

Indo Canadian Sun

India: Through the eyes of the West

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A sampling of observations and thoughts on India through the "eyes of the west" arising from contact and interaction over the centuries.

Diversity

Annie Besant: "A common religion is not possible for India, but a recognition of a common basis for all religions, and the growth of a liberal, tolerant spirit in religious matters, are possible."

Mark Twain: "India has two million gods, and worships them all. In religion all other countries are paupers; India is the only millionaire."

Winston Churchill: "India is a geographical term. It is no more a united nation than the Equator."

Philosophical

Albert Einstein: "When I read the Bhagavad-Gita and reflect about how God created this universe everything else seems so superfluous."

James Todd (Colonel): "Where can we look for sages like those whose systems of philosophy were prototypes of those of Greece: to whose works Plato, Thales and Pythagorus were disciples? Where do I find astronomers whose knowledge of planetary systems yet excites wonder in Europe as well as the architects and sculptors whose works claim our admiration, and the musicians who could make the mind oscillate from joy to sorrow, from tears to smile with the change of modes and varied intonation?"

Max Mueller: "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."

Science

Albert Einstein: "We owe a lot to the Indians, who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made."

Lancelot Hogben: "There has been no more revolutionary contribution than the one which the Hindus (Indians) made when they invented ZERO."

Werner Heisenberg: "After the conversations about Indian philosophy, some of the ideas of Quantum Physics that had seemed so crazy suddenly made much more sense."

Vedas and Upanishads

Henry David Thoreau: "Whenever I have read any part of the Vedas, I have felt that some unearthly and unknown light illuminated me. In the great teaching of the Vedas, there is no touch of sectarianism. It is of all ages, climbs, and nationalities and is the royal road for the attainment of the Great Knowledge. When I read it, I feel that I am under the spangled heavens of a summer night."

Wheeler Wilcox: "India - The land of Vedas, the remarkable works contain not only religious ideas for a perfect life, but also facts which science has proved true. Electricity, radium, electronics, airship, all were known to the seers who founded the Vedas."

William James: "From the Vedas we learn a practical art of surgery, medicine, music, house building under which mechanized art is included. They are encyclopedia of every aspect of life, culture, religion, science, ethics, law, cosmology and meteorology."

Modern India

Bill Gates: "It is really gratifying, for example, to visit India now and see that because they've had good educational institutions, and they've had a focus on it, there are more and more people in India participating in the world economy."

David Frum: "To balance China, the democracies will need new friends - and India with its fast-growing economy, youthful population, and democratic politics seems the obvious candidate."

Thomas Friedman: "When I was growing up, my parents told me, 'Finish your dinner. People in China and India are starving.' I tell my daughters, 'Finish your homework. People in India and China are starving for your job.'"

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