

Sanjoy Mukherjee and Laszlo Zsolnai (Eds.): **Global Perspectives on Indian Spirituality and Management. The Legacy of S. K. Chakraborty**. 2020. Springer.

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### **Ancient Indian Wisdom for Modern Business**

The book is a tribute to the revered Indian management scholar and philosopher Professor S. K. Chakraborty, the pioneer of Human Values and Indian Ethos in Management and the Founder Convener of Management Centre for Human Values (MCHV), Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta. The volume brings together a collection of papers from eminent scholars and practitioners from India, Europe, USA, Australia, and New Zealand on the topic of Indian Spirituality and Management.

The book presents and highlights the broader context within which the globalized, market directed business forces crash with Indian spiritual values and ethics. This value-conflict was the “Leitmotif” of S.K. Chakraborty for his decades long endeavor with inspired zeal to establish and promote an Indian Model of Management built on the indigenous knowledge of India. The seminal contribution of S. K. Chakraborty has been in anchoring a solid spiritual foundation to human values and leadership using insights from Indian ethos and its modern proponents like Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and Sri Aurobindo.

Shitangshu Kumar Chakraborty (1940-2018), originally a finance and accounting professor gradually transformed himself into a non-conventional teacher of Human Values, ethics, and leadership. This spiritual metamorphosis kept the industry awed so much so that in the 1990s many the public sector and private sector companies invited him to conduct development programs for their top and middle level executives. Chakraborty's mission was to bring in India's indigenous concepts into the professional Indian management. He published 41 books, 28 of them are focused on values, ethics, and leadership. He founded three journals and two institutions, and inspired many business students in India and abroad, and thousands of corporate executives and professionals who have gone through his management development programs. Of special mention is the Journal of Human Values, of which he was the founder Editor-in-Chief, published biannually by Sage Publications India.

One of the major themes of the book is how spirituality can serve in renewing business ethics and management. Chakraborty's effort to root business ethics in the traditions of Indian spirituality, particularly in the Vedantic heritage, is challenging for Western ethicists who usually think in terms of theories of rights, social contract, and utility maximization. However, in the last decades there have been considerable efforts in Europe and in North America to do something similar as Chakraborty did in India: giving business ethics a spiritual foundation.

Introducing spirituality in the field of business and managerial ethics creates a shift from external rule-directed behavior toward an inner-directed, existential search for meaning. What is missing in conventional business and managerial ethics is a deep, inter-subjective intuition of the Presence of Life that guides thoughts and actions. Chakraborty calls "consciousness ethics" such an ethics based on the re-connection with the inner source of Life, what he distinguishes from compliance ethics and cognitive ethics.

The book argues further that a spiritual turn is needed in business management as a whole. With its instrumental rationality and extreme materialistic orientation today's business management produces large scale ecological, social, and ethical "ills". Business management needs a more spiritual foundation to solve the failures caused by the application of the narrow sense of rationality and the corresponding materialistic management models. The book presents and analyses a number of real-world examples from India, Europe, and USA which show the viability of spiritually inspired business models in different competitive settings. The success

of these companies suggests that spiritual motivations may have a foundational role in good, innovative, and values-oriented management.

Another major theme covered by the book is spiritual-based leadership. S. K. Chakraborty pioneered in rebalancing the weaknesses of Western behavioral sciences and managerial practices by drawing on the Indian Rajarshi leadership model. He presented spirituality as the essence of transformational leadership to promote performance, role-effectiveness, and quality of work-life within organizations.

Spirituality as the context for leadership has evolved over the last decades both in the East and the West. This new focus has not only led to far broader concepts of purpose and success than traditionally associated with management. It has also given rise to deeper existential questions as to the identity and responsibility of corporations and their leaders, questions very similar in nature to those faced by persons with a spiritual quest.

In the “East” many leading institutions of higher learning concentrate on the leader rather than on the processes and methods of leading. The emphasis is on the virtues a leader must possess to be a “good” leader in both a moral and an operational sense. These virtues have their origin in age-old perspectives on the purpose of man’s existence and of his spiritual nature. Here the connection between the leader and his/her spirituality is more direct and explicit. The book compares and contrasts the Rajarshi leadership model as refined by Chakraborty with contemporary applications of Aristotelian “eudaimonia” conception, Catholic Social Teaching, models of Servant Leadership, and wise leadership.

The pitfalls of spiritual-based leadership are also explored by academics and practitioners in the book. The emerging consensus is that the high ideal of Chakraborty’s spiritualized organizations should be compromised with the reality of managing organizations that operate within a market context accountable to many diverse stakeholder groups.

The problems of business education are another major theme of the book. In the wake of widespread and all-encompassing globalization, the business scenario is increasingly being dominated by the phenomenon of market capitalism and the gospel of fierce competition. This has reduced the quest for creativity and human excellence in business schools because of focusing on techno-economic knowledge and skills with little attention to the deeper and higher

dimensions of life and work. Pertinent questions on meaning of work and purpose of life have been pushed far beyond the margins of dominant vocabulary of mainstream business schools.

The Mahabharata, in spite of being a tragic tale of human destructiveness and frailty, praises humanity in the highest possible terms. Nothing is nobler than being human, it asserts in the Book of Peace. What is that humanness which it extols? Should we take it normatively as ideal – but rarely exemplified – human virtues such as truthfulness, forgiveness, non-cruelty, non- envy and humility, the cluster of virtues which the Mahabharata calls “the thirteen forms of Truth”? Or should we take the entirety of human nature, with all its fragility and finitude, its aspirations, and its contradictions, to be constitutive of that humanity which the Mahabharata values above all?

We believe that S.K. Chakraborty was right that the mainstream materialistic value-orientation of today’s business can hardly be reconciled with any genuine spirituality. The dominant understanding of economic rationality as individualistic, self-interest maximization should be replaced with a much broader notion of rationality. Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen suggested that rationality requires subjecting one’s choice of action, including objectives, values, and priorities to reasoned scrutiny. In this way spiritually inspired choices may not be incompatible with the demands of human rationality. Business actors can rationally pursue objectives based on spiritual values and priorities.

### **Issues and Themes**

In his paper “*Life and Work of S. K. Chakraborty*” Bidyut K. Sarkar (Chakraborty Memorial Trust, Calcutta, West Bengal, India) gives a comprehensive picture about the personal and professional achievement of S. K. Chakraborty. Sarkar emphasizes that Chakraborty was a man immersed in Indian Ethos in mind, body, and speech. Based on the perennial principles of Indian wisdom like “simple living, high thinking”, his life is a fascinating story of transformation of a teacher of non-spiritual subject like finance and accounting into an āchārya of sacred topics like human values, ethics, and leadership. He made these domains spiritualized.

In his paper “*Vedas and Management*“ Mrityunjay Athreya (Author and Educator, India) emphasizes that modern management is an interdisciplinary science. It has utilized concepts from different fields, such as economics, psychology, mathematics, and engineering. For

dealing with ethical issues, management can benefit from philosophy and spirituality. The paper brings out some of the ways in which modern management can benefit from the Vedas. All the Vedas contain philosophical dialogues on the basic questions of the meaning of existence, purpose of human life, and relationship between the individual and the cosmos. This can be particularly useful in management.

In his paper *“The Spiritual Foundation of Professional Ethics”* Luk Bouckaert (Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium) argues for the need of a spiritual foundation for professional ethics. Although the sources of inspiration are different from those of S.K. Chakraborty, Bouckaert agrees with Chakraborty that an ethic of compliance is insufficient to guide professional ethics. The paper defines the purpose and structure of a professional ethic. Then it uses Ian Mc Ewan’s novel *“The Children Act”* to demonstrate why professional ethics regularly fails to overcome existential and ethically difficult choices. Then the paper explores the possibilities of a spiritual ethic as an alternative to a compliance code of conduct. Bouckaert presents Albert Schweitzer’s principle *“reverence for life”* as a good foundation for a spiritual ethic and refers to Hannah Arendt’s theory of judgement to elucidate the process of discernment and decision-making within the field of a spiritual ethic.

In his paper *“On Ego and Economics Subordinated by Spirit: Reflections on the ‘Spirinomics’ of S. K. Chakraborty”* Mike Thompson (Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria, Canada) emphasizes that Western management and business practice has developed on what might be regarded as providing returns on capital employed for the work of management and labor in producing profit through the economic ‘machinery’ of supply and demand. But the ‘machinery’ is in the hands of self-interested individuals who compete for their interests in the marketplace. The competition is for material rewards for their Body, their Life, and their Mindset (or, ego). It is at this point that S. K. Chakraborty makes his challenge to the role of the self in self-interest. He regarded Western management and business practices as being exploitative of the human condition and the greater wellbeing. The ego, he argues, must be subject to the development of the spiritual or higher self.

Mike Thompson brings together key Vedic themes as synthesized by Chakraborty and complementary insights selected from Western sources. He reflects on the applicability of Chakraborty’s work to the globalized world of business practices that indicate shifts towards the ideals of Chakraborty’s *“spirinomics”*. The paper outlines and discusses four major themes, namely detachment of the ego-self, managing the ego-self, Rajarshi leadership - wise leadership, and the nature of desire and economic paradigms.

In his paper “*Spiritual Turn in Business and Management*” Laszlo Zsolnai (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary) argues for the necessity of a spiritual turn in business and management. He argues that the contributions by Chakraborty on Vedantic ethics and management have vital importance to make these required changes. The paper presents real-world examples from India (Organic India, and Aravind Eye Care System) and Europe (Focolare Enterprises, and Triodos Bank) to show the feasibility of spiritually inspired business models. Zsolnai’s main conclusion is that spirituality and rationality are not antagonists in good management.

In his paper “*From Reason-based Decision Making to Intuition-based Management*” Sraddhalu Ranade (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu, India) argues that for centuries we have relied on reason, mathematical models and projections, empirical recommendations, and the guidance of “experts” to make safe decisions with predictable outcomes. But in a world of exponentially increasing information, complexity and rapid change with disruptive technological transitions, these means have become unreliable and even erroneous. Consequently, our means for decision-making need to evolve and transcend the current paradigm of logic and reason towards a higher faculty that we can call “intuition”. The paper explores the nature of intuition, how it guides decision-making, and how to exercise it deliberately in the field of management and life.

In their paper “*Understanding Human Values through Integrative Dialogue: The Śāstrārtha Method*” Sharda S. Nandram (Free University of Amsterdam and Nyenrode Business University, Breukelen, The Netherlands), Sharma Sukhada (Indian Institute of Technology, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India), Ankur Joshi (Nuclei, Bangalore, Karnataka, India), and Puneet K. Bindlish (Indian Institute of Technology, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India) focus on an integrative communication method called “Śāstrārtha”. It is an ancient Indian approach to communication where the process of reconciling different positions happens naturally. The aim is to understand the truth through dialogue, and the result is transformational thinking. Such a method can have applications in action research because of its transformational potential. The authors argue that the Śāstrārtha approach includes both “doing” (a materialistic focus) and “becoming” (a spiritual focus), and considers values as means to achieving higher purposes in organizations.

In his paper “*Ethical Decision Making – Synthesizing S.K. Chakraborty’s Classification of Ethics with Levels of Moral Judgement and the Four-component Model*” Sunil G. Savur (University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia) attempts to synthesize Chakraborty’s seminal work on business ethics and some well-established contributions from the West. These

include Chakraborty's three classifications of ethics (compliance, cognitive, and consciousness ethics), James Rests' four component model of ethical decision making (recognize, judgement, intention, and action), and Bebeau, Thoma & Walker's three levels of moral judgement (abstract or general principles, professional codes, and organizational level codes).

In his paper "*Time to Globalize Sarvodaya?*" Sanjeeb Kakoty (Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, Meghalaya, India) recalls that Mahatma Gandhi popularized the term "Sarvodaya", which is the amalgam of two Sanskrit terms, "Sarvo" meaning all and "Udaya" meaning rising or uplift. Hence, Sarvodaya can be understood as Universal Uplift or Progress of All. The term "Sarvodaya" was first used by Gandhi as the title of his translation of John Ruskin's book "Unto This Last". Gandhi suggested that the Earth can provide enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not for every man's greed. Gandhi advocated a social order that would be free from any greed for material wealth and stressed on simple living and high thinking. All natural resources are assumed as common property to be utilized for the welfare of all. Every individual is taught to see oneself as a trustee of the common resources and use it diligently for fellow creatures and the future generations.

In his paper "*From Indian and Utopian Ethos to Management for Spiritual Growth*" Gerrit De Vylder (Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium) underlines that S.K. Chakraborty and poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore have argued that labor and its management should have their own rewards in terms of personal and spiritual development. This should also guarantee fair-play, righteousness, and moderation.

De Vylder underlines that in the Indian ancient tradition two currents of thinking about the nature of the 'homo economicus' can be identified. The first is represented by Kautilya, the advisor to the Mauryan emperor during the fourth century B.C., while the second is represented by Thiruvalluvar, who was a Tamil poet-philosopher during the first century B.C. Kautilya's approach seeks to formulate pragmatic norms and rules within a strong institutional framework, while Thiruvalluvar's approach is more flexible relying on a change in the philosophical and spiritual make-up of a person. The paper argues, like Aldous Huxley, that only critical thinking and the efforts to 'recollect who we really are' (a higher spiritual intelligence) can guarantee to realize Chakraborty's and Tagore's high ideals.

In his paper "*Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility for Multinational Enterprises*" Manas Chatterji (Binghamton University, State University of New York, USA) discusses the relationship between ethics and corporate social responsibility for international

businesses, particularly multinational enterprises. This relationship is quite different compared to that of domestic corporations. In international business, factors such as culture, values and norms, social stratification, mobility, religion, language, educational system, economic and political structure, are all crucially important. Chatterji argues that as a result, the definition and relevance of the principles of business ethics in international business will be quite different than that of a domestic enterprise. The paper highlights these differences and present some theoretical models from which the differences will be estimated using empirical data.

In his paper “*Creating Sustainable Wealth through Human-Centered Complex Adaptive Systems*” Pravir Malik (Deep Order Technologies, San Francisco, USA) states that a complex adaptive system can be a generator of multidimensional wealth. Yet business leaders often continue to view the lubricator and output of contemporary complex adaptive systems, be they corporations, markets, or economies, in one dimension only: money. This narrow vision marginalizes the effectiveness of complex adaptive systems, causes inherently unsustainable practices, and destroys rather than creates wealth. The paper explores the power of deeper human values in being a stimulator of building effective complex adaptive systems and sustainable wealth.

In his paper “*Values of Management in Ecologically Conscious Businesses*” Andras Ocsai (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary) underlines that the current ecological crisis and the reality of the Anthropocene show the responsibility of mainstream economics and business. S. K. Chakraborty had suggested practical solutions to promote successful environmental conservation and to prevent ethical failures at individual and organizational level. Ocsai argues that personal values of business managers have decisive influence on the companies, determine how ethical, ecologically conscious a business is. The paper presents empirical studies about the values of management of eight well-known ecologically conscious businesses throughout the world (Interface (USA), Natura (Brazil), Patagonia (USA), Houdini Sportswear (Sweden), Organica Water (Hungary), Scott Bader (UK), Green Monday (China), Organic India (India). These cases show that ecologically conscious business organizations can promote ecological transformation and reorientation of business behavior.

In her paper “*Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility: Insights from Indian Ethos*” Sumona Ghosh (St. Xavier’s College, Calcutta, West Bengal, India) emphasizes that the practice of social responsibility and sustainability is engrained in the Indian value system, references of which can be found in the Vedas. CSR is rooted in the concept of “trivarga”. The ancient tradition of daan (charity), prevailed in the Indian society form ancient times and what

we recognize as CSR can be seen as an extension of this tradition. The spirit of the Indian classical wisdom which looks upon the entire universe as a single large family including all the living beings of the world can be achieved if CSR is aligned with sustainability and Sustainable Development Goals. The paper further explores the links among CSR, sustainability, and the Indian ancient wisdom.

In his paper *“Reflections on Spirituality as the Context of Leadership”* Peter Pruzan (Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, and Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh, India) suggests that the practice of organizational leadership can be better understood via reference to spirituality as the context for purposeful behavior. He emphasizes that a focus has evolved, both at leading business schools and at a number of successful and admired corporations in the “West”, on leadership as a supplement to or an overarching background for management. This focus has not only led to far broader concepts of purpose and success than traditionally associated with management. It has also given rise to deeper existential questions as to the identity and responsibility of both corporations and their leaders, questions very similar in nature to those faced by persons with a spiritual quest.

In his paper *“Translating Swami Vivekananda into Management Practice”* Swami Narasimhananda (Advaita Ashrama, Champawat, Uttarakhand, India) recalls that Swami Vivekananda tried to amalgamate Western organization with Indian spirituality. Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, two worldwide organizations that he founded, served his attempts in that direction. In his short life and amazingly large corpus of writings, letters, and talks, Vivekananda expounded various aspects of his leadership model and other issues of leadership and management that have become of great significance today. The paper sheds light on the insights of Vivekananda and analyses some attempts that translate them into practice like that by S K Chakraborty.

In his paper *“The Dharma of Leadership: Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita in an Uncertain World”* Debashis Chatterjee (Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, Kerala, India) states that the post Covid world requires creative leadership for solving problems as well as initiating the restoration of core human values that are the foundations of a sustainable world. Leaders of the future will have to ignite the rites of renewal and restoration by which organizations can transcend the very rationale of their existence from a mundane to a spiritual plane, from mere discontinuity to a deeper and greater continuity; from disharmony to sustaining harmony.

Chatterjee argues that the notion of dharma in the Bhagavad Gita affirms an enduring life vision for global leaders. It upholds deeper threads of wisdom for a sustainable world order.

In his paper “*Krishna: A Study in Trans-ethical Leadership*” Satya Chaitanya (Indian Institute of Management Lucknow and XLRI School of Business, Jamshedpur, India) emphasizes that the Mahabharata presents two great leaders: Bhishma and Krishna. Bhishma represents ethical leadership at its best with all its strengths and weaknesses. In contrast, Krishna is not limited by his ethics and frequently rises above it in his eagerness to do good to the world. This paper studies Krishna’s trans-ethical leadership in comparison to Bhishma’s ethical leadership and contrasts the two. The paper explores why a leader should rise above ethics to trans-ethical dimensions as and when the situation makes it unavoidable for the common good. The paper points out how Bhishma fails in this respect on many occasions and how Krishna unhesitatingly rises above ethics, even sacrificing his image as a great leader with integrity.

In his paper “*Leadership as an Adventure of Consciousness*” Sanjoy Mukherjee (Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, Meghalaya, India) underlines that large section of management literature, business school courses and corporate training programs focus on leadership skills. The importance of values, particularly human values is hardly dealt with. Mukherjee attempts to establish the deep connection between leadership and human values for achieving holistic effectiveness by adopting a consciousness approach in spiritual sense. The seminal contribution of S. K. Chakraborty has been in anchoring a solid spiritual foundation to human values and leadership using insights from Indian ethos and its modern proponents like Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and Sri Aurobindo. The paper elaborates on the roles of intellect or reason and emotions or feelings in values development process of the leaders. Drawing inspiration from illumined minds of the East and the West the paper charts out a roadmap for a leadership journey from information through knowledge to wisdom. The paper concludes with reflections on leadership as an adventure of consciousness.

In his paper “*Indian Models of Management and Leadership with Roots in Ancient Wisdom*” Subhash Sharma (Indus Business Academy, Bangalore, Karnataka, India) presents some holistic models derived from ancient Indian concepts including (i) OSHA Model of Management and Leadership, (ii) Theory K of Enlightened Leadership, (iii) Negergy-Synergy Grid of Leadership, (iv) ‘MBA’ Model of Decision Making, and (v) Corporate Rishi Model of Leadership. These models are built on the works by S. K. Chakraborty, M. B. Athreya, J.B.P.

Sinha, Rajen Gupta, Debashis Chatterjee, and Radha Sharma which have explored the idea of Self in relation to management and leadership.

In their paper “*Wise Leadership - Lokasamgraha and Rajarshi Revisited*” Anindo Bhattacharjee (Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India), Apurva Shinde (NGO Manager, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India), and Sandeep Singh (School of Management Sciences, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India) revisit two Indian concepts, “Lokasamgraha” and “Rajarshi” which were brought into modern management by S. K. Chakraborty. They constitute an alternative view of wise leadership from a Vedantic perspective. Lokasamgraha is about the well-being of society and the various stakeholders. It is a conception of general well-being of the world, as expounded in the Bhagavad Gita. This concept can help arrive at a Vedic conception of the modern stakeholder theory. The authors suggest an Indian construct of wise leadership that combines Lokasamgraha and Rajarshi (wise king) given by ancient Indian political economist, Kautilya.

In his paper “*Upanishads and Transformational Leadership*” Venkat R. Krishnan (Center for Oneness & Transforming Leadership, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India) emphasizes that the Upanishads are fundamental texts that explain the Atman, the real self of all beings. Krishnan believes that it is not possible to understand leadership without an inquiry into the Atman. Leadership requires seeing oneness among the diverse beings in the universe. Enabling others to realize that they are not just the body-mind complex, but that they are the Atman takes them closer to the state of oneness with everyone. This is moral and authentic transformational leadership, that enable followers to lift themselves into their higher self.

In his paper “*Management: The “Sanatana” Approach*” Pradip Bhattacharya (Author and Mahabharata Scholar, Kolkata, West Bengal, India) emphasizes that S.K. Chakraborty’s effort is extremely significant because it seeks to reverse the prevailing ethos of India management’s slavish worship of Western concepts. Management depends on values and values depend on perception. Man is the highest sampada, and not a resource that is used by others. Tyaga is a value shift from a lower impulse to what is higher and wholesome, identifying with that, attaching to that which has no first cause, will never decompose: Eternal Bliss.

In their paper “*Inspired Leadership and Indian Wisdom in Managing Crisis*” Anil Sachdev (School of Inspired Leadership, Gurgaon, Haryana, India) and Vidya M Iyer (School of Inspired Leadership, Gurgaon, Haryana, India) explore the practices of leadership development followed by five large Indian organizations through their leadership frameworks, their competency

models, assessment systems and coaching interventions, and multifactor leadership questionnaires to get 360 feedback on the behaviors of their senior leaders. The authors warn that the Indian scriptures prescribe leadership as an integration of self-leadership, spiritual leadership, and professional behaviors. With the Covid pandemic the impact of leadership behaviors on well-being of the employees and other stakeholders has become crucial. The paper recommends a model that develop leaders who can create physical well-being, communication well-being, emotional well-being, intellectual well-being, and spiritual well-being.

In their paper “*Times May Change, What Is Right Does Not!*” Tata Business Excellence Group (Tata Group, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India) recalls Jamshedji N Tata, the Founder of Tata Group who said, “We think we started on sound and straightforward business principles, considering the interests of the shareholders our own, and the health and welfare of the employees, the sure foundation of our success.” The paper reflects the spirit of the Tata group, which has been guiding it since its inception in 1868. The Group’s eternal ethos of Leadership with Trust, its core values, and the Tata Code of Conduct (articulated in 1998), serve as cornerstones for this relentless journey. In 2006, the Tata Quality Management Services (TQMS), in collaboration with the Management Centre for Human Values (MCHV), developed a diagnostic approach to assess the ethical tenets of business corporations. TQMS, currently known as Tata Business Excellence Group (TBExG), is a division of Tata Sons Pvt Ltd., partners with Tata companies in their pursuits of excellence.

In his paper “*Nurturing Conscious Organizations and Individuals*” Yazdi Jehangir Bankwala (Arpitha Associates, Malaysia & Singapore and Sejahtera Leadership Initiative, Malaysia) reflects on the following questions. How can organizations and individuals seek to deepen their own purpose and meaning? Whilst management a science of efficient allocation of resources, will it transcend to incorporate invisible resources including aspirations, passion, expressions, fulfilment, the spirit? How can organizations and individuals be net contributors to society/community/others rather than extracting/taking from them? Can an approach with emphasis on inner process and in destruction of the self-identity be enabling or disempowering? Can a values-based approach be an important starting position on this journey?

In his paper “*India’s Svaraj Parampara: Nation and Modernity in India*” Makarand R. Paranjape (Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, India) explores India’s quest for “Swaraj in Ideas.” The idea underlying the phrase made famous by K. C. Bhattacharya’s seminal and eponymous lecture of 1928 requires nothing short of an overhaul

our entire intellectual infrastructure. Paranjape argues that central to such an overhaul would be the concomitant realignment of India's intellectual enterprise – the pursuit of self-knowledge, truth, virtue, beauty, and, of course, happiness, the organization of the material resources in such a way that our daily life conduces to these aims. But Paranjape warns that to regain parampara, merely substituting Western ideas by half-understood Indian ones will not do. Parampara is not a knee-jerk reaction to the domination of Western categories over Indian ones, but a deep understanding of the difference will take India forward. This can be done by opening a dialogue between Bharatiya parampara and Western modernity so as to create new spaces of knowledge and svaraj.

In his paper *“Is the Bhagavad Gita Modern?”* Gautam Mukerjee (Anandini Foundation, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, India) revisits the 2500 year old dialogue of Bhagavad Gita in the light of the discoveries of contemporary science. The paper relies on the metaphysical understanding of the Bhagavad Gita by Sri Aurobindo. The practical analysis is from V. S. Sukhtankar who brought together many versions of the Mahabharata to create a modern singularity of the epic. The important messages from the past are contextualized with current neurophysiologic, psychoanalytical, and scientific ideas from Abraham Maslow, Rudolph Tanzi, David Bohm, Deepak Chopra, Danah Zohar, and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. The paper concludes that Aldous Huxley's categorization of the Bhagavad Gita as “Perennial Philosophy” is standing firm even today.

In his paper *“Love in the Classroom? The Relevance of Erich Fromm's Concept of Love for Business Students”* Knut Ims (NHH Norwegian School of Economics, Bergen, Norway) states that one of the challenges of modern business ethics is to deal with the limitations of the existing model of man in economics – the image of “homo economicus” as a rational self-interested being - and search for alternative criteria of success for business entrepreneurs and leaders. Ims believes that business ethics needs to use the concept of genuine love. The paper applies Erich Fromm's concept of “productive love”, which consists of four components – respect, care, responsibility, and knowledge. Ims draws on his own experiences with the course “Ethical action” that he was teaching for more than two decades at NHH Norwegian School of Economics in Bergen. The central question of the paper is: can Fromm's conception of love be applied in a business school setting with the purpose to develop the students' empathy, to enrich their personal development and their understanding of what a good manager looks like?

In his paper *“Teaching Ethics to Management Students in a Growth-obsessed India”* Jagdish Rattanani (S P Jain Institute of Management & Research, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India) asks the question posed by S. K. Chakraborty in 2002: “Both managers and students may wonder why they should be interested in ethics. What is there in ethics for me?”. Almost two decades later, the question is more significant particularly in India, one of the fastest growing global economies. Rattanani notes that the students of today were born after the nation changed direction and pushed liberalization and privatization under its New Economic Policy of 1991. Faster GDP growth over time brought an explosion of glitzy malls, fancy cars, and gated communities, but also the impending crisis of rising inequality seen every day in the slum colonies, marginal labors and homeless children who play on the streets just outside schools where future managers study to earn their MBA degrees.

In her paper *“Ethics, Consumerism and Sustainability in the Backdrop of the Kathopanishad”* Piya Mukherjee (Vivekananda Education Society’s Leadership Academy and Research Centre, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India) argues that in the post-pandemic world the learnings of the Kathopanishad (an important Upanishads) are very relevant. The statement “Neh nanasti kinchana” (meaning, there is nothing else than Atman or awareness) then becomes equivalent to a “mahavakya” given by the Upanishad. This drives home the point of fundamental interconnectedness between all humans and the physical environment. In the pursuit of moksha, individual as well as collective endeavors become balanced, saner, more compassionate, and sustainability-oriented.

In their paper *“Exploring the Centrality and Transformative Power of Spirituality”* Katalin Illes (University of Westminster, London, UK), Nitha Palakshappa (Massey University, New Zealand) and Madhumita Chatterji (ABBS Business School, Bangalore, Karnataka, India) argue that the grand challenges of our time need to be broached with a consciousness demonstrating embedded ethics, responsibility, and the umbrella of sustainability in order to respond appropriately. The authors use deep personal reflections to reveal narratives that provide a rich understanding of what S.K. Chakraborty refers to as a subjective realization of spirituality and how it ensures that human values are central to management thought and action. Through a very personal journey, informed by their experience as management educators, the authors explore spirituality as a transformative force in management.

In his paper “*Man, the Unmanageable – Meditations on Clarity, Morality and Meditation*” Arindam Chakrabarti (Stony Brook University, New York, USA) outlines that the Mahabharata, in spite of being a tragic tale of human destructiveness and frailty, praises humanity in the highest possible terms. Nothing is nobler than being human (na mānuṣāt śreṣṭhataram hi kincit), it asserts in the encyclopedic XIIth Book of Peace.

In the current “development-driven” India trying to become a superpower competing with the USA and China, there is the decline of “the humanities”, in favor of engineering, space and rocket technology, business-management and computer science. Can we maintain the Mahabharata’s concept of what is it like to be really human, in the face of such ecologically and ethically destructive devaluing of the humanities? Chakrabarti’s paper ends with this open question, because perhaps it is in such self-examining interrogatives – in re-enacting a timely and cosmopolitan Prashna-Upanisad – that the greatness of humanity consists.

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We as editors of the book very much hope that our book will serve as inspiration for academics, business leaders, and management professionals and help to rethink their roles and responsibilities in transforming business into a more human-centered and ecologically-oriented enterprise founded in spiritual wisdom. For doing this important and urgent task the book provides a rich variety of theoretical insights and experiential evidence on how spirituality can work in business organizations in India and other parts of the world.

The book has contemporary relevance in a world ridden presently with an alarming crisis (caused by the global spread and attack of Covid-19) as some of the authors highlight the importance of upholding and pursuit of human values and Indian Ethos in the global combat against this killer virus by suggesting alternative ways of thinking and living for a safe, sane, and sustainable future for the self, organizations, communities, societies, and the planet at large.