

Brief Report

“Enduring relevance of Vedic knowledge in today’s world for the welfare of humanity”

Proclaimed International conference of the ‘World Association for Vedic Studies’

(WAVES-2018) at DALLAS, TEXAS, USA

Dallas, TX, August 10, 2018 -The 13th international conference of the World Association for Vedic Studies (WAVES-2018) was successfully held Aug. 2-5 at the Brookhaven College, Dallas, Texas, centered on the theme of "Vedic Traditions for Education and Learning."



Lighting the lamp by the guests



Dr. Anupam Ray, Consul General of India, Houston, Texas as the Chief Guest

The conference was inaugurated by Hon. Dr. Anupam Ray, Consul General of India, Houston, Texas, who spoke of the enduring relevance of Vedic knowledge in today’s world. He highlighted that the Vedas have eternal truths to guide our lives.



Released the proceedings of WAVES 2016



Released the proceedings of WAVES 2018

After his inaugural speech, Dr. Ray released the proceedings of WAVES 2016 and 2018. Special guest attendee to the WAVES conference this year, Dr. Samhitashastri Arjunprasad Bastola, a Vedic scholar from Nepal, brought a message of good wishes from the president of Nepal, as well as an invitation to host the next edition of WAVES in Kathmandu, Nepal in 2020.

Jeffrey Armstrong, also called Kavindra Rishi, founder of Vedic Academy of Sciences and Arts (VASA), Vancouver, Canada, presented inspiring opening remarks on the Vedic Civilization and congratulated Indians for having this Vidya. Sashi Kejriwal, president of WAVES, welcomed the attendees and dignitaries, noting that WAVES is in its 22nd year in existence, having started with its inaugural conference in the year 1996 at Atlanta.



*Dr. Narayanan Komerath,
Conference Chair, WAVES 2018*



*Shri Jeffrey Armstrong,
Founder of VASA, Vancouver, Canada*

The conference Chair Dr. Narayanan Komerath, Professor of Aerospace Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Dr. Sashi Tiwari, former Professor at the Sanskrit Department, University of Delhi, and president of WAVES-India, also the co-editor of the 2018 proceedings, worked diligently to bring out the Proceedings of WAVES-2018, ahead of schedule and released it on the opening day. Dr. Narayanan Komerath who has published over 400 papers in his academic career as an aerospace engineer, brought a considerable degree of rigor to the peer review process that selected more than 50 papers for presentation at the conference and represented a genuine advance over previous conferences. Attended by over 400 people, and divided into 23 sessions, the conference consisted of keynote speeches, plenary lectures, panel discussions and presentation of research papers from around the world.



*Dr. Ved Nanda, Professor of law,
University of Denver, Colorado, USA*



*Dr. John Hagelin, President, MUM, Fairfield &
Dr. David Frawley, Director, AIVS, New Mexico, USA*

This year's WAVES conference featured keynote addresses by two recipients of the prestigious Padmabhushan Awards from the Government of India: Dr. Ved Nanda, Professor of law, University of Denver, Colorado, and Dr. David Frawley, Founder and Director, American Institute of Vedic Studies, New Mexico, USA. Dr. Ved Nanda traced the origins of the concept of Human Rights to the Vedas, while Dr. David Frawley, highlighted the study of mind and consciousness as India's unique contribution to the world through its Vedic knowledge systems.

Dr. John Hagelin, president of the Maharishi University of Management, Fairfield, Iowa, in his keynote, spoke on the theme of how Vedic science fulfills the development of modern science, and drew parallels between the Vedic concepts of energy and consciousness as embodied in the *Bhutas*, *Gunas* and *Doshas* with the modern mathematically derived ideas of energy and particles such as bosons, gravitons and other quantum field and string field theories.

In his keynote address, Dr. Subhash Kak, Regents Professor, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Oklahoma State University, spoke of the Indian foundations of modern science, and shared some of the frontiers of current explorations in Artificial Intelligence, speculating on whether and to what extent machines can produce or emulate human consciousness.

In his keynote, Shri Rajiv Malhotra, founder and President of Infinity Foundation, Princeton, New Jersey, reflected on his own personal journey titled "Journey towards Infinity," in disrupting the status quo in the academia, where western colonial and orientalist narratives about India and the Vedic Hindu civilization are recycled as authoritative knowledge about India. He also speculated on the way forward and the critical need to develop a school of thought that more authentically represented an Indic narrative about India's traditions and knowledge systems.



Shri Rajiv Malhotra, President, Infinity Foundation, with other Panelists discussing a textbook issue

The themes discussed in the parallel sessions, at the Conference, ranged from Vedic Education, Vedic Mythology and Philosophy, Vedic Knowledge Systems, Sanskrit wisdom, Indian Youth and Hinduism, Vedic Learning, Ancient Education and Sciences and contemporary Hindu Studies. Dr. Sashi Tiwari, President of WAVES-India, presented her reflections on inquisitiveness as an important ingredient of Vedic learning, and the methods of dialog and discourse embedded in the Vedic traditions, as critical elements that have contemporary relevance today. Dr. Narayanan Komerath presented his ideas on "*Pavamana Soma*," the missing link in the birth of the material universe. Dr. Narahari Achar, Professor Emeritus, Department of Physics and Material Science, University of Memphis, presented some new insights into the *Somayajna* and the structure of the Rig Veda. Dr. Bhakti Vijnana Muni, President, Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Institute, Bengaluru, India, presented his views on the contribution of Vedanta towards the harmony between science and religion. Shri Jeffrey Armstrong reflected on the use of Jyotish and Ayurveda in Vedic Education. Shri Dharendra Shah, member of the board

of directors of WAVES and treasurer, presented a historical journey through the contours of the Indic civilization, highlighting the need for research and a better understanding of the long-standing effects of various invasions and colonization on Hindu society. Dr. Deen Chandora of Atlanta spoke in detail about the Vedic methodology for the understanding of Cosmic Time.



*Prof. Shashi Tiwari,
President, WAVES-India*



*Dr. Subhash Kak, Regents Professor,
Computer Engineering, Oklahoma State University*

Special panel discussions explored topics such as teaching Hindu Dharma as a science and developing curriculum guidelines for parents and teachers (moderated by Mrs. Kamlesh Kapur), Vedic and ancient Indian chronology (moderated by Dr. Raj Vedam), the ongoing issue of the high school and middle school textbooks curriculum in history and social science as it pertains to the content related to India and Hindu civilization (moderated by Rajiv Malhotra) and contributions of the Indian civilization to the world (moderated by Nilesh Oak). These discussions were very lively as they pertained to the constant related to India and Hindu civilization and their contribution to the world.

The conference featured fascinating, sometimes contradictory, speculations on the historicity and possible dating of the Mahabharata war and the beginning of the Kali Yuga, the cosmic timescales embedded in the Vedas, that correspond remarkably closely to modern-day conceptions of the age of the universe and the earth, as well as reflections on European speculation that collapsed Vedic timeframes and dates into a Biblical timescale in 19th century Indology and passes for authoritative knowledge today. One of the highlights of the WAVES conference was Dr. Raj Vedam's reconstruction of the knowledge transfer out of India that has occurred across the various epochs through history. Taken together, these themes highlighted the need for a more authentic reconstruction of India's history that goes beyond orientalist and Indological discourse. In a similar vein, Dr. Shivshankar Sastry, in an electronic presentation from Bengaluru, dissected the theories of origins developed by Colonial-era Linguists, and pointed to the evidence that the entire framework of such concepts as Proto Indo European (PIE) and Avesta cannot withstand objective scientific and logical scrutiny.

Dr. S. Kalyanaraman, Director, Saraswati Research Institute, Chennai India, was awarded the Saraswati Award this year at the WAVES conference for his extensive contributions in his multi-disciplinary research into the Saraswati River civilization as the theater of the Rig Vedic people.

His talk delivered remotely from Chennai, India, offered new insights into the Metallurgical prowess of the Vedic people as far back as the 4th millennium BCE by correlating Vedic literary passages with the seals and artifacts being unearthed from current day excavations in and around the Saraswati-Sindhu region. His talk highlighted the need to revise our understanding of the ancient Vedic society in the light of contemporary research in multiple fields, such as archeology, Vedic literary studies, geology, hydrology and so on.



*Dr. S. Rammohan receiving Saraswati Award For
Dr. Kalyanaraman, Chennai, India*



*Dr. Kundan Singh, Sophia University, Palo Alto,
received the Veda Vyasa Award*

Dr. Kundan Singh, Sophia University, Palo Alto, received the Veda Vyasa award on behalf of the community. He has recently released a critique of the McGraw Hill textbook contents proposed for adoption by the California Board of Education in his new book "Making children Hindu phobic," published by Infinity Foundation and released at the WAVES conference this year.



Delegates of WAVES 2018

Both awards, the Saraswati Award and the Veda Vyasa Award, were inaugurated at the WAVES conference 2018 and sponsored by Sanatana Dharma Foundation, Dallas, Texas.



Dr. Ranjit Behera, Secretary (Academic), WAVES-India and Associate Professor, University of Delhi, India



Participants of WAVES 2018

The youth panel consisted of well-researched papers that dealt with some interesting aspects of Vedic culture consisted of Sanjana Venkatasubramanian, Ananya Ponangi, Arushi Agrawal and Anukriti Singh. And lastly, in acknowledging the enormous effort by volunteers and organizers in putting on this conference, Sashi Kejriwal, president of WAVES, highlighted the need for younger generations to get more involved in the future activities of WAVES. This conference was specially attended by some members of WAVES India, such as, Dr. S. Rammohan, Dr Rajeev Srinivasan, Dr. Subhash Bhargava, Dr. Lalita Juneja and Dr. Ranjit Behera.

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