

**The Secular and The Spiritual:
Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios and his
Relevance Today**

Valson Thampu



**Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair
Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam**

Publication Series No. 8

All rights reserved

Published by:

Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair,

School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies,

Mahatma Gandhi University,

Kottayam

Kerala, India

First Edition: Nov. 2018

Contact email: frkmgeorge@hotmail.com

Phone: +91 9447598671

Type Setting & Printing: Sophia Print House, Kottayam

Publisher's Note

Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair at the Mahatma Gandhi University continues to organise open seminars and lectures in creative faithfulness to the holistic, humanistic vision of Mar Gregorios and his renowned intellectual legacy that embraced various academic disciplines, secular ideologies and schools of philosophy and religion.

The Chair has also published a number of booklets extracted from the writings and speeches of Dr Gregorios. A major international publication in November 2017 was the 366-page book *Paulos Mar Gregorios: A Reader* by Fortress Press, USA. It brings together passages from his writings thematically ranging from Western and Indian philosophies through ecology and nuclear disarmament to interfaith dialogues and the futuristic vision for humanity.

We are grateful to Dr Valson Thampu, former Principal of St Stephen's College, Delhi University, who had close personal acquaintance with the intellectual and interfaith activities of Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios at national and global levels for delivering the memorial lecture.

My deep gratitude goes to the former Vice Chancellor Dr Babu Sebastian, the present Vice Chancellor Dr Sabu Thomas, Registrar Sri. M. R. Unni, Prof Dr M H Ilias, Director of the School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies, Dr Hari Lakshmeendra Kumar and members of the Syndicate for their generous support for the activities of the Chair.

Fr Dr K M George,
Incumbent Chairperson, PMG Chair



Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios (1922-1996)

Outstanding scholar, theologian, philosopher, polyglot and man of letters, Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios sought to bring together in a holistic vision, several unrelated disciplines like philosophy, economics, political science, medicine, education, physics and theology.

Born in 1922 at Tripunithura, Kerala, the great scholar- bishop had his earlier stints in his homestate as a journalist and postal service employee. He proceeded to Ethiopia in 1947 accepting the job of a teacher there and in course of time became the Special Secretary to Emperor Haillie Sellasi. He had an exceptional educational career in Yale, Princeton and Oxford Universities. Returning to Kerala, he was ordained as a priest of the Orthodox Church. In 1967 Fr. Paul Verghese became the Principal of the Orthodox Theological Seminary. In 1975 elevated as a bishop, Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios took charge of the Delhi Diocese of the Orthodox Church in July 1975.

Honours came unsought to Mar Gregorios. He became President of the World Council of Churches and the Indian Philosophical Congress. In 1988, he received the Soviet Land Nehru Award. He travelled widely and showed an unusual intellectual courage to explore new paradigms in human thinking. He was visiting professor in several universities like the J. N. U. in New Delhi.

Mar Gregorios has authored more than 50 books. *The Joy of Freedom, Freedom of Man, The Cosmic Man, The Human Presence, Enlightenment East and West, A Light Too Bright* and the spiritual autobiography *Love's Freedom: The Grand Mystery* are some of the most remarkable among these. Hundreds of his articles and lectures have been published in leading newspapers, and international magazines.

I. Introductory

In a real sense the present author is an illustration of the contemporary relevance of the unique and outstanding spiritual luminary we remember today, Metropolitan Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios who combined in himself the roles of theologian, philosopher, thinker, humanist, statesman, ambassador of the faith among the intelligentsia, and the mentor, very inconspicuously, of individuals who continue to turn to the memories and writings he has left behind for guidance and inspiration. My only regret is that I came under his influence when I was not fully ready for it. The late Bishop would surely have realized this, but did not ever make a mention of it. Instead, he treated me as a spiritual son. He never refrained from reminding me of my potential. But, insofar as I was not doing justice to it -at least by the late Metropolitan's exalted standards- I took it only as a matter of common courtesy.

Here is one such episode. As usual I visited him, one day in 1995, at his residence in New Delhi. He was weak and tired, but received me quite affectionately. He took me to his bedroom, so that he could rest in bed while we talked. He was concerned mainly about a request he had received from Punjabi University, Patiala, to write a textbook on Sikhism. He knew he was physically not up to it, yet he did not want to disappoint his admirers in the university.

“Can you take on this work,” he asked me. “I think you can.” And then, true to his over-generous nature he said, “You are the only one I can think of in my place.”

I knew the late Metropolitan had clearly over-estimated me. I was not up to the mark. I told him so. He tried to convince me otherwise. I persisted. He regarded me with a touch of disappointment. Our conversation turned to other subjects, which included the need to give due recognition to indigenous and non-western systems of healing.

I record this episode on purpose. What the late Metropolitan did not know, at that time, was that I was a case of mistaken religious zeal. I had an exclusivist outlook that became insecure in proximity with other faiths. For long I mistook this for faithfulness. It is only

after the late Metropolitan entered his eternal rest, and I felt very acutely the intellectual vacuum it precipitated, that I began to realize, ever so tardily, the unspiritual nature of my religious narrow-mindedness. It took me many a year of soul-searching, reading, reflection and extra-denominational as well as inter-religious exposures to begin to understand the critical relevance of the late Metropolitan's model of limitless personal growth and catholicity of outlook. Frankly, it was through his tutelage that I began to see, later than his death though, the truth that the essence of biblical spirituality is the growth of the human person to his full, God-given scope and stature, and the growing homeliness this afforded in all situations and with all people.

This core aspect of the Christo-centric vision of life -or, what we mean by spirituality- is more relevant today than it was even two decades ago. Since the departure of the late Metropolitan, I have never stopped asking, "Why does the Christian community in India fail to nurture men and women of comparable stature and breadth of vision? Why do we, the proclaimers of a great faith, stay small? What is gone wrong? Where?"

If I may be permitted to make a claim here, I'd submit that I have endeavoured, despite the late start I made, to live the model he shared with me. In this I have derived inspiration also from the life and work of Charles Freer Andrews. I came across the example of St. Gregorios of Parumala only in recent times. I am struck by the seminal presence, in Parumala Thirumeni, of the potentialities that found their global expression in the late Metropolitan. Using a biblical image, I'd say, Parumala Thirumeni is the mustard seed that sprouted and became the global tree called Paulos Mar Gregorios.

One thing is clear and beyond dispute. Biblical faith and human littleness are incompatible. No faith that breeds human bonsais is spiritual. The core spiritual calling is to be 'light of the world,' which cannot even begin to be undertaken from an outlook of parochialism. The late Metropolitan deemed his church -the Orthodox tradition that he cherished above all else- a lamp-stand, not a bushel, in respect of his spiritual light. That, I am convinced, is the model most faithful to the spiritual vision, especially in a multi-religious society like ours.

II. A few prefatory observations:

In view of the limited canvas of this paper, I shall limit myself to making brief prefatory allusions to only three basic things about the late Metropolitan.

II.i. *The importance of language.* One of the things that struck me, from my very first encounter with the late Metropolitan was his keenness, and extraordinary ability, to state his thoughts clearly and concisely. He reminded me, perhaps without knowing it, of C. S. Lewis' statement that clarity is next only to godliness. Clarity, after all, is the functional attribute of light. Through my interactions with him, I realized that clarity of thought and expression is a valid touchstone for assessing the mettle of a person's spiritual and intellectual enlightenment.

I understood Mar Gregorios' extraordinary capacity for clarity in terms of two aspects of his personality: one biblical and the other philosophical. The biblical aspect is inner purity, about which the late Metropolitan has himself spoken and written much in the general context. So, further elaboration is not warranted. The philosophical pertains to his felicity with language. Who doesn't know the late Metropolitan's intimate familiarity with the writings of Martin Heidegger and Wittgenstein? Even otherwise, language -as the Word- is at the centre of the biblical spiritual vision. If, to Heidegger, language is the 'abode of the being', the Word is, in the biblical tradition, the door to the very mind of God. Jesus is the living Word. In that capacity, he is the 'light' - the light of the world. Clarity is a function of light.

I see the late Metropolitan's felicity with many languages as a byproduct of his quest for clarity. There are two paradigms of clarity: the micro and the macro. In the micro-model, one seeks to attain clarity by putting the particular under the spotlight of specialization. In the second model, one seeks clarity by putting the particular under the daylight of the whole. Both yield clarity; but the outcomes belong to different orders of experience. The late Metropolitan practised clarity of the latter kind.

The critical factor in this is language. It is not difficult to see why. Each language represents a cultural and creative tradition with its

own genius. Fundamental issues are common to peoples across regions, nationalities and cultures. It is natural that the same issues are grappled with, in different philosophical and spiritual systems; each seeing the proverbial elephant from its own angle of experience. Wholeness of understanding cannot be attained by staying confined to a tradition or two. A variety of perspectives, depending on the complexity of the ideas and realities explored, are helpful and necessary. Or, to stay with the metaphor of the story, the integrated total of the versions of the five blind 'seers' approximates itself to light; or is nearly light.

Even though many key texts exist in translation, the characteristic flavour of a particular genius of understanding gets diluted or distorted when texts are moved from the original to a target language. Philosophical thinking is an exercise in subtle thinking. Even a subtle twist, a minor deflection, will cause huge end-result distortion.

Furthermore, the scope for accuracy and originality -especially in this age of specialization- lies in multi-linguistic, multi-cultural eclecticism. The danger in using language as a marker of social or ethnic identity is that it breeds exclusivity, which cripples intellectual freedom and exiles cultural cosmopolitanism, both of which were dear to the late Metropolitan. It was impossible to listen to him, or read his writings, without feeling awe-inspired by the breadth and sweep of his understanding, even as he carries his vast scholarship admirably light!

The example of the late Metropolitan is critically relevant today, given our impatience with even one language. Short Message Services make a mincemeat of words. ('great, for example, is gr8) Emails have escalated our impatience with sentences. It has, besides, killed the art of letter writing. SMS has divorced communion from communion, whereas etymologically both come from the same root. This is not a superficial linguistic issue, but the symptom of the shallowness that has now attained epidemic proportions. Between the elaboration and sophistication of the means of communion, and our inability and indifference to communication and community, the gulf is widening. What, then, to talk of developing and sharing philosophical and spiritual subtleties! We have legitimized and institutionalized impatience almost as the norm, if not a virtue.

In this context I need to say a word or two about the biblical character -Zacchaeus. He was ‘small of stature’ in more senses than one. One aspect of his smallness was his muteness. His lust for money and his skill to communicate were in a relationship of inverse proportion! Then he encounters Jesus, the Word. What happens? He shifts from covetousness to communion, communication and community. See how he talks! And the new realities he sees! The joy he claims!

We pride ourselves on living in an age of science and technology. Not accidentally, the late Metropolitan has said a great deal about this aspect of modern life. In the early sublime period of scientific development, science was not divorced from the philosophical and the linguistic. Aristotle was a scientist, a philosopher, an aesthician, a political scientist, a communicator, and so on. Newton was not far from being a poet. Einstein was nearly a philosopher and a brilliant communicator. Instances can be multiplied. Even in our times, Stephen Hawking is a better writer than many professors in humanities. The profundity of Noam Chomsky is certainly attributable to his felicity with languages and his deep insights into linguistics.

But the general trend is not quite the same. Scientists of a super-specialist variety revel in mouthing technical jargons that rise like a wall of exclusion before the common man. This chasm between the intellectual elite and the society at large impoverishes both.

II.ii. The second issue I need to flag is as follows. Ours is an age, if we go by Nietzsche’s view, *not of thinking, but of willing*. To put it crudely, this implies a shift analogous to shifting the argument from the tongue to the fist. Dialogue of minds gives way to clash of wills. So, Samuel Huntington is not wide off the mark when he tries to cast the present global outlook into a ‘clash of civilizations’; but that is not what history is, but what it is contrived to be. Cross-pollination of civilizations is, somehow, not exciting enough. Co-existence is too meek, and profitless, a prospect to be desired. One will must prevail over the other. It is this that makes ‘surgical strikes’, for example, an achievement of ultimate cultural pride. Its irrelevance to attaining the goals professed is wholly irrelevant. Our concern in seeing society

and history as a theatre of conflicts is that it imperils freedom and aggravates intolerance.

All the same, modernity puts a high premium on freedom of thought and expression. What is overlooked is that between the clamour for freedom of thought and the willingness to think rationally the gulf continues to widen. Mar Gregorios would predicate this, perhaps, on the contrast between ‘freedom from’ and ‘freedom for’. We wish to be free from the shackles we associate with the past in respect of the human condition; but we do not know how this newly gained and amplified freedom is to be applied. Modern man is like a traveler, all dressed up, but has nowhere to go.

The good news is that he doesn’t have to be so! The key to human regeneration lies in re-aculturating humankind in the discipline of thinking; not necessarily along the Cartesian lines of “I think, therefore I exist”, but as part of the challenge of living life in all its fullness, which entails the optimum development of the full range of human capabilities. The spirit that shapes the substance of the late Metropolitan’s thinking is the quest for fullness, or wholeness.

II. iii. *Empowerment through a tradition.* In his life as a thinker, Paulos Mar Gregorios was helped, in no small measure, by his being rooted deeply and creatively in the Orthodox spiritual tradition that combines spirituality with scholarship. In this too, he was at wholesome variance with the outlook of modernity, which views past traditions as a hindrance to human freedom and progress. His sanctified common sense, immense erudition, and extensive experiences in diverse contexts, convinced him that one could not manage without a foothold somewhere. A child, for instance, cannot grow up drifting among clouds. It needs a home, a focal point of belonging. The Orthodox tradition was such a home for the late Metropolitan.

T. S. Eliot, in *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, explains the synergy between the individual and tradition. Every individual needs a tradition to nourish and empower him. The individual, in turn, helps re-articulate the tradition in a contextually relevant fashion and ensures its liveliness and relevance. It is hard to exaggerate the formative

influence that his doctoral work on Gregorios of Nyssa had on the late Metropolitan. Most people envisage tradition as something set and crystallized in the past, to which one maintains a mechanical relationship of conformity, and not of investigation, or of seeking. To the spiritual genius of Jesus Christ, a tradition is not meant to be preserved, but fulfilled. It is the test and proof of the relevance and vitality of a tradition that it can nurture individuals through whom it moves continually towards fulfillment.

Paulos Mar Gregorios' rootedness in the Orthodox tradition is the source of his intellectual energy and philosophical clarity. It enabled him to stay steadfast, rather than exist like a shuttlecock bandied back and forth between schools of philosophy. Or, to use a biblical metaphor, stay blown this way and that by shifting winds of thought.

This, I believe, is of direct relevance to academia. Our universities and colleges lack intellectual vitality because we are in the business of warehousing information, with success in examinations as destination. We need to shift from this soulless state to cherishing learning as a vital experience, located in institutions with traditions of excellence, undertaken by a seeking academic community that practices learning as basic to human growth and perfection, or, as Mar Gregorios would say, sees education as the nursery for a new humanity. This is all the more important, insofar as we live in an age of homogenization, which functions in terms of coerced conformity, reducing individuals to the size and scope of the lowest common denominator. Vis-à-vis the human, homogenization is sheer oppression.

Wouldn't belonging to a tradition result in homogenization of its members? The answer to that apprehension lies in the way we relate to traditions. Unthinking, mechanical conformity to a tradition can homogenize all its adherents. Belonging to a tradition, seeing it as a continual flow in history towards perfection, and oneself as a responsible agent of that fulfillment, makes one a powerfully well-defined person. That is because a tradition only provides foundational principles and broad parameters, leaving the individual free to express and realize himself through that tradition. It provides only the canvas, the palette, brush and colours. It respects the creativity of the individual,

and does not prescribe the shape of beauty to be pursued or the proportion in which the colours are to be mixed. The test of the wholesomeness of a tradition is the measure of freedom it grants to its members to attain life in all its fullness.

In this respect, the late Metropolitan's idea of human identity could serve as an illustration. Human identity is a blend of the general, which is prescribed, and the particular which is a domain of free application. Aristotle uses the illustrations of navigation and healing. The pilot must be well-versed in the science of navigation; but unless he uses his sense of the moment and uses his lore in a contextually relevant fashion, the ship will be wrecked. The physician, likewise. It is not enough that he knows his science; he must mediate it to individual patients, as specific to his or her person and condition. A mechanical application of knowledge, without sensitivity to the distinctiveness of the immediate context, could imperil the welfare of the patient. This is the point that Eliot also makes. Tradition needs the individual to articulate itself. But the individual will have little to articulate, but for the tradition. Or, even if he has, he may not want to do anything beneficial with what he has.

III. At the root of Mar Gregorios' spiritual-theological vision is the reciprocity between the *seen and the unseen*. This is also the basis of his disagreement with Modernity, which he, otherwise, does not reject out of hand. The inability to factor the realm of the invisible is the main distinction between the spiritual and the empirical-materialist outlook on life. As Paul Tournier says, it is strange that the age of individualism does not produce outstanding individuals. The dwindling of the human is a modern epidemic.

The modern philosopher is, however, in a dilemma in dealing with the unseen, because the realm of the unseen does not lend itself to verification or allow itself to be confined to set theories and equations, even though it is continually making inroads into the tiny island of the manifest, without which progress would be impossible. It calls for faith, even in science, which philosophy may seem to deem alien to itself. Greek philosophers were not beset with this problem. The Platonic realm of Ideas would remain invisible, except for inspired

consciousness that serves as conduit for its inflow into the realm of the seen. Mere reason, while invaluable in itself, was inadequate for this purpose. So, Plato posited the doctrine of aesthetic transport. The Greek idea of creativity as the dialogue between Apollo, the god of light, and Dionysus, the god of darkness -the interplay of the visible and the invisible, so to speak- the complementarity between reason and revelation in the Judeo-Christian spiritual domain, Milton's need to invoke the Holy Spirit in his epic effort to 'justify the ways of God to man', all stand on the same foundation: the unseen continually qualifying, re-defining the seen and writing itself into the syntax of the seen.

The polarization between the seen and the unseen is unmaintainable even in philosophy. The two are in communion wherever there is progress or growth. The Heideggerian "Being" is invisible; but becomes visible through the 'being'. Essence becomes real only when it is embodied as existence. If so, the invisible is the foundation on which the visible stands. The logic for the fulfillment of the seen rests in the realm of the unseen. That is why humankind cherishes creativity above everything else. A great deal of the nihilistic averments on which modernity is erected, which modernity proliferates further, issue from severing oneself from the realm of the unseen, overlooking the simple principle that what one sees depends on where one stands.

In the biblical account of creation, the invisible pre-exists the visible. The first to be willed into existence by God is light. Light is the bridge, the birth-canal, through which the invisible becomes visible. To insist on the unreality of the invisible is to reject the idea of light. It is to reject the very history of human progress.

Philosophy, in its essence, is best understood as a journey from the visible to the invisible and back, as Plato envisages in *The Republic* through the Simile of the Cave. The denizen of the cave of shadows has to emerge to the realm of light -till then invisible (the irony not to be missed)- and then return to the cave of shadows. The cave is a realm of the invisibility of the visible, insofar as its inhabitants are free and able to see only a projected procession of shadows. The philosopher's task is to rupture this conditioned invisibility, which

endures in unawareness, with the resources of what otherwise would remain invisible; namely, the realm of light, which is what, in the given situation, invisible. To insist on the non-existence of the invisible is to remain in hiding about the true nature of the visible as well, chaining oneself to a world of shadows. The initiative to mediate the relation between appearance and reality in the word of 'the visible' can come only from the 'invisible'.

This is clearer in the realm of spirituality. Consider the instance of Jesus opening the eyes of the man born blind. Till he is healed, he relates to the world in a certain fashion. He is similar to dweller in Plato's cave, merely existing amidst shadows. Something beyond it needs to come in, for his eyes to open. That source is Jesus, the light of the world. That light is invisible, as light, in an empirical sense! There is no material proof that Jesus is the light. The irony is that this truth was more visible to the blind man than to the disciples of Jesus. How are we to understand the 'sight' that this man gains? Surely, it existed as a possibility within him. The fact that it was invisible to the crowd, does not disprove its reality. It takes the eyes of Jesus, the light, to see that possibility. Jesus serves as the link between the potential for sight in this man and its actualization in him, vis-à-vis him and the world. The crux of the miracle is that the blind man sees 'the invisible' -the identity of Jesus as the light. As for Jesus, he too sees 'the invisible' -the potential for sight in this man. So, it turns out that it is the communion of the invisible and the invisible that births the miracle, which is sight.

The point is also that 'sight' per se is a miracle. If we take it for granted, or belittle it, or fail to use it for purposes germane to its nature, it is because we are blind and, unlike the blind man in the miracle, we do not know that we are. The worst form of blindness is the inability to see the invisible, which is what our age is suffering from. If so, it is a measure of our spiritual foolishness that we take pride in that over which we should indeed be lamenting. At least now and then experiences force us to intuit the fact that we are characters in *The Country of the Blind* by H. G. Wells.

Scepticism about the realm of the invisible is innate in a mechanistic and materialistic worldview. It overlooks the fact that the physical

begins to be deformed when it is delinked from the metaphysical, much like the body putrefying when separated from the breath. Being confined only to the visible goes against the grain of being human and the logic of history. It shrinks the scope of progress and evolution to the ambit of the material order as it stands now, and discounts the significance of inner life; which, from a spiritual perspective, is the pearl of the greatest price.

The travail that St. Paul senses in nature points to its longing to transcend the status quo, the scheme of things as it is, and to grow towards fullness and perfection. It is an urge that philosophers and theologians alike attribute to Life itself. Each time a baby is born, St. Augustine said, Life is trying to express something unprecedented and unrepeatable about itself. We experience this travail in our individual life as well, as the painful process of becoming fully human. The spiritual longing to be led from darkness to light, is basic to all religious traditions. Without this, we lose much of what distinguish us from the rest of the animal kingdom.

It is in this light that Mar Gregorios' critique of Enlightenment needs to be viewed and appreciated. European Enlightenment, for all its significant breakthroughs, laid excessive emphasis on the visible and the material with two predictable consequences:

III.i *The ascendancy of the critical and rational and the evaporation of the reverential.* What evaporated in the process is a sense of reverence in our response to the totality of our predicament. This happened largely because of the reductive understanding of reason itself, confining its operation to the zone of human control and mastery. Horizons of possibilities that reason of this kind -what in practice is manipulative intelligence- cannot handle is discounted. Shakespeare's Hamlet appears to be protesting against this outlook when he says to his friend, "*There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio/ Than are dreamt of in your philosophy*".

Among the three essential ingredients that Bertrand Russell identifies in *Political Ideals*, reverence for life figures prominently. On the cultural side, modernity legitimized irreverence as the strategy for life. It was necessary to break the shackles of petrified authority,

ossified tradition and superstitious and sectarian religiosity. But its loss outweighed its gain. It reduced human beings from being travelers, if not pilgrims, to tramps, as Samuel Beckett portrays in *Waiting for Godot*.

III.ii. *The tyranny of the mechanical*. The mechanical and the creative -routine and revolution- together comprise the two terminals of human condition. But the Enlightenment, by putting the spotlight exclusively on the visible and the verifiable, discounted transcendence in respect of the human. Freud painted man as a crude biological mechanism driven by sex. Marx posited man to be a product of economic and social conditions. Darwin, via the hypotheses of 'natural selection' and the 'survival of the fittest' over-played the role of material causality, an outlook that Mar Gregorios finds too problematic to accept in faith, especially as a philosopher.

A major problem in absolutizing cause-effect relationship, with its end-product of arriving in material determinism, is that it reduces the range and scope of human freedom. Freedom involves an interplay between cause-effect fixity and cause-effect fluidity. As a rule, no law operates in the human domain except in tandem with its opposite. Any law or principle begins to be anti-life when it functions unilaterally. This is a key insight in the Garden of Eden narrative. Freedom is real only when it includes the possibility of turning freedom into its opposite - unfreedom, of which Adam and Eve hiding in the Garden is a fairly transparent symbol. Ironically, their hiding in the Garden, not less than their ability to 'till the land and to take care of the Garden', proves the reality of their freedom.

Historically the mechanistic-technological culture imperiled freedom in two major ways.

III.ii.a. Technological means to curb freedom and to aggravate fear. Technology for manipulation is a case in point, and Noam Chomsky the most respected contemporary prophet against it in warning the world of the violence immanent in 'manufactured consent,' for example. The genius of intrusion that modern technology has makes it an irresistible ally to the State in its totalitarian thirst to control all aspects of human life, and to condition individuals into conformity with the interests of the ruling elite.

III.ii.b. By obstructing human growth, we are withheld from the full play of freedom. We can only be as free as we are developed or evolved. As a matter of fact, evolution is, or should be, an ascent to higher levels of freedom. Yet, freedom was imperiled in this very process.

The role and relevance of higher education, as seen by the modern State, is a question of particular interest for our purpose. Coincidentally, it was in academia, and not ecclesia, that I met Mar Gregorios when he was a priest, for the first time in 1966. Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios had as much acceptance in academic circles in Delhi and a large number of centres of intellectual culture around the world, as he had in church circles.

Should higher education, through universities and centres of educational excellence, serve as instruments of exclusion, as August Strindberg, the Swedish author, alleged they were; or should they serve as a means for enriching culture and transforming societies? It cannot be denied that governments around the world, and the Indian State in particular, are apprehensive of inviting upheavals by unleashing knowledge. The growing tendency to privatize higher education clearly points in this direction. The outcome of such privatization, to which commercialization is an inevitable concomitant is the systemic suppression of the aspirations of all from the lower middle class down.

IV. Given the above, it is imperative for those who believe in the primacy of the human to insist on Gregorios' emphasis on *freedom*. Biblically, God is the source and exemplar of human freedom. The essence of God's perfect freedom is the identity of will and desire. God wills what he desires, desires what he wills. That is how creation is accomplished in the Genesis account. The two are inseparable, like fire and light in a burning wick.

It is a sign of man's flawed freedom that in him will and desire are often in conflict. The Aristotelian prescription for this moral malady is 'perfect self-mastery', which is echoed in biblical spirituality as well. Paul agonizes over this issue in the 7th chapter of the *Epistle to the Romans*. He fails to do what he wills. And ends up doing the evil that he does not desire. Confessing this inner dis-relationship between will and desire, Paul goes on to identify this as the 'death-principle'

“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? -Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom.7:24,25)

Existence implies, going by the doctrine of the Fall, compromised freedom. It is not merely that, as Swami Vivekananda says, matter is inhospitable to freedom, which it is; it is also that the systems that man creates tend to suspect and circumscribe individual freedom. In the system of thought Sartre developed (*Being and Nothingness*) there is a chasm between ‘existence in itself’ and ‘existence for itself’. The two can coincide only in the case of God, if there is God (which Sartre denies). Human predicament is punctuated by the continual struggle to bring the two into harmony, without ever fully succeeding to do so for any length of time. It was as a compromise, we may say in retrospect, that Aristotle propounded his Doctrine of the Mean, -avoiding ‘excess’ and ‘defect’- identifying this as a feasible strategy for leading a virtuous life. Virtue is inseparable from freedom. Only a good man can be free. Also, only a free man can be good. Moral stature is, in Aristotelian thought, unattainable for slaves.

There is a cultural sense in which modernity drives a wedge between will and desire. Though ours is, presumably, an age of willing, it is rarely that the individual exercises his will in a pure sense. There is only an illusion of willing. We will, mostly, what is willed by others. As Oscar Wilde says, “We are other people”. Our thoughts, our dreams, our desires and passions are all borrowed! This is the essence of what the existentialists call ‘inauthentic existence’; the idea that life is what happens to us, and that everything is up to something else. At the far end of this line of argument, man becomes no more than a victim, clothed with no more than the choice to merely endure his existence.

St. Paul addresses this issue in *Epistle to the Romans*. We are not to conform to the pattern of this world, but to be transformed by the daily renewal of our minds (Rom. 12:2). Thinking, Paul implies (cf. ‘daily renewal of our minds’) is the means for fortifying our will as well. Those who refuse to think end up enslaved. Herein lies the motive of the State to propagate a consumerist culture and the indulgent lifestyle that goes with it. It weakens will, especially the will to resist.

This weakening of the will happens as a by-product of holidaying from thinking. Even education, in such a cultural matrix, will bypass the goal of promoting a culture of thinking. Students will be taught what to think, not how to think.

IV.i. The spiritual terminology for the existentialist ‘inauthenticity’ is ‘hypocrisy’. A hypocrite is an actor; one who is not what he appears to be. There is nothing -no, not even adultery- that attracted greater condemnation from Jesus than hypocrisy, which he lists as a characteristic religious vice. The pathos in the predicament of a hypocrite is his inability to bridge the gulf between what he wills and what he desires. A hypocrite is a classic case of unfreedom. He caricatures the human.

Hypocrisy, incidentally, involves the ‘visible-invisible’ dynamics as a matrix of human freedom. A hypocrite is one who does not find himself free to be in his true self. The person you see is not the real he. So long as that invisible dimension does not become evident or visible, the question of hypocrisy does not arise, as in the case of one who identifies himself completely with the role he plays.

Reflections on freedom will necessarily bring us face to face with the reality of our not being in complete control of our predicament or destiny. Maurice Maeterlinck in *Wisdom and Destiny* raises the question: To what extent do you will, or control your own life? And to what extent is your destiny shaped by extra-personal forces? This is an issue that I have had to face acutely in my tenure as the twelfth principal of St. Stephen’s, something that I have dealt with at length in my memoir titled *On A Stormy Course* (Hachette India, 2017).

IV. ii. *Freedom and Intolerance*. Mar Gregorios would also, if he were to address the issue of human freedom today, bring in the issue of intolerance into its conceptual ambit. Intolerance is a function of freedom, as Jesus implies in the parable of the unmerciful servant (Mtt. 18:21-35). But it is not a problem innate in freedom, but incidental to it, stemming from the limitations of the agent of action who is presumably free. A critical question to ask is, “How free can a person be, if he is ignorant even of the basics of life?” In the present case the servant whose massive debt has been waived, fails to see his

kinship with the one who owes a pittance to him. His exercise of freedom is vitiated by blind ignorance. Knowledge and understanding are necessary conditions for a healthy exercise of one's freedom. Ignorance makes a person conform unthinkingly to prevailing stereotypes. That is what the insensitive servant does in the parable: he behaves according to the stereotype of a creditor. The fact to which he, like most others, is blind is that all creditors are also debtors.

Agents of intolerance everywhere are marked by their incapacity to think and to feel. Also, by their unwillingness to know a situation in its totality. Intolerance is a function of reductionism: the part pretending to be the whole. Agents of intolerance, though seemingly free, are objects of unfreedom; for violence reduces humans to objects. They are puppets manipulated and used by their ventriloquists from a distance.

Paulos Mar Gregorios was very Aristotelian in identifying the four co-ordinates for human freedom. (a) Ability to distinguish between right and wrong (b) The ethical taste and spiritual discernment to choose what is right and to eschew what is evil (c) The will to make what is chosen to prevail and (d) The availability of conditions -social, economic, political, religious- to make this possible. If you were to ask him for an example of pure freedom, he would, very likely, point to Diogenes at Corinth. Since this was an episode very dear to the late Metropolitan, I will be pardoned if I gave a brief account of it; second in profundity in classical literature only to Socrates' preference for death to unfreedom. The late Metropolitan cites this episode in *Enlightenment: East and West*.

According to Plutarch's version of the event, Alexander the Great, at the zenith of his power, visited Diogenes of Sinope at Corinth. This he did because unlike all others, Diogenes had refused to go and meet the Emperor to receive his favours. At the emperor's approach, Plutarch notes, Diogenes, who was lying in the sun, raised his head a trifle, beheld the royal retinue and, then, fixed his eyes on the monarch. Alexander asked the philosopher if he wanted anything from him. "Yes," said Diogenes, "stand a little out of my sun." Alexander was so impressed by the grandeur of this man's spirit that he remarked,

“If I were not to be Alexander, I would be Diogenes.” (I cannot help being struck by the similarity between Diogenes and John the Baptist.)

V. The Shaping Paradigm, or the Heart of the Matter.

If Nature, going by St. Paul’s spiritual intuition, is in travail for the birth of a new order, the birth pang that punctuated all of Metropolitan’s life of quest and scholarship was **the quest for a new humanity**. I believe that this is the meeting point between his philosophical and spiritual vision, which in his case, unlike that of many other philosophers, could not be compartmentalized. The biblical worldview in general, the vision of Jesus Christ in particular, is based on the need for the status quo to give way to the emergence of the new. This must happen at the micro (the individual) and macro (creation) levels. The individual must be born again (Jn. 3:3) and the present order of things must give way to a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1). Pain, as Khalil Gibran says in *The Prophet*, is the medium for this new birth. The imperfections on account of which the world groans is, hence, pregnant with meaning and hope.

Mar Gregorios is eager to ensure that his idea of the ‘new’ is not equated with the ‘modern’. Modernity, which is etymologically related to the ‘mode’ or the fashionable, is an outlook that discounts the old - especially, religion, tradition and authority- for the sake of whatever is new, only for the reason that it is new. Such an approach is not acceptable to him. His Orthodox vision does not see history in terms of discontinuity. He is almost Hegelian in presuming history to be a continuous and purposive flow. While there is no return journey in history, there is also no waste or superfluity. Everything endures, even a shadow that falls on the wall, provided we evolve the means -the technology- to retrieve and decipher it, which we will hopefully do someday. But the fact that we would do it then, should not be an alibi for looking down history till then, without which we would have reached that stage of capabilities.

The Spiritual Idea of the New

There are two contrary paradigms for understanding the emergence of the new: the creative and the evolutionary. In the creative model, the birth of the new is abrupt, involving the mysterious

and the trans-personal, even as it presupposes, in the case of the individual, the uncoerced participation through faith of the individual concerned. The emergence of the new heaven and the new earth is wholly eschatological, autonomous from human consent and participation. The individual is transformed, the scheme of things dissolved, as the forerunner to the new.

The spiritual vision of life is instinct with an awareness of the imperfection that afflicts the created order, for which the Doctrine of the Fall is the explanatory hypothesis. This imperfection, in its practical sense, is incompleteness or part-ness. The world is great, even glorious; but it is incomplete and, to that extent, imperfect. So, it cannot hold human happiness. What is incomplete is inhospitable to wholeness, which expresses itself as health, peace, harmony, well-being. This incompleteness results from alienation: alienation of the part from the whole, which is God.

The spiritual strategy for birthing the new is, therefore, transformation, which is the attainment of, or rehabilitation in, in wholeness. So, St. Paul says, “He who is in Christ Jesus is a new creation.” (2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus tells Nicodemus of the need to be born again (Jn. 3:3), revealing the key to this passage later as “abide in me, and I in you” (Jn. 15:4). This is the essence of the Orthodox tradition that nurtured Metropolitan Gregorios. It is understandable, therefore, that he was alert to the falsity that clung to modernity vis-à-vis this aspect of the human condition.

The Spiritual strategy for entering the new is holistic growth, not a mere jettisoning of the old. Only perfection can escape the endless cycle of enchantment and disenchantment (Mtt. 5:48), on which the mirage of pleasure perpetuates itself in the domain of culture. The latest, and most fashionable gadget in the market, is modern but not ‘new’ in the spiritual sense of the term, because it is predicated on imminent disenchantment. In less than a year it will perish in popularity and become trash.

The strategy for growing into wholeness is asking, seeking, knocking (Mtt. 7:7). Asking includes not merely supplicating (or begging) but also interrogating, or not accepting the status quo on

trust. To seek is to look beyond the status quo to find what as yet is un-manifest. To knock is to persevere in the quest for all-round perfection.

Creation is inaugurated as a pre-human, or a priori, divine activity. Once this stage is over, disruptive interventions to craft the new cease and the logic of life and nature -the logic of growth- is set in place; the reason why we have focused almost exclusively on this aspect of the new. Existence in time and space can envisage the new only as resulting from outgrowing the part-ness, or incompleteness, of the given into wholeness. But the attainment of perfection will bring history and culture to a standstill. It has to be envisaged, hence, as an eschatological possibility.

On the religious plane, though, the idea of the new does not amount to any more than the denominational fashions that come into being from time to time.

The Secular Idea of the New too is predicated on growth, but it is growth as evolution, understood almost entirely as moving from a lower level of complexity or competence to a higher one. The irony here is that it is predicated on in-eradicable imperfection. Perfection can never be a cultural goal. It can only exist in time -as Jesus implies in his conversation with the woman of Samaria (Jn.4)- as a thirst that will never be quenched. Scientifically, water is a coalition of incompleteness-es. Hydrogen and oxygen are, vis-à-vis human thirst, incomplete. They come together, or abide in each other, to form water. The integration of the incomplete cannot amount to completion or perfection. Water is extremely precious and useful; but it is not an embodiment of perfection. If it were, it would not have been subject to corruption, which it is.

The secular model for the birth of the new is evolution, based on the merciless principle of the survival of the fittest. But the 'fittest' will not still be perfect. In the unlikely event of the fittest being perfect, the evolutionary process will come to a halt. The new humanity will not be the fittest, but the fullest; continually approximating itself to the norm embedded in its creation -created in the image and likeness of God. It will not attain perfection as a realized, stable state; but

serve as the signpost to perfection by being attuned to God, who alone is the fountainhead of perfection. God alone, as Jesus tells the rich young man, is good, or perfect.

Yet the spiritual and the secular models are not as contrarian as they might seem to be. The spiritual does not have to be exclusive of the insights of the secular. The factor common to both is growth, though the understanding of growth differs between the paradigms. The difference is that the natural and the supernatural participate in the spiritual model; whereas growth is driven by the processes of nature and culture in the secular.

Understandably, therefore, Paulos Mar Gregorios is not wholly negative towards what is modern. He only insists that the modern should be critiqued from a holistic perspective. Its benefits should be welcome, but its hubris rejected. He avoids two common tendencies: of seeing the past as a Golden Age and of envisaging the future in terms of Utopia. He stood rooted in a living tradition, which does not see perfection only as a privilege of the past or as attainable only in the distant future. Seeking perfection or excellence is a continuing, unending calling, the byproduct of which is human growth. Here is the late Metropolitan's touchstone for assessing the new humanity: *the human must be a living revelation of God.*

It is instructive to compare this with the Hegelian idea that God is continually making himself through history. The Hegelian view puts the spotlight on God's immanence in history. He does not emphasize, but takes it for granted, the correlation between God's historical self-revelation and the evolution of the human species towards perfection. The idea of God's wholly immanent involvement in any evolutionary process is infelicitous to Orthodox theology, - God's immanence in the created order is not- which puts the focus entirely on human transformation.

What I perhaps share with the late Metropolitan is the conviction, which has been at work in nearly all that I attempted in public life, that pursuing excellence is the dynamic essence of spirituality. This it shares with philosophy, except that the philosophical paradigm, focusing exclusively on the rational and the logical, is a comparatively smaller

canvas for its attainment. Mention needs to be made of Martin Heidegger in this context. To Heidegger, an attitude to life based on maintenance per se is untenable. The valid approach is “maintenance-enhancement”. Living entities cannot be preserved as it is, like relics. They have to be continually enhanced if they are to be maintained. The quest for perfection is predicated, thus, even in philosophy on the pursuit of excellence. Life maintains itself, wrote Simon de Bouvoir -Sartre’s close associate and the leading feminist philosopher in France in the 20th century, in the *Second Sex*, by excelling itself. But, in order to excel itself, life must maintain itself. The two must happen at the same time.

It was this quest for perfection, understood from within the Orthodox spiritual tradition, complemented by an expansive understanding of western philosophic traditions, among which he was so much at home, that Metropolitan Gregorios deemed the *elan vital*, the vital life, of new humanity.

VI. Mar Gregorios and Education

I believe that the role-model of the late Metropolitan is significantly relevant to the regeneration of higher education in India. What academia lacks today is the intellectual-spiritual joy borne out of a genuine and disinterested delight in the free-play of ideas and insights. It lies in the adventurous eagerness, so very distinguished in Paulos Mar Gregorios, to go beyond minimal requirements and to stay confined to tiny comfort zones. Nietzsche, recalling his university days, emphasizes how little he and his contemporaries were obsessed with marks or prospects of employment. For him, learning, especially higher learning, was an end in itself. We could get his meaning wrong if we don’t read this affirmation in conjunction with his creed that education must contribute to the enrichment of culture. The point is that we do best, not when we are hitched to mercenary goals, but are unfettered by them, so that we can grow to, and express, the fullness of who we are. It is doubtful if higher education is even aware of such a goal today.

For purposes of illustration, consider the example of Socrates. When his trial was in progress, accused of impiety and of corrupting

the youth of Athens, he was visited by Hermogenes, one of his ardent disciples. Socrates talked with him on everything else except matters relevant to his defence. I quote from Xenophon's *Apology*.

“. . . he (Hermogenes) roundly put it to him (Socrates) whether he ought not to be debating the line of his defence, to which Socrates in the first instance answered: “What! Do I not seem to you to have spent my whole life in meditating my defence?” And when Hermogenes asked him, “How?” he added: “By a lifelong persistence in doing nothing wrong, and that I take to be the finest practice for his defence which a man could devise.”

It is for want of this wisdom -which sees excellence in terms of the totality of life and as invaluable in itself- that our academia is so woefully bankrupt. Think of students who become hyper-hard-working on the eve of examinations! What idea of education are they living? Think of teachers who teach, keeping ‘what is likely to come in examinations,’ and become ‘very popular’ among students for that very reason! Consider how colleges and universities are regulated and assessed today? Which institution you know is geared to equipping young people to be, like Mar Gregorios, lifelong learners?

If you wish to make a mark as a public speaker, you could choose between two contrary strategies. You could spend a few days of furious work, fine-tuning your text. Alternately, you could, given the fact that enriching the culture of thinking is dear to you as a public speaker, continually enlarge your mental horizon, thinking capacity and communication skills, so that there can be a blend between what is previously prepared and what is thought up on one's feet, which enhances spontaneity and liveliness in communication. Metropolitan Gregorios practised the second model.

We can only afford to flag here, very briefly, a few of the issues pertaining to education that interested the late Metropolitan:

1. *The elitist bias of higher education.* The egalitarianism immanent in biblical spirituality makes Mar Gregorios frown upon the elitist bias, especially, of higher education. He sees this, essentially, as a hangover of the Enlightenment mindset, that saw education as an exclusive preserve of the ruling elite. Spreading higher education

in the masses was deemed inimical to national interests as it potentially imperiled the status quo through revolution.

Higher education as an instrument of exclusion and as a means for fortifying social stratification was unacceptable to Paulos Mar Gregorios, and should be so for anyone who endorses democracy. A major failure of education in India is that it stays blind to the need to nurture and propagate a culture of democracy through education. When this is not done, the temptation to misuse education to subserve sectarian or communal interests gathers momentum.

The exclusion of the common man from the precincts of higher education -- in Kerala it happens indirectly by keeping quality higher education beyond the reach of most aspirants -- a de facto exclusion of variety and diversity from academia, is inimical to the robustness and vitality of education. The goal of all-round development through education, which is basic to the pursuit of excellence in education, is defeated by the homogenization of its clientele. Even though quality, access and equity were adopted as the prime goals in education under the XIth plan, no significant change was discernible in our practice of education. Theory and practice seldom meet in the domain of education.

2. *The need to nurture a culture of thinking.* The Indian mindset is shaped by hierarchism and conformity. The hangover of the *guru-shishya parampara* makes the teacher as an authoritarian source of knowledge and the student a passive receptacle. As a result, we consign students to intellectual passivity. Such a model of education is inimical to creativity and innovativeness. Of late, this problem has aggravated further by the invasion of the academia by a spirit of intolerance and regimentation. All States are tempted to use education as a means for conditioning and homogenizing its population. While this may seem desirable from a narrow angle of vision, it results in consigning a society to the pits of mediocrity.

Reference needs to be made in this context to the eminently avoidable dichotomy infused into the nexus between religion and reason. It is dangerous to separate the two. At any rate, spirituality and reason imply each other; except that in the spiritual context

‘reason’ is understood differently from the scientific-secular context. Reason, in the spiritual context, is inseparable from creativity, as exemplified in Jesus Christ. On occasions, the Metropolitan became refreshingly creative, as he tried to mediate philosophical concepts to his readers and audiences. The ability to couch profundity in simplicity was his hallmark.

The infusion of this creative-intellectual richness into academia needs to be deemed an urgent necessity. For want of it, learning becomes a dull and deadening experience. People in academic circles used to flock to Paulos Mar Gregorios because he combined spiritual authenticity with intellectual brilliance. He married scholarship to spirituality.

The goal of promoting a culture of thinking will not even begin to be addressed so long as we do not renounce the present outlook of seeing learning as only a mercenary means to attain material advantages alone. There is a need, as John Dewey argues in *Moral Principles in Education*, to shift the emphasis from the instrumental to the intrinsic value of education. Nothing is more harmful to the intellectual and moral development of a student than coercing him or her to see classroom transactions as the means only for securing marks and to gain promotion, or performing well in higher education as a passport to lucrative employments.

3. *The neglect of values-formation and character building.* The tendency to nudge values-formation to the periphery of educational responsibilities betokens the domination of the technological and the pragmatic. It is from this outlook that adherence to values and ideals is deemed as too risky to be desirable in practice. Education thus caters to the goal of ‘success,’ not greatness. But the success of individuals, as understood and practised in this model, undermines social cohesion and collective welfare, of which mounting corruption is a tell-tale symptom.

Following on the lead given by Rousseau, Kant identifies the nucleus of corruption as the tendency of the individual to decide on specific issues prioritizing his interests at the expense of the collective. The shaping idea in character-formation is that individual interests,

when counter to collective interests, should be made subservient and curbed. The preponderance of ‘competition’ and ‘success’ in the matrix of education, frustrates this goal. This is an issue that the Metropolitan would have pursued with extreme vigour today.

4. *Domination of the acquisitive at the expense of the creative.*

Education today is hitched to the acquisitive mindset. Once knowledge is defined as a means to power, this outcome becomes inevitable. The Metropolitan would have insisted that “Knowledge is power” is a reductive paradigm. Knowledge is also love, truth and justice. It should be understood and practised as a means for realizing what it takes to be human, what constitutes happy life at the individual and societal levels.

The most regrettable outcome of the acquisitive outlook on education is the decline of the creative. The logic of life does not allow the co-existence of the acquisitive and the creative. They are in a relationship of “either ... or” (cf. Soren Kierkegaard). Nothing is more important today than regaining the creative genius we have allowed to dissipate in embracing the acquisitive and the mechanistic.

The goal of education is to enable individuals to live happy and socially relevant lives. To Aristotle, this has two components (a) nurturing virtuous individuals and (b) creating healthy societies where the virtuous individual can live, serve and find fulfillment. The project of education has to keep both dimensions continually in mind, which it does not do today. The talents of the moral man become, as Renan pointed out, his burdens in an immoral society.

The values-formation of the individual needs to be seen as basic to his or her empowerment. How is an individual to discern the right from the wrong and to choose the former, if he is indifferent to values? Such a person can only function on the principle of expediency and become a piece of driftwood, floating with the flow of the times.

5. Above all, Metropolitan Gregorios would have emphasized the need to emphasize the *development of linguistic skills* through education. Since this issue is dealt with at the outset, it does not need to be elaborated at this stage.

VII. CONCLUSION

The new humanity that the Metropolitan sought is necessarily God-centred. God alone is the sufficient ground of human existence. We live, and move, and have our being, as St. Paul says, quoting from the classics, in God. It is this very principle that Jesus emphasized when he said, “Abide in me, and I in you”. The souls of human beings remain ‘restless’ according to St. Augustine, until they find their refuge in God. As Pascal said, we do not know who we are, or what our life means, except through the Divine.

I conclude by randomly listing a few issues that Paulos Mar Gregorios would have brought up, if he were to address us today.

1. How can we harmonize material development with human welfare? The Metropolitan singled out Sweden, distinguished by its ‘socialism from womb to tomb,’ -- commendable material development fortified by distributive justice - as a case study. He underlined the toll it takes on the felicity of life -- aloneness, depression, suicide. The parallel between Sweden and Kerala should concern us.

2. How can we combine bread with freedom? The idea that development is possible only through a curtailment of freedom, as implied in the present model of developmentalism, which is being configured as a cult. Allied to that is the rising militarism in India. Both, together, remind us of Germany under Hitler. A related issue: can we inoculate the society against intolerance through education? Shouldn't we?

3. We are a religious society. We are also multi-religious. And we have entered a phase of religious animosities. The battles are about gods. How can we relate to God as a source of unity, not of discord? Is there an idea of God that practitioners of all religions can share? The need to evolve a new vision for wider ecumenism is imperative in an age that envisions everything in terms of competition and conflict.

4. Finally, how do we integrate the philosophical and the practical? It's a question of pretty ancient vintage. An issue of special relevance is the elitist alienation of the intelligentsia from the common man and life in general. They leave the burning zone of realities to pragmatists

who cut the Gordian Knot, unmindful of what else is shredded in the process.

Was Paulos Mar Gregorios a theologian or a philosopher? Or, was he was both? He would insist that philosophy, at least a philosophical bent of mind, is a necessary discipline for everyone who wishes to live meaningfully and with dignity. But true philosophy calls for as much the reason of the heart and the soul as it does for the reason of the mind. It is this holistic rationality that the late Metropolitan embodied. And it is this that we lack, and need, most. Paulos Mar Gregorios is an inspiring instance of integrating spirituality and philosophy to the enrichment of both.



Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam Publications

1. Philosophy East and West
2. The Vision Beckons
3. How Do We Psychoanalyse Our Societies and Religions
4. Certainty and The Secular Which Do We want?
5. നമുക്കാവശ്യം സർവ്വമത സംഗ്രഹിയായ ഒരു വിശ്വനാഗരികത
6. Towards A New Enlightenment This Time - Global, Spiritual and Comprehensive
7. The Dialogue of the Spirit & A Panchsheel for Religions
8. The Secular and The Spiritual: Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios and his Relevance Today