

[Editorial: The West's Love for India](#)

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the Editor

India mistakenly, I would say, often looks to the West as a model of accomplishment, a measure of what is true and important. Ironically, the greatest of Western minds have had nothing but admiration for India and her remarkable culture, a reverence for her profound spirituality, an appreciation for that which far exceeds the value of any technical advancement the West has to offer.

The Indian renaissance thinker Ram Swarup of Delhi describes the onset of the West's love affair with Bharat. "India thus became a new passion. F. Majer (1771-1818) found that 'the priests of Egypt and the sages of Greece have drawn directly from the original well of India,' that it is to 'the banks of the Ganges and the Indus that our hearts feel drawn as by some hidden urge.' Herder (1744-1803) saw in India the 'lost paradise of all religions and philosophies,' 'the cradle of humanity,' and also its 'eternal home,' the great Orient 'waiting to be discovered within ourselves.' To Schopenhauer, the Upanishads were documents of 'almost superhuman conception,' whose authors could hardly be thought of as 'mere mortals.' He spoke of India as the 'fatherland of mankind' which 'gave the original religion of our race,' and he

expressed the hope that European peoples, 'who stemmed from Asia,...would reattain the religion of their home.' "

Lest the wisdom of our Sanatana Dharma be taken for granted, we offer the following collection from among dozens of famous quotations on the Holy Land of Hindu Dharma.

"When we read the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East--above all, those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe--we discover there many a truth, and truths so profound, and which make such a contrast with the meanness of the results at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East, and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy."

Victor Cousin, French Philosopher (1792-1867)

"India was the motherland 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 the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all."

William Durant, American Author (1885-1981)

"The true Vedantic spirit does not start out with a system of preconceived ideas. It possesses absolute liberty and unrivalled courage among religions with regard to the facts to be observed and the diverse hypotheses it has laid down for

their coordination. Never having been hampered by a priestly order, each man has been entirely free to search wherever he pleased for the spiritual explanation of the spectacle of the universe."

Romain Rolland, French Mystic (1886-1944)

"The divine origin of man, as taught in Vedanta, is continually inculcated, to stimulate his efforts to return, to animate him in the struggle, and incite him to consider a reunion and reincorporation with Divinity as the one primary object of every action and reaction. Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reason as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers, appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigor of Oriental idealism like a feeble Promethean spark in the full fold of heavenly glory of the noonday sun, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished."

A.W. Schlegel, German Scholar and Poet (1767-1845)

"What extracts from the Vedas I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum--free from particulars, simple, universal."

Henry David Thoreau, American Philosopher (1817-1862)

"Whatever sphere of human mind you may select for your special study, whether it be language, or religions, or mythology, or philosophy, whether it be laws or customs, primitive art or primitive science, everywhere you have to go to India, whether you like it or not, because some of the most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India and in India only."

Max Müller, German Orientalist (1823-1900)

"In religion and culture, India is the only millionaire! There is only one India! The land of dreams and romance. The one land all men desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of all rest of the globe combined."

Mark Twain, American Humorist Author (1835-1920)

"Precious or durable materials--gold, silver, bronze, marble, onyx, or granite--have been used by most ancient peoples in an attempt to immortalize their achievements. Not so, however, with the ancient Aryans. They turned to what may seem the most volatile and insubstantial material of all--the spoken word--and, out of this bubble of air, fashioned a monument which more than thirty, perhaps forty, centuries later stands untouched by time or the elements. For the Pyramids have been eroded by the desert wind, the marble broken by earthquakes, and the gold stolen by robbers, while the Veda remains, recited daily by an unbroken chain of generations, traveling like a great wave through the living substance of the mind."

Prof. Jean Lee Mee, Contemporary Author/Translator