understanding of the biological and psychic nature of the child. She saw mental deficiency as more of an educational than a medical problem.



Margaret & Rachel McMillan, working in England in 1911, stressed the need for cognitive stimulation through sensori-motor activity. Unlike Montessori, they did not use structured sense training apparatus but encouraged sensory experiences in the environment.

Montessori divides a child's life into three stages: 0-6 years, 6-12 years and 12-18 years and utilized the sensitivity of each age as an educational opportunity. The role of the teacher became a 'perceiver' of child's needs; 'preparer' of his/her environment; a 'protectress' of he child's right to learn to protect the continuity of the child's learning process from peers' interruption and unnecessary intervention. To Montessori, a truly

they reinforced their own learning and internal feelings of success.

Montessori's methods and schools are greatly used throughout the world today.

9. Cognitive Psychology Model: Swiss Psychologist Jean Piaget believed that human beings develop increasingly more complex levels of thinking in definite stages. Each stage is characterized by the possession of certain concepts or intellectual structures, which he refers to as schemas. The schemas mediate between the child and his or her environment. With experience, new schemas develop. Piaget's stance is that the development of the schemas occur in the same order in all of us and furthermore at a predetermined rate—a rate governed by our physiological maturation. Until the requisite

neurological structures are developed, these schemas cannot appear. The earlier states lay the basis for future development. The stages are:

1. Sensori-motor stage (0-2 years) (preverbal)
2. Pre-operational stage (2-7 years)
 - (a) Pre-conceptual thought (2-4 years)
 - (b) Intuitive thought (4-7 years)
3. Operational stage (7 to 16 years)—advent of rational activity.
 - (a) Concrete operational thought (7-11 years).
 - (b) Formal operational thought (11-16years).

Thus, Piaget alongwith Gesell, Freud,, Erikson and others brought into focus the view that nature sets the basic sequence of stages while nurture shapes the development processes within stages. Since then, the genetics research has further unfolded the causes of human diversities. American anthropologist Margaret Mead studied at length the cultural aspects of development and helped us to understand the basic conceptions of human nature.

10. Behaviourists View: Led by B.F. Skinner, a large number of models have demonstrated that human being is capable of learning and modifying behaviour by responding to tasks and feedbacks. One of the important applications of behavioral systems theory is in the development of instructional systems that enable leaders to adjust the pace of instruction and to record their own progress. Similarly, the principles of cybernetics have been employed to design learning environments—from board games to computer simulations to elaborate laboratories for learning. Students teach themselves by observing the results of their actions. Thus, behaviorists rejected the conventional model of a human being as a free agent who acts in accordance with the decisions of an inner self that is neither fully controllable or explicable by scientific means. Rather, Skinner & his followers envisaged the use of scientific knowledge about the control of human behaviour to create a planned man (human)-one who is conditioned to behave in the way best calculated to achieve society's goals.

12. Waldrof Model: Founded by Rudolf Steiner in 1912, it was based on the science of the spirit termed as anthroposophy. As per his views,

human being evolves through following stages viz.

- (a) Physical Body
- (b) Life Body or Etheric Body.
- (c) Sentient or astral Body.
- (d) Body of the Ego.

Steiner built an education philosophy around the knowledge of these stages and with the objective of developing clarity of thought, sensitivity of feeling and strengthening of the will. Steiner visualized the stages of development as:

- 1-7 years : Imitation; absorption of sounds of speech, gestures of people, attitudes and values of parents and peers.
- 7-12 years: Imagination; child experiences and expresses life through finely shaded feelings.
- 12-17 years: Rational Judgement; Uses thinking as an objective instrument; Healthy idealism and vulnerable sensitivity about one's own feelings causes child to build barriers of self protection. Therefore constantly seeking an ideal or model to emulate.

Education, according to Steiner, must be practical, it must be artistic and it must help young people to develop their own capacity for evaluation. Learning is an individual as well as a social process. Academic studies emphasize the former while practical work supports social-cohesion. Academic study should be balanced by helping the child to experience what society is—which is not just intellect but motives, feelings, action, co-operation, confrontation. Above all the cultivation of intuitive and spiritual aspect is as important as the understanding of life's practicalities. It is also true that to bring the two in harmony—the development of the pupil and the development of the civilised world—will require a body of teachers who do not shut themselves up in an educational routine with strictly professional interests, but rather take an active interest in the whole range of life. Steiner attempted to create a balance in student's intellect, feelings and will through the Waldorf model of schools which was first started in Stuttgart in 1919. Today, over 650 schools in 37 countries are founded on this model.

13. Sectarian Models: Here is a constant push and pull between the drive towards multiculturalism and instinct to preserve one's ethnic

and linguistic characteristics. There have been scores of initiatives to preserve this balance between local culture and internationalism. For instance, there are international-schools now in almost every country. At the same time, there also exist schools representing a particular religion, language or ethnic bias. For instance, there are French Schools, English Schools, German Schools, Indian Schools etc. There have also been attempts to establish universities based on religious sentiment such as Banaras Hindu University Muslim Aligarh University, Catholic University etc. Language issue has been a bone of contention in many countries, esp-where there are many languages spoken. Israel, for instance, had to setup special Hebrew schools to teach new immigrants arriving from multifarious linguistic background. Switzerland has been faced with the need to teach four official languages to pacify all groups. The imposition of different languages over the mother tongue has also led to psycho-economic exploitation and therefore, has been the cause of concern for social-activists. A movement towards secularization of educational system has led to exclusion of religious instruction in government schools in many countries. Another approach to secularization has been to

encourage the study of all religions and cultivate the spirit of tolerance for other faiths. Some countries like USA have accepted the dual system-one with a secular orientation that is publicly supported and one that is composed of a private, often church supported series of networks, both of them contributing to the culture & economy of the country.

14. Marxist/Centralist Model: A central concern of Karl Marx & Engels was to cure the alienation and dehumanisation of human beings caused by the exploitative forces of capitalism. Marx saw the need for a proletarian revolution in order to bring about a social order where each man's interests would be seen to be identical with the interests of all and alienation would disappear. Thus, Marx proposed the notion of a "communal man", who attained his/her freedom not by fleeing from social relationships but through social relationship. In actual practice, however, the Marxist ideas led to suppression, oppression and a total centralization of both political and economic power. The educational system too became highly centralised and turned the human beings into mere machines and brutes. Finally, the system was discarded in late 1980's.

The centralist model, however, is not peculiar to communist model. It is equally applicable to capitalist and other fascist regimes. One of the greatest dangers of this model is a lip service to human freedom and diversity and a lack of commitment to justice and supra-aesthetics.

15. Self-Development Models: The growth in human-interactions have also led to psychic and social clashes and this led to the development of models of communicating inter-personal skills and expanding personal awareness. Psychologists, Organisation-theorists and Psychiatrists have developed numerous techniques to develop harmonious relationships, foster creativity and enhance self-esteem. Thus, focus of education has shifted to the "learner-centered" models rather than treating learners as a cog in the "teaching-machine". The role of the teacher in the learner-centered models is that of a facilitator. The learning modalities go beyond conceptual and behavioral techniques and utilise awareness-building experiential methods. The result is greater self-awareness of unconscious dysfunctional patterns in one's life, healthy human relationships, greater ability of conflict

resolution and improved performance. Assertiveness Training, Active Listening, Negotiation Skills, Self-Management and Leadership Training are just some of the modern attempts to fill-up-the-gaps in educational methodologies.

16. Institutional-Building Models: Inspired by the African proverb "It takes a whole village to raise a child", Dr Comer of Yale developed a program that is currently used by 165 schools across the United States. The School Development Program (SDP), puts children at the centre of the educational process and calls on significant adults in children's lives—at home, in school and in the community—to work together to support and nurture every child's total development so each can reach his or her full potential. SDP is a response to the belief that schools have not kept pace with the technological, demographic and social changes in the modern times. For the most part, schools staff & parents are not trained in child development theory. Even if they are, schools do not have an organisation and management structure in place to solve problems collaboratively. Thus, SDP is a process that utilises the talents and strengths of administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents to plan a

school's academic, social, and staff development program. By working together, they create a better environment not only for the students but for themselves as well. The school becomes a better place to teach and a better place to learn. The nine-element process of SDP includes three mechanisms viz, parents program, school planning management team and Mental Health Team; three guiding principles viz, no fault, consensus decision making and collaboration; and three operations viz; comprehensive school plan, staff-development and assessment & modification. Comer-Ziegler approach has further improved the experiment.

The Yale experiment though unique to the needs of United States does demonstrate the importance of organisation and management plan based on knowledge of child-development and relationship issues in order to improve school climate, encourage student development and in turn, academic growth. The Yale model is just one of the many attempts that are underway today to reform the institutions which make the educational-process possible more efficiently and effectively. The Schools without Walls of New York, The Parkway Education Program of Phila-

delphia, Metro High School of Chicago etc. were other innovative attempts especially to tap the potential of the cities for educating the street children.

17. Social-Change Model: Just as the Gurukulas in ancient India contributed to the revolts to unseat the oppressed kings, education for social justice is the theme of thinkers like Paolo Freire. A pedagogy of the oppressed was developed by Paolo Freire on four fundamental ideas: conscientization, reflection, articulation and action. Paolo ran an adult literacy scheme in Brazil in the early 60's. His inspiration and methods resulted in hundreds of thousands of peasants being able to read and write rapidly. More than this, they grew to be able to interpret their predicament with dignity. He was so dramatically successful in such a short space of time that the authorities had to close it down after the coup of '64 and he was even expelled.

His view of knowledge, that we make and remake reality in a learning praxis, his conviction that people can and should take part in the transformation of their own condition (echoing Gandhi and Subhash Bose in this), his rigorous re-interpretation

of the role of the teacher as a reflective agent in the learning process of the student, his rejection of conventional "transfer-of-knowledge" systems as mere banking models feeding the injustice and oppression in the world today, make him an important beacon in the world.

While Paolo Freire is not the sole champion of justice in today's world, he did point out the importance of education for social transformation in unambiguous terms. There have been, however, insufficient successful attempts to emulate his success in other parts of the world.

18. Bank-Street Model: In 1916, Lucy Sprague Mitchell founded the "Bureau of Educational Experiments" which was based on her spirit and vision, and shaped by the emerging progressive education movement. This led to the opening of a Cooperative School for teachers in 1930 which in 1951 was renamed as Bank Street College of Education. The initiatives of this New York institution are today known all across the United States as the Bank Street Model.

The credo written by Mrs Mitchell capitulates the spirit of the Bank Street Model:

"What potentialities in human being—children, teachers, and ourselves—do we want to see develop ?

- *A zest for living that comes from taking in the world with all five sense alert.*
- *Lively intellectual curiosities that turn the world into an exciting laboratory and keep one ever a learner.*
- *Flexibility when confronted with change and ability to relinquish patterns that no longer fit the present.*
- *7776 courage to work unafraid and efficiently, in a world of new needs, new problems and new ideas.*
- *Gentleness combined with justice in passing judgments on other human beings.*
- *Sensitivity not only to the external formal rights of the "other fellow", but to him as another human being seeking a good life through his own standards.*
- *A striving to live democratically,, in and out of schools, as the best way to advance our concept of democracy.*

Our credo demands ethical standards as well as scientific attitudes. Our work is based on the faith that human beings can improve the society they have created."

Essentially, Bank Street Model is a way of living and working with children based on 'developmental-interaction' approach. "Developmental"

refers to the Bank Street's imperative that the curriculum be individualized in relation to each child's stage of development while "Interaction" refers to the premise that children learn through interaction with each-other and with adults in a skillfully designed learning environment. The two way communication between parents and school is an essential ingredient of the interactive philosophy. The child's out-of-school and in-school learnings are integrated and the parents learn what the teacher is trying to accomplish so that the goals can be supported at home. One of the basic tenets of the Bank Street Model is that all adults and children are learners. Thus, learning is a dynamic process and not a static one. The Bank Street's emphasis on core curriculum, using Social Studies and Science thematically and integrating content into basic skills has been very successfully applied in West Hills in New Haven, Conn. & other places. The goalsfor children and adults in Bank Street Model based schools is to help develop confident, inventive, responsive and productive people.

19. Futuristic Models: Alvin Toffler in 'Future Shock' drew the attention of one and all towards education in the future tense. He began with the

premise that nothing should be included in a curriculum unless it can be strongly justified in terms of the future. He opined "our schools are silent about the future. It is as if the time comes racing to an abrupt halt. The students are focused backward instead of forward. The future, banned as it were from the classroom, is banned from their consciousness as well. It is as though there were no future."

Led by the futurists, several school districts in U.S.A. are beginning to think about the future. Union High School District in Los Altos, California, for instance, established a Task Force on High School of the Future comprised of all interested parties. These visionary exercises are leading to a restructuring of curriculums, institutional reforms, renewed training for teachers and preparing facilities to accommodate new developments in technology.

The conferences & funding sponsored by Fortune 500 firms are adding to the futuristic dialogue esp. with the objective of utilising the educational systems to serve the future human resource needs of the multinational companies and governments.

20. Distance Learning Models: With the advent of technologies such as silicon (the tech. of sand), fiber-optics (the tech. of the electro-magnetic spectrum (the tech. of light)), we find ourselves in the midst of a telecommunication revolution. These developments bring us a super highway without having to leave home or use a vehicle and it opens up possibilities for quality education.

Already several universities in the United States, Japan and Europe are exploring the possibilities of distance-learning programs. California State University, for example, has already worked out twenty campuses to take advantage of distance instruction using latest telecommunications technologies. This twenty-campus system spans over 1000 miles and enrolls over 355,000 students. The advantages for rural and isolated areas and interactive learning are also immense. In South Carolina, the Educational TV's 2 digital network is also linking public colleges, universities, business communities and state agencies including Health, Criminal Justice, Hospitals & Correction, for distance learning and professional development.

It is certain that the world of tomorrow will be shaped greatly by these technological capabilities much in the same way the airplane, telephone or wireless influenced our life in the beginning of this century.

Yet, the realm of mind and consciousness will continue to pose perennial questions of our origins, our purpose and challenges of our collective survival and upliftment. Thus, educational-processes will no doubt be enhanced by the use of newer information technologies but the role of human ingenuity will never diminish.

In developing countries, open-university network is also an attempt to increase the access of educational opportunities to those who were hitherto, unable to pursue education due to their family and other responsibilities.

Thus, we see a new trend towards decentralist models of education.

21. Environmental-Education Model: The physical and psychic degradation caused by the blind pursuit of industrial revolution and goals of material growth is sickening one and all. Yet, we

seem to be caught in a vicious cycle, and unable to get out of it. Some starve due to physical deprivation while others die due to misuse of affluence. Environmental Ethic is, therefore, not a subject to be taught through singing or dancing but it is a serious science: the science of inter-related and inter-locking crises, the cause of what we do and its effect. It is an issue of our collective survival. Thus, the study of ecology has permeated the entire educational philosophy and raising fundamental questions of not how but Why. This is also raising fundamental questions about our spiritual world-views and therefore, challenging our values, our lifestyles and desideratum of life.

In the words of Maneka Gandhi, an environmentalist, "Ethics is not engineering. It does not ask "how to" but "Why". While developing ethics we do not search for tools to fix anything. We search for foundations which alone can justify our being and continuing on this planet. Ethics creates foundation values as the *raison d'etre* for the whole system, its specific subvalues and its specific modes of action. If our deepest ethic is the conviction that life is sacred, all conservation and development strategies flow out of that. Out of this

comes action. We have to understand why we do something—and the "how" falls into place. How should we live? The simplest question is also the most profound. What are the aims of development ? The ultimate end of all development is not merely life but quality living for all creatures, a life with meaning, dignity and fulfilment."

As we shall see later, Shrii PR. Sarkar has given a lucid expression to these sentiments in Neo-Humanistic Education Model.

22. Home Schooling Model: Home schooling has been practised since very early times in the human civilisation. It was, however, limited to children of nobility or exceptional children. Leon Battista Alberti in 15th century felt that the natural place for education was the home and not scholastic institutions. Today, home schooling movement has acquired an identity of its own. Some see it as a product of reaction to the authoritarian, class-room style education system that is boring for the children & stunts creativity. The classroom is geared to the average child and not all children learn to read or walk at the same time. Some child-psychologists recognise that there are different types of intelligence and not

all are allowed to develop in the classroom situation.

With the development of information technologies & greater access to instructional materials, it is becoming more & more feasible to follow the home-schooling model. At times, it is even becoming more appropriate for parents & pupils to design their own home-curriculum. The Home-Schooling model is student-centered. It involves using not only traditional educational resources and materials (books, workbooks, art, music and dance classes, vocational schools and community colleges) but community (libraries, museum, art galleries, clubs and organizations, arboretums, volunteer work) and non-traditional resources (professionals, trades-people craftspeople, retirees, pen-pals, neighbours, public, TV, computers, videos, magazines & newspapers).

With self-esteem intact, the Home-Schooling Model fosters discovery and a student can research any subject and develop to their fullest potential.

23. Corporate Model: With the growth of multina-

tional companies and the corporate influence on all aspects of human society, the educational systems are also not spared. There was a time when the business community used to have only an indirect or subtle influence on education policies because it had someone on the school advisory board. Now, the business involvement is a pure intervention. They finance the schools, dictate the goals, monitor the administrative efficiency, determine the curriculum and research needs and hire the graduates. At times, the corporations have even established their own university for in-house-training of their employees. Motorola's University in Singapore is one such example.

Almost every company all over the world participates in some educational program esp. when it serves its corporate interest-short-term or long-term. Recognising that habits and attitudes instilled early are the foundation of successful work-ethics, the Chrysler Education Program Advisory Group works with individual students in specific public schools in Chrysler plant cities. World of Work Program is a company wide program that prepares today's school children for tomorrow's work place. Similarly, Rockwell International in Los Angeles addressed the crisis

in education on all fronts, from KG to graduate school, with programs to enhance skills, motivate students, improve schools management, and generate a renewed interest in science and math.

NSA International Inc. entered the "learning systems" business in 1990 and began to market 132 activities and games developed to help children in the areas of creative thinking, memory, decision making, problem solving and comprehension. Such attempts of business community are examples of business involvement in education of our times.

This trend of corporate involvement in education is not without its dangers. The billions of dollars spent by the corporations strengthen the already existing knowledge gap between rich and the poor world. The tree of knowledge is no longer accessible to one & all as every one's birthright. UNESCO in its Annual World Education Report has focused the attention of international community towards dangers of widening knowledge gap. Its implications for efforts to address the major global challenges of our time—promoting sustainable development, protecting the environment, combating the spread

of disease, furthering the respect of human rights, promoting economic democracy, and fostering a spirit of understanding between peoples and cultures-need scarcely be underlined.

Furthermore, the corporate model underscores the importance of non-material goals such as spiritual realisation, aesthetics and supra-aesthetics in the educational systems. The research requirements to cater to the needs of the poor are also getting neglected with the spread of corporate model. Over—reliance on financial support by corporations also lends instability into the education systems of our times. On the other hand the corporate model is an important means to transfer technology and spirit of efficiency to all walks of life and to all countries-rich or poor.

24. Neo-Humanist Education Model

In the background of centuries old tradition of endeavors to find an ideal system of education, Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar in the year 1962 laid the foundations of an eclectic educational system based on universalism. Recognising the limited capability of existing educational systems to

produce sadvipras*, he laid out a step-by-step educational approach to fathom the different levels of consciousness and create individuals who could pave the way for One Universal Society on this planet. The Neo-Humanist Education Model of Shrii PR. Sarkar is the consummation of human efforts of thousands of years to build an education system which is a unique combination of tradition and modernity, analysis & synthesis, rationality & devotion, peace and justice.

The underlying premises of Neo-Humanist Educational System are as follows:

1. The goal of human life is 'Self Realisation and Universal Welfare' (Atma Moksaratham, Jagat Hitacaye). Neo-Humanist Education (NHE) Model achieves this by following an educational approach guided by the motto 'Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye' i.e. Knowledge for liberation-physical, psychic and spiritual. Shrii PR. Sarkar defines knowledge as the subjectivisation of external objectivity and consider knowing oneself as true knowledge. In this respect, NHE Model retains the spirit of

Note: Vipra is an intellectual & Sad vipra is a benevolent intuitional-spiritual moralist who is ready to fight against injustices and exploitations in the society.

Ancient Gurukula system of India and the secular approach to education.

2. Without psycho-spiritual guidance, human beings tend towards exploitation and this exploitation can be more dangerous in the psychic level than in the physical level. In order to avoid intellectual extravaganza or physical subjugation, human being require educational processes of behavioural transformation. NHE Model imparts such processes by which one can transcend the realm of motor and sensory consciousness, develop a control of all the propensities that lead the mind astray from the Higher consciousness, nurture the intuitional-faculty of mind and ultimately ensconce oneself in the Supreme Consciousness. This training is indispensable for liberation of human intellect from all narrow sentiments and to develop the god-centered lifestyle. God-centered lifestyle is antithetical to self-centeredness, matter and dogma-centeredness. Such a training constitutes the core of NHE Model.
3. Each human being is born with a certain reactive-momenta which manifest as basic

emotional drives. The environment conditions the human mind and each human being is also endowed with free-will. The Neo-Humanist educational process enables the channelisation of the expressions of basic emotional drives in a healthy way, promotes the cultivation of discriminant intellect to allow only the healthy influences from the environment to impact the mind and inspires the individual movement towards the realisation of cosmic self and actions for universal all-round welfare.

The primary purpose of education is to learn to serve the society and to acquire the necessary skills and the ability to do the same in a most effective and efficient manner. Thus, NHE Model is ultra-progressive and utilises the most appropriate knowledge (including science, technology and arts) for the enrichment of collective happiness. The wisdom & arts must, however, lead the way of science & technology in order to preserve the aesthetics of human civilisation.

4. Everything of this universe is at the different level of metamorphosis of the supreme con-

sciousness. NHE model accepts the existential and utility value of every entity of the universe. The challenge of pedagogics is to search, to discover and recognise the truth of life. The learning based on truth must then involve the knowledge of progressive utilization of all potentialities of the cosmos. This is, in essence, the curriculum-credo of NHE Model. Herein lies the dynamicity of NHE model.

5. Theories cannot be the deliverers of peace and tranquility in the human society. It is the example and therefore, exemplary role of the educators lies at the root of all learning and praxis. NHE model lays stress on correspondence of thoughts, words and deeds. Hence, only such persons can serve as the educators who adhere to the fundamental norms of Neo-Humanistic living and maintain a minimum gap between feelings, thoughts, words and actions.

Knowledge of applied psychology-relating to children, public, parents or authors is also essential for educators. Only such persons who have acquired the love and mastery of educational skills can serve the cause of

human growth of pupils. A proper selection of educators is an indispensable component of NHE Model. NHE model does not consider academic certificates as the sufficient criteria for selecting teachers. Qualities like a strong character, righteousness, spirit of social service, selflessness, an inspirational personality, and leadership ability should be evident in teachers. Teachers must get the highest respect in society and their economic needs should be properly looked after.

6. Human body is a biological machine and follows unique laws of maturation and growth. NHE Model recognises the bio-psychology of humans as a natural process and therefore, educational process must remain cognizant of physiological needs, psychological requirements and innate longing for the supreme in humans,

NHE model is versatile and flexible enough to respond to each person's need for self-fulfillment in all the three realms—physical, psychic and spiritual.

Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar defined acronym EDUCATION as comprising of:

Enlargement of Mind.

DESMEP (Discipline, Etiquette, Smartness
Morality, English & Pronunciation

Universal Outlook Character Active Habits
Truthworthiness Ideation of the Great
Omniscient Grace Nice Temperament.

Some of the principles which stem from the NHE
Philosophy are:

1. To awaken the thirst for knowledge and the development of the whole human personality.
2. Ethically Based education.
3. Awakening of Spiritual Awareness.
4. Integrated Approach to learning.
5. Cultivation of Aesthetics in all disciplines.
6. Local and multi-cultural recognition.
7. A new environmental consciousness.
8. Exemplary role of the educators.
9. The spirit of service
10. Expanded social consciousness and Sense of Justice.



According to Shrii PR. Sarkar, "Educated are those who have learnt much, remembered much and made use of their learning in practical life". NHE model gives emphasis on moral education and the inculcation of idealism-not only philosophy and traditions. Furthermore, the sense of universalism is to awakened in all children. Etiquette and refined behaviour are not enough. Real education leads to a pervasive sense of love and compassion for all creation. Teaching of a global-ligue-franca, classical languages and mothertongueor natural tonguecan set at rest the controversies over languages. The use of mother-tongue (local languages) should be encouraged throughout one's student life. As per NHE model, vocational education according to the natural tendency and spontaneous aptitude of students should be introduced during secondary education. NHE calls for a radical change in the examination system so that both applied and theoretical comprehension of the pupils can be properly assessed. NHE Model also calls for total freedom to educationists concerning the academic aspects of the institutions and the educational institutions should be free from political and other vested interests including business, military or religious priests.

NHE encourages the benevolent use of science and arts. Arts and sciences must be free like the light, air and the unhindered wealth of nature. Arts should lead the sciences and they must serve all and supply the vital juice of life. Thus, NHE model strives to build an education system on the foundations of cardinal human values unassailed by the shifting values of each age.

Thus, NHE model is truly synthetic, unific and integral, sensitive to the needs of individual & collective existence as well as introversial-extroversial balance. In the final analysis, NHE takes us beyond the scholastic approach involving manas-sphota (psychic-dilation) into the realm of intuitional-cum-spiritual where'caetanya-sphota¹ involving sublimation of consciousness establishes the pupils in Universal-consciousness & its concomitant Neo-Humanistic Love*. The dynamicity of Tantra, orthodoxy of Judism, austerity of Jains, service spirit of catholics, ethical stance of Buddhists, antiexploitation sentiment of Marx, reverance for life of Environmentalists, progressive use of science and technology of

Note: When the love of human heart extends to embrace the plants animals and the Inanimate world as the expression of One Supreme Consciousness, it may be called Neo-Humanistic Love. It transcends geo-sentiment, socio-sentiment & human sentiments.

materialists, applied psychology of Naturalists, social-outlook of Islam, mysticism of Bauls and Sufiis, devotion of Vaishnavites, pragmatism of the Entrepreneurs & Merchants and the thirst for sublime knowledge of the alchemists-all find their place in the holistic approach of NHE Model of the Modern Gurukula. As Dr Sohail Inayatullah a notable futurist comments, "Even the futurists have a place in PR. Sarkars' thoughts on Education".

Neo-Humanistic Gurukula at Ananda Nagar

To give a practical shape to the sublime ideas enshrined in the neo-humanist education philosophy, Shri PR. Sarkar founded a universal campus of Ananda Marga Gurukula on a 625 sq. kms educational township at Anandanagar in West Bengal, India. Lying in the lap of world's oldest mountains and at the birth place of ancient civilisation of Rahr, Anandanagar brings back the memories of the long journey of the first unit mind from primordial muck to oneness with Supreme consciousness-a truly momentous event, atleast comparable in importance to the first amphibian emerging from the sea, or the first human setting foot on the moon. It is, therefore,

not surprising to find symbolic representations from all ages, cultures, and faculties in this newly designed universal-education township. Here, in the silent bosom of wilderness, education can be imparted to serious students from all cultures and research can be conducted as a service to the poorest of the poor.

Gurukula at Anandanagar reminds us of the ancient times where great sages and teachers would live together with their students, sharing their lives and their examples, as well as their knowledge, guiding their students on the path of integrated development of body, mind and spirit. Just as from the legendary centres of learning in the ancient past came the great flowering of Indian culture-the Upanishads, and a tradition of men & women who have passed into legend themselves, similarly the Gurukula of Anandanagar with its international network of over a thousand institutions in over 180 countries prepares to bring a renaissance of values in the modern society. Started with the blessing of Mahasambhuti-a rare spiritual advent, Gurukulas reflect the new hope for a world of love, peace, understanding, inspiration and justice.

COGNITIVE MAP AND NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION

	Realm of Supreme Subjectivity	Realm of Subjective Mind		Realm of Objective Mind (Cittatattva)					Realm of Physicality
Lewi of consciousness	Atman "unit consciousness"	Mahatattva "Pure-I" feeling	Ahamtattva "Doer-I" feeling	Hi ran may* Kosa (Causal layer)	Vljinamaya Kosa (Subliminal layer)	Atimanas Kosa (Supra-mental layer)	Manomaya Kosa (Subtle mind)	Kamamaya Kosa (Crude mind/ metazoic structures)	Annamaya Kosa (Protozoic structures/ body)
Type of functional knowledge	Supreme synthetic subjective propositions	Spontaneous intuitional faculty • Focussed intuitional • Spirituo-intuitional	Action al faculty	Knowledge from the causal plane	Knowledge from the subliminal plane	Knowledge from the supra-mental plane	Conceptional knowledge (Paroks'a Bodha)	Perceptional knowledge <small>Sensorv Acquired direct habitual indirect inborn</small>	Glandular secretions & their interplay
Learning domain & realisations	Stance of non-attributional consciousness	Stance of attributional consciousness	Apexed intellect	Devotional sentiment attraction for the supreme	Wisdom through discrimination and non-attachment	Creativity Aesthetics Sense of history/futures	Scientific aptitude	Practical life skills	Physical education
Yogic approach to mundane & spiritual knowledge	Dhyana-sadhana	Dhyana--sadhana	Madhu vidya Dharana Dhyana	Madhu vidya Dharana Dhyana	Madhuvidya Pratyahara Pranayama Dharana Dhyana	Madhuvidya Pratyahara Pranayama Dharana Dhyana	Madhuvidya Ishwara-Pranidha'na	Yama Niyama	Sentient Diet Cleanliness Fasting Asanas
Supporting curriculum of neo-humanist education	Spirituality as a mission Perfect-spirituality as opposed to psuedo-spirituality Omni telepathy	Spirituality as a principle Cosmic ideation Surrender to the supreme •	Spirituality as a cult Cosmic ideation Surrender to the supreme	Neo-Humanist outlook Integrated development curricula Anti-exploitation sentiment Cosmic sentiment	Ethics Philosophy Eco-justice Peace studies Progressive utilisation approach	Arts, Architecture, design, music, literature etc. Future studies Aesthetics	Natural sciences (physical, life, biological sciences) Social sciences (human, behavioural) Microvita sciences	Communication skills Computational skills Entrepreneurial Technical Inter personal Life management skills	Martial Arts Sports, Games & Gymnastics Healthcare Nutrition Safety training Stu-vol training Collective social service etc.