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Our Heartfelt thanks to

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LAST DAYS HARVEST MINISTRIES

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*The Development of
Civilization and Religion in
India and its Influence on the
World Society*

Dr. Alexander Harris

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*This book is dedicated to my mother, my loving wife, my
darling children and grand children*

My Faithful Prayer Warriors

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Author's Note

In November of 1999, the Pope visited India and attention was directed to him prior to his arrival. On October 25th, an article appeared in the New Indian Express titled, "Tell the Pope how Hindu he is", and it contained a gist of Francois Gautier's forthcoming book, "The Indian Origin of Things". In the article it was stated,

The Pope is arriving in India on the 5th of November. Does he know that he may be stepping on a land from which Christianity originated? Indeed, over the centuries, numerous historians and sages have pointed out that not only has Hinduism had a predominant influence on Christianity, but that many of the Christian rites could be directly borrowed from Buddhist and Hindu India.

French historian Alain Danielou had noticed as early as 1950 that "a great number of events which surround the birth of Christ - as it is related in the Gospels - strangely remind us of Buddhists and Krishnaites legends".

The article then goes on to state,

Great Indian sages, such as Sri Aurobindo or Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the founder of the Art of Living, which is practiced in more than 80 countries, have often remarked that the stories recounting how Jesus came to India to be initiated, are probably true. Sri Ravi Shankar notes, for instance, that Jesus sometimes wore an orange robe, the Hindu symbol of renunciation in the world, which was not a usual practice in Judaism.

Christians when they read such articles have two types of reaction. Some are apathetic, secure in their own faith, while others are shaken in their spiritual foundations wondering and groping for answers.

I was speaking sometime ago to a Brahmin who was a teacher of the Bhagavad Gita. He discussed the similarities between the two faiths with respect to the Gita and he pointed out the parallels in the doctrines of sacrifice, salvation by faith, and total surrender to God. However, he quietly went on to say that the Gita was written several hundred years before Christ and probably even Christ might have read the Gita.

Masih in his book titled, "Shankara's Universal Philosophy of Religion" writes about the striking similarity between the lives of Krishna and Jesus,

The phenomenon of 'Krsnajanmastame' in which the child

Krishna is represented as a suckling at the mother's breast. Nanda, the foster-father of Krishna had gone to Mathura to pay his taxes (just as Joseph had gone to Bethlehem for census). Krishna was born in a cow-shed (Gokula exactly as Jesus was born in a manger); massacre of infants of Mathura by Kamsa (just as the massacre of infants by Herod); Krishna (like Jesus) had raised the son of a widow from the dead; Kubja anointed Krishna just as Mary had done with precious ointment.

Well how about that!

Another issue facing Christians is that we are accused of being violent in converting people to Christ. Mr. Dayananda Saraswati in an article titled, "Conversion is Violence", in the New Indian Express, dated October 29, 1999, writes,

I am hurt by religious conversion and many others like me are hurt. Millions are hurt. There are many issues to be discussed regarding conversion, but I want to draw your attention to only the central issue here, which is this one-sided violence. Religious conversion is violence and it breeds violence. In converting, you are also converting the nonviolent to violence.

However, when Mr. Sarawati was asked about organizations like the ISKCON spreading Hinduism, he said there was a difference between "converting" people and "convincing" them (The Hindu – Oct 31st, 1999). Mr. Saraswati has his own ashram in the United States (Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania). Interesting!

In January 1999, Christian missionary Graham Stewart Staines and his two young sons were burnt to death in Orissa. In September 1999, a Christian priest, Fr Arul Doss was also killed in Orissa. Observing these incidents Mr. M V Kamath wrote an article titled, "Mission Impossible, Putting an End to Conversion Activity" in the Times of India, dated October 13, 1999. In it he writes,

Some time ago, church authorities released a long list of atrocities perpetrated against Christians in different parts of India and at different times. The cumulative impression sought to be driven home is that minorities are no longer safe in India. This is an ominous development. Orissa's director-general of police Dilip Mahapatra has been quoted as saying that Fr Doss had received a "number of complaints and evidence" to the effect that the priest was involved in "illegal conversions" in violation of the Orissa Freedom of Religions Act, 1967.

He then goes on to state that,

Christian missionary efforts at conversion under the guise of social work do not take place in places, say, like the Brahmin-dominated ward of Mylapore in Chennai. They are conducted in poor, illiterate and innocent tribal areas and in remote jungles far from the prying eyes of authority. Now a reaction seems to have set in.

By the way I spent about four and half years from 1995 - 1999 ministering to Brahmins in the Brahmin dominated ward around Kapaleswara temple in Mylapore and they are yet to give an answer with evidence.

What are the answers to these issues? Was Jesus initiated in India? Did He read the Bagavad Gita and learn the Gospel from ancient Hindu thought and then begin His ministry? Was Christianity birthed from Hinduism?

Prof. Irfan Habib, an eminent historian, when interviewed by the Hindu (January 8th, 1997) said,

'Historical linguistics, inscriptions and the canons of archaeological excavations mean nothing to our friends in the VHP and the only thing that matters to them is working up religious sentiment.'

Once these religious sentiments are invoked in the community, it automatically leads to religious confusion, communal conflicts and violence.

Over the centuries scholars like Prof. Irfan Habib have clearly exposed these deceptions, but the Church has chosen to remain blind to these strongholds against the Gospel. Many organizations mainly run today by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), a religious wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), look for any anti-Christian material in the western world. They then project these liberal theologians as leading Bible scholars and prejudice the minds of educated Indians against Christ and Christians. This is one of the key reasons why the Church has been ineffective in reaching the educated communities.

This book traces the development of civilization and religion in India from the early civilizations. The development is systematically discussed so that truth can be brought out and deceptions exposed. Then each person after knowing the truth can decide their own spiritual pathway with total freedom.

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Foreword

God is blessing and utilizing each one of us in different ways. Albeit the ministries are different, those who are blessed with the redemption of Christ are striving to build up the Kingdom of Heaven from diverse angles.

Dr. Alexander Harris, author of the book titled, 'The Development of Civilization and Religion in India and its Influence on the World Society', is giving explicit reasons for writing this book. He goes on to state the following:

The religion and culture of India has been highly misunderstood over the years due to the Aryan distortions, and, mission strategies over the years have been based on these distortions and misunderstanding. ...

Did Hitler not claim that he was a Christian?

Thus, any mission strategy has to be built on the right historical perspective.

It is clear that this book is not written with the prime motive of intellectual contribution, but for analyzing the mission strategy in the light of the redemption of Christ.

Though St. Thomas preached the message of salvation in India in 1st c. A.D. itself and despite the fact that the Christian rulers (Europeans) ruled India for nearly five hundred years, Christians are still minute in number against the Indian population of a billion. What could be the reasons for the snails' progress of Christianity in India? The following gets us to the bottom of it.

*The religion and culture of India has been highly misunderstood over the years and
Racism and Casteism play a key role in damaging the growth of
Christianity in India.*

The author is unveiling the facts about the historical development of religion and culture of India, which helps one to understand the history of ancient India. His following statement divulges the hidden glory of the Indus Valley Dravidians that was disclosed through the archaeological excavations.

In 1920 archaeologists announced the discovery of extensive urban ruins in the Indus Valley, which pre-dated the earliest

archaeological sources and this, has caused scholars to re-examine their views on the different phases of Indian culture.

Until the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization, the development of literature and culture in India was always credited to the Aryans. The Rg Veda, which speaks in such derogatory terms of the enemies subdued by the Aryan tribes, gives the impression that they were all savage barbarians. The Brahmins for centuries have degraded the original inhabitants of India with the intention of self elevation, preservation and oppression. These ancient dwellers in India were Dravidians, and in fact, their culture had developed a highly sophisticated way of life.

It should be noted here that the term 'Dravidian' is the mutilated form of the term 'Thamizhan'. Those who could not pronounce the term 'Thamizhan' have pronounced it as 'Dravidian' in Sanskrit, which refers to the original inhabitants of India.

Disclosing the facts about the period of Sanskrit inscriptions that occur from 150 AD and the development of Sanskrit language through the ages are the highlights in the author's research field. Knowledge on the period and development of Sanskrit language plays an indispensable role in comprehending the Indian culture, religions and the chronological development of Indian literature obviously.

The author points out the solemnity of the system of racism and casteism that affects the world society to a great extent, as follows:

The vicious scheme of the caste system, also called brahminism, is still in practice today and many think that it is an ancient part of our culture. However, this is not so, the Dravidian culture is one of equality and love for all communities & nations. The so-called Aryans constitute about 12% of India's population, and the rest who are Dravidians (the so-called Sudras and Panchamas) constitute 88%. Through the caste system the so-called Aryans have maintained Political, Economic and Religious control over the Dravidians for the last 1200 years. Slowly the political and economic controls are changing today due to the democratic process; however, the religious control is preserved unfortunately by the constitution. The RSS and its sub organizations are working hard deceptively to preserve brahminism, and the religious wing of the RSS, the VHP, has continuously distorted historical facts concerning religion and

*culture in India to their advantage.
The Caste System is about 1200 years old,
.....Racism based on ones skin color
developed in the world society about 200 years ago. As evi-
dence, why would Shakespeare write Othello in the early 17th c
AD, where a black North African man marries a white European
woman if this type of Racism existed in his time?*

Understanding the system of racism and casteism, devised by the Aryans, is entirely different from analyzing the malicious effects of this system in the mission field and striving to uproot this anti-Christian principle. The author's effort to uproot this system is obvious following the incident which was published worldwide.

In January 1999, Christian missionary Graham Stewart Staines and his two young sons were burnt to death in Orissa. In September 1999, a Christian priest, Fr Arul Doss was also killed in Orissa. Observing these incidents Mr. M V Kamath wrote an article titled, "Mission Impossible, Putting an End to Conversion Activity" in the Times of India, dated October 13, 1999. In it he writes,

Christian missionary efforts at conversion under the guise of social work do not take place in places, say, like the Brahmin-dominated ward of Mylapore in Chennai. They are conducted in poor, illiterate and innocent tribal areas and in remote jungles far from the prying eyes of authority. Now a reaction seems to have set in.

The author spent about four and half years (1995 - 1999) ministering to the Brahmins in the Brahmin dominated ward around Kapaleswara temple in Mylapore. They are yet to furnish answers with evidence for his valid and challenging questions raised through pamphlets which were distributed in that area and the subjects in question narrows down to Casteism, Monism, Monotheism, etc. Besides the pamphlets his website (<http://appiusforum.net/>) remains unchallenged. His dialogue with the scholars of various universities and questions on the first appearance of Sanskrit inscription is still waiting for answers from the Sanskrit scholars. His ministry is definitely a good answer to Mr. MV Kamath's searching question. I would like to relate an incident that took place in the same area, which might also shed some light for Mr. Kamath's question.

The author, when doing a challenging ministry among the Brahmins of Mylapore, requested me to write a pamphlet for the Hindu

intellectuals. On the basis of Saivite and Vaishnavite (Hindu) literature, I wrote a pamphlet titled “Why God took an Avatar?”. He then asked me to distribute it to the same Mylapore area, which is densely populated with Brahmins, with his staff members. Two of his staff (Bhuvana and her friend) came along with me to distribute that tract from door to door. In one of the houses, a middle aged woman came and asked me, “Are you giving this tract to us? My father is a Great Vaishnavite Professor. Can you meet him and answer his questions?” Immediately with great pleasure I agreed and started discussing with him who was 83 years old, and by birth, so called ‘Aiyangar’, who is in the summit of caste stratification, devised by the Aryans. He raised so many questions and I explained in detail to him on the basis of Vaishnavite literature. After the discussion when we were about to come out of his house, suddenly he fell down at my feet. I was shocked. He said the following: “For many years I have been teaching Vaishnavism, but today you have opened my eyes”.

This incident shows how modestly the Brahmins like Vaishnavite professors are longing to listen to the facts. Hence it is our responsibility to share the gospel with them systematically. Because of the great burden for the salvation of the Brahmins, the author has chosen Mylapore area and has done his ministry for four and half years and had given me an opportunity to share the message of salvation with that Vaishnavite professor. The author’s rich experiences gained through pamphlet distribution, research websites and dialogues with the Brahmins helped him to bring out this book, which in return helps the missionaries to assess and formulate effective methods of evangelism. His writings reveal his tireless, bold and firm stand to eradicate racism and casteism, to rid the anti-Christian principles at large affecting society and create an environment for the growth of the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is quite natural to have various opinions in the scholarly realm. At the same time we need to analyze in depth the issues, which are against the welfare of the society, and strive together to uproot it from the society. Though it is difficult to understand St. Thomas Tamil Christianity, the author is meticulously applying the new research findings of Dr. M. Deivanayagam on the mission of St. Thomas in India that has developed as Saivism and Vaishnavism, now known as Hindu religion, as a dynamic instrument in his missions, with the great burden for sharing the gospel with the elite group which has been problematic.

The Author has concluded this book as follows:

Our National Emblem is taken from the famous Sarnath Lion capital of Emperor Ashoka and it is in two parts. The crest shows three lions standing back to back on a flat slab. Actually there are four lions, but the fourth cannot be seen in the picture. The base shows a horse to the left, a bull to the right, and a wheel in between. Below the crest is written the motto, 'Satyameve Jayate' in Nagari script, which translates as truth alone triumphs.

SATYAMEVE JAYATE.

As it is beautifully concluded by the author, though deceptions appear to be predominating the society, finally Truth alone will Triumph.

We admire the challenging spirit of the author for not only understanding and unveiling the facts, but also persistently standing firmly against discriminations i.e., the anti – Christian principles.

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Foreword

I deem it a great privilege and honor to write the foreword to this book and I thank Dr Alexander Harris for this.

God's calling comes to people in different ways. It is not only unique and special to every person but also different to some people like our dear brother Dr Alexander Harris. I am amazed at the way God has called an Aeronautical Engineer to research the development of Sanskrit and bring out a book which is highly informative, educative and challenging.

The book carries valuable information and asks relevant questions. These questions when answered genuinely will remove many ambiguities and reveal some startling truths in the Development of Civilization and Religion in India, and also, its far reaching influence on the World Society. Nowhere in the book is he forcing his ideology on the minds of the readers but leaves it to their decision. The reader is given the choice either to accept or reject it.

I like the way he explains who a real Christian is, identifying or separating him from the crowd or multitude. This concept or more specifically the fact is either totally missed or ignored not only by the World, but even by the Christians themselves.

Each and every topic is handled with diligence and given in a capsular form. Even though the book is not voluminous it has all the essence needed and thereby making it fully qualified for a good and educative reading.

I pray that the Almighty God would enable our beloved brother to bring out more books in the future which will edify and reform the society. I wish and recommend that every Indian, particularly every Christian believer would read this book and digest the facts which would help them to lead a witnessing life for Jesus Christ.

I once again thank Dr Alexander Harris for this unique privilege of writing the foreword and wish him all the very best with his future endeavors.

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