

**FROM HUMANISM TO HOLISM
(An Ecological Approach)**

Humanism is only Anthropocentric

I want to draw attention to the narrow outlook of humanism, whether spiritualistic or materialistic. This narrow outlook consists in making humanism anthropocentric. Man prides himself in thinking in terms of humanity as a whole, irrespective of the differences of creed or culture, race or religion, habitat or language, colour or sex. Humanism thus has a universal appeal to man as a man. Its chief interest is in the welfare and progress of the human species. Man is prepared to extend his love to his kind. Thus humanism means philanthropism.

It could of course be said in justification humanism that no other thought or ideology could be regarded as covering the entire range of human race. Thus it escapes all parochial thinking in terms of different groups of men. Its interests are not sectarian, but truly universal. No thinking is made in terms of man simply as a man. This indeed is its positive contribution, a plus point, as opposed to the partial thinking in terms of one's identification with one kind of group or another. Man often thinks as identifying himself with family, or caste or community, or with one's nation, race or religion. Thus there are cross interests of groups and classes going at tangents, resulting into conflicts. Human race has been at conflict with itself through-out history. Man has rarely been at peace with his kind. The history

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of man is filled with bloody wars. The truth about man, if he has eyes and mind to see, is that man is the worst enemy of man. Man does have his big fears from the calamities of nature, floods, famines, holocausts, earthquakes, volcanoes, windblasts, pestilences and so on. Over these he has no control, or at the most a very limited control. But the greatest source of his fear is his next-door neighbour, if he is not indoors also. Death tolls taken in murders, group conflicts and wars far exceed those due to natural calamities. Human hatred has been more heinous than nature's wrath. In any case, man who prides himself in the possession of reason, has shown more cruelty to man than the so-called inanimate nature has exhibited towards him.

Man's Actual and Ideal Nature

Humanism can, therefore, be looked at from two points of view. Humanism may stand for man's actual nature, or it may stand for his ideal nature. Man as he is, is an admixture of good and bad qualities, virtues and vices. This, of course, is a liberal understanding of human nature. If we take the proportion of the good and the evil aspects of man's natures, even normally man's evil nature is overpowering over his goodness. Man is regarded as a rational animal. This really means that his anthropological character as an animal is fundamental and his rationality is a superficial growth. His animal passions are basic, and his rationality is only a weak addendum. It is well-known that flesh is stronger than spirit. So that the human intelligence is under the spell of his beastly instincts. Man uses his intelligence in the service of the satisfaction of his animal wants. This distinguishes human animality from the brutish animality. Animal behaviour is spontaneous instinctive behaviour. Animals kill, not for enjoyment but for the satisfaction of hunger. They mate not for the sake of the mating enjoyment, but for the sake of continuation of the species. Man, on the other hand, is calculating and planning

in his instinctive satisfactions. Therefore his behaviour is aggressive, self-aggrandizing, possessive and selfish in the full sense. Because of the calculating reasoning in the service of animality, his animality is more pronounced than that of any animal. Therefore, human behaviour is more brutish than that of the brutes. He is indeed the cruelest of all the animals. His vices are more brutish than any of the beasts.

Man's is selfishness and cruelty and his habits of eating, drinking and sex, his selfishness and possessiveness, his tendency to crime cannot be comparable in their extensity and intensity to those of any of the lower animals. It is indeed unjust to the beasts to call human actions as beastly. Men usually describe certain human crimes as beastly. But men are found indulging in crimes of which the brutes are incapable. There are no murders, no rapes, (no group-rapes), no wars amongst beasts. These happenings are in the spontaneous working of nature.

Man is a Curse against Man, Animate and Inanimate Nature

Human existence, because of his vicious nature, is a curse against other men, a curse against animal life and plant life, a curse even against inanimate nature. This is what man actually is, as found in the past history and the contemporary history in the making. It is difficult, as it is most shameful, to give the ghastly description of human killings, and atrocities. Any one can read these things and events from the pages of history. Men do not simply kill in thousands and millions, but rejoice and boast in these performances. With all the scientific and technological achievements and the so-called progress in the modern civilization, twentieth century itself is illustrative of the great and the greater wars, the battles that are being fought every day in the different quarters of our globe, and the vigorous preparations going on for the greatest war possibly in the present century itself. One shudders at the very thought of the nuclear war, but

the humanist human beings are destined to settle the truth of their opposite humanist ideologies by taking recourse to the only method with which they have been historically familiar. That method, as they very prudently declare, is of the war to end war. It appears that it will be the final war with the most dangerous of human weapons, such that it will be the end of all humanity and life on earth. From the remnant ashes new man will take his birth, to fight again with teeth and nails and stones at the most. Our march of the technologically most advanced civilization is onwards (or backwards ?) to primitive animal life of barbarism.

This is indeed the story of man as the worst enemy of man. How much worse his behaviour must be towards the lower creatures, the beasts and the birds which he kills for enjoyment of killing as also for the satisfaction of his varied taste of fresh meat. Men can complain against men, though to no use. But who can give justice to the beasts of prey? Men indulge in killing enormously for the sake of the satisfaction of their tongue and their appetite. Men are indeed essentially butchers, for hunger is the greatest and the most insatiable of all instincts. Human beings are really unmindful of the criminal activity on their part against their fellow creatures. The slaughter-houses all over the world are equipped with the most advanced machinery for killing millions of animals every day.

Animals are killed in the name of religion also as sacrifices to Gods and Deities. This shows that religions are human religions for the sake of the so-called good of human beings alone. This is the most inhuman side of the spiritual religions. On special religious ceremonies when merry-making and felicitations go on a large scale among men, these are the times for the animals to tremble with the fear of intending death followed by the severe pangs of actual death. Can any human being project through his imagination as to what the animals must be thinking,

(if they are given the power to think and speak), as to the nature of man and his philosophy humanism? The animals would warn animals: 'Beware of humanism!' Because for them humanism is equal to violence against life. They would be wishing that man should be more of an animal than a human being. Let man come back to animality than continue in being a man. That indeed is an aspect of 'going back to nature' as often a whim comes to the man. Man would indeed be less cruel as an animal than as a man. This is the animal view of humanism as expressed in man's actual nature.

Man is not violent to man and to the animal alone; he is also equally violent against nature as a whole. His technological and industrial civilization is based on the exploitation of man by man. The roots of this exploiting nature of man are in his biological existence. The biological laws are 'natural selection', 'struggle for existence' and 'survival of the fittest'. The opposite and rival humanist ideologies are making use of all their technological knowledge in their struggle for existence and establishment of supremacy. In order to be successful in this struggle man has exploited the energies derived from nature in such a way that it has disturbed the balance of nature. The reactions of this ultimately will be on the very existence of man. This way humanism will come to a pitiable end, not merely for man, but for the entire life and existence. The lesson from this is that man will have to think not merely in terms of man, but in terms of the whole existence—human, animate and inanimate.

We have above referred to the distinction between the two aspects of humanism, namely, as interpreted in terms of nature of man as he is, and as ideally he should be. It may be objected that the description of the actual evil tendencies in man is one-sided and farfetched. History does not record merely wars and cruelties and atrocities perpetrated by man; it also records the

good that he has done. He has made a tremendous progress in science, philosophy, art, religion and many other small or big spheres of his life. He has, in short, produced great civilizations and cultures. All these speak volumes regarding the immense potentialities in man. There is no doubt that both these trends of good and evil have been there. That shows that man can be good if he means to be good. He is not incapable of giving the right direction to his inherent goodness. But the fact remains that he has not invariably trodden the path of goodness. The evil which is equally, if not more, strong in his nature, has also expressed itself in the most damaging fashion. If we draw the picture merely of his goodness, that will be equally misrepresentative. This only means that off, and on he wishes to put forth his best, but that is not his uniform, much less rectilinear, line of progress.

Humanism as a Human Ideal, and its Shortcomings

Having come to realize his lacunae, his shortcomings, his narrow visions, his parochial tendencies, his submission to the devil within him, he advocates as to what an ideal life will be for man. That is the idealistic interpretation of humanism. Thus, humanism is not the picture drawn as it were by the beasts of the actual behaviour of man, and to be cautious about his so called humanism. It is the human picture of man as he should be. Humanism is a norm, an ideal, a value. It is, according to him, that which is worthy of human realization. Humanism is a picture of the perfection of manhood.

But what I wish to contend here is that even the picture of the idealist humanism is not at all a very happy picture. It is true that whatever be the diverse interpretations that have been put upon this ideal form of humanism, man has tremendously fallen short of its realization. It would be immensely good for man to realize humanism in its ideal form. But even in this

ideal form humanism is too narrow. Humanism is only an expression of man's love towards mankind. This means that he is interested in the welfare of the human species. His thinking is bound by the homosphere. It is anthropocentric. It is nothing less than the expression of the rank egoism of the human species. It shows an unmindfulness towards the non-human existence of the beasts, the birds, the plants, the trees, and the nature as a whole. This negligence is born of the tremendous ignorance on the part of man about the contribution of the non-human existence towards the human welfare. It is time for him to realize what he owes to nature as a whole for his own maintenance and preservation. He cannot think of his welfare at the cost of nature, both animate and inanimate.

Human Ecology

Ecological studies, especially those of human ecology, have thrown a flood of light upon how man and nature together constitute unitary existence. Living organisms are in intimate relations with their environment. Every organism has to play its part in maintaining the whole order of existence. The environmental structure is made up of all the five elements of ether, air, fire, water and earth. They have given rise together to life on earth, which has its grand evolutionary process from amoeba to man, from unicellular organism to the most complex of organisms. The minerals, the vegetation, the insects, the birds, the beasts and the human beings—all influence one on other in a very complicated network beyond the complete grasp of human intelligence. From the complex complementary actions of heat, air and moisture microbes and plant life come into existence. Fish, reptiles, and various species of animals come into existence. The herbivorous animals feed upon herbs. The carnivorous animals feed upon the herbivorous. There are some animals which live on both herbs and flesh. Each of the species has its own ways

of behaviour. Its habitat, its eating and mating habits, its dealings with other species, its enmities and friendships are uniformly decided. When animals die, even the most ferocious and powerful among them are eaten by microbes. They ultimately are reduced to soil. This circular process, of life feeding upon life, and the ultimate reduction of everything to earth, from which again everything springing into life, — goes on constantly numberless times. This is how the globular existence maintains itself. Sun is the source of its energy, earth is the recipient and consumer of this energy in various form. All kinds of growth take place on earth. Thus metaphorically speaking sun is the father and earth is the mother of all globular existence. Both sun and earth are a part of the stellar universe. From the different direction of the entire astronomical existence different kinds of invisible rays penetrate the solar system. Some of them are dangerous from which natural protective measures save our life, while some others are helpful for the maintenance of congenial atmosphere. Man is what he is because of all the visible and invisible forces which are at work in the entire ecosphere and biosphere. His preservation is made possible owing to the equilibrium that is maintained in the workings of nature as a unitary existence.

Man and Nature together form one reality

It is quite wrong to bifurcate reality into nature and man. Man cannot be thought of apart from nature. Nature enters into man as much as man is a part and parcel of nature. This bifurcation is not made by nature. It is man-made artificial bifurcation. It is human consciousness which is responsible for this division. He is aware of himself in a manner in which nature does not seem to be aware of itself. This gives a sense of superiority to man. Man dubs nature as unconscious and insentient, therefore not worthy of his attention or recognition. Neither plant life nor animal life could stand any comparison with

human life. If at all they are to be reckoned with, they are only instrumental to human life. It appears to man that the entire existence is in the service of man. He is the centre of the universe, the crown of all creation. He thus holds a position of supreme honour and dignity. In this way his idea of humanism is born of his egoism and superiority complex, as he holds a very unique position in the universe.

But if we take a correct view of the ecological findings there should be no place for the sense of self-alienation of man from the total reality. Once this evil idea of egoism enters into the human mind it proves to be disruptive and destructive of the unity of reality.

With the increasing knowledge of the laws of nature, man gained power over nature. He used his knowledge towards bending nature to serve human purposes. In the primitive stages of human existence, man was at the mercy of natural powers. But with the advancement of science, knowledge became a power in the hands of man. So much so that it went into his head. He prided himself in the conquest of nature, not knowing that he is inviting his own defeat. His technological civilization has been based on the erosion of natural energies. These energies really help preserving the entire existence, including that of man. But man was uncalculating in his intrusion in the inherent balance of nature. Excited in getting quick results, and in abundant fulfilment of his increasing wants, he was totally blind to the impending dangers which slowly but surely were beginning to strangle man into death. The apparent progress was the real regress. Digging the energies from earth, he was actually digging his own grave. The bund of technology was broken, and in its flood, he did not know how to stop this flow to save himself from drowning in it. His unfriendly attitude to nature resulted in rousing the demon in nature. Man got knowledge and power from nature,

only because nature was a real repository of both knowledge and power for exceeding that man could ever have. In this competition man was destined to lose. Man could never be equal to nature.

Nature is a Repository of Wisdom

Man is totally wrong in thinking nature to be merely insentient and unconscious existence. Man actually derives his knowledge by understanding the ways of nature's behaviour. What he calls the laws of nature are really the uniform ways of orderly behaviour of nature. While human knowledge is theoretical, nature is replete with this knowledge as expressed in its behaviour. Man prides himself in his possession of awareness which he wrongly equates with actual knowledge. He thinks that since animals and inanimate nature do not possess awareness, there is no knowledge in them. But it is important to note that awareness and utter ignorance go together. Man has awareness of the possession of body. He is also aware that he is existent. But he has absolutely no knowledge, or if at all very little knowledge, of what the nature of his body is or what his true nature is. That is, inspite of the fact of man's awareness of himself he has utter ignorance of his own bodily and spiritual nature.

On the contrary, nature, whether animate or inanimate, does not possess any kind of awareness equal to that of a human being. We cannot conclude on that account only, that there is no presence of knowledge or intelligence of some sort in nature. Intelligence in nature is of a different sort. Nature is full of design, order, arrangement, system. These are formulated by the natural scientist in terms of the laws or uniformities of behaviour on the part of nature. If these constitute human knowledge, howso incomplete it may be, then it is sheer expression of obstinacy on the part of man, not to accept the presence of knowledge in nature. Nature does not write books. Man, on the other

hand, writes books. But in fact nature herself is a very big book of infinite pages, of which man reads a few and expresses their meaning in his own language. If man's knowledge is derived from nature, if man's knowledge gets its sanction from nature, then virtually, nature is the real source and storehouse of inexhaustible knowledge. Nature does not merely possess knowledge, far exceeding all the knowledge of all the men and the scientists and the philosophers collectively, it possesses real wisdom of keeping the equilibrium of its forces, so that everything is sustained in existence, and is preserved. This sort of wisdom man very miserably lacks. He uses his intelligence egoistically to violate the balance of nature, and in return loses his balanced state in the total affairs of nature and its laws

The Universe is Man's Home and Family

The entire existence constitutes man's total environment. This environment is so very important that man derives his life from it. He also gets his sustenance from it. Man could not have been born nor preserved if the five elements were not there, if the vegetation and the various bacteria, germs, insects, birds and animals in all the variety of species were not there. In short, his environment in all its intricacies of interrelationships, is verily his home. This is the idea expressed in saying that the whole earth together is the family (*Vasudhā eva kuṭumbakam*). Or again, in saying that for the enlightened man the entire universe becomes one nest. (*Viśvaṁ bhavati ekaṁ dam*).

The lesson from this is that man cannot think only the good of himself or his own species, neglecting his intimate family relationships, not only to his kind, but to the whole existence forming into one unit. That is, he must shift his interest from the homosphere, to the biosphere and to the ecosphere. Then only he can safeguard human interests. The entire existence is so designed that it can sustain itself satisfactorily as a unitary whole.

There are wholes within wholes, orders within orders, systems within systems. They penetrate into one another in an incomprehensible cosmic order. Man may try to understand this complex order of existence. But there are inherent limitations on his understanding, owing to the infinite variety of the complications into which the world order is interwoven. Man himself is a miniature universe, a microcosm (*piṇḍa*) in the macrocosm (*brahmāṇḍa*) having certain affinities.

Holism exceeds Humanism

The truth, therefore, does not lie so much in humanism as an exclusivist concept, as it truly lies in the all-inclusive concept of 'holism'. Holistic view refers to man in his total relationships with the reality as a single and singular whole. In the holistic nature of reality, man does not get a privileged place.

The assertions of holism are that the entire reality is one unit. It is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent spiritual principle. It is holy or sacred in all its aspects of manifestations, the inanimate, the vegetative, the animal and the human. All the things and events are very intimately interrelated, forming a grand system in a very orderly design. In all these there is a revelation of the immanent spiritual intelligence. The world is not exhausted in its sensuously visible or perceptible aspect. The unsensed, the unperceived, the invisible also constitutes a very influential aspect of the reality, which transcends easy comprehension by the limited tools of knowledge which a normal human being possesses. Any change or occurrence anywhere in the totality of reality affects in a small or a great way the rest of existence. The different sciences try to get different glimpses of the uniformities that prevail in the total order of reality. These uniformities are diverse in their forms. It may be a mathematical uniformity, or it may be a physical, chemical, biological, psychological, social, aesthetic, moral or a spiritual uniformity. These are not independent of

one another, though they are distinguishable from one another. Whatever be the nature of each, its essence consists in helping its preservation. This is the basic nature of *dhāraṇā* or *dharma*, the law of existence. It is the oldest truth, but reasserted through the ecological study, though initiating in biology necessarily touches all other disciplines.

Man, Crown or Clown?

The view of holism may be rephrased as holistic humanism or ecological humanism. But I would like to avoid the concept of humanism and qualify it as holistic or ecological. Because in such a phraseology humanism becomes prominent. Man, mankind or humanity becomes central in the humanist ideology. But man is not the central or fundamental truth, reality or existence. Holism is the impersonal, objective view of the situation. While holism includes human existence, its converse is not true. Man is so familiar to himself that he makes him the centre of his thinking. The Protagorean doctrine of 'homo mensura' set the humanist ball rolling. It means : Man is the measure of all things. It is true to say so in a certain limited sense. But it has misled man into giving them the central value. Another two similar ideas about man are that man is the crown of creation, and that man is made in the image of God. All these three ideas, originating as they are in the human mind, have expressed the egoism of the human species. It may be natural for man to think highly and subjectively of himself. This way of thinking has its importance, but it has closed an objective view of man. Man could be thought of in terms of the total reality and his place in it, however important that place may be.

For, if it is true that man is the crown of creation, it is also true that in the drama of existence he has often played the role of a clown, a fool. If he is made in the image of God, it is also true that man is responsible for the damage he has done to

God's creation. Man is indeed the intruder who has disturbed the balance, the equipoise of nature. This perhaps is the *Sāṅkhya* view when it has been pointed out that originally *Prakṛti*, the unmanifest nature is in *sāmyāvasthā*, the state of equilibrium; and it is because of the association of *Puruṣa* with *Prakṛti* that this equilibrium comes to be disturbed. It is the sense of the ego that is responsible for this undesirable modification in the smooth movement of nature.

Man the intruder in the Ecological Balance

Every small or big creature in this universe has its own role to play in the continued maintenance of the universe. Therefore it has a right to exist. With all the development in the sciences man has not as yet understood the full workings of nature, and what the contribution of each species is to the maintenance of all. To give some examples, in Brazil, people experienced some trouble owing to the night bats. They abhor light, and move and fly rapidly all over the jungles and cities. On the governmental level decision was taken to kill them all. It was realized after three years that the botanical fructification had almost stopped and there was a great economic setback as the jungle production went down. So the study was undertaken of the behaviour of these night bats. It was realized that they were responsible for pollenization of about six hundred species of plants and trees. Therefore, though they were ugly and foul-smelling, it was again decided that the bats may be allowed to multiply. Similar experiences were about the large scale killing of birds in China, and frogs in India. Thus, through sheer ignorance of their important contribution, man was responsible for causing imbalance in nature. This reflected on his own well-being adversely. He had to change his attitudes. There is a great truth in the virtue of non-violence. It is not merely a moral virtue, but an aspect of the cosmic law of preservation.

A good thought, a good action will have its vibrations throughout the universe. An evil thought, an evil deed will also have its repercussions all over. There is a sort of resonance which runs through the entire existence. How this happens is a mystery. But it does not remain a mystery when we accept the spiritual unity of reality which manifests itself in various forms. The result of it is that wonderful balance is maintained. One of the most striking example is that of the lemmings, a species of small arctic rodents. If they multiply beyond certain numbers which cannot be maintained, they voluntarily march into the sea and drown themselves ! What a marvellous example of collective and purposeful surrender to death ! Is it possible to think of men doing so ?

Wonderful ways of the world phenomena

The mysterious parapsychological phenomena of clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-transmission, hypnosis, prophetic dreams etc. are suggestive of extra-sensory ways of communication, some of which powers are to be found in the birds, the insects and the animals. The ways of the world phenomena are wonderful. We cannot put them in the mere human category. These phenomena throw more light upon the oneness of the cosmic reality, than the familiar human modes of experiences. It is only the dogmatic scientist believing in the absoluteness and ultimacy of the sensuous perception, and inferential knowledge dependent upon such perception, that remains impoverished of the richness of reality.

These above considerations do not warrant us to conceive humanity as the central core of the cosmic existence. We cannot understand man by belittling the non-human existence. We must take a cosmic view than the humanistic view, the holistic view than the partialistic view. The ecological view is more comprehensive than the human view. Ecological view originates in a

scientific study of man and other organisms in their far reaching environmental situations. The speculative ecology, like the philosophy of physics takes us to the metaphysical view of the entire existence. Thus the better picture of any part of existence, including that of man, is given by the cosmic view, or the holistic view. Therefore, the concept of holism, cosmism or ecologism by itself is preferable to that of humanism.

Man alone can implement Holism

It must, however, be admitted that there is some important truth regarding considering man to be somehow holding the central position. For, though the whole is more important than man as a part of it, though the ecosphere is more comprehensive than the homosphere, though the macrocosmic is inclusive of the microcosmic, this truth is known by man. And whatever implementation in practice is to be done of this truth, that is only possible for man, than for any non-human existence. That is, ultimately man has to know as to how he should behave. It is man who alone is capable of putting his theory into practice.

But to accept such a central position of man in theorizing and in practice is not to accept the view of humanism. The sum total of the truth is that man accepts the truth of holism or ecologism, and then he makes it a point to abide by this truth. The codification of conduct is for man, not for the brutes, the birds or the plants or the rivers and the rocks. Man indeed is the proper subject or object for the moral and the religious life. What does holism teach man? It teaches that man should not merely think in terms of his own good or of his country's good or even of his own humankind's good. All these goods are good in increasing gradation. But he should rather think and act in terms of the good of the animate and the inanimate existence. They are also various forms of expressions of the one underlying

spiritual reality. They are not conscious of their rights, and they have no consciousness of the duties to perform. But man is endowed with the powers of awareness or consciousness. He knows both his duties and rights. But he also can have a projected awareness of the rights that the non-human existences have, because of their important contribution towards maintaining the equipoise of the entire reality or nature. Man, thus, has consciousness of his duties towards them, which duties he must observe irrespective of reciprocal expectations of behaviour from them towards man. The one good that is inherently there in all nature's creations excepting man is that they all spontaneously abide by the laws of nature to which they owe their existence and sustenance. It is not given to them to violate the laws of nature. That indeed is the natural order. Man, alone, because of his sense of consciousness, and egoism born of it alienates himself from nature and is endowed with freedom, as it were, either to abide or not to abide by the preservative laws of nature or *dharma*. Thus, while for the non-human nature *dharma* is spontaneous, and knowledge of *adharma* is impossible, for man, the knowledge of *dharma*, both in the sense of the laws of natural preservation and in the sense of moral duty for human conduct, as derived from his knowledge of nature, is to be acquired. Further, there is no direct linking between his theoretical knowledge of *dharma* for himself, and his actual implementation of that knowledge into action. There is a big gap, as reportedly put by Duryodhana, between knowing and willing. He says, 'I know what my duty is but I am not inclined to do it. I know what is bad conduct, and yet I am not inclined to desist from it'. (*Jānāmi dharmam na ca me pravṛttiḥ, jānāmya-dharmam na ca me nivṛttiḥ—Pāṇḍavagītā*, 57). Or again, there are men like Arjuna who are inclined very much to do the good, they have a sense of duty, but they confess their ignorance of

what their duty is. This is because of the extreme complexity of the situations in which they find themselves. Thus, from these two opposite kinds of characters we find that either there is no knowledge of *dharma* or there is no will to do *dharma*. In both the cases the gap between knowing and doing is very clear.

But generally speaking in man the tendency to evil, or to animal like lower behaviour, wields greater force than the tendency towards goodness. And hence man differs from the beast in this, that while for the beast, his spontaneous law of nature or his *dharma* is inviolable, for man, his inclination to choose *adharma* is more predominant than the choice of *dharma*. This being so, there is a need for training man both in his theoretical knowledge of *dharma*, and also in the cultivation of practical will towards the invariable choice of good in every respect.

This brings us to another truth in humanism in its idealistic form. Humanism as an ideal for man is worth realization. It is his dream, a value, an end which lies far ahead of him. Actually man is very weak, and is full of ignorance and lacks the strength of will. Therefore, the actual conduct of humanity has to overcome its dehumanized form, and make a long and difficult march towards reaching the ideal manhood. This being the immediate need humanism in its ideal form needs to be taught. It is, of course, better to be truly human in its ideal form than to remain in the actual dehumanized condition in which he finds himself. But there is a further goal to be sought beyond the idealistic humanism. That is of holism. It could be achieved by casting off the egoism of humanism. In order to do this man has to develop an attitude of reverence to reality and to everything in nature. Nature as it phenomenally appears is not all. There is a supernature behind it. Nature is indeed a manifestation of divinity. Man has worshipped nature right from the primitive stage of his understanding. He might have done it through fear

of the destructive forces of nature. He may have worshipped nature to appease nature. This primitive religion has developed itself in the enlightened reverence to nature. The spirit in man and the spirit in nature are the manifestations of one and the same absolute spirit. This is the ancient *Vedāntic* truth confirmed by the ecological science leading to Holism.*

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