

Social Harmony without Hierarchy

[The Paradigm of a Symbiosis of Heart and Mind]

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Abstract

This article presents the idea of harmony without hierarchy. It suggests the need for transformation of human thinking from a Division (Divided vision) oriented view to a unified vision of cosmic connectivity. It analyses contemporary society through the socio-analytic tools of 'dialectical chakra' and 'dialectical intensities' and suggests the need to move forward towards harmony without hierarchy based on Joining of Hearts and Spirit (JHS). For achieving the same it provides a seven levels framework of Identity spiral and suggests the need for developing leadership based on higher levels of Identity. This requires a new world view of 'Planetary Realizations' taking us beyond individualism and collectivism towards cosmotivism and cosmonity. The ideas of Omega circle and Theory O presented in the article provide us ways to operationalizing and realizing the vision of social harmony without hierarchy.

Keywords: Dialectical chakra, Dialectical intensity, Cosmotivism, Omega circle, Theory O.

Introduction

This article presents the idea of harmony without hierarchy[†]. A quick look at history suggests that the world has been ruled through Division (Divided-vision) approach. Though there have been attempts to overcome divisions, however, these attempts led to new divisions. For example, Religion(s) emerged to unite Tribes, however they turned into supra-tribes and carried forward the same ideology of binary thinking of Us and They in the form of believers and non-believers. Believers got united, but they got united to oppose the non-believers. With the advancement of Science and development of Democracy new ideas emerged. The concept of Nation-State emerged as a new idea to unite people of different ethnicity, religions, creeds etc. However, world got divided into different Nations carrying forward the Tribal-Religion mentalities of binary thinking. In addition many Isms contributed to the binary thinking. In today's world, Religions, Isms

and Nations tend to reinforce the Divisions. For creating a World based on Harmony, we need to transcend the Division (Divided vision) approach to life and move in the direction of a 'Unified vision' through 'Planetary Realizations'. Ananta Giri (2013) in *Knowledge and Human Liberation*, notes that Planetary realizations refer to the challenge and process of realizing our potential and aspirations as children of Mother Earth going beyond exclusion of many kinds such as class inequality, nation-state centered rationality and anthropocentrism.[1] This implies a change in consciousness and a movement towards Higher Consciousness beyond Religions, Isms and Nations. Such movement will be Transformative in nature as it will take us towards Harmony. Why there is so much of Kolaveri-di (Killing rage, violence, negative energy, anger)? This is because JHS (Joining of Hearts and Spirit) is missing among people, religions, ethnicities, isms, and nations.

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Towards Manthan (Churning) Theory of Social Evolution

Dialectical Chakra & ARIMA foundations of Harmony Creation

To create Harmony, a new approach is needed. We can refer to it as ARIMA: Action, Reaction, Interaction, Mutual Adjustment. Division (Divide and Rule) approach leads to an unending Action-Reaction cycle creating spirals of revenge and negative energy in society. To understand this process, Sharma (1996) developed the concept of 'dialectical chakra' as a tool of socio-analytics based on Hegelian dialectics and Indian metaphor of Chakra.[2] Chakra is indicative of rotation. When dialectical forces get rotated, 'Dialectical chakra' gets created and it provides the momentum for social change. However when dialectical chakra goes out of control because of 'dialectical intensities', societies have to pay heavy price in terms of death and destruction.[3] 'Dialectical intensity' refers to the intensity of dialectics between two dialectical forces. Dialectical intensities once unleashed in a society can make 'dialectical chakra' go out of control because it leads to Action-Reaction cycles. This has been the experience of human societies as human history is full of such Action-Reaction cycles at the micro, national and global levels, wherein 'dialectical chakras' have gone out of control. When such things happen it may take long time for the healing process to take place in human society in spite of Reconciliations.

In view of such human experiences, there is a need to move from Action-Reaction mode to next level viz. Interaction. This implies Conversation and a continuing Dialogue with 'Others' who are different from Us. Such Interactions and Conversations will lead to Mutual Adjustment (*Swalpa adjust madi*, to use a phrase from Kannada language). In fact, this phrase (Pease adjust a little) is at the foundation for Harmony and Healing to take place. 'Live and let live' was Mahavira's way of stating the same.

Social progress has been taking place through the Evolution-Revolution-New solution (ERN) processes. Dialectical chakras in society create conditions for 'Manthan' (Churning) within the society. When dialectical intensities become unmanageable, Evolution creates conditions for Revolution. However, post-revolution, there is

need for New solutions otherwise the Revolution fails, e.g. Communist revolution failed because it could not find the New solutions needed by the society. New solutions are needed to restore the Harmony at the higher level of society's evolution through revolution. New solutions also imply Innovations in society including Technological innovations. For example many technological innovations have flattened the caste system in India. The 'Manthan'/ Churning Theory of social evolution suggested here implies that Evolution-Revolution-New solutions process should lead to 'Harmony without hierarchy' because this process reduces the impact of hierarchy based on certain social parameters, e.g. race, caste, gender, region, religion, class etc.

Further, it may be indicated that the idea of Harmony should be viewed within the perspective of 'Great Order and Disorder'-'GOD' process in nature.[4] In Nature, we observe both Order and Disorder i.e. Cosmos and Chaos. Harmony is essentially a dynamic process of relationship between Cosmos and Chaos. A proper understanding of Nature's OD (Order-Disorder) process is essential to understanding the Harmony in social context. Once we understand Nature's OD processes, we can have a better understanding of ARIMA processes in society as Order-Disorder leads to a New Order. Once a New Order is established a new Order-Disorder process starts leading to next level of evolution. Thus, social changes take place through ODN (Order-Disorder-New order). ODN process has been at work in human history. Transition from Tribes to Religion to Nation-State to Globalization has happened through ODN. Order-Disorder process is already at work in the context of Globalization and next order could be movement towards 'Harmonic Globalization' to achieve a balance between four fundamental forces viz. Force of Market, Force of State, Force of People and Force of Self.

Ananta Giri (2013) has pointed out, Harmony should not be seen to reinforce Hierarchy in society.[5] Idea of Harmony based on reinforcing Hierarchy is not based on proper understanding of nature in terms of OD (Order-Disorder) processes. Meera Chakraborty (2011) in her book, *Colors of Mind and Other Essays* has also made a similar observation.[6] In societies we find manifestations of various colors of mind and we need to understand their dynamics for a proper

view on Harmony. In fact, in politics, colors of mind acquire different colors in terms of ideologies leading to a divisive and conflict enhancing unleashing of dialectical forces. Many times 'Dialectical chakra' goes out of control and the society's atmosphere of harmony is disturbed leading to various forms of violence in society.

In social context, JHS (Joining of Hearts and Spirit) provides a way to achieve Harmony without Hierarchy-'Harmonious Oneness'. It takes the ARIMA process to higher levels of consciousness leading to harmonious coexistence. While it recognizes the Order-Disorder dynamics and play of 'Dialectical chakras' as a social process, it also takes this dynamics to the level of 'Dynamic Harmony' (Giri 2013).[7] In the field of Religion, there have been many attempts to achieve Harmony among Religions through Inter-Faith Dialogues, however, in many such Dialogues, JHS (Joining of Hearts and Spirit) is missing as such Dialogues remain at the 'Head' level. While 'Head' may play some limited role in achieving Harmony in society, for 'Transformative Harmony' a Movement in the direction of JHS (Joining of Heart and Spirit) at Individual, Society, Nation and Global levels is needed. This is the essence of JHS Vision and JHS route for achieving Harmony without Hierarchy. Through JHS we can liberate the world from Division (Divided vision) approaches to life, living and relationships and move in the direction of harmony without hierarchy.

Identity Cone Model of Human Beings

To further understand the JHS approach to Harmony without hierarchy, we propose I7 (Seven levels of Identity) model in terms of an Identity Cone (Icon)/Spiral. Amartya Sen (2006) talks about multiple identities of an individual that are manifested in varying forms in social and political discourse both at individual and collective level.[8] Model proposed here identifies various levels of identities of human beings. This model also has a linkage with evolution of human societies through the historical experiences of transitions through Tribes to Religions to Nation-States to Globalization and beyond. Seven levels of Identity (I) in terms of I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6 and I7 are as follows:

1. My Tribe, My Home town, My caste/ community, My region
2. My Religion

3. My Nation
4. My Globe
5. My Planetary system (My milky way)
6. Neighborhood Planetary system (other milky ways)
7. Cosmos/ Entire universe

These seven levels also represent seven expanding circles of consciousness and are presented in fig. 1 in terms of a spiral model of an expanding spiral of identities. It can also be referred to as a diamond model on the basis of its V shape.

It may be indicated that an individual manifests his/ her identities depending upon the social contexts. Thus, a person at one point of time may intensely display his/ her religious identity and at another point of time display national or global identity.

Globalization has taken the human consciousness to level 4. However, as Giri (2013) argues, we have to strive for 'Planetary Realizations' which implies transcending beyond caste, class, religion, gender, nation and move beyond I4 level of identity.[9] In our subsequent discussion we present Theory O as a framework for expansion of the circles of identities to the cosmic level represented by Theory O. Physical travel has made it possible to realize our I4 level of identity and in future human beings may travel to other planets and thus it may become physically possible to realize higher levels of identity. Till then we need to rely on spiritual approaches to realize the higher levels of identities and establish Oneness with cosmos leading to Harmony among human beings.

Above presented model can be viewed in terms of 'SO-SO Window of Consciousness' wherein interaction between two individuals takes place from different levels of identities.[10] This window can be presented in terms of 7 x 7 Matrix to analyze which levels of interactions are dominating in interpersonal interactions and thereby in the society as a whole. A large number of identity conflicts take place in societies because human beings operate from different identity levels and humanity as a whole has not moved to higher levels of identities. Further political systems and politicians tend to exploit the identities to create vote banks restricting the society to move up in the evolutionary spiral. This leads to 'identity politics' that we observe in the

political arena. I7 model serves as a socio-analytic tool to understand the dynamics of identity discourse and identity politics in democratic societies. Further, ARIMA model discussed earlier provides us a basis to resolve the identity conflicts

and move in the direction of harmony without hierarchy. When Joining of Hearts and Spirit takes place, human beings move up this identity ladder and reach the level of Harmonious Oneness represented by I7.

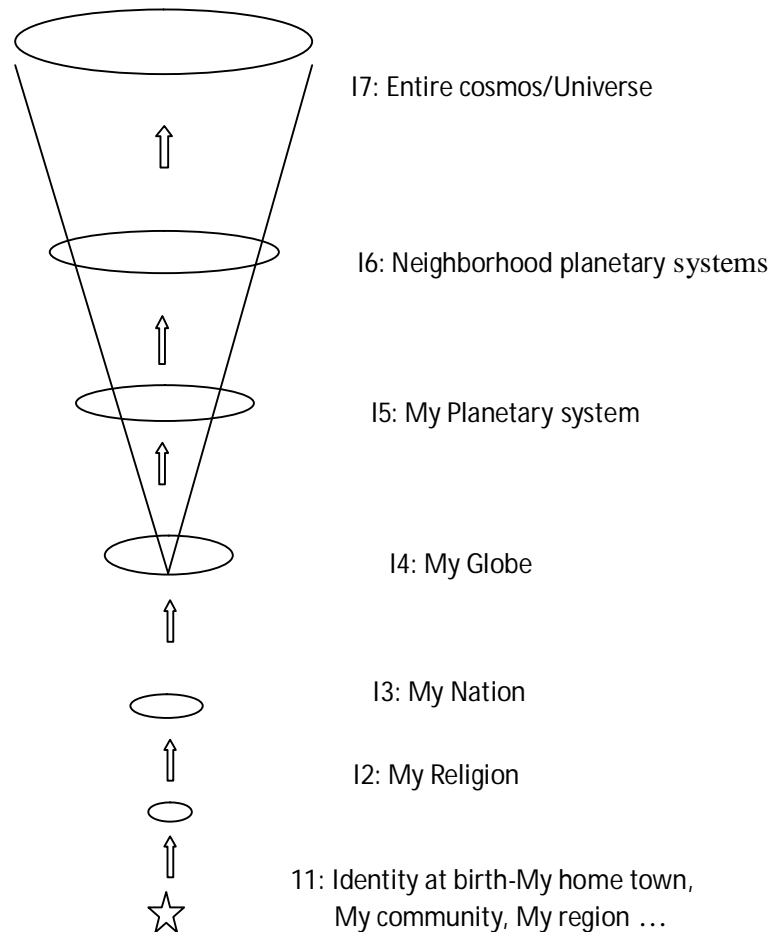


Figure 1. Seven levels Identity Spiral Model

Need for Cosmotivistic Perspective of Societies

Harry C. Triandis (1995) suggested the framework of Individualism and Collectivism for study of societies. He suggests that collectivists are closely linked individuals who view themselves primarily as parts of a whole, be it a family, a network of co-workers, a tribe, or a nation. Individualists are motivated by their own preferences, needs, and rights, giving priority to personal rather than to group goals. In contrast to individualists, collectivists are mainly motivated by the norms and duties imposed by the collective entity. He also explores wide ranging implications of individualism and collectivism for political, social, religious, and economic life.[11]

This framework has been widely used to study cultures of different societies in terms of their individualistic and collectivistic orientations. It has also impacted the Management field, particularly Organization Behavior and Organization Theory. However, the framework lacks another important dimension of cultures viz. cosmotivistic orientations of societies. By cosmotivistic orientation we imply the view and world view of a society in terms of its relationships with cosmos. A society's/ nation's culture is not only shaped by its individualistic and collectivistic orientation but also by its cosmotivistic orientation. Cosmotivistic orientation is indicative of a culture's linkages with cosmos and is expressed in many ways through creation mythos & mythology, philosophy, art, literature, dance, music, poetry

etc. When we focus on individualistic and collectivistic categories only, we ignore a large and significant aspect of shaping of society's/ nation's culture by its 'cosmotarian' perspectives. As an illustration Indian society has a strong cosmotivistic orientation as reflected in its philosophy, its ethos, its festivals, its rituals, its arts and literature and in thoughts of its many well known thinkers from ancient to modern times.

Thus, by introducing the idea of cosmotivistic orientation to the study of societies we get a better framework that is three dimensional viz. Individualistic, Collectivistic and Cosmotivistic. In every society there is a dynamic interaction between these three orientations, hence, societies differ in their configurations arising from the interactions between individualism, collectivism and cosmotivism and this gets reflected in religious, social, identity, political and economic discourse and world views. When viewed from the perspectives of Market, Society and Self (Spirituality), individualism, collectivism and cosmotivism reflect their dominant paradigms of thinking. Interactions between the three determine the configuration of the society that keeps changing depending upon the intensities of interactions.

It may be indicated that societies also differ in yin and yang oriented cosmotivistic views. In yin oriented cosmotivistic orientation, relationship with cosmos is viewed in feminine perspective. Hence, culture dominates in terms of feminine metaphors and phrases and there is a desire to seek harmony with nature and cosmos. In yang oriented cosmotivistic view, masculine metaphors dominate and there is a desire to conquer and dominate nature. In Indian culture both Yin and Yang metaphors are part of the cosmotivistic orientation as the aim is to achieve the harmony between the two and this is reflected through concepts such as Shiva-Shakti union, Purusha and Prakriti etc. This concept also represents the idea of 'harmony without hierarchy' as there is no hierarchy between Shiva and Shakti.

Harmony Based Cosmopolitanism

A Step in the Direction of Planetary Realizations

Cosmotivistic orientation also has a linkage with cosmopolitanism. In fact in cosmopolitanism, an

'ism' is hidden. When we consider ISM as an Idea, its Spirit and Manifestation of spirit, we get an interesting perspective on cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitan is rooted in Cosmo + Polis i.e. a city with cosmic perspective. This also implies a city (place) where inhabitants of the city (place) have cosmic perspective. Thus, a city/ society/ nation is cosmopolitan in its character if its inhabitants have cosmic perspective.

Thus, cosmopolitanism can be considered as an expansion of consciousness. The expansion can be in following forms:

1. From Local to Global to Cosmic level
2. From Ego to Eco to Cosmic level
3. From Human values (Justice, rights and duties) to Spiritual values (Love, compassion and devotion) to Cosmic values (Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram)

Expansion of consciousness also has linkages with developments in human thinking. Broadly there are three perspectives in human thinking viz.

1. Geo-centric
2. Helio-centric
3. Cosmo-centric

These correspond to significance of Earth, Sun and Cosmos in human thinking. 'Discovery' of Earth moving around the Sun led to a shift from Geo-centric view to Helio-centric view. With the discovery of many planetary systems, we are moving towards cosmo-centric view. Thus, there is an expansion of human consciousness. This expansion also finds its manifestation in human relationships and human societies. While some societies are still Geo-centric, others have become Helio-centric and in future we may see transition towards Cosmo-centric societies. This will facilitate the idea of cosmopolitanism in human affairs and will lead us towards Cosmonity taking us beyond the idea of Modernity through 'modification of modernity'. Modernity was largely a result of Helio-centric view of the world, its modification implies moving towards cosmo-centric view of human existence. 17 identity model presented earlier also takes us in the direction of cosmo-centric perspective on evolution of human thinking.

We can also look at the future emergence of the idea of cosmonity in terms of historical perspective of evolution of human thought

systems in terms of Religion(s), Science/Modernity and Spirituality. This view is presented below:

Religion(s) → Science/ Modernity →
 Spirituality → Cosmonity

The concept of Planetary Realizations has its equivalence with the idea of cosmonity presented in this article.[12] In fact, the idea of Planetary Realization can serve as a foundational concept to integrate Religions, Science/ Modernity and Spirituality for everyone's benefit. For this, we need 'the calling of practical spirituality'.[13]

Indian Illustrations of Cosmonity/ Cosmic Thinking

Following ideas from Indian Thought provide an Indian perspective on cosmopolitan thinking:

1. Vaisudhaiv Kutumbakam: Entire world is a family
2. Swami Vivekananda's idea of 'Brothers and Sisters': Brotherhood and sisterhood is beyond one's own community, region and nation
3. Unity in diversity reflecting the cosmic reality
4. Live and let live (Mahavira)
5. Viswarup Darshan (Ch 11 of Gita)
6. Sarve bhavantu sukhina (Welfare and happiness of all)

Harmonic Thoughts from India for 'Modification of Modernity'

Ancient literature provides us many clues for the 'harmonic cosmopolitan' outlook of many ancient Indian thinkers. Their thoughts are reflected in many popular 'wisdom statements' in varying forms. In the discussion below, we draw upon the thoughts of three globally known modern Indian thinkers to provide an essence of Indian thought on Cosmopolitanism. We can refer to them as ViGA (Vivekananda, Gandhi and Aurobindo) Trinity of modern Indian thought who have in many ways influenced contemporary social thought leading to 'modification in modernity'. It may be indicated the 'Modification in modernity' has largely been brought out through the idea of consciousness. These thinkers essentially crystallize the essence of the 'ancient wisdom and historical experience' of a long Indian tradition of consciousness based thinking. Their thoughts have also entered Western thinking.[14] Their

cosmopolitan ideas can be summed up in terms of the following:

1. Theology of Swami Vivekananda
2. Economics of Mahatma Gandhi
3. Spirituality of Sri Aurobindo

Words of Swami Vivekananda, "Each soul is potentially divine and aim is to manifest this divinity" lead us towards manifesting our divinity in the form of dignity. Swami Vivekananda further captured the idea of Cosmopolitan thinking through his famous liberating words, Brothers and Sisters reflecting the oneness of all human beings. In the past the idea of brotherhood/ fraternity was largely restricted to one's religion or nation.

Gandhi's famous expression, 'There is enough for every body's need and not for every body's greed' takes us towards a Cosmopolitan view of the resources of the planet. This view implies recognition of the rights of all human beings on the resources of the earth and their sustainable utilization for benefit of everyone. There is a message of sustainable consumption and sustainable living. A narrow view leads to greed maximization by a few nations, a small segment of persons within a nation or by a few Global Corporations leading to conflicts and disharmony with nature and other human beings.

Spirituality of Sri Aurobindo is reflected in his vision of evolution of human mind and consciousness to the cosmic level. Circle of consciousness should expand to get connected with entire cosmos. This connectivity is the essence of spirituality. Once this connectivity is established, a cosmopolitan perspective develops.

Thus, Vivekananda's Theology, Gandhi's Economics and Aurobindo's Spirituality provide us a new framework for overcoming the negative side effects of modernity. Ideas of these three thinkers also provide us a foundation for developing a non-hierarchical harmonic society. In the Indian as well as world context, their visions can transform a divided society (divided in terms of race, religion, caste, class, gender, region etc.) to a more tolerant and harmonic society with an outlook rooted in a cosmic view of life represented. This is also the essence of Theory O perspective of life, living and relationships leading and the idea of New Earth Sastra[15] wherein soil and soul are interconnected in a harmonious way.

Hierarchical harmony envisaged by modernity has led to wounded soles.[16] Time has come to find new ways to heal soil, sole and soul. This will be

possible through 'modification of modernity' to the requirements of 'harmony without hierarchy'.

'Omega Circle' As Symbol of Harmony

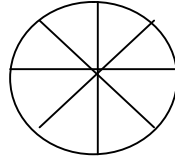


Figure 2. 'Omega Circle' as Symbol of Harmony

The idea of 'Omega circle' is an extension of the idea of 'dialectical chakra' and is based on the idea of 'chakra' wherein different spokes of the chakra represent various view points or perspectives.[17] It is also rooted in the 'syadvad'/'anekantvad' philosophy of Jainism. 'Truth is one, it has many manifestations' declared Upanishad. When viewed through the 'Omega circle' concept, it implies a 360 degree view of reality. As a circle of consciousness wherein different perspectives find an integration, it represents the essence of harmony without hierarchy and is also a symbol of cosmopolitanism, cosmic outlook and cosmonity.

A Cosmic Rhyme of 'Harmonious Oneness'

In 1993 in *Creation from Shunya*, I had written a poem titled as *Why Run the Race?*.[18] In 2007, I extended it as follows (based on general observations of astronauts as well as an imagination of an astral view of harmony):

When I fly to the space
And look at the human race,
I find people and nations
Running a destructive race,
They are divided along regions and religions,
Without any rhyme and without any reason,
They have created a climatic change,
It is now affecting the entire range,
They are creating a new chaos,
From Washington to Laos,
There are many thought divisions,
Hence the need for a new vision,
A vision of harmony and cosmos,
To save humans from turmoil and loss
Next time when I will go to the space,
And look at the human race,
I hope to find a billion of cosmic persons,
Leading humanity through a new vision.

This poem provides us a vision of 'Cosmic Human beings' through an expansion of human consciousness to the level of Harmonious Oneness (HO) represented by 17 in the Identity spiral model. It also represents the evolution of human beings from citizens to netizens to 'cosmic beings' or 'cosmic citizens'.

Towards Theory O of Harmony without Hierarchy

Extending his work, *Wisdom & Consciousness from the East*,[19] Sharma (2013) in his *EARTH Conversations with Daniel Albuquerque* suggests Theory O in terms of expansion in one's circle of consciousness to the cosmic level to achieve Oneness (O) with cosmos.[20] O is essentially a circle and in a circle there is no hierarchy. In fact, a circle is a symbol of 'harmony without hierarchy'-harmonious oneness. Theory O not only has its roots in 'dialectical chakra' but can also be considered as an extension of the idea of Omega circle. Further it also has connectivity with the 17 model of 'Identity cone'. At the 17 level one's circle of consciousness expands to cosmic level and a person acquires cosmotivistic world view and hierarchical thinking disappears.

Theory O implies realization of deep rooted Oneness of everything in cosmos from quantum level to cosmic level through 'Quantum ropes' and 'Quantum threads'. [21] This was the Vedantic view and in Physics, string theory envisages the same. Once such a realization of deeper connectivity dawns an individual, her/his circle of consciousness expands and her/his world view becomes inclusive and holistic. A person moves away from Division (Divided vision) approach to Cosmic vision approach to life, living, relationships and even management and leadership.

During evolutionary journey of human society from Tribes to Religion to Nation State to Globalization, human beings have strived for Harmony. However this striving was for 'Harmony within Hierarchy' as Pyramid structures were built to manage societies. Modernity also reinforced the hierarchical structures. New hierarchical structures of modernity were based on Science in contrast to earlier hierarchical structures that were rooted in Religion.

Marcus Bussey (2013) classifies harmony in terms of Tamasik, Rajasik and Sattavik harmony. He observes that Tamasik harmony is of the kind found in the feudal system of Europe and the caste system of India. He further notes that Rajasik harmony is characteristic of the topsy-turvy flux of modernity and capitalism in general and Sattvik harmony implies a spiritual dimension at work that reinvigorates consciousness and reframes material considerations.[22] So far, world has largely operated on the idea of harmony within the hierarchical systems.

Even sattavik harmony could be within the framework of hierarchy. We need a new framework of sattavik harmony in non-hierarchical context. As Tamasik harmony and Rajasik harmony ideas have failed to create social harmony, Sattavik harmony idea represents a future hope for the humanity. While Cyber revolution has partly demolished the hierarchies and the pyramids representing the same, it has not yet moved in the direction of sattavik harmony. In future societies may move towards 'mandala' like structures wherein every part is interconnected. To manage and lead such systems, one's level of consciousness should rise to O level (Level 17 in the Identity cone model) and this may ensure emergence of sattavik harmony in a non-hierarchical context. In fact, Theory O can be considered as a theory for creating new structures for society based on harmony without hierarchy.

Three interrelated ideas presented in this article viz. Dialectical chakra, Omega circle and Theory O constitute the foundational concepts for moving towards Harmony without hierarchy. Dialectical chakras can be moderated through Joining of Hearts and Spirit (JHS) because when Hearts and Spirit join, positive energy is generated and dialectical chakras in society move in harmonious manner generating goodwill among different communities, nations and identities leading us

towards Oneness. JHS ensures 'unity in diversity' and JHS route takes us towards the 'harmonious oneness'. Omega circle thinking helps in integration and synthesis of multiple perspectives about social realities and thus helps in resolving conflicts. Theory O helps in raising society's consciousness to higher levels and shows a path to leaders to view things and events from a higher level of consciousness to achieve harmony among communities, religions, nations and regions etc. All three ideas provide us ways to operationalize the JHS approach to Oneness. They create a shift in human thinking from 'Division' (Divided vision) approach to Cosmic vision approach wherein the circle of consciousness expands towards Planetary Realizations. Today world needs new leadership based on such ideas to transform violence and conflict ridden humanity to a new 'sacro-civic society' based on harmony without hierarchy.

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