

Unlocking the Ancient Wisdom: India's Contribution to Global Knowledge

Dr. H Thopesha

Assistant Professor of History, Government First Grade College, Nelamangala,
Bengaluru Rural District, Karnataka

ABSTRACT

The paper focus on the area of culture of India. India's literary contribution or philosophical contribution to world wisdom India is considerably given in the various spheres of life. India has contributed a lot since ancient times, which has been crucial in the development of modern concepts. The contribution has gone a long way to develop the way of life on the earth. India, a land complete in prosperous civilizing tradition and thoughtful idealistic customs, has long been observed as a beacon of knowledge and illumination. Indian society is one of the oldest civilizations and its contributions to the modern world through decimal system and invention of zero, foundational.

Keywords: Culture, Heritage, Civilisation, Philosophy, Foundation, Human and Society

INTRODUCTION

As an ancient civilisation, India is world-renowned for its philosophical beliefs and fabulous customs. It represents the achievement of India in science and technology since the ancient times. India invented the number system a few centuries ago with Aryabhata contribution the world it's most very important gift, by inventing the number Zero. India has exciting olden times and is generally acknowledged and cherished worldwide. Indian civilisation has accorded enormous significance to understanding its remarkably vast corpse of academic texts. Ancient knowledge informs established facts that guide native society on how to interact with the world.

"If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions, I should point to India." (Max Mueller) This statement from Max Mueller merely gives a hint on the spiritual and philosophical contributions made by India. However, India contributed in nearly every field and its contribution to the world wisdom is so huge that it cannot be recounted in a few pages. It will take several volumes of a work to write on India's contribution to the world wisdom because there is no field in which India has not contributed.

According to the celebrated author of The Story of Civilization, Will Durant, "It is true that even across the Himalayan barrier; India has sent to the West such gifts as grammar and logic, philosophy and fables, hypnotism and chess, and above all numerals and the decimal system. India was the mother of our race and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages. She was the mother of our philosophy, mother through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics, mother through Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity, mother through village communities of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all." Despite India's extraordinary civilization achievements being well documented by respected Western scholars, accurate knowledge of the country's history has seldom entered the public domain.

Few people are aware that the numbers that we all use today are an Indian invention. Beyond the numeral system itself, a number of other critical mathematical principles also have their routes in India, whose scientific texts and discoveries were regularly studied by foreign scholars, from Greek philosophers to Arab mathematicians, and from British inventors to Nazi and Cold War era rocket and nuclear scientists. According to Ludwig von Shroeder "Nearly all the philosophical and mathematical doctrines attributed to are derived from India" (Ludwig von Shroeder)

Ancient Indians were known pioneers in metallurgy, and had mastered the production of high quality steel more than two thousand years before the process was finally demystified in Britain and Europe The legendary Indian Wootz Steel was so advanced and prized that it was selected by King Porus as a gift over gold and silver also offered to him by Alexander the Great. Many scholars have pointed to significant Indian contributions to Ancient Greek philosophy, often portrayed as the foundation of human and certainly Western-philosophy. In a thorough recent analysis in The Shape of Ancient Thought, American scholar Thomas McEville also details how Indian philosophy directly influenced the key facets of pre-Socratic

Greek philosophy. “Is it not probable that the Brahmins were the first legislators of the earth, the first philosophers, and the first theologians? The Greeks, before the time of Pythagoras, travelled into India for instruction.” (Voltaire)

Another revolutionary Indian contribution was the development, production and use of cotton textiles for clothing. The Ancient Greeks were initially not even familiar with cotton, instead often wearing animal skins until the wars of Alexander the Great, during which they discovered and started using Indian garments, which essentially clothe all of us today.

“Hundreds of years before the Christian era, cotton textiles were woven in India with matchless skill, and their use spread to the Mediterranean countries.” (The Columbia Encyclopaedia). For us in Britain, it is important to be aware that one of the pillars of our wealth as a modern nation, and a foundation of our industrial revolution, was directly derived from knowledge and experience of high-quality textiles production and trade gained in India, as well as what many economic historians argue was the deliberate dismantling of India’s pioneering textiles industry. In his book *The Political Economy of Imperialism*, Dan Nadudere states that “It was by destroying the Indian textile industry that the British textile industry ever came up at all.” (Dan Nadudere)

The ancient republic of Athens has long been considered the oldest non-tribal, organised democracy in the world. During the modern era, racially motivated European ‘historians’ distorted or simply re-wrote significant Indian and colonial historical achievements, from pettily changing the date of the life and death of the revered Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, to make it appear as if he lived after Pericles and Socrates, to omitting known references to the existence of ancient Indian republics, known as Gana-Sangha (equal assembly), or Gana-Rajya (equal government).

In the same vein, the history of the ancient Indian republic of Vaishali, which dates back to 600 BCE – almost a century before the institution of Athenian republican democracy – was also ‘adjusted’ to support colonial propaganda of the day. Ironically, Ancient Greece itself demonstrated significant respect and attraction towards India and its achievements, but the legacy of modern-era colonial propaganda in this and many other facets of our collective history, remain with us to this day. “Through such chronological manipulations, the threat that the Indian past presents to the Greek miracle (as postulated by European supremacists is defused by chronology.” (Thomas McEvilley)

Another completely distinct and more widely known ancient form of Indian democracy is the localized ‘panchayat’ system, which literally means an ‘assembly of five’ wise and respected elders. Unlike ancient Indian city and state-level republics, panchayats started as a form of localized grassroots democracy more than three thousand years ago, have survived the rise and fall of repeated conquests and empires, and are still a central feature of India’s modern democratic apparatus. “India was the mother of village communities of self-government and democracy,” (Will Durant)

One of Independent India’s most notable contribution to modern space exploration occurred between 2008 and 2009, with Chandrayaan-1, the Indian Space Research Organisation’s (ISRO) first dedicated lunar mission. ISRO’s Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) carried both ISRO and NASA instruments, of which the Indian ‘Moon Impact Probe’ first detected the presence of lunar water. This was achieved three months before NASA’s ‘Moon Mineralogy Mapper’ (also part of Chandrayaan-1) made the same breakthrough, to which the discovery of lunar water is often attributed. “We want to thank ISRO for making the discovery possible. The moon till now was thought to be a very dry surface with lot of rocks.” (Jim Green, NASA Director)

Like many Indian inventors before him, the 20th Century Bengali scientists Satyendra Nath Bose are one of modern science’s unheralded heroes. His work provided the foundations for quantum statistics, which were later endorsed, developed and published by Einstein; the 2001 Nobel Prize for physics was awarded to German and US scientists for their study of condensates, which was in fact first conducted by and even named after Bose; the widely covered ‘God Particle’, the Higgs-Boson, is deservedly known to be attributed to Peter Higgs, the British genius behind the Higgs particle. The other, less well known half of the Higgs-Boson is named yet again after Bose, for his ground-breaking contributions to particle physics.

Guglielmo Marconi has for long been credited as the inventor of wireless radio communication. He subsequently received the 1909 Nobel Prize in Physics for contributions to the development of wireless telegraphy. The first public demonstration of the use of radio waves for communication, however, was made by an Indian scientist, Jagadish Chandra Bose. Bose’s revolutionary demonstration forms the foundation of the technology used in mobile telephony, radars, satellite communication, radios, television broadcast, WiFi, remote controls and countless other applications that play a central role in our daily life.

Little needs to be written about the ‘zero’, one of the most important inventions of all time. This mathematical digit and concept also has a direct link to the ancient philosophy of ‘nothingness’, and is one of many examples of the intermeshing of science and mathematics with spirituality and philosophy in ancient India. Other critical branches of mathematics such as Calculus, attributed to Isaac Newton and Gottfried Leibniz, were developed to an almost identical formula by Indian mathematicians, hundreds of years before Newton and Leibniz’s findings.

Since the time of the Indus Valley civilization over 5,000 years ago, and until the onset of the European colonial era in the recent past, India had created and sustained a vast and highly advanced network of canals, along with intricate irrigation, water management and sewage system. These sewage systems were so advanced that they were designed to automatically self-clear systems blockages, as well as account for smell and odour. The world’s first flush toilets were also in use in India over 3,000 years ago, and were a feature of most homes in the Indus Valley Civilization – the largest ancient civilization in the world.

CONCLUSION

India’s philosophical thoughts and eternal knowledge continue to encourage persons both in India and around the world. It is important that regain the inclusive facts system of our heritage. Indian culture is measured the first and highest ethnicity in the world. Our beautiful cultural heritage is certainly a gift from our ancestors. It is the birthplace of four great world religions as the Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. Ayurveda is an substitute medicine system with chronological ancestry in the Indian subcontinent.

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