

## Learning in Villages Today: Reminders or Reminders?

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Despite the vicious onslaught of modernization, many of India's villages still give us deep insights into what authentic learning societies could look like. Their indigenous belief systems, local knowledge systems and social relationships comprise diverse and rich learning spaces, rooted in and evolving with local culture and environment. For the local people, their village societies offer opportunities for them to identify challenges and provide solutions, which are relevant to their local context and consistent with their values of interdependence, diversity, cooperation and collective participation.

Unfortunately, our Indian 'educated' people and educationists have been unable to think beyond the Western promise of schools and their own 'expertise' to understand these essential human values and how they manifest themselves in villages. Not only have they failed to see the rich learning opportunities that pervade all aspects of life in villages, but they have also actively contributed to the weakening of village learning societies. In the name of science, progress, poverty eradication, environmental awareness, fertilizers, medicine, rights of women and child, information technology, etc., they have marginalized and de-valued the rich knowledge systems, languages, relationships, media, etc. that local peoples possess. In the process, they have demoralized both individuals and whole communities.

For more than a decade now, we at SIDH, a not-for-profit organization, have been studying the effect of colonialism, development and modernization on rural areas of the unique Jaunpur district, in the newly-formed state of Uttaranchal. Because of its inaccessible location in the Central Himalayas, Jaunpur was excluded from most government welfare programs. As a result, it has been able to retain its traditional belief systems, values, knowledge systems and social structures for longer than most of India's rural villages.

In the process of our research in Jaunpur, we have uncovered deep understandings of how *parampara* (dynamic living traditions) and people's everyday activities offer rich spaces for learning and growing. Local people are not as 'deprived' or 'backward' as the Education for All campaign agenda and development institutions would have us believe. In this article, I will: 1) share some of the insights we have gained about people's learning; 2) highlight what the impact of modernization and schooling has been on this village learning society; and 3) discuss what options exist to regenerate this village learning society.

### Learning in Jaunpur: Structures, Rituals, Values, Knowledges

The major defect of the Educational for All campaign (and of the larger development industry) is its failure to recognize and respect the diversity of values, belief systems and contexts of the different villages it endeavors to 'help'. The driving agenda of modernity asserts only one definition of progress and well-being: a purely capitalist framework that reduces humanity and the purpose of life to serving the State-Market. All human values and relationships are made subservient to the goals of profit and efficiency. This 'universal' agenda is forced on people all over the world and is used to evaluate and rank different communities. However, to understand the learning spaces of Jaunpur, it is important to understand how their context and worldview, their notions of progress and well-being, are quite different from those of modernity.

#### *Agriculture and Joint Families: Traditional Notions of Wealth and Well-being*

Like many villages in India, Jaunpur relies on land, subsistence farming (maize is the staple crop), animals and produce. Traditionally, several families would live together, work the land together and share the food. This joint family system connected families to each other, to the land, and to animals. (Animals were actually considered part of the family. The death of a cow or even a goat was mourned by the whole village.) Individual well-being was dependent on cooperation and collective effort, and the community's well-being depended on the land.

This was re-affirmed through traditional notions of wealth, which were based on grain, cereals, and agriculture, land, soil, and people. The people defined wealth, or *samridhi*, as something that exists in homes where there is enough to eat, where all family members love one another and look after their cattle. It is not surprising that physical effort was linked to wealth – the word *kamai* (earnings) is defined by the physical effort involved and is directly related to *kama* (work). Frequently heard expressions would include: "*hum ghas kama kelate hain*" (we earn grass/wood);

“*hum khet ki kamai khate hain*” (we eat off the earnings from the field); “*hum dhan ke seth hain*” (we are wealthy in rice); “*hum anaj aur mitti ke seth hain*” (we are wealthy in grain and fertile soil).<sup>1</sup>

In such an environment, there was little disparity in the housing, clothes and food of the people. At the same time, everyone also accepted the fact that each individual might possess different amounts of wealth. What was not acceptable was the flaunting of wealth or spending money on visible symbols of over-consumption.

To make sense of Jaunpur’s peoples’ perspective towards Nature, agriculture and food (or *anna*), one must view these relationships as something beyond mere commercial activities. Food is more than just a commodity; it is *prasad*, a blessing bestowed upon people from both Nature and their own work and therefore is to be accepted with gratitude and humility. In this way, agriculture in the villages differs significantly from the industrial farming practices of today’s big agribusiness (where the idea of exploiting Nature for the highest profit prevails).

#### *Identity and History: Storytelling and Folk Songs*

Out of this deep relationship with the land emerge several diverse activities and traditions that reinforce a holistic sense of identity, community relationships and place. In Jaunpur, two powerful learning processes are storytelling and folk songs. Storytelling used to be a well-respected art in Jaunpur. Until a few years ago, it was a common sight to see a village elder sitting in the village *chaur*, late in the evening, surrounded by a group of children. He would encourage them to assist him in removing the corn from the cobs, while narrating popular folk tales that satisfied the children’s deep curiosity about nature and society. For instance, an elder would tell them how all was one in the original state and how the universe — earth and sky — was created from two eggs of the *Sooni Garudi* (the archetypal symbol of a pair of eagles). Another story describes how *daags* (witches) emerged: Man was one entity, but upon the request of the fairies, man was divided into spirit and matter, between God (sky) and woman (earth). The fairies that desired man for their own needs were hence labeled *daags*. Similarly, a story about four brothers explains how the four castes were made. One day, four brothers found a dead cow. While three brothers refused to touch the corpse, the youngest brother obliged but was then ostracized from the family. Other origin stories illustrate the creation of man and of mountains and flat land.

Such stories are one of the most important wisdom frameworks in traditional communities, because they are clues to the spiritual potentialities of human life. They reiterate timeless truths and contribute to a sense of identity, place and continuity in relation to the cosmos. In this way, they reduce existential fear, insecurity and uncertainty from the lives of people. They also create much-needed spaces for people to collectively reflect upon issues of ethics and social justice — the rightness or wrongness of their actions and the actions of those around them.

Another learning space is found in Jaunpur’s folk songs, which narrate everything from the community’s historical events and personal tragedies to aspects surrounding nature. The women of Jaunpur sing *ropni* and other kinds of folk songs to lighten the burden of their work, particularly while doing the back-breaking job of transplanting rice. Usually, there are two themes running through alternate lines in every folk song. The first recalls a major event of either the recent or distant past. The second line, which rhymes with the first, offers detailed information on some important aspect of nature, such as the kind of grass which should be planted on the hill slopes, the names of leaves that have medicinal value, or the optimum distance between planting different varieties of rice. Embedded in these songs are individuals’ and collectives’ vast and detailed knowledge about agricultural practices and nature itself. There are also songs about the various changes in a woman’s body during pregnancy, about mythological, social and historical events. These songs are critical not only for keeping communities’ histories alive, but also for providing spaces for women to express themselves and nurture their creativities.

#### *Festivals: Collective Participation and Collective Good*

In addition to storytelling and folk songs, there are numerous festivals that celebrate the link between community well-being and Nature. A good harvest is celebrated with gratitude towards the power that has created abundance in nature. Benediction or *kripa* is vital for survival, and most of the festival rites are associated with offerings of the new harvest to the local gods and goddesses. Each festival is related to a particular agricultural activity, which in turn is related to time, seasons and systems of measurement. As such, they link time, movement of the earth and shifting of the sun’s position with agriculture, food and health, and more broadly to peoples’ own faith, gratitude and ultimately happiness. For example, *Sankranti* in Jaunpur is celebrated on the first day of every month, according to the Hindu solar calendar. Sankranti corresponds to a change in the position of the sun and a change in the seasons. The Sankrant of Makar, Kark and Vikhot (when the sun crosses the Tropic of Capricorn, Cancer and Equator

respectively) are especially auspicious occasions. Such festival traditions both humble and empower community members, by celebrating forces greater than himself/herself and asking for their protection and guidance. They also provide excellent opportunities for people to heal and replenish different relationships.

The festivals often involve much preparation and several rituals. Just as working the land requires collective effort, the festivals also call for everyone's participation. On *Phooldei*, in the months of March/April, young girls put the first flowers on the threshold of every house in the village, for good luck throughout the year. During July/August, the men celebrate *Poojav* by lighting a lamp in the village temple and taking turns in keeping guard to ward off evil spirits. If things go wrong in the village (such as illness or tensions) then the people of the village collectively do *Pooj*, by offering prayers to appease the angry *Dharti-Mata* (Mother Earth). The rituals or prayers involved during these festivals are for the well-being of all the households in the village and never limited to the well-being of "me and my family alone." The significant learning from these celebrations is their collective nature and generosity of spirit.

There are also many festivals, ceremonies and rituals that mark the different events of life: birth, marriage, and death. For such occasions, after the individual activities of bathing, cleaning homes and courtyards, and wearing clean or new clothes, food is shared with the rest of the community, especially the less fortunate. Thus, festivals are times to learn *barkat*, which literally means 'plenty', but also denotes 'generosity of spirit' and 'social responsibility', not simply towards the family but within the whole community. These festivals reaffirm the strong conviction that individual good can only result from collective good.

#### *Caste and Work in Traditional Societies*

Another aspect of Jaunpur society worth noting is the function of caste and work as vibrant living spaces in traditional communities. In relation to the above discussion, it is important to recognize that most events and celebrations actively include members of all castes. Notably, festivals take place in the village center or *chaur*, as opposed to individual homes. And whether it is a festivity or a death ceremony, playing of the *dhol* by the *bajgis* (very low caste) is an absolute necessity on all occasions; their participation is as important as that of the *pundit* (highest caste). In fact, all ceremonies would be incomplete without the equal presence of both the Brahmin priest and the Harijan. Modern notions of the caste system (which today is almost synonymous with injustice and untouchability) tend to overlook this interdependence.

It is also important to recognize how different capabilities and knowledge systems are associated with particular caste groups. One reason cited for the rise of a system of sub-castes and caste divisions was that guilds of workers tended to crystallize into groups by occupation (like chariot-makers, smiths, leather workers and the carpenters). Each of these groups and sub-groups had their own language/vocabulary, measurement systems, science and sociology. Indeed, mastery of a craft was a source of pride and self-respect, as well as livelihood, for family members. Different kinds of work were respected for their contribution to the collective well-being of the village. Groups did not consider themselves inferior or superior to each other, so there was very little felt hierarchy. Each caste group had its own base of power, with control over its own political structures and its own means of production. The apprenticeship model of learning was used to retain and improve knowledges of crafts and to pass them down through generations; we can still see how this powerful form of human learning exists today with pundits, soldiers, farmers, masons, weavers, and with craftsmen of *sunar* (gold), *suthar* (wood), *kumhar* (clay), *luhar* (iron), and *chamar* (leather). Although these groups became more or less hereditary over time, there is some evidence to indicate a level of fluidity and diversity in the system originally.<sup>2</sup>

Today, most of our 'intellectuals' are unaware of the origins or positive aspects of the caste system. They have been taught that it is inherently hierarchical and thus inferior, when compared with other so-called politically-correct Western 'democratic' systems. While it is true that certain injustices and distortions of the caste system have emerged and must be eradicated, it is also important to value the knowledge and wisdom unique to each of the caste groups, and the specific contexts in which this knowledge and wisdom are situated. Often, urban 'educated' people do not value these different contexts or diverse knowledge systems because of their own alienation from traditional society; because they have never been part of a group engaged in self-sufficient livelihoods where learning happens spontaneously and dynamically; and because they do not dignify physical work as a source of learning. They also have a tendency to over-generalize caste relationships, wrongly assuming that what they see in one village holds true for all villages in all parts of a place as diverse and complex as India.

In addition, our 'intellectuals' have little imagination to think beyond and little courage to struggle against the political and economic models of the West. They have not investigated the perverse relationship between the growth of industrialization and the decline of caste and sub-caste livelihoods. They seem to find it much easier (and more profitable) to bully and beat up their own indigenous structures using the tools and frameworks of Western academia. Moreover, people who believe in today's dominant vision of progress cannot conceive of the possibility of non-hierarchical groups engaged in diverse livelihoods and living interdependently. They have become conditioned in a system that ranks everyone according to the amount of income or capital they have, that forces people to violently compete against each other, and that perceives work with one's hands to be dirty and menial. While the crises induced by modernization will be discussed in more detail below, the area of caste offers one example of how we might re-examine traditional systems, to recognize and re-incorporate their positive aspects while creatively addressing injustices and distortions.

To summarize, even in this brief description of the structure, activities and traditions in Jaunpur, one can catch a glimpse of the richness and diversity of learning that takes place in village learning societies. Most of these learning spaces and processes are centered around land, forest and agricultural practices, because these are the sources of collective well-being. These spaces and processes are authentic and relevant to Jaunpur's peoples' reality, to their daily lives. They are a source of pride and inner strength for individuals, and they also emphasize interdependence, intrinsic motivation and collective participation among members of community.

Before I am accused of romanticizing tradition, I should make a caveat here: It is important to understand the distinction between modernization and imitation/Westernization. If we define modern as "belonging to the present time," then being 'modern' is inevitable and none of us have a choice in that matter. Being modern, in this regard, would mean living in the present and would entail correcting the distortions/injustices of traditional systems. But in countries with a colonial past, like India, we imitate the West without thinking and call it being 'modern'. We forsake the continuity between traditional systems and modern times, instead of re-interpreting traditions in contemporary terms to improve the present. What I am calling for is not a rejection of the present but, in contrast, an appreciation of the remainders of the past and a conscious effort to make sense of what aspects of the past are still relevant and meaningful in society today.

### **The Impact of Development on Traditional Structures, Knowledges, and Values**

Today, we can see why the British sought to alter the prevalent beliefs among local people, so that they would support the colonial system of rule. The British deliberately attempted to eradicate and/or to homogenize diverse local systems and beliefs into one centralized system, because they understood quite clearly that control over diverse local systems and beliefs was necessary to empower the colonizer. Though the British introduced an alien set of beliefs that insisted we were backward, deprived, sick, and full of superstitions, after 'Independence', the Modern Indian has carried forward in this direction. His/her efforts are aided by Development agencies, NGOs, or by campaigns such as Education for All (EFA), who have all adopted as their mission to "reach the un-reached". Such rhetoric bears an uncanny resemblance to the British expansion of and justification for colonization and, when more deeply analyzed, reveals more of the same "West is best" propaganda that has existed for centuries. In this section, I explore two key processes which have greatly weakened village learning societies' capacities to critically self-assess and regenerate themselves and to respond to new globally-backed forces of colonization and exploitation: schooling and the global economy.

#### *Creating a Class of 'Educated' Dysfunctional Parasites*

The structures, values and beliefs that are imposed and glamorized by development schemes, modern schooling, the economy, and the global media stand in stark contrast to the structures, values, and beliefs of traditional communities like Jaunpur. For example, whereas the traditions of storytelling, folk songs, festivals, and work were all sources of and spaces for learning and understanding identity, place and history, today schooling is presented as the best and only source of knowledge. Worse, the importance of identity, place and history (and their synthesis into shared wisdom) is fundamentally ignored and purposefully negated by schooling. Young people are taught to be ashamed of their village's low literacy rates and its lack of monetary wealth, modern conveniences, or infrastructure. To progress in the system, schooled children must submit to being alienated from all that has been sacred to them, all that had helped them survive and grow: their beliefs, their family systems, their land, their livelihoods and lifestyles. Schooling demands the acquisition of information and values that are completely irrelevant, meaningless and often demeaning to people's lives. Abstract school subjects and values, such as competition, selfishness and domination over others, have been presented (and accepted) as more valuable than the diverse knowledge systems,

skills, languages, bonds and capabilities of community members, primarily because it is promised that school will lead to job opportunities in the government or in a private corporation. As one young schooled man in Jaunpur commented, “Earlier there were no alternatives and choices. With education, one has choices.”<sup>3</sup>

However, several studies show that these choices are an illusion, that the only ‘choice’ awaiting the ‘educated’ youth is unemployment.<sup>4</sup> The present education system fuels the socially and economically destructive practice of flooding one small village with a disproportionate number of ‘educated’ but unemployed (and unemployable) youth, or with innumerable tailors and electricians from vocational training centers who have very little creativity or adaptability. Ironically, it seems youth would rather be unemployed than work in the fields or learn the crafts or skills of their families. This dilemma is an extension of the effects of the colonial education system, of which Gandhiji once commented: “We see the children of the mason, the iron monger, carpenter, tailor, cobbler and of other occupations attending schools. But after completing their education, instead of improving the quality of their traditional occupation, they look down upon it as inferior work and abandon it altogether.”

Furthermore, the youth return to their communities after their education, no longer able to relate to the traditions and ceremonies. For example, it used to be that each day began and ended in Jaunpur with the sound of the *Namti* (drums) to remind people to be grateful to the gods. Now this art is dying out, as the drummers grow older and their children are not interested in carrying on the tradition. As one village elder remarked, “The young have found new festivals: the market and the television.”<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, these new festivals do little to strengthen local people’s imagination and self-esteem, much less their bonds with one another. These unemployed and alienated youth have very little regard for the village worldview/way of life or village elders. For this reason, they have placed a tremendous strain on village life.

#### *Breaking Joint Family Structures*

Similarly, whereas the traditional conceptions of well-being were directly related to the land and community relationships, the modern economy insists that wealth is based on money and jobs in the government or companies. Such beliefs have led to the break down of traditional family and community structures. Buying into the myth that they will be better off and ‘wealthier’ by abandoning agricultural occupations and entering the formal sector, joint families split up into nuclear families. As one village member during SIDH’s study on joint families, “I too want to do less work and earn more money.”<sup>6</sup> The emphasis in modern society on individualism, competition and greed exacerbates this myth. This again contrasts with traditional values that emphasize the importance of collective effort and cooperation. Often, families experience tension and discord, jealousy and bitterness, due to the perceived superiority of being educated and having a job, versus working in the fields. Today, further pressure has been placed on the family structure and relationships by the increasing out-migration of men and women from the rural areas to urban centers.

Although many in Jaunpur have been taught to believe that a nuclear family has more opportunities and thus more upward mobility, what SIDH’s studies have shown is that the overwhelming majority of nuclear families are failing to meet their basic needs. In fact, dependence on the Market and State leaves nuclear families more impoverished. As one young child remarked, “Every time a joint family breaks up, the shopkeepers get richer and people get poorer, because so many things have to be bought again, like houses and beds and pots and pans and TV sets.” A 40-year-old man, who recently split from his joint family to form a nuclear family, confirmed this view: “When we were one family, we needed fewer things. When we get divided, we need to buy new tools, new vessels and another set of oxen.” As one village elder remarked, “*Aajkal harkat hai – par barkat nahin*” (There is a lot of movement going on today but not plenty for all).

SIDH also found in its study that many nuclear family members, who had taken the initiative to break up from their joint families, regretted having done so. Several women expressed that they thought becoming a nuclear family would mean better food, better clothes and better schools for their children. But in fact, they are finding the workload of a nuclear family overwhelming. As one 35-year-old woman said, “I thought I will do what I please, but I have to do all the work alone. Where is the time and energy to think about myself and my wishes?” Daughters, in particular, bear a large part of the burden of excessive workload in nuclear families, since they do not have other female family members to share it with. Now that this is evident, most women have expressed the desire to marry their daughters into joint families, “because they are not overworked”. Several children of the nuclear families stated, “Children from joint families are rich. They have more milk. They have more grain.” An elderly man

commented, “The joint family is a matter of pride for the *gaon ki shaan* (village), but a nuclear family is considered selfish and lives only for its own *shaan-shaukat* (pleasure).”

### **Looking Towards the Future**

One can see the incredible challenges ahead: to undo the damage created by modern systems and institutions, which do not acknowledge holistic learning spaces; to recover the lost value systems indigenous to our cultures, which have been steadily eroded; to regenerate rural communities and our dying farmers and artisans; and to counter consumer culture. The prevailing education system of post-colonial India has very consciously sought to create highly self-centered individuals, who will easily fall prey to the Market economy and all the other maladies of the West that stem from heightened individualism and consumption. As Sharma and Sharma (1999) say, the problem lies in “the need of an educated person to seek individual autonomy, which though quite in tune with contemporary democratic ideology, clashes with the cultural ethos of ‘family first’.”

These challenges are an opportunity for rediscovering and re-valuing the knowledge systems of our traditional societies — its folk tales, folk songs, local beliefs and practices, festivals and *sanskars*, systems of agriculture and economics, and understandings of governance and social justice. I should make it clear here that I am not advocating a re-valuing of traditional systems just because ‘old is gold’; nor am I trying to over-simplify the debates between tradition/modernity. Rather, I feel that we need to relate ourselves to the present, not by imitating the West, but by (1) carefully examining and critically evaluating our traditional knowledge and value systems, and (2) by correcting their distortions and re-creating relevant systems to suit our local cultural contexts. This is a critical agenda for learning societies if they are to have any relevance for the people of India.

Furthermore, I believe that it is important for the education system to change, to make it conducive for an individual to live with real integrity and real dignity. Writing articles, having seminars, youth camps, etc., are some ways to start serious discussions about the problems of modern education. As discussed above, the local social, economic, political context that surrounds schools is very significant. This context has to be strengthened in order to undermine and subvert the current education model. We also need to explode the myths propagated by the modern education system. The differences between peoples’ beliefs and their experiences have created a lot of confusion and paralysis. For example:

- \* The belief is that schooling provides good jobs, but the experience is that unemployment has increased.
- \* The belief is that jobs provide better opportunities for children, but experience shows that children cannot even manage to sustain themselves in their fruitless wait for a job (the literate children refuse to work in the fields).
- \* The belief is that a job can earn more money than working in the fields, but the experience shows that cash crops periodically yield more income than annual job salaries.
- \* The belief is that schooling is the best and only source of education, but experience is that ‘the literate person is scheming and corrupt’; ‘the rural literate fits in a city and an urban literate fits abroad’; ‘the literate does less work and earns more money’; ‘we are sending our children to schools so that they do not get fooled by the literate people’.

At the same time these contradictions create a vibrant opportunity for new thinking and action. In SIDH, we are working to open up dialogues from these conflicting gaps between beliefs and experiences. Some of our own efforts to regenerate and re-value the learning spaces of traditional communities include: conducting research on changing attitudes towards physical labor and on changing attitudes toward traditional occupations; introducing agriculture as a major part of the SIDH curriculum; starting a handloom, bakery, brick making, electrical, plumbing maintenance and repair units; studying the historical evolution of sub-castes and re-valuing their knowledge systems; and introducing the concept of trusteeship, autonomy, and interdependence among the youth. The various programs of SIDH, such as Sanjeevani, a year-long residential program for youth, further seek to accomplish this agenda of revitalizing different aspects of village life. The objectives of Sanjeevani are as follows:

- to generate a sense of self-confidence and self esteem in the youth;
- to make the youth aware of the limitations/contradictions of the present system and help them make realistic choices;
- to challenge their existing thought patterns and beliefs so as to make them receptive to new ideas;
- to improve their analytical and decision making skills;
- to encourage them to take leadership roles in personal and public life;

- to train them in the basic principles of business and management so that they can become self-employed.

The students of Sanjeevani are rural youth between 17-25 years of age. One third of the curriculum is agriculture which involves physical labor (working in the fields), the rest is divided in upgrading their literacy skills (including computer literacy) and also political thought and contemporary issues. They are also given support to complete their formal studies. However, the primary focus is a shift in attitudes. We work towards making the youth confident and responsible so that they can look after themselves and their families. This is not as difficult as they imagine, because material needs are not unlimited (as projected by the global market). Above all, we try to make them realize why and how they are being manipulated to believe that the key to happiness is the acquisition of consumer goods. The greatest challenge we face is sustaining the new learnings within the students once they go back to their old surroundings. One year is too short a time to make their beliefs strong enough to resist persistent attacks from parents and peers about upward mobility, and there is little support outside the Sanjeevani course to counter the dominant consumer culture. But we hope, equipped with critical perspectives and skills, the youth of Jaunpur will be able to work on regenerating learning societies.

Today's Development schemes, and particularly the EFA infrastructure, continue to suppress the diversity of local communities, and reinforce feelings of inferiority/superiority. It is urgent that we, the middle class, rethink the Modern worldview we have embraced – for we are the main agents destroying village learning societies in India. In the last 50 years, we have been engulfed by a firm message from our 'modernizers', that we have been left behind in some process of Development, whose rules are being defined by those who are (at best) ignorant and (at worst) contemptuous of us. We need to empathize with the struggle facing the majority of our people. This calls for us to first regain our faith in ourselves by re-examining our history and the options and choices before us. The work of people like Gandhi and Dharampal are excellent starting points.<sup>7</sup> It also requires that we regain our faith that happiness does not result from accumulating comfort or goods but from loving, trusting and giving. To begin to do so, we can draw from our rich spiritual traditions, whether it is a meditation technique like Vipassana; social movements like Swadhyaya; or a holistic framework (shastra) of education like Jeevan Vidya.<sup>8</sup>

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Child and the Family: A Study of the Impact of Family Structure upon Children in Rural Uttaranchal, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> For more information, see S.P. Dabral's Tehri Garhwal Rajya ka Itihas, published by Vir Gatha Prakashan, Dogra, Garhwal in 2032 Vikram Samvat and Gerald D. Berreman's Hindus of the Himalayas, published by Oxford India Paperbacks in 1997.

<sup>3</sup> The Child and the Family: A Study of the Impact of Family Structure upon Children in Rural Uttaranchal, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> See K.P. Kannan, "Political Economy of Labor and Development in Kerala," in Economic and Political Weekly (Vol. 33, No. 52, 1998) for more information.

<sup>5</sup> The Vital Connection: A Study of Beliefs and Practices of Jaunpur-Tehri Garhwal, 2000 (unpublished).

<sup>6</sup> This quote, and the others that appear in this section, are from The Child and the Family: A Study of the Impact of Family Structure upon Children in Rural Uttaranchal, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> See The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi (New Delhi: Batiala House, 1973) and Dharampal's Collected Writings, recently released in five volumes by the Other India Press (Goa, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> *Vipassana* is a Buddhist meditation technique which trains the mind to observe without judgement by increased awareness. This is done by observing the breath and sensations. Anapana or observation of the breath has been used with children. S.N. Goenka brought this technique from Burma to India. *Swadhyaya* is a social movement started by Dada or Pandurang Shastri in Gujarat and Maharashtra villages, and spread to several states today. It uses the Geeta as its inspiration but has applied it to overcome caste /class and gender distinctions. It has radically transformed the lives of villagers by creating wealth, equity, and happiness. *Jeevan Vidya* is formulated by Nagaraja Baba of Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh, it propounds the law of co-existence between space and being (which includes nature and man). It throws new light on the concepts of nyay (justice), dharm (religion), satya (truth) and explains the key to happiness.

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