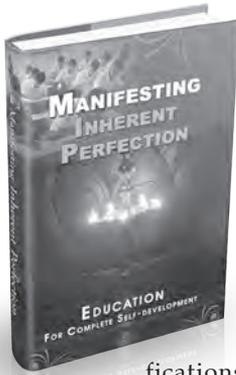


edification. It is ideal for non-detailed study by school students.

N. HARIHARAN, MADURAI



**MANIFESTING INHERENT
PERFECTION—EDUCATION FOR
COMPLETE SELF-DEVELOPMENT**

By Swami
Atmashradhananda

Published by Sri Ramakrishna
Math, Mylapore, Chennai
– 600 004, Email: mail@
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Rs 250/- .

Without formal qualifications in pedagogy one cannot become a teacher in Indian schools and colleges. This formal training is based on European and American educational theories. For example, Western pedagogy has been influenced by the theories of Melanie Klein, Anna Freud and Jean Piaget. All three of them had been influenced by the theories of Sigmund Freud; Anna being his youngest daughter who was eclipsed by her father and Melanie Klein's reputation. Therefore Western pedagogy is rooted in the analysis and confrontation with Sigmund Freud's construction and emphasis of everything being libidinal.

Further, during the Enlightenment Period in Europe John Locke came up with his concept of the *tabula rasa*; according to Locke a child was an empty slate to be written on by her teachers. Essentially Locke's influence on contemporary pedagogy has been to cram a child with information. *Manifesting Inherent Perfection* performs its pedagogical work by negating Freud's understanding of childhood as essentially erotic and at the same time correcting Locke's theory of a child being an empty vessel without any past *samskaras*. *Manifesting Inherent Perfection* is essential reading for someone receiving teachers' training or someone wanting to become a better teacher. Swami Gnaneshwarananda has this to say: 'In order to be an educated man one does not have to go through books, one does not have to talk a lot, and one does not need to be an information bureau or a card-index. Anything that helps us in bringing into manifestation the perfection that is already within us, is true education.' (39)

The emphasis here in the quoted passage and throughout the book is on holistic learning and character building. What is the point to be a learned person without being able to attain *mukti*?

Swami Yatiswarananda's essay reprinted in this collection is one of the most important attacks against Freudian constructions of the mind and childhood, especially Freud's concept of sublimation (*How to Sublimate Our Tendencies* 23-32). The editor of this volume has shown a deep understanding of education when he included Swami Yatiswarananda's essay. Traditional books on the theory of education will not have such holistic approaches or bother about Ashtavakra's concept of what constitutes the true aim of education (Swami Samarpanananda, *Ashtavakra—the Young Knower of Brahman* 539-548). Though a 'born scholar', Ashtavakra 'set his mind on acquiring the highest knowledge of Supreme Brahman' (547)—this knowledge of the Supreme Brahman is the aim of all education. Sadly modern educational theories have nothing to say about transcendence; they are all concerned with the results of the Protestant work ethic; efficiencies and the generation of capital.

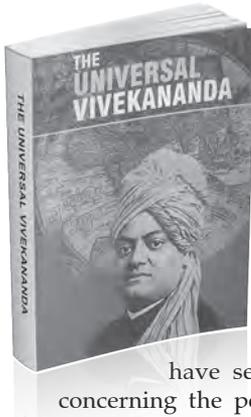
The *Ten Commandments for Teachers* (375-379) is useful to this reviewer who is a career academic. Career academicians tend to forget that their main job is to teach and not to research; research complements teaching but unfortunately the current UGC norms emphasise research over teaching and this entire book should be used by the MHRD to rethink its educational policies. It is rarely that a book on pedagogy addresses the *zeitgeist*; and this reviewer feels that the book under review should be available in the e-format for easier dissemination. Unless this book is available in either the mobi or epub formats, many will not be able to use the book and it will languish within the circle of Indian Studies', scholars and Ramakrishna Mission devotees. The work is so all-encompassing and addresses simultaneously both praxis and theory that this reviewer cannot overemphasise the digitisation of such a book. A book of this nature will be intentionally misread by professional educationalists as *dharmaic* and bigoted. Only its availability online, possibly free of cost on platforms like SCRIBD, will do the authors and the editor justice.

The traditional wisdom pages chosen by the editor are pertinent and worth integration into

the classroom—for example, the pithy saying on page 375 is something that we teachers must learn first and then burn the message into our students. The photographs and the illustrations are good. In fact, this book will come in handy for parents distraught with their children's upbringing. There are struggling working couples in India who want to know how to bring up their children properly; this book should reach them.

There is a list of books on 583-586 at the end of this volume which can be procured from the Chennai Math; but this reviewer urges that financial burdens notwithstanding, to make even those recommended books available electronically at nominal prices or free for the global audience. While the Ramakrishna Mission devotees and the monks and their students will find in this volume a handy guide, it is those who have no connection with the Ramakrishna Mission who will benefit the most from this book.

— SUBHASIS CHATTOPADHYAY, BISHNUPUR, WEST BENGAL



THE UNIVERSAL VIVEKANANDA

Edited by **Ghanananda
and Parrinder**

*Advaita Ashrama, 5, Dehi
Entally Road, Kolkata –
700006. Email: mail@
advaitaashrama.org Hard
cover, Pp. 312, First Edition,
2014, Rs.115.*

The recent years have seen a spurt of publications concerning the personality and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, all of them commemorating his 150th birthday. They are anthologies, containing new articles written for the occasion by people from various walks of life. Most of these books have been reviewed in the pages of *The Vedanta Kesari*.

This book, however, is of a different type altogether. It is an anthology of articles from the 1960s, taken from the book *Swami Vivekananda in East and West*, published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre of London, supplemented by some articles from the *Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Memorial Volume*. The book, thus, has a vintage value, and should be of interest to admirers of Swamiji, as representing the viewpoints of scholars of the 1960s.

The book has been ably edited by Swami Ghanananda and Dr. Geoffrey Parrinder. Apart from the Publisher's Note, Publisher's Preface to the First Edition and a Note by the Editor in the beginning of the book, there are 17 articles, followed by Tributes to Swamiji from several prominent people of those days. The book closes with a brief introduction to the authors, followed by an Index.

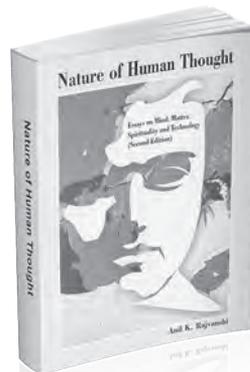
The articles fall into two categories. Some of them are general in character, dealing with the personality of Swamiji and his contributions. Another category is specifically about the work of Swamiji in India and the western countries. The authors are from diverse backgrounds, but have a common trait, viz., a sense of reverence for Swamiji. The book begins with a brief overall appraisal of the subject by the Editor. Then follow the rest of the articles, each dealing with one aspect of Swamiji's personality. All the articles are of uniformly high standard, testifying to the deep study made by the authors. Some of the authors are from the Ramakrishna Order itself, most of them stationed abroad.

Some articles appear to be outdated. This is because all of them were written in the 1960s. Since that time so many new things have been discovered in the life of Swamiji that the same articles would have been written in a somewhat different way. But, still, the articles are valuable in themselves, since they portray the subject from a closer perspective in time.

A couple of articles towards the end do not indicate the name of the author! Are they the contributions of the Editor himself?

This is another worthy contribution from the Advaita Ashrama. The high quality of publication is what is to be expected from the Advaita Ashrama.

— NVC SWAMY, BANGALORE



NATURE OF HUMAN THOUGHT

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