



# Postcolonial–Postmodern Enquiry for Human Sustainability: Relevance of Santhigiri Model

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Published online: 9 November 2019  
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## Abstract

The basic premise of this paper originates from the contention that the hegemony of the West is unsustainable because of its grounding on a way of life and life vision not in conformity with the eternal laws of Mother Nature. It is losing its sheen under the impact of unsustainable lifestyle and consumerist culture and the resultant ecological hazards, violence, wars, racial animosity, and religion-induced extremism (Victor Ferkiss, *The Future of Technological Civilization*, New York, 1974, p.283-89). These trends are giving way to the emergence of a new humane civilization, and the new civilization shall evolve out of the wisdom accumulated over the past several centuries of human efforts to achieve prosperity and happiness. It should be inclusive and should respect all cultures by providing appropriate space to grow and develop in conformity with the laws of Mother Nature. Santhigiri movement grounded on the revelatory spirituality of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru offers hope for ushering in of a humane civilization ensuring solidarity beyond religion, race, caste, and region. The view that the academic hegemony of the West has been stifling the voices of varied cultural and religious traditions in other parts of the world and denying due space in the mainstream is examined in the larger context of the unalterable law of cyclical view of history. A historical examination of the hitherto civilizations shows that they have grown in particular directions in parts instead of the whole. A civilization on achieving maximum efficiency in particular directions starts decaying and disintegrating giving way to the shifting of creativity, power, and wealth to another region or continent. This shifting of power, creativity, and wealth from one place to another, one civilization to another has been an unavoidable law of human history. A new civilization that will foster the total efficiency of whole segments of humanity instead of maximum efficiency of parts in particular directions alone can offer

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human sustainability. The rising Santhigiri Parampara exemplifies the possibility to achieve the goal of human harmony based on the living guidance of wisdom of an Atmajnani Guru. If we can shed our biases and feeling of superiority on any counts and realize our limitations and come out of our unsustainable world view structured by modern science, technology, and instrumental rationality and seek the whole, we all can enjoin in this global mission of raising human consciousness into higher levels of attainment which can lead to an egalitarian and enlightened culture.

**Keywords** Sustainability · Hegemony · Marginalised cultures · Guru · Dharma · Yugadharmā · Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru

## Introduction

Enquiry for human sustainability acquires considerable significance in the context of postcolonial and postmodern historical experience because as historical records show, the colonialists had denigrated the cultural and religious legacy of the colonized people and even denied them the right to history. In other words, the colonists believed that that the colonized people were not civilized, and hence, “Europe had to colonize them as a civilizing mission.” Similarly, the ignoble impression that the Western historians and thinkers created in the minds of the middle-class English educated intelligentsia in colonies about their own culture and religion has done considerable damage in recognizing the worth of one’s own cultural and spiritual legacy at the time of nation-building after political independence.

The view that the intellectual and academic hegemony of the West have been stifling the voices of varied marginalized cultures and religious traditions in other parts of the world and denying them due to space in the mainstream history as well as academic and intellectual discourse is examined and discussed in this paper. The examination is contextualized in the Indian concept of time and law of cyclical view of history enshrined in the *Manu dharmā*<sup>1</sup> which is testified and validated in modern times by the revelatory spirituality of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru<sup>2</sup>, the founder

<sup>1</sup> *Manu dharmā*: Divine Law, a code of conduct in life based on cosmic awareness, ensuring the welfare of individual, society, and the world revealed by Manu, who was the progenitor of mankind as also the ancient law-giver of the universe according to Indian tradition. He was the primordial ruler of humanity, ordained by God. The founder Guru of Santhigiri ashram has affirmed this view as it has been confirmed through revelations received by his visionary disciples.

<sup>2</sup> Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru (1927–1999) is a teacher in the absolute sense of the term, in the tradition of revelations and prophecies. According to revelatory words and vision, his mission was to restore Yugadharmā and Atmajnana tradition. The teaching of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru marks a break and fundamental shift from the existing spiritual philosophies and religious orders. Grounding on the revelatory words and visions received from the *Brahma prakasham*, Guru stated that the existing spiritual and religious systems have come into being following an error in Yugadharmā which invoked curse from Brahman leading to the eclipse of *Atmajnana margam* and Manudharmā which was India’s original and sacred spiritual legacy. It was this error and curse that contributed to the arrested social evolution and spiritual progression of humanity despite the sacrifice of past seers leading to the present human predicament—Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, Dialogue on *Human Prospectus*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1980, (Vijayan, O.V., *Introduction*, tr. Usha, O.V.)

Guru of Santhigiri Ashram.<sup>3</sup> Ancient civilizations denied appropriate space and importance to matter which sought to spiritualize all realms of human life. In modern civilization, spirit is neglected and everything has been materialized to the extent that the worth of human self is neglected.<sup>4</sup> An examination of the history of civilizations shows that all hitherto civilizations have grown in particular directions instead of the whole and on attaining maximum efficiency in particular directions, their decay and disintegration start with the shifting of creativity, power, and wealth to another region or continent. This shifting of power, creativity, and wealth from one place to another and one civilization to another have been an inexorable law of human history.<sup>5</sup>

Modern civilization is caught in a vicious cycle of its own making and has been seeking solutions to these haunting problems within the self-same value premises and thought patterns that have produced them. Modern civilization is losing its sheen under the impact of unsustainable modern lifestyle, consumerist culture, and the resultant ecological tragedies, violence, wars, racial animosity, and religion-induced extremism.<sup>6</sup>

However, the rise of nations grounding on unsustainable prosperity and military power should not be mistaken for the emergence of a new human civilization. A civilization that fosters total efficiency of all sectors and domains, instead of maximum efficiency of a few alone will endure. The new civilization will synthesize matter and spirit in its natural and organic processes and will reinstate the lost equilibrium. Such a civilization will be based on *yugadharmā*<sup>7</sup> and will be sustainable.

## Context

Spirituality as a science of the human soul and life found its fruition in the Sanatana dharma or Atmajnana tradition of India fostered and sustained through the Guru-disciple order.<sup>8</sup> The wisdom tradition of India is universalistic and whole-embracing and aims to attain the total efficiency and perfection of humans. This tradition influenced the cultural universe and world view of even

<sup>3</sup> Santhigiri Ashram, founded by Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru in 1968 at Pothencode, 22 km away from Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of Kerala state, India, is a registered charitable organization. The Guru has visualized the ashram as a learning center of values essential for accomplishing a righteous life. Santhigiri remains as a global platform for people beyond culture, religion, race, and creed due to its grounding in the atmajnana tradition. It is from the Ashram, the Guru said, one should learn the fundamentals of life and niceties of culture. One should acquire dignity and nobility from the Ashram. The negative instincts one inherits are to be corrected and cleansed from soul through the guidance from Ashram, the Guru observed. The objectives of the Ashram are encapsulated in the three dictums of *Anmadanam* (giving food to the needy), *Athurasevanam* (medical service to the ailing), and *Atmabhodanam* (spiritual guidance). The teaching of the Guru seeks to unite people beyond religion, caste, creed, and race and guide them in accordance with *dharma* of the present age. The rising Santhigiri Guru *parampara* bears testimony for this. As part of fulfilling its mission, the Ashram has been doing commendable service in rejuvenating and promoting the traditional systems of Indian medicine as well as disseminating the teaching of the Guru through branch Ashrams across the country.

<sup>4</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*, Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, p.138

<sup>5</sup> Lohia, Rammanohar, *Wheel of History*, Hyderabad, 1955, P.56-59

<sup>6</sup> Victor Ferkiss, *The future of technological civilization*, New York, 1974, p.283-89

<sup>7</sup> *Yugadharmā*: Yuga is long aeon of time, in the ancient way of reckoning time in India. *Yugadharmā* is the dharma (divine law) according to a yuga (age)

<sup>8</sup> Rig Veda with the commentary of Sayana, Trans: John Muir, 5 Vol., Amsterdam, 1967; Nihilananda, Swami, *The Upanishads*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1959

the poorest in the poor in India. If we talk to a common person in India, he or she would tell us that all beings possess the radiance of the same cosmic power, and therefore, we should respect it and if we purposively do any harm, it is sinful. Such a positive orientation towards cosmic well-being and harmony characterized by compassion, love, and tolerance of the other, despite the material inadequacy of life, reveals the power of the spiritualistic world view that India pursued through *yugas*. However, at a particular point of social development, the path of rishi tradition was eclipsed and gave way in course of time to the present form of Hinduism which the modern world mistakes as Indian spirituality and religion.<sup>9</sup> It is in this context the mission of Santhigiri Ashram founded by Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru assumes global significance. Santhigiri movement, drawing upon the teaching and mission of the Guru, is a novel experience and experiment that seeks to restore *dharma* in accordance with *yuga* and the rishi tradition of India.<sup>10</sup> It aims at a spiritual and cultural renaissance grounded on the fundamental ideals of Santana dharma. Spiritual and material find its due space in the teaching of the founder Guru and is exemplified by the rising *parampara* of Santhigiri. A way of life and thinking based on the Guru's teaching and Guru-disciple order facilitate unification of humans beyond religion, caste, and creed with an objective to achieve material and spiritual progression in life. If we can shed our biases and feeling of hegemony—which are unsustainable and unfounded—and come out of our world view structured by modern science, technology, and instrumental rationality and seek the whole, all of us can enjoin in this global mission of raising human consciousness to higher levels of attainment.

As part of this global mission, it is important to probe and bring out the fundamental truths and virtues in all other cultural and religious traditions in different parts of the world so as to give them hope and strength to reinvent the worth in their culture and civilization. Since the ideals and path of Santhigiri are universalistic and all-embracing, such an initiative will bring about solidarity beyond regions and open up a new space for striving together in order to make a new humane world order.

## Dharma: Ideal and Praxis

Dharma, the cosmic will and design, is believed to have been revealed to humanity by Atmajnani Gurus or rishis in ancient India.<sup>11</sup> They revealed eternal fundamental truths and laws that uphold and sustain the universe, Mother Nature, and human life, which

<sup>9</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *The Path of Culture*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1993, p.35.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p.51

<sup>11</sup> Dharma: It was revealed by Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru that dharma, the cosmic will and design, was revealed to humanity through Manu, Adi Guru. But an error occurred to a *kalanthara* Guru in the third Chaturyuga of seventh Manwantwara invoked curse from Brahman leading to error in Yugadharm and vanishing of Manu's memory from human mind. Thereafter, humanity lost irrecoverably the Manudharma. The Guru noted that the present book which is generally referred to as Manusmriti is authored by scholars from time to time to cater to the sectarian interests: Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Dialogue on Human Prospectus*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1980, (Vijayan, O.V., *Introduction*, tr. Usha, O.V.)

constitute the basic philosophical premises of Vedas and Upanishads. Dharma is yuga-specific and is to be observed in accordance with *yugadharmā* under the guidance of a *Kalanthara* Guru ordained for the same.<sup>12</sup> That is why there is the concept of *Yuga purusha*, under whose guidance dharma is to be practiced in each *yuga*. The socio-economic, political, and cultural lives of Indian people were conditioned by this spiritualistic world view.

Human lives in all its manifestations are premised on certain principles in every habitat. Since these principles are considered essential to uphold a righteous life in harmony with the cosmic design, it is called *dharma*.<sup>13</sup> These eternal principles have ever been considered the highest revelations on human life and its inalienable nexus between the spiritual order of the world and Mother Nature. Such eternal ideals and their crystallizations and articulations have ever been present in all cultures and religious traditions of the world.

The Semitic religions had drawn up the ethical and moral world view of the West. However, unlike India, the modern social, economic, political, and rational thought systems in the West have laid down the foundation of Western cultural universe and socio-economic and political fabric.<sup>14</sup> Rise of scientific temperament, rationality, and search for truth through the brilliant application of human intelligence and critical reflections have put limitations on the influence of religion in the West. In the Western context, therefore, *dharma* is to be understood as the ethical-moral and natural philosophies found in the treatises of social, economic, and political thinkers right from Greco-Roman time. Pursuit of justice, truth, and righteous life in the West was characterized by striving towards the accomplishment of ideals of democracy, secularism, socialism, humanism, freedom, equality, and all.

While examining the marginalized cultures across the world, African societies present an example of rich cultural varieties and customs. Prior to the advent of foreign cultural intervention, one finds in the religious beliefs and practices of the people of Africa a set of principles that visualize a righteous life as in every traditional culture.<sup>15</sup> Consequent upon the cultural and economic encroachment by traders, colonialism, Islam, and Christian missionaries into the African society, African people lost their cultural homogeneity and religious solidarity. They lost their indigenous world view and culture to a considerable extent and the hegemony of dominant religions and cultures sidelined and eclipsed the indigenous African culture and their visualization of *dharma*.

While viewed in this context, we find that human efforts across the world to achieve a righteous life marked by material and spiritual well-being have always been ideal rather than practical. Wisdom accumulated over centuries on the sacrifice of visionaries to initiate and guide humans to a virtuous life bring in the realization that the value-free way of life and materialistic world view and the resultant greed, animosity, violence, and wars have been rising by defeating their efforts.

<sup>12</sup> Parasara smṛiti, 1:24

<sup>13</sup> Rama Jois, M., *Dharma: The Global Ethics*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Gulbarga, 2011; Pandit, M.P. *Our Vedic Heritage*, Chinmaya Mission, Bangalore, 1984

<sup>14</sup> Alan Brill, *Judaism and other religions: models of understanding*, March 2, 2010

<sup>15</sup> N.A. Alolo & J.A. Connel, *Indigenous religions and development: African traditional religion*, 2013.

## Wisdom Tradition of India

India was the cradle of spirituality and human civilization. The distinctiveness of the Wisdom tradition of India has been its universalistic world view and its spiritual and philosophical depth to accommodate and harmonize other religious, spiritual, and cultural streams.<sup>16</sup> It was not an exclusivist, but inclusivist philosophy which offered a way of life in harmony with cosmic design. This inclusivity makes the Guru tradition of India relevant and promising in the present global context of rising human suffering.

Dharma as praxis was the sustaining and guiding principle of the social and political life of ancient India as exemplified by Vedas, Upanishads, Thirukkural,<sup>17</sup> and Dharma Sastras.<sup>18</sup> Stories, legends, and narratives in ancient writings undergird the idea that dharma as ought principle has been working as the regulatory principle of social life, polity, and economic system in ancient India. When *dharma* ceases to be functional as a guiding principle of social, political, and economic life of people, social division, disintegration, discord, and stagnation ensue.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, *dharma* as an instrument of material progress and spiritual elevation also comes to an end. Want of philosophical reflection and critical attitude that engineered the Hindu society owing to its political, religious, and cultural factors made the Indian society hierarchical in character and confused real conceptions of *dharma*. When we examine *dharma* as a regulatory principle of Indian social life, polity, and economic life over the past millenniums, we find that at the existential level, social inequalities and superstitious practices contrary to the true spirit of yugadhama had tainted *dharma* as praxis in all realms of Indian life. Therefore, any genuine discourse on *dharma* should focus on how we as a people, society, and nation have deviated from *dharma* as praxis leading to the decline in all walks of life.

*Dharma* as praxis lost much of its dynamism with the gradual eclipse of *Atmajnana* or rishi tradition and the subsequent advent of the belief systems and practices contrary to yugadhama.<sup>20</sup> Accordingly, dharma was interpreted and reinterpreted in such a way that it was weaned away from its original sense of holding social life, family life, and individual life in harmony with the eternal laws of nature or the cosmic will and design. The underlying point is that this concept has not only a religious and moral standing, but it has an ethical and legal significance in the cultural sensitivity of this country. This dichotomy of *dharma* as ideal and praxis has done considerable damage to India's social development. It is in this context of rising social divide and disharmony, the relevance of a paradigm shift in the discourse on the theory and practice of *dharma* assumes importance.

Several Gurus and *acharyas* took birth in India to restore *dharma* by eliminating superstitious beliefs and practices based on religion and the resultant social segregation

<sup>16</sup> Rama Jois, M., *Dharma: The global ethics*, op.cit.

<sup>17</sup> Thirukkural: A celebrated work in Tamil literature, authored by Tiruvalluvar, a saintly householder lived in Tamil Nadu in between the second century BC and the eighth century AD.

<sup>18</sup> Pandit, M.P., op.cit. P.167; Hume, R.E., *Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1975

<sup>19</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Birthday Messages*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1988, p. 75

<sup>20</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Dialogue on Human Prospectus*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1980, p. 27-34. (Vijayan, O.V., *Introduction*, tr. Usha, O.V.)

which is otherwise not the culture of this tradition exalted by Vedas and Upanishads. However, it has been a tragedy to find that these seers could not fulfil their mission and restore equilibrium by eliminating the basic deviations and distortions that caused social disintegration and made human life vitiated.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, many of them confused the real meaning of *dharma* as constituting the distinctive duties of the four *varna* and the four *ashramas* so that the term *Varnashrama dharma* has been misconstrued and looked upon as the Sanatana *dharma*. What they have lost sight was *dharma* as reflective morality.

## Spiritual discourse on Dharma: Santhigiri model

Spiritual renaissance by restoring *dharma* in conformity with *yuga* and reaffirmation of the eternal relevance of Santana *dharma* has been the vision and mission of the founder Guru of Santhigiri Ashram, Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru. The revelatory teaching of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru has brought in a new exposition and understanding on the existing notion of *dharma* and its practice. The Guru reminded that all physical and metaphysical phenomena function on the basis of specific and precise principles and laws of nature. Any breakdown due to error, deviation, distortion, or intervention in the laws that operate behind natural phenomena will cause disharmony in nature and inevitably affect human life leading to natural calamity, clash, and sufferings.

The Guru draws our attention to existing religious faiths, practices, modes of worship, and ways of life across the world and calls for revisiting and reviewing them in the light of the original underlying spiritual philosophy of Sanatana *dharma* and *yugadhama*.

The Guru's long-drawn search and *tapas* for unraveling the basic causations of lingering human miseries, unsustainable material progress, and spiritually fallen state of humanity found fruition on the occasion of Guru's spiritual fulfillment in 1973. The Guru proclaimed to the world that *Manu dharma*, otherwise called *Santana Dharma*, was the fountain of spiritual knowledge of humanity. It was due to an error that occurred in a spiritual vision to a great rishi in the *Manu* lineage that *dharma* was eclipsed and *Manu dharma* and *Manu's* memory vanished from human memory. The revelation that human miseries and peacelessness linger despite the advent and sacrifice of innumerable great spiritual visionaries in different parts of the world is due to an error in spiritual vision to a *Kalanthara Guru* in the third *Chaturyuga* of the seventh *Manvantara*<sup>22</sup> is a hitherto unknown truth and new knowledge to the world.<sup>23</sup> The Guru revealed to humanity the fact that "over the past several millenniums, the spiritual and material life of humans was not in conformity with *dharma* of the concerned *yugas*. The non-observation of *yugadhama* and thereby non-observation of the cosmic will and cosmic design and the resultant way of life disharmonious with the eternal laws of

<sup>21</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Birthday Messages*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1988, p. 75

<sup>22</sup> *Manvantara*: It has been revealed to the visionary disciples of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru that a conceptual error crept into the consciousness of a great preceptor in the line of the Manus, the spiritual rulers of humanity for a *Manvantara*. It was revealed from the Light by the Almighty as a response to Guru's intense search for truth. This error happened eons ago in the third *Chaturyuga* of this *Manvantara* that is approximately 108,000,000 years ago and stained humanity in a dreadful way

<sup>23</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Birthday Messages*, op.cit., P. 149

Mother Nature have contributed to the decadence of religions and human life. This is an important revelation to humanity.”<sup>24</sup>

Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru has stated that Guru Traditions have played a supreme role in the evolution and development of the core spiritual wisdom and philosophy of Sanatana dharma. It was *adi guru* Manu who revealed to humanity *dharma*, the cosmic will and design behind the spiritual order of the world, Mother Nature, and human life. The *Manvantara* time calculus<sup>25</sup> and the doctrine of yugadharma enshrined in the revealed treatise of *Manu dharma* thus brought to human understanding the spiritual design of the cyclical movement of time conceived in *Kalpa*, *Manwantara*, and Yuga.<sup>26</sup> The *Manvantara* time calculus and the doctrine of yugadharma provided the benchmark and criterion for spiritual pursuit of humanity. According to *yugadharma*, religious faith, worship system, and practices should be in conformity with the dharma of yuga. Otherwise, it would lead to deviation and distortion in religious faiths and practices leading to social disintegration, cultural decay, and misfortunes. Thus, yugadharma is fundamental to human spiritual pursuits.<sup>27</sup> Stories of incarnations, karmic relations of previous births spreading over to *yugas*, narratives and discourses on dharma highlighted in epics, *puranas*, etc. all bring into light the relevance and importance of *yugadharma* in the spiritual and material pursuit of human life.

When we examine the teachings of Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru, it is found that most of the concepts found in Guru’s teachings had already been there in existence. But the Guru expounded them in accordance with the dharma of the present yuga. Thus, Guru’s exposition on fundamental concepts in spirituality and religion such as *Manu dharma*, *yugadharma*, *Jnana marga*, spiritual stages, astral powers, worship systems, demonic worship, *Pitru Suddhi*, or *Gurupooja* marks a shift from the existing paradigm.

In the context of lingering human predicament, the Guru’s revelation regarding the first error and non-observation of Yugadharma for the last 25 *Chaturyugas* and its ramification in the ensuing spiritual and material life of humans is relevant and significant. The revelatory teachings and restoration of yugadharma by Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru have marked a revolutionary shift from the existing religious systems and paves the way to a transition in the spiritual, religious, and cultural life of the people and nation. In course of time, it will lead to spiritual and cultural renaissance of India leading to national unity and integration, which will bring back to India the *Gurusthanam* of the world.

## Marginalized Cultures and Global Solidarity

The civilizational history of humanity shows that certain human habitats across the world had been relegated to the background in its forward stride. Hegemony of dominant cultures has marginalized and denied appropriate space for the rise and development of certain cultures. This is significant, as noted earlier, in the colonial and postcolonial

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, P. 79-83

<sup>25</sup> *Manvantara* time calculus: an epoch that forms part of a *kalpa*. It consists of 306,720,000 years. A Manu is a ruler of this period. There are fourteen such *Manvantaras* in a creational process called *kalpa* which lasts 4,320,000,000 years.

<sup>26</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Gurupuja in Santhigiri*, Santhigiri Ashram, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992, p. 37.

<sup>27</sup> Karunakara Guru, Navajyothisree, *Dialogue on Human Prospectus*, op.cit. p. 27-34.



context of modern history because the ability to construct the account of the past, it was claimed, was unique to the Europeans. The European historians and social theorists asserted that people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (ASAFLA) had “culture” but not history. This view was challenged by many powerful thinkers and movements during anti-colonial struggle all over Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The postcolonial writings in ASAFLA as well as in the West documented much more evidence of significant aspects of civilization—in arts, literature, sculpture, knowledge systems, science, and technology. The postcolonial writings were more in the nature of a counter and therefore shared much of the methodology of the European colonial thought process. Many more forms of authentic perspectives on history, culture, and civilization had always existed in all parts of the world. Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru’s teachings belong to that genre of a view regarding the evolution of civilization.

It is in this context that the paradigm shift brought about by the revelatory teaching of the Guru on the notion of dharma and its existing practice have initiated a new thinking and awareness among truth-seekers, philosophers, and social thinkers. Going beyond the dualism/non-dualism discourse, the Guru’s teachings seek to synthesize the elements of truth in every culture and religion. By restoring *dharma* of the ongoing age and thereby the Santana dharma tradition, the Guru’s teachings offer a platform for people across the world beyond religion, caste, creed, gender, and race to get together and strive together for attaining a righteous life and achieving a new humane world order. The way of life and spiritual practices initiated by Santhigiri provide hope and promise to a novel collectivity of people transcending national and cultural boundaries. It is this possibility that makes Santhigiri movement relevant in associating not only with the marginalized cultures and people across the world but this is applicable to the Western civilization as well.

The unabated human predicament in the wake of modern world development and Western hegemony in almost all realms of socio-economic and cultural life of people living in the developing countries provides an opportunity to revisit the historical trajectory of modern Western civilization and rediscover the irreparable damage it has done to local and indigenous cultures in varied human habitats across the world. It will facilitate the forging of a gradual and new alliance in ushering in a new humane world order. The emergence of powerful indigenous socio-cultural and political movements in almost all developing countries has sought to resist the alien cultural and economic encroachments. Though the decolonization process has brought in political independence, the West could succeed in shaping strata in their own image in the erstwhile colonies. The global alliance of these strata along with the mainstream Western academics has been sidelining, neglecting, and obstructing the emergence of the indigenous cultures in the rest of the world. It is this persisting hegemony that hinders the spontaneous surfacing of marginalized cultures and their socio-economic development.

## Conclusion

The brief analysis of the historical trajectory of the rise and fall of human civilizations necessitates a rereading and rewriting of the cultural history of human societies which inevitably points to gradual cessation of Western hegemony, on the one hand, and the restoration of India’s lost *Atmajnana margā* and wisdom tradition grounding on the

fundamental premises of the revelatory spirituality of the founder Guru of Santhigiri which has the sagacity and strength to address and accommodate varied cultural diversities, on the other. This new spirituality has opened up a global environment for fresh initiatives to achieve solidarity of varied cultures across the world.

In this context, our initiative to familiarize the Santhigiri movement in the backdrop of Indian spirituality and culture with other cultures and movements in other parts of the world and forge a common platform, grounding on the universalistic, dynamic and living guidance of Santhigiri, assumes importance and relevance. The unfathomable depth and comprehensiveness of the teaching of the founder Guru of Santhigiri Ashram, Navajyothisree Karunakara Guru in conformity with India's wisdom tradition has thus brought in a new opportunity for human approximation, integration, and sustainability while ensuring organic and natural diversity.