

## The Beautiful Tree: Indigenous Indian Education in the Eighteenth Century (1983)

This major work uses in its title a quote from Gandhiji's Chatham House (London) speech in 1931 which underscored the traditions of Indian education. By reproducing extensive documentation from the 18th and 19th centuries (in particular, relating to the Presidencies of Madras and Bengal, as well as the Malabar and the Punjab regions) about widespread educational institutions prevalent in different regions of the subcontinent, Shri Dharampal provides incisive empirical evidence to substantiate Gandhiji's claim about India being more educated before the onset of British rule. This published documentation initiated a vibrant discussion; the book was reviewed among others by P. Radhakrishna (*Indian Express*, 26.02.1984), Claude Alvares (*The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 18.04.1984, 42-46; response by G.S.R. Krishnan, *ibid*, 22.07.1984), Dharma Kumar (*Seminar*, May 1984; response by J.K. Bajaj & M.D. Srinivas, *Seminar*, June 1984), G.S.R. Krishnan & Madras Group (*PPST Bulletin* 4/1, June 1984, 22-47; 48-63), G. Sivaramakrishnan (*EPW*, 25.08.1984, 1473-1475), Amrik Singh (*Indian book Chronicle* 10/11, 01.06.1985, 201-204), Ganesh Mantri (*Dharmayug*, 14.07.1985), Aloka Parasher Sen & S.G. Kulkarni (*Studies in History* 2/2, 1986, 288-291), Sebastian Joseph (*Deccan Herald*, 29.03.1987). Shri Dharampal's detailed and insightful introduction, besides lucidly contextualising the official documentation (primarily by Governor Thomas Munro [Madras], William Adam [Bengal], Alexander Walker [Malabar] and G.W. Leitner [Punjab]), also provides an incisive outline of the contemporaneous British educational set-up, thereby allowing the reader to appreciate the relatively high-level of pedagogic developments still prevailing in many regions of the subcontinent in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The volume was reprinted by Keerthi Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Coimbatore 1995, and also in: Dharampal, *Collected Writings*, Other India Press: Mapusa 2000 (reissued 2003 & 2007), vol. III. Recently, this book has been reprinted as part of the *Dharampal Classics Series* and edited by J.K. Bajaj and M.D. Srinivas, Vol. 4, Rashtrathana Sahitya: Bengaluru and Centre for Policy Studies: Chennai, 2021. Translations into Gujarati and Hindi were published in *Dharampal Samagra Lekhan* (11 vols.), edited by Indumati Katdare, Punarutthan Trust, Ahmedabad 2005 and 2007, respectively. More recently, a Tamil translation was published as *Azhagiya maram: pathinettam Nootrandil India Paarambariya Kalvi* by B.R. Mahadevan. Kizhakku pathipagam, Chennai, 1st edition, May 2016, 2nd edition, December 2019; as well as a Kannada translation, *Cheluva Taru* (ಚಲುವ ತರು) by Prof. Madhava Peraje, Dravida Samskruthi Adhyayana Vibhaga, Kannada University, Hampi, 2015.